

# Union County Senior Softball League Rules 70s Division - 2023

*"Let's play ball and have some fun"*

**Note – Changes are in Red**

## GENERAL RULES

ASA/USA rules will be used unless superseded by UCSSL rules.

## THE PLAYING FIELD

### COMMITMENT LINE:

A three (3) foot line shall be marked perpendicular to the foul line and placed halfway (32' 6") between third base and home plate mat.

### SCORING PLATE:

A 2<sup>nd</sup> home plate will be used as a scoring plate. It will be placed in foul territory, 8' from the back tip of home plate (on the 3rd base side) on an extended line from first base. A runner attempting to score **MUST** touch the 2nd home plate.

### STRIKE ZONE MAT:

The rectangular mat will be 19" wide and 36" long. It will be placed with the painted home plate of the mat directly over the permanent home plate. Put outs at home plate can be made by touching any part of the mat.

**BASES:** Bases will be sixty five (65') feet apart.

### DOUBLE FIRST BASE:

A double bag shall be used at first base. Two individual bases will be used.

The outside base will be in foul territory 1' away from the regular base.

The 1' separation is a safety issue.

If a play is being made at 1<sup>st</sup> base, the batter/runner **MUST** use the **outer** base or will be called out (ball is still live). The defensive player **MUST** use the **inner** base or the batter/runner will be called safe (ball is still live).

## EQUIPMENT

**BALL:** The official game ball is a 'RESTRICTED FLIGHT' as provided by the league, This season we will use Yellow AD Starr "Tattoo". 52 COR / 300 max ball.

### CLEATS / SPIKES:

Metal cleats are **NOT** permitted. A player found wearing metal cleats will be ejected from the game. If on base, a dead ball out will be called and all runners must return to the base occupied before the play began.

### SHIRTS:

Shirts will be provided by the league and required to participate in the game.

### PITCHER'S MASKS:

Masks are not required but pitchers are strongly encouraged to wear a protective mask in all league games. Those who choose to not wear one do so at their own risk

## **PLAYERS, COACHES & SUBSTITUTES**

### **MEMBERSHIP:**

All members must annually complete and return the registration form along with the yearly fee for the upcoming season. New members must also submit a proof of age document with photo ID.

### **TEAMS:**

Each team roster will consist of a minimum of 15 and a maximum of 18 players. Emergency roster changes can only be made by the league officials if a roster is reduced to fewer than fourteen players. Players added to team rosters must pay the full league fee and submit a signed waiver form before participating in games, as must all other players.

### **REGISTRATION:**

NO player will appear on a team's official roster unless his completed registration form and full league payment have been received.

Any player found to have participated in a game without having first submitted his signed registration form with league fee to his manager or league official will be deemed an illegal player and the team will be subjected to forfeit(s) for the game(s) in which that player participated.

Registration forms and fees must be in the hands of the Commissioner within 48 hours after the player participated in a game in order for that player to be deemed a legal participant in that game.

### **ELIGIBILITY:**

All players must be 69 years or older during the current calendar year.

### **PLAYING TIME:- BOTH DIVISIONS:**

Except for the manager, each player present at the start of the game must be in the batting order for a minimum of three (3) innings. The manager will inform the other manager whether he will be playing. He shall also announce which other, if any, players will not be playing that game.

Players DO NOT have to play a defensive position.

**INJURED PLAYER:** A substitute can replace an injured player. If there are no substitute players available for an OBVIOUSLY injured player, NO slot out will occur when the player is due to bat. His spot will be skipped. A player who leaves for any other reason, and is NOT replaced, will result in a slot out recorded the first time only when the removed player is due to hit.

If a player is injured during an at bat, can be replaced by a player who has not yet played in the game or who played the first half of the game and has been removed from the game, if such a player is available. If no such replacement is available, the next batter in the order replaces him at bat with no slot out recorded. The replacement batter in either circumstance will assume the ball-strike count of the injured player.

**LATE PLAYERS:** If a team starts the game with fewer than the standard number of players (11) late arriving players are added to the bottom of the lineup until the full lineup is reached. Additional late arriving players can be added to the bottom of the lineup in the same manner.

## **THE GAME**

### **FORFEITS:**

Game time 9:30am., Forfeit time is 9:45.

**MINIMUM NUMBER OF PLAYERS:**

9 players to start the game. **10th spot in the batting order will not be a slot out.**  
In case of the above, **and there are no available fill-in players** the opposing team will supply a player to act as catcher **only** and will make all plays.

**LENGTH OF GAME:**

Length of the game is 7 innings or until a winner is determined.  
An official game is 5 innings or 4<sup>1/2</sup> innings if the home team is ahead.  
All tied games of official length that are suspended due to weather will be counted as a "tie" in the official standings and not replayed.

**MERCY RULE:**

A **12** run mercy rule will be in effect after 4½ innings, 5 if the home team is behind.  
The mercy rule will not be in effect during playoff games, however, a team losing by the usual mercy rule may request taking a loss rather than playing the full 7 innings.

**TIE GAMES:**

Tie games after 7 innings will continue using the International Tie Breaker Rule until one team is ahead after a completed inning. All extra innings are open innings.

**INTERNATIONAL TIE BREAKER:**

It is used to start each half inning in extra-inning games beginning in the eighth inning.

The last batter in the previous inning is placed on 2<sup>nd</sup> base. He cannot get a courtesy runner until he reaches 3<sup>rd</sup> base. The game proceeds as normal.

