



Bloomsburg University Intramural Sports Program

IM Sports – SOFTBALL RULES

NIRSA rules with these IM modifications & the IM General Rules will govern play.

TEAM CAPTAINS: Team captains are responsible for their team's actions. They are also the only players allowed to talk with officials during the game. It is each team captain's responsibility to ensure that all team members are listed on the team roster. A player may be added to a team's master roster before that team's second regular season game. Therefore all rosters after the first week of play are concrete. Team captains are not only in charge of their team's actions, but also the fans that are present. **BU ID+ Cards are required from all players at all games.**

Forfeits: GAME TIME is FORFEIT TIME!!! If a team does not have the minimum number of players at the scheduled game time, the game will be called and either a default or forfeit will be recorded.

- a. **Forfeits:** Teams that have **FEWER THAN HALF THE MINIMUM PLAYER REQUIREMENT** present on the field/court at game time will lose the game by forfeit. A deposit of up to \$20.00 will be assessed to the team captain prior to participation.
 - i. **1st Violation=** Teams/individuals will lose forfeit deposit.
 - ii. **2nd Violation=** Teams that forfeit for the second time, without notification to the Intramural Sports Office, maybe dropped from the tournament.
- b. **Defaults:** Teams that have half the minimum player requirement, but not enough players to compete at game time will lose the game by default. Teams may also inform the Intramurals Office (389-5288) by 4:00 pm (after 4:00pm will be a forfeit) on game day to receive a loss by default.
 - i. **1st Violation=** Grace, teams/individuals are not penalized.
 - ii. **2nd Violation=** 1 Forfeit. Team/individual will lose their Forfeit Fee and team captain must speak with the Intramural Director to discuss further league play.
 - iii. **3rd Violation=** 2 Forfeits. Team/individual will be dropped from the tournament.

NEW! Grace Period: A team will forfeit a game when it is not ready by game time. The team ready to play will have the choice to grant their opponent a Grace Period, at which they will have 10 minutes to field the minimum number of players to play. **Game clock will start.** The following penalties will be enforced during the 10 minute grace period.

1 point will be awarded to the team ready to play for every 2 minutes that passes.

- a. **Game time:** Team ready for play will be awarded a 1 run.
- b. **2 minutes:** Team ready for play will be awarded another 1 run for a total of 2 runs.
- c. **6 minutes:** Team ready for play will be awarded 2 more runs for a total of 4 runs.
- d. **10 minutes:** Team ready for play will be awarded 6 pts. And the game will be declared a forfeit with a final score of 6-0.

THE GAME: Games will be 7 innings or 50 minutes, which ever happens first.

- A new inning will not start after the 50 minute mark if 7 innings has not been completed, it will be at the umpire's discretion to call the game or play. The home team **MUST ALWAYS** bat last.
- Once an inning starts, play must continue until the end of that inning.
- The umpire may call the game before the beginning of a new inning, due to time constraints.

TIES: If after 7 innings and time permits, the game will go to extra innings.

- Teams will start with a runner (the person who made the last out) on 2nd base.
- Teams will start with 1 out.
- Teams will keep playing until the time limit expires or there is a winner.

Called Games: In the event of inclement weather or power failure of more than 15 minutes, the following will constitute a complete game:

- Four innings have been completed (3 1/2 if the home team is leading).
- The game has reached at least one-half hour in elapsed time.
- If the game is called due to weather before the time limit (30 minutes) or inning limit (4 innings) the game will be cancelled and not rescheduled.
- Teams must keep the

If play stops due to inclement weather, the final decision will be made by the Sport Supervisor.

RUN LIMIT: There is a 5 run limit per inning. The 5th inning and after, a team may score as many runs as they need to avoid getting beat by the 10 Run Rule. If the score difference is 5 runs or less, during a team's at bat, during the 5th inning or later, they must still follow the 5 run limit per inning.

10 RUN RULE: When a team is ahead by 10 or more runs after 5 complete innings of play (4 ½ if the home team is winning) the game will be called and that team will be declared the winner.

PITCHING: A ball must be delivered underhand at a moderate speed from below the hip, and with a perceptible arc that reaches a height of at least 6 feet from the ground but not exceeding 12 feet. The speed of the pitch is left entirely to the judgment of the umpire. The ball may be released with the palm either on the top or on the bottom of the ball. **(Violations of these rules is an Illegal Pitch)**

NEW! ILLEGAL PITCH: When the umpire declares an illegal pitch and signals that the ball is dead:

- If the batter swings at or contacts the pitch, the illegal pitch is nullified and all action as a result of the batter's swing stands.
- If the batter does not swing, a ball is added to the batter's count

DEFENSIVE POSITIONING: Teams must have two (2) female players and two (2) male players in both the outfield and the infield

- A team playing with nine (9) players that have 3 in the outfield or infield, must have at least one (1) female and one (1) male among the 3.
- The pitcher combination must be made up of a male and a female.

