



Downingtown Area Recreation Consortium

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DARC Coed Softball League Rules

General League Rules

1. We will use Coed A.S.A. Rules-exceptions to follow. Umpires will carry a copy of the league rule sheets and a copy of the current A.S.A. Rulebook.

Equipment

2. All necessary equipment (bats, gloves, etc.) must be provided by teams playing. DARC will supply the bases, lineup cards, and the game balls will be supplied as follows: Regular season-1 new ball, 1 ball from previous game. Playoffs-2 new game balls will be provided.

3. Metal cleats will not be permitted. Players wearing metal cleats after being warned by the umpire not to do so shall be ejected.

4. **BATS:** All bats must be Amateur Softball Association of America (A.S.A.) approved or meet current A.S.A. guidelines. Approved bat list is available at the A.S.A. web site www.asasoftball.com. The bat shall be free of burrs, dents and visible cracks.

Locations

5. Games are scheduled to be played at Kerr Park (Wallace & Pennsylvania Aves. in Downingtown) and Shamona Creek Park (1101 Dowlin Forge Rd. in Uwchlan Twp.). Hickory Park (351 Park Rd. in Upper Uwchlan Twp.) may also be utilized. Makeup games may be rescheduled on an as needed basis anywhere within the Downingtown Area School District (DASD).

Field Rules/Weather Cancellations

6. **RAIN CANCELLATIONS:** *Please call the DARC Weather Line at 610-269-6540 or go to the www.cancellations.com website if you question whether or not games are still on. Decisions on rainy days will be made by 3:30PM on weekdays and 10:30AM on weekends by the recreation office. Please no calls before then. Please call for possible cancellations regardless of the present weather conditions (i.e.-if it rained the previous day; the field may not be in playable condition). It is your responsibility to call, we will not always be able call you!*

****RED FLAG RULE:** If the "Red Flag" is displayed on the fence post along the first base line at Kerr Park or Shamona Creek Park, the field has been deemed "not playable." Please keep off of the field.

7. All games will be rescheduled by the DARC office (when possible) and team captains' will be contacted regarding any rescheduled games.

8. Only players are permitted to be in the playing field area. Coaches are allowed to coach bases. Physical interference will not be permitted. Children must remain off of the playing field during the game as well as the tennis courts and fences.

9. No drugs or alcoholic beverages are permitted on the fields or at the park at any time. If you are caught the proper authorities will be notified and you will be suspended from the league without refund. Please read and abide by the enclosed player conduct code. By registering your team in the league, you and your team are ensuring that you have read this and will abide by this guideline.

10. Dugout Conduct: Participants may not smoke inside the dugout areas. Children should remain outside of the dugout area whenever possible.

11. It is the responsibility of both teams to ensure that the fields are left in clean condition and assist with setting up the field &/or returning equipment to appropriate storage areas.

Players, Teams & Fees

12. All rosters are due prior to your first game! Failure to have all fees and rosters in at this time will result in forfeitures of games until all fees and rosters are collected. Teams can drop/add players to their roster up until the point that there are 5 regular season games remaining for their team. After this point all rosters are final because **players must play in at least 5 regular season games to be eligible to play in the playoffs.**

-Lineup Cards must be turned in to the umpire at each regular season game-

If possible, please WRITE THE FINAL SCORE ON TOP OF EVERY CARD at the end of each game

13. Teams will be limited to a maximum of 24 players on the roster.

a.) Players may not play on more than one team. Even if the original team folds during the season.

b.) Players must be at least 18 years of age (as of the first game of the season)

c.) All players must sign the team roster/waiver/release of liability form. A player must be on the team roster in order to play in a game.

14. Each team must pay half of the umpire fee (**\$36; \$18 per team, per game**) **prior** to the start of each game. Umpires must be paid in cash. Playoff umpires are paid by DARC.