**RAINOOTS & END OF SEASON:**

Rainouts will be scheduled as soon as possible. Every attempt will be made to reschedule and play a full regular season schedule each season if possible.

No regular season games will be scheduled or played any later than the second Thursday in August.

**SCORING & PUBLICITY:**

The Home team's score book is the official book.

**HOME TEAM:**

Occupies the 1st base dugout/bench  
Brings the following equipment: Bases. Strike mat. 2nd home plate.  
Keeps the official score book.

**PLAYOFFS:** To be determined

**PITCHING**

**ARC PITCH:** The height of a legal pitch is between 6' and 12' from the ground.

**CALLED STRIKE:** A legal pitch striking ANY portion of the mat.

**PITCHER'S BOX:** The pitcher's box is a 2' by 10' rectangle starting from the pitching rubber (50') and extending back 10'. The pitcher can pitch from anywhere within this box as long as his pivot foot is within or touching the boundary line of the box

The pitcher CANNOT walk up and pitch. He MUST come to a COMPLETE stop and present the ball before pitching. ALL other ASA/USA pitching rules must be observed.

## BATTING

### THIRD STRIKE FOUL

Dead ball out, whether caught or not but runners CAN advance on a caught fly ball

**FOUL TIP:** A foul tip is a batted ball that goes directly into the catcher's glove. With less than two strikes a batter is not out.

If the batter has two strikes a foul tip is considered a third strike foul and the batter is out.

*Note: A batted ball which does not go directly into the catcher's glove is considered a FOUL BALL and, if caught, is an out. There is no longer a height restriction on a foul tip.*

### MAXIMUM RUNS PER INNING:

A team may score up to **5** runs per half inning.

However, if a team is trailing by more than **5** runs they can score additional runs to catch up. No additional runs can be scored in that inning.

The seventh and subsequent innings are open innings, with teams allowed to score an unlimited number of runs.

Neither team can score more than **five (5)** runs in the first inning.

## BASE RUNNING

All runners must reach 1<sup>st</sup> base on their own.

Base runners may leave the base when a pitched ball is hit, touches the ground, or reaches home plate.

### COURTESY RUNNERS:

Any player on the roster, and active for the game, may be a courtesy runner. He need not be in the lineup at that time.

There is no limit to courtesy runners, but a runner may only run once per inning.

A runner who is replaced by a courtesy runner cannot be a courtesy runner in the SAME inning.

A courtesy runner may be inserted at any time during the runner's time on the bases.

A courtesy runner can be replaced by another courtesy runner before the 1<sup>st</sup> pitch is thrown.

If a pitch is thrown with an illegal courtesy runner on base, an appeal can be made and the illegal runner is declared out.

If a courtesy runner is on base when he is due to bat:

The courtesy runner is **not out and can be replaced**

The courtesy runner comes to bat.

### **SLIDING, OVER-RUNNING:**

Sliding is permitted into any base including 1<sup>st</sup> base and the 2<sup>nd</sup> home plate.

Overrunning 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base without liability to be tagged out is NOT allowed.

### **INTERFERENCE:**

Runner must slide or otherwise avoid interfering with a fielder attempting to throw to first base. If, in the umpire's judgment, the player did not attempt to avoid interfering, he may rule a double play.

**IMPORTANT: THIS IS A JUDGMENT CALL.** You cannot protest the umpire's call.

*Note – This is a clarification of the current rule. There is a misconception that runners must veer (or slide) on ANY play being made at 2<sup>nd</sup> base. There is already a rule in effect regarding collisions so this clarification eliminates the jeopardy of a runner veering away from the base only to be tagged (or called) out if the fielder drops the ball or there is no clear intention to throw to first base.*

### **COMMITMENT LINE:**

A line drawn halfway between 3<sup>rd</sup> and home plate. A runner touching or crossing this line (with his foot), MUST continue toward home plate. Returning toward 3<sup>rd</sup> base is an automatic out.

### **HOME PLATE OUT:**

A play at home plate is always a force out. The defensive player must have possession of the ball, touching any part of the strike mat, before the runner touches the 2<sup>nd</sup> home plate. The defensive player may NOT tag the runner after the runner steps on or crosses the commitment line. A runner crossing or touching the strike zone mat will be called out.

### **SCORING:**

A run will score when the runner touches the 2<sup>nd</sup> home plate before the defensive player tags any part of the strike mat.

## **EJECTIONS AND SUSPENSIONS**

**Players ejected from a game must immediately leave the playing area. The playing area includes, but is not limited to, the bench and/or stands.**

Any player ejected from a game, for any reason, will be reported to the league commissioner.

A player ejected a second time, for any reason(s) in the same season may be suspended from the league for the remainder of the season at the discretion of the league officials.

There will be no reimbursement of fees to any players suspended from the league.

### **“GREEN GRASS RULE” – All players**

A batter/runner cannot be **put out** at 1<sup>st</sup> base when a batted ball reaches the outfield grass **untouched** after passing an infielder (other than the pitcher)

The middle fielder is considered an “*infielder*” if he is playing in the infield and an “*outfielder*” if playing in the outfield. The determination is where the player is standing at the time of the pitch.

The ball is alive and other runners can be put out.

If the batter-baserunner continues beyond 1<sup>st</sup> base, he is on his own and becomes liable to be put out