

# SENIOR SOFTBALL BEAUFORT

## FALL 2024 RULES AND REGULATIONS

**General.** This league is sponsored by Senior Softball Beaufort and shall be governed by the following rules and regulations as adopted by team representatives and approved by the league commissioner.

### **Player Eligibility.**

1. All players must be 55 years of age or older at the time of registration. A case by case exception may be approved by the Commissioner for females between the ages of 50 and 54. A case by case exception may also be approved by the Commissioner for players between the ages of 50 and 54 who were on an existing and active team roster the season prior to the team joining SSB.
2. This league will allow females to play but will not have any "Co-Ed" rules.
3. To be eligible to play, a player must register on [www.seniorsoftball.com](http://www.seniorsoftball.com) and sign waiver forms with Senior Softball Beaufort and Island Rec Center.

### **Rosters.**

1. A maximum roster of 15 players (including managers and coaches who are also players). In addition, up to two alternate players may be allowed on each team. Managers and coaches may assign themselves as part of the 15 player roster or as alternate players. However, the Commissioner may limit the assignment of alternate players if they are required to form a full roster for a new team. If a team has less than its full roster present for a game, and alternate players are available for that game, the manager will insert the alternate players into the lineup (which is limited to 15 players and which includes playing in the field, see Game Play, section 10c) to replace roster players for that game. However, an alternate player may opt out of playing due to injury or health issues. Alternate players who are not in the lineup may serve as courtesy runners if available, at the manager's discretion and subject to paragraph 11 under Game Play section. At the beginning of each new season, current players may opt to remain with their current team or enter the draft process to join a different team.
2. At the beginning of each new season, new players, current players who have opted into the draft or players who have missed more than just the prior season will be entered into a player draft for that season. The draft will be conducted with the goal of improving parity amongst teams. The Founders will decide, in consultation with the current managers, if there are enough new players and available fields to form an additional team. The draft order will be a function of each team's record the prior season and the number of open roster spots on each team and whether or not there are enough new players for an additional team. The Founders, in consultation with the managers, will determine the exact draft process for the new season. Potential new players who lack basic softball skills, as determined by the Commissioner, and therefore are unable to participate safely in competitive games may be declared ineligible for the draft by the Commissioner. However, they may participate in practices and informal scrimmages to work on their skills so that they can work to become eligible for future drafts.

### **Game Play.**

1. Ground rules will be dependent upon the field and field conditions. Prior to the start of the season, the Commissioner will specify ground rules for the umpires and managers for each field.

On fields without complete fencing between the foul lines, a line will be marked on the field at an appropriate distance for that field. If a player hits the ball in the air over the line, it is a home run; if the outfielder catches the ball with at least one foot over the line, it is still a home run. If a player hits the ball that crosses the line on the ground, untouched by the fielder, it will be a ground rule double; if the fielder touches the ball, it is a live ball even if it crosses the line and the player can continue running the bases and is not limited to a ground rule double.

