

## **VADNAIS HEIGHTS PARKS AND RECREATION** **2020 ADULT SOFTBALL LEAGUE RULES**

### **Playing Rules**

The United States Specialty Sports Association (USSSA) Rules shall apply to all play unless otherwise stated in the following information:

#### **A. Team Rosters**

Preliminary rosters and individual waivers must be submitted to the Parks and Recreation Department **before** the first scheduled play date. If a roster is not turned in, the team shall forfeit until a roster has been submitted. Players must play in at least four (4) games to be eligible to participate in the State Tournament. The team roster may not exceed 20 eligible players.

#### **B. Postponement or Questionable Games**

- Officially all games will be called at the field by the umpire. Players may call the City's weather Hot Line at (651) 204-6002 to get up to date information on any possible delay/or cancellation. Early rainout determinations will also be e-mailed to each team contact prior to 4:30 p.m.
  - Players may also sign up to receive text/email notifications of rainout determinations via the City's website.
- Make-up days will appear on the schedules. If a team cannot make a rescheduled game, they forfeit the game.
- In the event of rain or darkness, games will be considered official **after four (4) complete innings.**
- For all leagues, a 20 run rule will be in effect after three (3) innings, a 15 run rule will be in effect after four (4) innings, and a 10 run rule will be in effect after five (5) innings.
- All games shall use the Flip Flop Rule when applicable. The Flip Flop Rule shall also be used to insure completion of an additional inning when a game is near the time limit.
- If the game is suspended in the top half of an inning after the fourth complete inning due to rain or darkness, the final score shall revert back to the previous completed innings. If the score is tied at that point, a tie will be recorded in the standings.
- Games will consist of a 55 minute time limit or seven innings, providing time and weather conditions allow. No new inning may start after 50 minutes. **The umpire's watch will be the official time piece.**

#### **C. Extra Innings**

In the event a game ends in a tie, it will be recorded in the standings as a tie. At the discretion of the umpire, **and if time allows**, extra innings can be played to break a tie.

#### **D. Official Team Line-ups**

- The team manager shall enter in the home team score book his/her official team line-up before the start of each game.
- Teams may begin and end the game with 8 players.

- A full line-up consists of ten players. Teams may play with eight or nine eligible players.
- Teams will be allowed free substitutions. Players must reenter in the same spot in the batting order.
- Any player who bats must play at least one inning in the field during the game. Any player who plays at least an inning in the field must bat at least once during the game.
- The home team is designated by the schedule.
- The home team is responsible for recording the score. Captains should verify the score between one-half innings with umpires. Teams may choose to exchange the score book so that the batting team records the scoring.

#### E. **Grace Period**

- ***There is a 10 minute grace period for the early games only.*** All other games, game time is forfeit time. Teams must produce an official line-up of eligible players. In order for a game to be officially forfeited, the appearing team must have eight eligible players present. An eligible player is anyone who has a Waiver of Liability on file for the current season. If neither team has eight eligible players, a double forfeit will be declared.
- Any grace time will be subtracted from “the game time”.

#### F. **Protests**

Only protests on rule interpretation are allowed. All other protests will be decided on the field by the umpire. After a protested play, the protest must be received by the umpire before the next pitch. A \$50.00 deposit is also required at this time. If, after review by the league director and chief official, the protest is found to be valid; the \$50.00 deposit will be returned. If the protest is found to be invalid, no refund will be provided.

#### G. **Disputes**

Team managers and players involved during a dispute will be the only individuals allowed to question the umpire’s decision on a given play. The opposing team manager may be present but may not comment on the call. Violation of this rule will result in expulsion from the game.

#### H. **Sportsmanship and Ejections**

Umpires will not tolerate abusive behavior, profanity, belligerent behavior, or personal baiting of opponents. Players will be ejected from the game and may be ejected from the grounds for such conduct. Fans will be ejected from the grounds for such conduct. Ejected players or fans unwilling to leave when directed shall cause their team to forfeit. If both teams are involved, a double forfeit will be declared. Ejected players are finished for the remainder of the game and suspended for the next game. Players receiving two ejections during the season will be suspended for the remainder of the season. Ejected players have one minute to leave the game and/or the grounds when so ordered. If a player is ejected from the game for any reason, the ejected player’s team must have a substitute available to replace the ejected player or that team will forfeit the game. Any player leaving the bench or his position to dispute an umpire’s call will be ejected from the game and the grounds. Players and managers may not bump, spit, push, hit or swear

at any umpire. Any physical contact with the umpire will result in permanent expulsion from the league and possible criminal penalties/USSSA sanctions. These actions will not be tolerated.

**I. Playing Shoes**

Players will not be allowed to wear shoes with metal spikes.

