

# Portland Area Senior Softball League (PASS) Competitive and Recreational Divisions Joint Rules

**\*\* Changes in Red**

## 1. **General:** **as of 4 November 2022**

- A: The PASS is divided into two divisions: Competitive and Recreational. The Competitive Division will be comprised of ball players who possess a higher than average skill level and wish to be in a more competitive division. The Recreational Division is for all ball players who wish to be in a less competitive division and want to enjoy the game just for fun, relaxation, and camaraderie.
- B: PASS has established that participants must be at least 65 years of age or older and can be of either gender in order to play in the Delta Park Recreational Division, 62 years of age or older and can be of either gender in order to play in the North Clackamas Recreational Division, and 61 years of age or older and can be of either gender in order to play in the North Clackamas Competitive Division.
- C: The Competitive Division will play their games at North Clackamas Park located at 5440 SE Kellogg Creek Road, Milwaukie, Oregon 97222 (Wednesday).
- D: The Recreational Division will play their games at North Clackamas Park located at 5440 SE Kellogg Creek Road, Milwaukie, Oregon 97222. (Monday) and at Delta Park - Owens Sports Complex. 10737 N Union Court, Portland, OR 97217 (Tuesday).
- E: The games at both complexes will begin at 10 a.m. and consist of two 7-inning games. For the Delta Park Division, All games will be finished by 1:00 p.m.
- F: At game time, or at any time, during the course of a game, **the Division Commissioner/Team Managers** shall be the sole judge of the fitness of the field for play.
- G: The home team for the first game shall be the team listed first on the schedule. If no schedule is available, the home team shall be determined by a coin toss.
- H: All games will be played in accordance with current SSUSA rules, except where noted within.
- I: The bats will conform to Senior Softball USA rules. The one exception is bats with ratings of 1.20 and 1.21, are approved for use. The balls will also conform to Senior Softball USA rules. **The Recreational Division and the Competitive Division will use the Trump Stote: 44 core - 375 psi softball.**

## 2. Team Composition

### A. Offensive/Defensive Play

Eleven players will constitute an official line-up. The standard fielding positions are pitcher, catcher, 1<sup>st</sup> base, 2<sup>nd</sup> base, 3<sup>rd</sup> base, short stop, rover, left field, left center field, right center field, and right field.

### B. Roster Players

Roster players will have priority over non-roster players regarding playing time. All roster members present and able to play shall be included in the batting order. **If a team has 12 roster players, capable of playing in the field at game time, then substitute players will not be allowed to participate. An attempt will be made to limit team rosters to 15 ball players.**

### C. Substitute Players

All Competitive/Recreational Division players are advised they may be asked, on a specific game day, to play with another team (other than on the team on which they were drafted for the current season). This would occur in order to have a more equal number of players on each team playing that day. Five minutes prior to the start of games that day, the Division Commissioner will meet with the Team Managers (or their assistants) to determine on which team substitute players will be required for that day. The procedure for adding substitute player to a team is as follows:

1. Substitute players may be added to any team that cannot field a team of at least 12 players. Team Managers must select players from the same or lower skill levels as the missing players. The Recreational Division Commissioner may approve substitutes as long as they are 61 or older in the NCP Competitive Division, 62 or older in the NCP Recreational Division, and 65 or older in the Delta Park Recreation Division.
2. If a team remains short of 12 players after all available substitute players have been selected, the Division Commissioner may select a player from another team having more than 12 players. The team with more than 12 players can protect 10 of its players plus the Team Manager from being selected to play for another team. The selected Team Manager will make every effort to supply a quality player.
3. At game time, a Team Manager with an insufficient number of players may ask the team they are playing to fill defensive position(s) for them in order to equalize the number of players in defensive positions. In this case, the supplied defensive player continues to bat only for his actual team.

### D. Player Loss

If a team loses a player, who is in the batting line-up, due to injury or other health condition, and cannot be replaced with a substitute player, that player's spot in the batting order shall be passed over without penalty.