Penalties/Warnings

15. Forfeits will be called if a team does not have a combination of at least **nine** players ready to play within **ten minutes** of the scheduled game time. In the event that the game prior to yours runs into more than ten minutes of your game time, your team must be ready to play as soon as it ends. Forfeiting teams will be required to pay the **ENTIRE UMPIRE FEE (\$36)** unless DARC is notified at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled game time. **Three forfeits will terminate your team from the league; no refunds will be given. IF YOU FORFEIT A PLAYOFF GAME, YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO PAY ALL NECESSARY UMPIRE FEES FOR THAT GAME!**

16. In the event of a forfeiture, teams not having enough money to pay the umpire at the time of forfeit have until the closing of business the last business day before their next game to drop off the forfeit fee to the DARC Office. Failure to pay the forfeit fee will result in the forfeiture of all games until the fee is paid. **Umpires will not umpire forfeited scrimmage games.**

17. **Fake Tags:** A form of obstruction by a fielder who attempts to tag a runner without the ball and thereby impedes a runner advancing or returning to a base. If a fielder is caught attempting to deceive a runner they will be ejected, given a 1 game suspension, and the runner will be awarded the next base.

18. **Crashing Into A Fielder With the Ball (Interference):** In an effort to prevent injury and protect a defensive player attempting to make a play on a runner, a runner must be called out when they remain on their feet and crash into a defensive player who is holding the ball and waiting to apply a tag. To prevent the out ruling, the runner may slide, jump over the defender holding the ball, go around the defender or return to the previous base touched. If the act is determined to be flagrant, the offender shall be ejected. A runner may slide into the fielder.

- a.) When a runner is called out for crashing into a fielder holding the ball, the ball becomes dead. Each runner must return to the last base touched at the time of the crash as this constitutes interference.
- b.) When the runner crashes into a fielder holding the ball before being put out and, in the judgment of the umpire, it was an attempt to break up an obvious double play, the immediate succeeding runner is also called out.
- c.) When a crash occurs after the runner is called out, the runner closest to home plate is also out.
- d.) When a runner runs outside the three-foot lane to avoid a crash with a defender holding the ball and waiting to apply a tag, the runner should be called out.
- e.) When a defensive player is fielding a thrown ball and the flight of the ball carries or draws them into the path of the base runner, it is not a crash.
- f.) **When the ball, runner, and the defensive player arrive at the same time and place, and contact is made, the umpire should not invoke the crash rule, interference, or obstruction. This is merely incidental contact, or what some persons commonly call a "wreck."**
- g.) **BOTTOM LINE: Try to avoid contact if at all possible.**

19. **Outfield Assists:** Outfielders are not permitted to throw out a runner at first base.

20. **Out of Play Boundaries will be marked at the playing fields: Catch & Carry Rule:** If a "live" ball is caught in play and "unintentionally" carried out of play, then it is automatically a dead ball. Runners will be awarded one base from the last base touched at the time the fielder left live ball territory. If, in the judgment of the umpire, a fielder "intentionally" carries, kicks, pushes, or throws a live ball from live ball territory out of play it is automatically a dead ball. All runners are awarded two bases from the last base touched at the time the fielder left or the ball was kicked, pushed, or thrown from live ball territory.

21. **Dugout Conduct: Participants may not smoke inside the dugout areas. Children should remain outside of the dugout area whenever possible.**

22. **No Bunting! The batter may not bunt or "chop" the ball.**

Starting/Playing/Ending the Game

23. A regulation game shall consist of 7 innings. A full seven innings need not be played if the team second at bat scores more runs in six and one-half innings and/or before the third out in the last of the seventh inning, or the run-ahead rule is applied. A game that is tied at the end of seven innings shall be continued by playing additional innings until one side has scored more runs than the other at the end of a complete inning, or until the team second at bat has scored more runs in their half of the inning before the third out is made.