**J. Alcoholic Beverages**

Alcoholic beverages in cans and plastic bottles are allowed and can only be consumed in the pavilion and picnic shelter areas. They are not allowed in the dugout or on the ball field. Anyone caught with alcohol beverages in these areas will be ejected immediately. Teams are to pick-up all bottles, cans and garbage before leaving their area for the night. Violation of this rule will possibly lead to that team being suspended from the league. Refunds will NOT be issued to any teams that are suspended. Any player who appears intoxicated (as determined by the umpire) will not be allowed to play in the game. PLEASE NO GLASS CONTAINERS.

**K. Courtesy Foul**

Players will be allowed three balls and a two strike count. There is no courtesy foul.

**L. Homeruns**

Men's 'D' - 3

Men's "E" - 1

Co-Rec - 2 Men, 2 Women

Note: Any homerun over limit will be ruled an out, the ball is declared dead and no runners may advance.

**M. Base Running**

Safety Base (first base). Any batted ball hitting the white portion is a fair ball and any ball hitting the colored part is a foul. On the initial throw to first base from the infield, the batter/runner MUST touch the colored portion of the base. The defensive player MUST always touch the white portion. This rule is in effect only on the initial play at first base which does not include:

- Returning to the base after over running.
- Running on a base hit to the outfield (runner may touch the red or white part).
- Re-tag to advance on a fly ball.
- If the base runner uses the orange portion at any time after the first attempt at first base and is not in contact with the white portion, then he is considered off the base.

**EXCEPTIONS:**

- On any attempt to force the batter/runner out at first base on the initial throw that pulls the defense off of first base into foul ground the defense and the batter may use either the white or colored portion of the base.
- Any deliberate collision constitutes an automatic out. Whenever the catcher or any fielder clearly has the ball and is waiting to tag the runner, the runner

must slide or attempt to avoid contact. If, in the umpire's judgment, the runner deliberately and forcefully runs into the defensive player, the runner is declared out and shall be ejected from the game. The ball is declared dead and all other runners must return to the last base touched at the time of the collision.

**NOTE:**

- The catcher or any fielder may not block the pathway of the runner unless he has possession of the ball or is in the act of fielding a batted ball or taking a proper stance to receive a thrown ball (thrown ball must already be in flight).
- A player attempting to slide may not attempt to prevent a fielder from making a play.
- On double play chances, runners must slide or get out of the way. The umpire will call the runner failing to get out of the way OUT along with the batter.
- Teams may have one courtesy runner per inning for injured players. A player requiring a courtesy runner may not advance past first base on the initial hit. They will be the last out recorded in the book.
- On a fair fly ball hit over the fence for a home run, the batter and all base runners are credited with a score. The batter and any runner on base do not need to advance and touch the bases. They should go directly to the dugout area.

**N. Field Management**

- The Managers/Coaches and umpires shall not allow anyone other than a player, manager or coach to be in the dugout, bench or the field of play during a game. The first violation of this rule shall be a warning by the umpire. The second violation or refusal to heed the warning issued on the first violation shall be an immediate forfeiture of the game.
- No player shall carelessly throw a bat. For a first offense, the player may be warned that a repeat offense will result in an ejection. All flagrant offenses (including a first offense will result in ejection).
- All equipment not in use must be kept inside the dugout. Any stray equipment that comes in contact with a live ball may result in a penalty to the offending team.
- All players on the batting team except for the batter, on deck batter, First Base Coach, Third Base Coach and base runners must be inside the dugout or outside the field of play. Any player not listed above who comes in contact with a live ball may result in a penalty to the offending team.
- A casual profanity rule shall be enforced. Any use of the “F” word will result in an automatic ejection.
- The Dig Rule will be enforced by the umpire.
- No smoking is allowed anywhere on the playing field.
- **Due to safety concerns, at no time can a camera, audio or video device be worn or used by a player or coach on the field of play.**

O. **Miscellaneous**

In the event that an umpire does not show for a game, the managers of both teams shall agree on a substitute umpire from either team's bench. This umpire will be paid for his/her services.

To determine the league champion, in the event of a tie in the season record, head-to-head competition shall be the tie breaker. If for some reason a tie still exists, runs scored in head-to-head competition shall determine the league winner. If a tie still exists, a coin toss will determine the league champion. This rule applies for determining other "trophy" positions.

All exposed jewelry or items that are judged to be hazardous or potentially dangerous by the umpire may not be worn during the game.