STRIKE ZONE: For each legally pitched ball touching any part of home plate or the mat will be declared a strike.

PLAYERS: The minimum number of players to play is 8 and the maximum is 10. The number of male players may be equal to, or less than, but not greater than one more the number of female players. Teams must maintain these numbers for the entire game. If playing with one more guy than girl (5 guys and 4 girls) the catcher **MUST** be a guy. **This catcher will only be permitted to bat on an alternating basis with one of his teammates.** The alternating hitter must be designated at the start of the game.

UPDATED! BATTING: Batter must alternate male-female or female-male. If playing with one more guy than girl (5 guys and 4 girls) the catcher **MUST** be a guy. **This catcher will only be permitted to bat on an alternating basis with one of his teammates.** (So only 8 players are in the lineup with the 9th player alternating with another player) The alternating hitter must be designated at the start of the game.

- The batter must have a portion of his/her foot touching the ground within the batter's box area. The umpire will determine the batter's box, based on IM guidelines. The batter shall not step on or across the plate. If this occurs, the batter is out and the ball is dead.
- Bunting or chopping down on the ball will result in an automatic out.
- The batting order must be followed. Substitutes will bat in the position of the player they replaced.
- A batter is called out on a foul ball that is hit with a two-strike count. If such a foul ball is **NOT CAUGHT**, base runners **MAY NOT** advance; ball is dead. If such a foul ball is **CAUGHT**, base runners **MAY** advance at their own risk.

UPDATED! BASE ON BALLS (WALKING): Any time a batter is walked, the next two consecutive batters are not eligible to walk, **unless it is from 4 illegal pitches.**

UPDATED! SUBSTITUTION: Limited free substitution is permitted in order to encourage maximum participation. Limited substitution is available to all players in the line-up. Once a substitute has entered the line-up, he/she must play for 6 consecutive outs (a full inning). Once a player has been replaced in the batting order, he/she may bat again only if he/she returns to the position in the order which he/she vacated. The starter and the substitute cannot be in the lineup at the same time. This rule allows for re-entry of both the starter and any subsequent substitutes. In the event of an injury, disqualification, or ejection, a substitute may enter the game prior to the 6-out period. The sub, or the team captain, should inform the umpire prior to putting their name into the appropriate slot on the game sheet.

BASE RUNNING: Base runner(s) may not leave their base until the pitch reaches home plate. There is no stealing.

- When the ball is in play and is overthrown out of play, one base shall be awarded to each base runner. (Bases are awarded according to the position of runners at the time the ball is thrown.
- When a ball is carried into dead ball territory, the ball is dead. All runners advance one base beyond the base they occupied at the time of the dead ball.
- Pinch runners are allowed only if the batter is injured. Pinch runners will be the last recorded out.

SLIDING: THIS IS A NONCONTACT SPORT. If there is a play at home plate where safety is of concern, players must slide. If a player does not slide when necessary, the runner is out.

- It is at the umpire's discretion when to use the "slide rule."
- Players must slide feet first. No headfirst slides. **If a player slides headfirst, the runner is out.**
- Base Sliding must be performed with discretion. If undue contact occurs, the base runner may be ejected. The advancing base runner may not collide with the person covering the base. Upright collisions may result in an automatic out, and possible ejection

COLLISION RULE: When a defensive player has the ball and is waiting for the runner and the runner remains on their feet and deliberately, with great force, crashes into the defensive player, the runner is out. If the act is considered flagrant, the runner shall also be ejected from the game.

BASE AREA: If, during a play, the base has been moved from its original spot, the runner need only touch the original base area. The original base area will be a judgment call made by the umpire closest to the base.

DROPPED THIRD STRIKE: The Batter and base runners may not advance when the catcher does not hold a third strike. Batter is out and the ball is dead.

FIELDING: A team may throw the ball around the infield in the first inning only. Infield practice will not be permitted between outs or innings for the remainder of the game. An offensive player may not impede, hinder or confuse a defensive player while attempting to execute a play. A defensive fielder may not remain in the base path without the ball in an attempt to impede the progress of a runner.

- Covering a Base: a player covering a base must keep half of the base available to the advancing runner.

FIELD OF PLAY: Any ball that is hit and enters another Intramural Field, in which a game is being played, (i.e. soccer, flag football) it will be ruled a ground rule double. All base runners will advance two (2) bases.