The umpire is empowered to call a game at any time because of darkness, rain, fire, panic, or any other cause that places the patrons or players in peril. A game called by the umpire shall be regulation if five or more complete innings have been played, or if the team second at bat has scored more runs in four or more innings than the other team has scored in five or more innings. **Games that are not considered regulation shall be resumed at the exact point where they were stopped. Games that are regulation tie games shall be resumed at the exact point where they were stopped.**

****TIME LIMIT:** We will allow no more than a maximum of 1 hour and 30 minutes per game. Time begins with the first pitch. A new inning will not begin after 1 hour and 30 minutes from the start of the game. The only time a game will be permitted to go longer is if a game is still tied after 1 hour and 30 minutes-it will be continued until a winner is determined.

24. **All at bats will begin with a 1 ball, 1 strike count. No "courtesy fouls" will be given.**

25. A legal pitch must be a six to twelve foot arc. (*Umpire's judgment*). The strike zone mat will also be utilized. A pitch, of legal height, that hits any part of home plate or the strike zone mat will be a strike.

26. Games are played 10 v. 10 format. Teams should maintain at least a 6:4 player ratio at all times (6 men: 4 women or 6 women: 4 men) OR (5 men: 5 women). **However, if a team has only three men or three women the team can play with nine fielders and the vacant position must be listed last in the batting order. An out will be recorded when the vacant position in the batting order is scheduled to bat. If you have a legal team you must start the game at that time.**

a.) If a shorthanded team's player arrives before they have batted thru the lineup the player can be immediately added to the lineup and the automatic out can be avoided.

b.) Players arriving after the team has batted thru the lineup may be substituted into the lineup at any time during the game. They cannot enter into the batting slot with the out, however, they may enter into another player's position.

c.) A legal team with less than ten fielders must take an automatic out in the batting lineup for the unfielded position.

27. Teams may start the game with as many as two "extra players" (EP's) in the lineup (**one male & one female**). This allows a team to have a maximum of 12 players in the batting order (10 fielders and 2 extra hitters). The extra player (EP) is optional, but if used, it must be made known prior to the team batting through the line-up and must be noted on the line-up card. The EP must remain in the same position in the batting order for the entire game. When EP's are used, all 12 on the starting line-up must bat and any 10 of those 12 may play defense. Defensive positions may be changed each inning as long as the batting order remains the same.

Teams playing shorthanded may use an EP (bat 10 players), but must remain fielding only 9 players. A legal team with less than ten fielders must take an automatic out in the batting lineup for the unfielded position. Note: If the EP is used EP, the EP must be used the entire game.

28. Any player, may be substituted for or replaced and re-entered once, providing players occupy their same batting positions in the batting order. *The starting player and their substitute may not be in the line-up at the same time.* If a player is removed from the game and is not replaced their batting slot will be an automatic out.

29. Once the defense has taken the field, all players must maintain the same position throughout the inning. They cannot switch positions (i.e. shortstop & 2nd baseman or left fielder & right fielder) depending on who is up to bat. **If playing with a short fielder, the short fielder may roam anywhere in the outfield, but must be a "noticeable" distance in front of the other outfielders!**

a.) A team may apply a shift and have 3 infielders on one side of second base; but fielders must maintain their defensive alignment.

b.) A pitching change may be made at any time.

30. When a team is in the field the infielders may not cross the plain between the bases and outfielders must remain in the grass area of the outfield until the ball crosses the plate.

31. If a male batter is walked and a female batter is to follow, the male batter will be awarded second base and the female batter will bat. *Applies at all times, even when bases are loaded.*

32. Third Strike Foul: If the batter fouls off the third strike they will be out. No "courtesy fouls" will be given.

33. No Leading: Runners must remain on base until the ball is hit. If no contact is made and the runner leaves the base they will be "out."