E. Ball Player “No-shows”

Absences from games is expected throughout the year. These occurrences should be held to a minimum and coordinated with the Team Manager. If a ball player is consistently absent without notifying the Team Manager, then the Team Manager can request a meeting with the Division Commissioner and other Division Team Manger. The Team Manager may request that the ball player be removed and another player be assigned to his team. The ball player will be contacted to obtain his point of view. The Team Managers/Commissioner will review the information and decide on a course of action. A majority agreement of those present is all that is needed. The ball player will be given the option of quitting, moving to another team (with Team managers approval), or be added to the Substitute Listings. Players can play for any team as long as they meet the qualifications for that division.

F. Umpires

If an umpire is available, he/she will be responsible for all game calls – their decisions are final. If an umpire is not available, the Team Managers will be responsible for designating 1 or 2 qualified base umpires for each team. The team at bat provides the 1<sup>st</sup> base and 3<sup>rd</sup> base umpire who will be responsible to make the calls. The 1<sup>st</sup> base umpire will be responsible for calls at 1<sup>st</sup> base and at home plate. The 3<sup>rd</sup> base umpire will be responsible for calls at 2<sup>nd</sup> base and 3<sup>rd</sup> base. The 1<sup>st</sup> base or 3<sup>rd</sup> base umpire is responsible for calling an illegal pitch (see 4B for additional guidance). During the umpires turn at bat, the Team Manager will provide a knowledgeable replacement until the original umpire can resume his position. The catcher is responsible for calling balls & strikes, plus making the call on a foul ball call on balls hit down the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base lines, if his/her assistance is requested by either the 1<sup>st</sup> base or 3<sup>rd</sup> base coach. In the event of a question of the interpretation of a rule by an umpire, only the Team Managers should approach the umpire and limit remarks to the specific rule in question. If a disagreement cannot be resolved by the Team Managers or umpire, the Division Commissioner will be consulted to resolve the dispute.

G. Blood Rule

A player, coach, or umpire who is bleeding is prohibited from participating further in the game until appropriate treatment is administered.

H. Player Conduct

This paragraph further defines the specific actions considered unacceptable. For additional guidance on punitive measures, refer to PASS Policies and Procedures, Paragraph 5. Any action by a member of the league considered unbecoming (for example: physically threatening another player or umpire, persistent use of obscene language, baiting opposing team members) will not be tolerated. If such action is observed and brought to the attention of the Team Manager, he/she will address the situation immediately before play continues. If the offending player

continues to chip away verbally after being told to stop, the umpire may eject the player for the balance of the game. If a player is ejected, the player must leave the playing field and dugout. Any of the following actions are contrary to the spirit and intent of the rules and are grounds for ejection from the game by an umpire or the Division Commissioner:

- a. Judgment calls by umpires should not be argued.
- b. Use of profane, abusive, or threatening language.
- c. Laying hands on or striking an umpire, player, or spectator.
- d. Consuming alcohol or being intoxicated on the field.
- e. Reckless play or conduct resulting body contact that exposes others to possible injury.
- f. Smoking on the field or the benches.
- g. Delaying a game with stalling tactics.

### **3. Field Set-up**

- A. The playing field dimensions will be in accordance with the current addition of the SSUSA Official Guide. The pitcher's rubber is 50 ft. from home base. Base paths are 70 ft.
- B. The Strike Mat  
The strike mat is 19 inches wide by 34.5 inches deep. The mat will be placed over home plate, aligned with the front edge. A defensive player making a play at home plate will be allowed to complete the force out by touching any portion of the strike mat.
- C. Scoring Line  
A scoring line is used instead of a scoring plate. The scoring line should be marked from approximately 6 feet from the front left corner of the strike mat, perpendicular to the 3rd base line and continue to the backstop fence. The base runner's foot must be down on or down past the scoring line prior to the ball being received by a defensive player touching the strike mat for the scoring of a run.
- D. Commitment Rule  
A commitment line 30 feet from the scoring line will be used. Once a runner's foot touches the ground on or past this commitment line, the runner is committed to advancing to the scoring line. If a runner from 3rd base gets within 30 feet of home plate, that runner is committed to continue home and cannot return to 3rd base. A runner can be tagged out before he/she touches or passes the commitment line, but not afterwards. For the ball player to be called out, the defensive player must throw the ball to the player covering home plate. The home base defensive player in-turn must touch the strike mat before the runner crosses or touches the scoring line. If a runner touches or re-crosses the commitment line in an attempt to return to 3rd base, the runner will be declared out and the ball remains live. If the runner does not touch or cross the commitment line, he/she may attempt to return to 3<sup>rd</sup> base at their own

risk. Only one attempt to return to 3<sup>rd</sup> base is allowed. If runner attempts to get into a “run-down”, he/she will be declared out and the ball remains in play. The 3<sup>rd</sup> base defensive player must receive the ball and touch 3<sup>rd</sup> base before the runner returns in order to declare the runner out.