2. A pitching screen is required to be used. The teams will provide their own screen and must follow the rules listed below:
  - a. The pitching plate will be set at 50 feet from the rear point of home plate.
  - b. The pitching screen must be placed in front of the pitching plate no more than 4 feet in front of the plate with the edge of the screen covering a minimum of one half of the pitching plate.
  - c. Once the screen is in place, it may not be moved in that half inning unless a new pitcher comes in or the screen is moved by a batted ball.
  - d. The pitcher may release the ball from either side of the screen, but have at least one foot in contact with the pitching plate itself.
  - e. Before releasing the ball, and in contact with the plate, the pitcher must pause momentarily before he may release the ball or it is an illegal pitch.
  - f. If the batter hits the screen with a batted ball, it is treated as a dead foul ball immediately and runners, if any, return to their bases. It is treated the same as a foul ball in terms of being a strike or a courtesy foul ball or an out.
  - g. After the pitcher releases the ball, he must make a reasonable effort to move entirely behind the screen. He may field the ball as soon as it is hit.
  - h. If a pitcher violates these rules, then the umpire will issue a warning to the pitcher. Any subsequent violation of these rules will result in the umpire declaring the pitch to be a ball.
3. A strike mat will be used at home plate. All legally pitched balls (6-12 foot arc) that hit any part of the home plate or strike mat will be called a strike. The edging of the actual home plate and strike mat is treated as part of the strike zone.
4. The umpire will announce that a pitch is "illegal" if it is outside of the 6-12 foot arc. If the batter does not swing at the pitch, it is a ball. If the batter swings at the pitch, then it will be treated the same as a legal pitch.
5. A double bag will be used at first base with the outer bag (generally orange) being in foul territory. The defensive first baseman must use the inner bag (generally white) and the runner must use the outer bag. However, when no play is being made at first base, the batter/runner may use either of the two bags.
6. A commitment line (or point of no return) will be marked perpendicular to the 3<sup>rd</sup> base foul line and placed 30 feet from home plate.
  - a. Once a runner's foot touches the ground on or past the commitment line, the runner must continue to the scoring plate
  - b. If he crosses back over the commitment line towards 3B, the runner is out.
7. A scoring plate (or auxiliary home plate) will be placed 10 feet from the back of the home plate in a straight line with first base.
  - a. The scoring plate is to be used by the runner only.
  - b. The defense can only get the runner out by touching home plate (not the strike mat) while in possession of the ball.
  - c. If the runner touches home plate/strike plate mat, the runner is out.
  - d. All plays at home plate are force plays.

8. Runners going into 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base must slide or go in standing or give himself up without obstruction to the defensive player.
  - a. There is no over-run rule at 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base.
  - b. The runner must make every effort to avoid colliding with a defensive player. If the umpire judges that the runner did not make such an effort, the umpire will call him out.
  - c. The umpire will use standard ASA/USA Softball rules to determine which player, if any, is responsible for interference when a runner collides with a fielder while running between bases.
  - d. Tagging of runners is allowed except past the commitment line.
9. An 11<sup>th</sup> fielder (includes a middle fielder/ rover plus a 4<sup>th</sup> outfielder) will be allowed. A team's use of 11 fielders is not dependent on the number of fielders available to its opposing team. Outfielders must take a position behind the 180-foot line until the ball is hit by the batter. If a team has less than 11 players, they may designate one player as the middle fielder/rover and play only three outfielders who must take a position behind the 180-foot line until the ball is hit by the batter.
10. Batting Orders
  - a. All players (excluding alternate players as specified in paragraph 1 under Rosters) who arrive on time to play in the games must be in the lineup. It will be the manager's choice as to whether any late players for the first game of a doubleheader will be added to the bottom of the batting order (and play the minimum number of innings in the field). In other words, a manager may elect to use a player arriving late for the first game of a doubleheader only in the second game of the doubleheader.
  - b. If a player becomes ill or is injured during the game and is removed from the game, their team will not be penalized with an automatic out when that player is due to bat, provided they advise the umpire and the opposing manager at the time of the illness or injury.
  - c. If a manager determines that one of his players is not in a condition to play (for example, due to being intoxicated due to alcohol or drugs), then the manager, in consultation with the opposing manager and umpire, may declare that player ineligible for that game and remove him without having the team penalized with an automatic out when that player is due to bat.
  - d. All players who arrive on time to play in the games must play at least three innings in the field if it is a seven inning game or two innings in the field if the game lasts at least five innings, unless the player opts out due to injury. A manager may not dictate to a player to opt out; it is the decision of the player.
11. Courtesy runners may be used at any time once a batter gets on base.
  - a. The same courtesy runner may not be used more than once in the same inning unless running for the same batter.
  - b. If a courtesy runner is still on a base when it is his turn to bat, he is automatically out as a batter and remains on the base if there are less than three outs.
12. The ball and strike count will be 1 and 1 when a batter steps to the plate.
13. All batters will be given a courtesy foul ball. If the batter hits a foul ball after the courtesy foul, the batter will be called out.
14. Home Run Rule
  - a. Each team is limited to two (2) over the fence (or over the marked home run line if there is no fence) home runs in a game. Any subsequent over the fence home runs will result in the batter being awarded a single and runners move up one base only.