34. Courtesy runners will be permitted. The courtesy runner must be the last player of the same gender to make an out. (*male runs for a male; female runs for a female*). **Prior to the start of the game both team captains must notify each other of which players will need a courtesy runner. If an injury occurs during the game both teams will be aware of it and courtesy runners will be permitted to run for those players injured during the course of the game.**

35. EIGHT RUNS IS THE MAXIMUM RUNS PER INNING. The fielding team is automatically up to bat after the eighth run has scored. **(Does not apply in the seventh inning, OR IF A TEAM IS TRAILING**

BY MORE THAN THE RUN AHEAD MERCY RULE RUNS). In the seventh inning both teams can score as many runs as possible.

36. RUN-AHEAD RULE (“Mercy Rule”): If one team is ahead by 20 runs after 3 innings, 15 runs after 4 innings, or 10 runs after 5 innings the game is over. Complete innings must be played unless the home team scores the run-ahead limit while at bat. When the visiting team reaches the limit in the top half of an inning, the home team must have their opportunity to bat in the bottom half of the inning. **Also applies for playoff games.**

37. Teams making protests must notify the other team captain and the umpire at the time of protest. The umpire must also sign the scorebook. Captain’s wishing to protest must notify DARC by the close of the next business day. There is a \$25 fee for all protests. If the protest is won, your fee will be refunded, if the protest is lost, your fee will be forfeited. **Umpires judgment calls cannot be protested; only rules can be protested.** All protests will be decided by the A.S.A.

38. Please write final scores on line-up cards and turn in to umpires at the end of each game. A representative from **both the home and away** teams must report the final scores by noon of the following business day. Leave your name, team name, telephone number and scores on the DARC answering machine at **610-269-9260** or email scores to darc@kennett.net. Standings will be posted on the website www.darcinfo.com and will be updated as often as possible.

Post-Season

39. **TIE BREAKER:

- a.) Should any ties exist, head-to-head record is the first tie-breaker.
- b.) Head-to-head run differential, amongst those teams involved, will be used if the tie still exists.
- c.) If a tie cannot be broken by the above tie breaker rules, overall run differential for the entire season will be used as the third tie breaker.
- d.) If still tied, and the tie affects playoff status/seeding, it will be broken by a playoff game.

40. Playoffs: Single elimination until the semi finals. Semi Finals and Finals will be a best of 3 series. There will be one umpire for first and second rounds and 2 umpires for both the Semi Finals and Finals. The highest advancing seeds will be the home teams. Playoff umpires are paid by DARC.

41. All playoff games must complete a full 7 innings (6 ½ if the home team is winning) unless the Run Ahead Rule “Mercy Rule” applies. Playoff games that are not considered regulation shall be resumed at the exact point where they were stopped. Playoff games that are regulation tie games shall be resumed at the exact point where they were stopped.

Please sign and date to verify that you and your team have read/understand/and will abide by the above rules. Return one to DARC & keep a copy for yourself & team.

X _____

Date: _____



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D.A.R.C. PLAYER CONDUCT CODE

Players, coaches, managers, or other team members will not make disparaging or insulting remarks to or about opposing players, officials, or spectators or commit other acts (e.g. profane or abusive language, taunting, etc.) that could be considered unsportsmanlike conduct. Hostile behavior will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Any player, manager or coach who is ejected from a game for any of the above offenses must leave the playing area immediately. The DARC Ejection Policy for all league participants will be as follows:

1st Offense: If any player, manager, or coach is ejected from a game he/she will be suspended for one game. He/she must leave the playing area immediately and will not be permitted to participate in the next game.

2nd Offense: The second infraction will result in a suspension of two (2) games and he/she will not be permitted to participate in any playoff or championship games.

3rd Offense: The third infraction will result in the player, manager, or coach being permanently dismissed from the team for the remainder of the season without refund. He/she will not be permitted to participate in any DARC leagues for one year from the date of the third infraction.

Threats of any kind, either to a player or officials will result in a minimum two (2) year league suspension. This is a serious violation and the local authorities will be notified. Further action will be taken for any physical contact or incidents which may warrant additional suspension or discipline.

By registering your team for this season, you and your teammates understand and will abide by the guidelines listed above. Thank you for your cooperation regarding this information.