- E. Outfield depth rule (does not apply to Competitive Division)  
All outfielders except the rover must stay behind the outfield encroachment line until the ball is hit. This is to give the older, slower runners a chance to get on base. The only player that can shift to play any outfield position is the rover. The left centerfielder, right centerfielder, shortstop, and second baseman have to stay on their side of second base until the ball is hit. Only the rover may come into the infield and play on the turf/dirt. Outfielders cannot throw runners out at 1<sup>st</sup> base.
- F. Infielder’s depth rule (does not apply to Competitive Division)  
Infielders must be behind the first, second and third base bags until the ball is hit. This is to give the older, slower runners a chance to get to base.

#### 4. Pitching

- A. The Recreational Divisions will start with 0/0 count and the Competitive Divisions will start with a one and one count. Pitches must be delivered with a continuous underhanded motion. The pitcher must start the delivery from a stationary position in an area 50 to 60 feet from the home plate. At the highest point of the arc, the ball must be at least 6 feet above the ground, but not more than 12 feet above the ground. Pitches judged to be outside of these parameters will be called an illegal pitch and counted as a ball even if the ball lands on the strike mat. If a batter swings at an illegal pitch, the illegal pitch call is nullified and all play stands. The 1<sup>st</sup> base or 3<sup>rd</sup> base coach will call illegal pitches. Disputes will be adjudicated according to our “chain of command,” (umpires, then the Team Managers, then the Division Commissioner). For insurance purposes, it is essential for the Competitive and Recreational Divisions to enforce illegal pitches. Pitches are strikes when:

- a. The ball hits the strike mat.
- b. The batter swings and misses.
- c. The ball is hit foul.
- d. The ball hits the batter if the batter is in the strike zone.
- e. If a batter with 2 strikes hits a foul ball, it is the 3<sup>rd</sup> strike.
- f. The ball hits the pitcher’s screen.**

- B. Walks

A walk or base on balls occurs when the ball count reaches four. An intentional walk is when runners are put on base to assist the defense by adding a force out at one or more bases. An intentional walk can only be requested by the defensive Team Manager. One intentional walk per game per team is allowed. If, in the judgment of an umpire or 1<sup>st</sup> base coach, a pitcher is walking another batter intentionally, all play

will be stopped, and that batter will be awarded second base and all base runners will advance accordingly

C. Infield Fly Rule

There will be no infield fly rule in the Recreational Division. The Competitive Division will use the infield fly rule.

The infield fly rule is in effect whenever there are runners on first and second base, or bases are loaded, with less than 2 outs. If a fair fly ball is hit that the first base coach/umpire judges can be easily caught by an infielder or rover positioned as an infielder, the first base/coach umpire shall immediately call “infield fly, the batter is out.” After such fly ball is either caught, dropped, or not caught, runners may advance at their own risk.

D. Foul Ball

For the Recreational League, foul balls will be called by the base coaches. For the Competitive League, the catcher will call all foul balls. If the catcher is unsure whether the ball landed fair or foul, he/she may ask for assistance in making the call from either the first base coach or 3<sup>rd</sup> base coach as appropriate. If the batter hits a foul tip or foul ball and it is caught by the catcher, it must be determined that the ball was at least over the batter’s head if it is to be called an out. Determination for this call will be made by either the 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base coach. A foul tip hitting the body or equipment is a foul/dead ball unless the foul tip is the 3<sup>rd</sup> strike.