15. All bats will be USA Softball/ASA approved. A batter using an illegal bat will face the punishment listed in the Beaufort County Adult Softball Rules and Regulations.
16. Each team will provide each player with at least one uniform jersey. A player must be in uniform to play in the game, unless both managers agree prior to the game to waive the requirement.
17. Each team must have a minimum of nine (9) players to begin a game. Once both teams have at least nine (9) players, the game will start at the scheduled time, i.e. no waiting for additional players. Players that arrive late may be inserted at the end of the lineup and field at that time.
  - a. A team with less than nine (9) players will forfeit the game following a 10 minute grace. However, SSB encourages the two teams to play an informal scrimmage once a forfeit is declared so that all players that showed up to play are able to do so. The managers can mix the rosters as they see fit for the scrimmage.
  - b. Teams will not be given a 10 minute grace period for the second game. If the first game is forfeited, the second game will begin once both teams have the minimum number of players. The second game will be considered a forfeit if a team does not have 9 players by the second game time.
18. There is a 5 run limit per inning with unlimited runs allowed in the last inning.
19. After 55 minutes of game time, the teams will finish the current inning and play one more unlimited run inning. The last inning is always an unlimited inning unless the "Mercy" rule is reached.
20. If teams are tied at the end of 7 innings or the time limit, they will play one extra five run limit inning. The player who was the last batter to complete his time at bat prior to the extra inning will be placed on second base to start the inning for each half inning of the extra inning. A courtesy runner is not permitted for this runner unless this runner is injured and unable to safely run the bases. If tied at the end of the extra inning, the game will be considered a tie.
21. Mercy Rule: 15 runs difference after 4 innings, 10 runs difference after 5 innings.
22. Determining Regular Season Winner and Seedings or Tournament / Playoff Winner
  - a. Win/Loss Record
  - b. If there is a two way tie, head-to-head win/loss record is used. If that is tied, then least runs allowed in the head-to-head games. If that is tied, a coin flip.
  - c. For 3-4-5 way tie, least runs allowed in all games played.
  - d. Any teams still tied after c above, the most runs scored in all games played.
  - e. If still tied, the winner is determined by a coin flip.
  - f. If a tournament or playoffs cannot be completed, the awards are determined as follows:
    - i. Win/Loss record
    - ii. Head-to-head play
    - iii. Least runs allowed in all games played
    - iv. Runs scored in all games played

#### **1. UMPIRES**

- a. Umpires have total and complete control of the game, and all decisions are final.
- b. Players arguing calls or decisions can be ejected at the discretion of the umpire for that specific game.
- c. It's a given that every player will commit errors and umpires are not immune to them either.
- d. One umpire is monitoring the entire field and does not have the advantage of all visual angles or replay.
- e. They are paid, but they umpire based on their love of the game.

## 2. ATTITUDES & SPORTSMANSHIP

- a. Our league is based on integrity not intensity.
- b. This addendum is the official warning for all players with respect to this area.
- c. Players, managers, coaches, or spectators exhibiting unacceptable attitudes or demonstrating poor sportsmanship are grounds for immediate ejection BY THE UMPIRE.
- d. The umpire has complete discretion with respect to players, managers, coaches, and spectators in violation of this section.
- e. The SSB Founders can deem a player, manager, coach or spectator arguing an ejection ineligible for their team's next game whenever that occurs.

## 3. FOUL LANGUAGE

- a. Foul language is always prohibitive.
- b. As adults, without being specific we all know which words are considered acceptable and those which are not.
- c. The first use of foul language by a player will incur a warning from the umpire for that game.
- d. The second use of foul language by the same player in the same game will draw an automatic ejection.
- e. The umpire has full and complete discretion as to what language is acceptable and what is not.

## 4. EJECTIONS

- a. If a player incurs two game ejections during the season for any reason, they will be prohibited from playing in SSB for the remainder of the season and possibly the next season (as determined by the SSB Founders).
- b. Managers are responsible for reporting player ejections simultaneously with their weekly game scores.