**Team managers are responsible for informing their teammates and fans of these rules.**

## **VADNAIS HEIGHTS PARKS AND RECREATION 2020 CO-REC SOFTBALL RULES**

All Regular USSSA and Vadnais Heights softball rules and regulations apply with these exceptions:

1. The Co-Rec League will use a 12” ball when the men hit and 11” ball when the women hit.
2. All teams must begin and end a game with at least eight players (10 maximum) on the field and at least 50% of the players on the field must be female. If there are nine players with only four (4) women, then the team may play all nine players in the field but must take an automatic out when the missing woman would normally bat.
3. Males may not pinch-hit or courtesy run for females.
4. There must be a female between two (2) males in the batting order, up to 14 batters. Teams may use a “Rolling” batting order to insure maximum participation.
5. Outfielders may not play closer than 15 feet from the infield. Infielders may not play in front of the base lines until after the ball has been hit.
6. With less than two (2) outs, when a male is walked, he is awarded second base and the following female will bat. With two outs, when a male is walked, the following female has the option of also walking or batting. In either case, the male is awarded second base.
7. On defense, players may play at any position.
8. The team at bat will provide a third base coach (who may have a glove) who will be responsible for changing out the balls with the opposing pitcher. A team that does not have a third base coach in position at the start of an inning will receive a delay of game penalty.
9. At the discretion of the umpire, time will be immediately called for any serious injury. All runners will be awarded two (2) bases from the last base occupied.

## **2020 Vadnais Heights COVID-19 Rules and Guidelines for Adult Softball**

All Vadnais Heights Adult Softball leagues will adhere to Minnesota Department of Health, USSSA, and other applicable local guidelines in an effort to ensure the health and safety of all who are involved. The cooperation of every person is needed to ensure that the league can continue; if local or inner-league conditions change, the league may be postponed or canceled at the discretion of City Staff.

The following procedures and guidelines have been developed in reference to the MN-USSSA Adult Slowpitch Return to Play document.

- The total number of people in attendance at Community Park will be capped in accordance with current Stay Safe MN guidance.
- Vadnais Heights Parks and Recreation will post its Parks, Recreation, and Facilities Preparedness as well as its League Rules at Community Park for public viewing.
- All staff, players, and umpires must maintain 6' social distancing at all times off the field, and whenever possible on the field.
- All staff, players, and umpires are encouraged to wear a mask or other face covering until the CDC, state, and local authorities declare masks are no longer recommended.
- **No spitting. Spitting will result in automatic removal from the field.** *This includes sunflower seeds, tobacco chew, etc.; these items should not be used on the fields or in dugouts/team line up areas.*
  - **Clarification - The penalty for spitting is a team penalty as follows: first player who spits during the game results in a warning for the team for the remainder of the night (both games in the case of a double header); any further team members found spitting will result in:**
    - An out if offender's team is at bat; the player at bat (or next to bat if between batters) will be out.
    - Base advancement for all players on base if offender's team is in the field, including a walk for the batter.
- Each team is required to use only their team's softballs when in the field. Once a half-inning is complete, fielding team will take their ball into the dugout and team going to play in the field provides one of their team's softballs. Vadnais Heights Recreation will provide softballs; teams are encouraged to mark their balls prior to the start of the game.
- Dugouts:
  - Players are encouraged to bring their own chairs rather than using the bench. Space in the dugout is limited; and if used, players must keep 6' of social distancing while in the dugout.
  - Teams must clean the dugout and bench areas on arrival and departure. This includes wiping down benches and any high-touch areas and removing any trash. Remind all to wash hands after leaving complex.
  - Teams should not enter the dugout until the other team exits. Teams must leave the field immediately after their game concludes. Teams will have 5 minutes to vacate the bench area.
    - Games will be scheduled to allow for adequate time to adhere to social distancing in team changeovers.

- Staff, players, and umpires are recommended to bring hand sanitizing products and/or sanitizing wipes.
- One coach or manager per team will conduct a pregame meeting at home plate, all involved must keep 6' social distancing during ground rules and coin toss.
- It is recommended that all players and umpires use their own equipment while participating. This includes gloves, bats, helmets, etc. No handshakes, team huddles, high fives. Teams should tip their hats or wave instead.
- The catcher and umpire shall position themselves during a player's at-bat to allow for social distancing. Catcher shall position themselves behind the umpire, at least 6 feet, and become a "retriever," not a catcher.
- Anyone exhibiting symptoms or possible exposure to COVID-19 should not attend until such a time as the participant has been tested and/or cleared. This includes recent exposure to someone with COVID-19.
- All players must sign a USSSA-specific COVID-19 waiver before participating; copies will be made available for player to sign at their first game.
- If games cannot be played due to inclement weather:
  - Men's League games will not be rescheduled
  - CoRec League games will not be rescheduled beyond September 3.
  - Any teams with more than one rain out not rescheduled will be refunded \$25 per game not played.

*Updated July 13, 2020*