E. Pitcher Protection Rules

The Recreational Division and Competitive Division will use a safety screen and wear a mask for the safety of the pitcher, shin guards are optional. If a screen is used, it must be placed four feet in front of the pitching rubber with one side of the screen centered on the middle of the pitching rubber depending on the throwing delivery of the pitcher. The pitchers may pitch from the rubber or up to ten feet behind the rubber at their discretion. The pitcher is NOT required to be behind the pitching screen and may make defensive plays, however, at least one foot needs to be in the outlined pitchers box. Although not required, it is highly recommended that the pitcher move behind the screen after he/she pitches.

F. Dead Ball

For the Competitive Division, if a batted ball hits the pitcher's screen after being hit and not yet fielded by any player, it is a foul ball, dead and strike two, no runner advancement can occur. If a batted ball hits the pitcher's screen after being hit and not yet fielded by any player for a second time, it is a foul ball. Note: the Competitive Division allows for one foul ball after strike two.

The Recreational Division: If a batted ball hits the pitching screen it is a dead ball and a strike. If a batter has 2 strikes, and hits a foul ball, the batter is out.

## Halo Rule

The Halo zone is an imaginary box measuring 1 foot on each side of the pitching rubber and from the ground to 1 foot above the pitcher's head. The halo rule is not used in either the Competitive or Recreational Divisions.

## 5. Batting

### A. Batting Order

1. A team may bat any number of players. All roster players who are present at the game will be placed in the batting order unless the ball player(s) are injured or elect not to play. The Team Manager will align the batters in any batting order he/she desires. Substitute players, not on the team's roster, will bat last.
2. The batter that is on-deck when the first game ends will bat first for the second game. The batting order will remain the same.

### B. Calling a Batter Out. A batter is out when:

1. The batter steps into the batter box with an illegal bat.
2. The batter's entire foot is touching completely outside the batter's box when the ball is hit.
3. The batter's foot touches the strike zone mat when the ball is hit.
4. The batter bunts or chops the ball. A chopped hit, as judged by the umpire or base coaches, occurs when the batter strikes downward with a chopping motion with the bat so that the batted ball bounces high into the air.
5. The batter bats out of order. If a batting out of order error is discovered while the incorrect batter is at bat, the correct batter may take the incorrect batter's place and assume any balls and strikes. If the error is discovered after the incorrect batter has completed a turn at bat, the player who should have batted shall be called out.
6. If a player leaves the game due to injury or loss of physical condition, the player will not be called out for failing to bat.

**Note:** Due to the shortness of the fields at North Clackamas Park, the first three home runs over the fence by each team will count as home runs. If a batter uses a courtesy runner and hits a ball over the fence, it counts as one of the three and is considered a walk-off, emptying the bases. After the initial three home runs, each additional one is a single with base runners advancing only one base.

## 6. Base Running

- A. Base runners advance at their own risk on any caught ball whether fair or foul.
- B. Base runners can be tagged out by a fielder with ball on the base path or near a base if the fielder is pulled off the base by a wide throw.

B-1 Rundown: (Recreational Division only). Base runners can make only ONE change of direction during a rundown if a defensive play is being made on the runner. If more than one change of direction occurs, the base runner will be declared out and the ball remains live.

C. A base runner shall be called out and a dead ball declared, if the runner interferes with a fielder at any point on a base path or on a base.

Note: Interference is clearly defined in the SSUSA rules. In the Recreational Division, every attempt to avoid injury is paramount. The base runner will make every attempt to avoid contact with a defensive player. Depending on the situation, the base runner will NORMALLY run in a direction that will take him/her away from the play and the flight of the ball. The call of interference will be determined by the Team managers who must consider all factors.

D. If a fielder impedes the runner at any point, the runner shall be awarded the base to which the runner was advancing.

E. The base path is defined as 3 feet on either side of a direct line between bases.

F. Courtesy Runners

A team may use an unlimited number of courtesy runners, but a player may only courtesy run once an inning provided the ball is put in play (strikeouts do not count).

A courtesy runner is defined as a player running for a batter or for another base runner. A runner is defined as anyone who has reached base. For a regular or intentional walk, the runner will take 1st base and any others on base will advance to the next base if applicable. The batter who needs a courtesy runner may elect to have a runner from behind home base or elect to use the “Jerry” rule. The “Jerry” rule is defined as: a batter who hits the ball which strikes any portion of the green outfield prior to being touched by a defensive player, is safe at first base and cannot be thrown out by ANY defensive player. If running for the batter, the courtesy runner will be positioned behind the batter in the right rear corner of the back stop. The courtesy runner will not break for first base until the ball has been batted. The courtesy runner can only advance to 1<sup>st</sup> base. Courtesy runners **will only** be allowed for injured ball players, or upon player request. The Team Manager does not have the discretion of inserting courtesy runners unilaterally without the permission of the base runner. Prior to the start of the game, each Team Manager may select up to two batters that he/she determines require a courtesy runner from home base. These batters will have courtesy runners for the remainder of the game. Any additional batters who require running assistance may use the “Jerry Rule” or attempt running on their own.

Courtesy runners will not be allowed based if the only consideration is age, weight, or speed limitations. If a courtesy runner is on base when his turn to bat comes up, he/she can be replaced by another runner.

## G. Base Runners

Base runners in the Competitive Division will advance base-to base with no run through allowed. If the base runner overruns a base or fails to remain in contact with the base, he/she may be tagged out by a defensive player. Runners to first base will run to the orange bag directly to the right of the 1<sup>st</sup> base bag. This is called the “Safety First Base” and is used to avoid contact with the defensive player when he/she is attempting to make a play at 1<sup>st</sup> base. If a collision with a defensive player at 1<sup>st</sup> base is obvious, the base runner may swing as far right of the orange bag or left of the white bag as possible to avoid a collision. In those circumstances, the base runner will be considered safe, even though the orange base or white bag has not been touched. The 1<sup>st</sup> baseman may touch either the orange or white bag in this situation to record an out if the runner has not reached the base. Sliding is permitted in the Competitive Division, except at 1<sup>st</sup> base and at home.

Base runners in the Recreational Division will advance base-to base using the run-through rule. Runners to first base will run past the orange bag directly to the right of the 1<sup>st</sup> base bag. This is called the “Safety First Base” and is used to avoid contact with the defensive player when he/she is attempting to make a play at 1<sup>st</sup> base. If a collision with a defensive player at 1<sup>st</sup> base is obvious, the base runner may swing as far right of the orange bag or left of the white bag as possible to avoid a collision. In those circumstances, the base runner will be considered safe, even though the orange base or white bag has not been touched. The 1<sup>st</sup> baseman may touch either the orange or white bag in this situation to record an out if the runner has not reached the base. Sliding is NOT permitted in the Recreational Division.

## 7. Run Rule

There will be a five runs per inning rule with the exception of the final (open) inning. In the open inning, runs are unlimited. If the game is tied at the end of regulation, the game will continue for one additional inning. At the top of the extra inning, the team at bat will place their last batter on 2<sup>nd</sup> base. The team at the bottom of the inning will follow this same procedure during their at bat. The game will be considered concluded after ONE extra inning.

Exception: If in the top of the open inning, the visiting team is ahead by 10 or more, the flip-flop rule applies and the home team will bat. If the home team equals or exceeds the visiting team's score, then the visiting team will replace their players where they were when the batting was suspended. The visiting team will have one chance to equal the home team's score. Once the home team's score is equaled, the game will be finished and the game will be a tie.

## 8. Flip/Flop Rule

If after the 6<sup>th</sup> inning and the home team is losing by 10 runs or more, the home team will remain at bat. If the home team does not equal or exceed the opposing team's score the game is over. If they equal or exceed the opposing team's score, then the opposing team will bat. If they subsequently score enough runs to take the lead, then the game is over.

**9. Mercy Rule**

The Mercy Rule (one team ahead of the other at the end of 5 complete innings by more than 10 runs) does not apply in either Division.

**10. Appeal Plays**

The following plays are subject appeals to the umpire: missing a base, leaving a base too early after a caught fly, batting out of order, attempting to run to second base after a turn at first.

**11. Expediting Play**

- A. Infield warm-up is permitted during each team's turn in the field in the first inning, and at the discretion of the umpire thereafter.
- B. After the first inning, pitchers are permitted only two warm-up pitches.
- C. A substitute pitcher may take up to 6 warm-up pitches.

Approved by the Board of Directors           (date)          

          (date)          

**William Tidd**  
**Administrator**

          (date)          

**J. P. Morgan**  
**Secretary**