EQUIPMENT: Bats will be supplied by IM Sports due to the difficulty in monitoring "illegal bats". A game ball and a catcher's mask will be provided as well. Catchers are encouraged to wear the protective masks, which are provided for their protection.

- **Bats:** Only bats supplied by the Intramural Department will be allowed
- **SHOES:** Metal or Replaceable cleats/spikes are ILLEGAL. Molded rubber shoes are legal.
 - **Players must wear closed-toed shoes at all times, i.e. sneakers or boots**
 - **Any player seen wearing metal spikes after the first pitch of the game will be ejected.**

A PLAYER MAY COMPETE WITH ONLY ONE TEAM. Once a player has played with a team, he/she may not play for any other team, regardless of division. Violation will result in suspension of the player and forfeiture of the game/s in question. See IM General Rules for details.

PLAYOFF ELIGIBILITY: Team must be in good standing with no unsportsmanlike conduct issues.

- Players must be on official team roster
- Players must have played in at least 2 regular season games.

TIE BREAKER: If teams are tied a tie breaker will occur. The first tie breaker will be the head to head game result. If there is still a tie after the first tie breaker the team with the least points given up will win. If there is still a tie we will take the team with the most scored points. If teams are still tied, a coin toss will decide the outcome.

ELIGIBILITY: YOU MUST SHOW YOUR STUDENT or FACULTY/STAFF ID for every competition. Currently enrolled BU undergraduate students, graduate students, and BU Faculty/Staff personnel are eligible for intramural competition. A player is ineligible for any further activity as of the date he or she withdraws from school. Players listed on the current year's varsity sport roster are ineligible to participate in the same/comparable intramural sport.

Comparable varsity sports are as follows:

BU Varsity Sport – Comparable IM Sport
Baseball/Softball – Softball

Basketball – 5 on 5 Basketball
Football – Flag Football
Soccer – Outdoor; Indoor Soccer
Volleyball – Sand and Indoor Volleyball

VARSITY TEAM MEMBERS: Limits are placed on Varsity Team Member participants to preserve the integrity of our Intramural tournaments. Our programs are intended to serve the general student body; therefore, members of a varsity sport will not be allowed to participate in the same or "like" sport, in which they are classified as a Varsity Team Member. A varsity squad member is any individual participating in intercollegiate contests attending regular practice, whose name appears on the official squad list, or who has won a letter at a recognized college. The active squad rosters on the date of the first varsity contest shall be used to determine intramural eligibility.

Interpretations: Included as a varsity squad member are red shirts, junior varsity players, and freshmen. Anyone who works out with an intercollegiate team and/or retains a locker and equipment is also ineligible for the same or "like" sport. Any student receiving athletic grant-in-aid assistance shall be ineligible to compete in intramurals in the same or "like" sport responsible for such assistance. Once considered a varsity squad member, you are one for the entire school year unless you have been dropped from the squad list and are no longer playing or practicing with the team. You must drop before the second intercollegiate contest for varsity members or before the second junior varsity contest for junior varsity players.

FORMER VARSITY MEMBERS: Limits are placed on Former Varsity Member to preserve the integrity of our Intramural tournaments. Our programs are intended to serve the general student body; therefore, Former Varsity Members will be limited to two (2) player per roster. A former varsity player is defined as a student who has been listed on a "school's varsity squad list" for any 2-year or 4-year college/university team for more than one academic year: They will be considered a "former varsity member" for a period of two (2) academic years following the completion of the academic year in which s/he received his/her award. A student who has been a member of a varsity team at a four-year college or university in a particular sport is eligible for intramural competition in that or its related sport during the next academic year. The fall term is considered the start of the next academic year. Teams affected by this rule are limited to two (2) player on their team roster and must play in the highest available division for the league. Graduates or transfers from community colleges are also affected by this rule.

CLUB SPORT MEMBERS: Club sport members are eligible for competition, but are limited to the amount of players per team, per sport. **CLUB BASEBALL PLAYERS:** Team club members are limited in IM softball to two (2), on the field at a time with a total of three (3) on the roster. A club sport member is any individual participating in club sport contests, attending regular practice, or whose name appears on the official squad list. Once considered a club sport member, you are one for the entire school year unless you have been dropped from the squad list and are no longer playing or practicing with the team.

All club members must be identified, before the start of the game. Teams violating eligibility rules will be ineligible for playoffs. **All Club Sport members must participate in the Competitive Division.**

DESCRIPTION OF DIVISIONS OF PLAY:

1. Division A (Competitive)

Some of our sports will differentiate between competitive and recreational leagues. The Competitive league is designed for teams whose primary objective is to win games. **This is a highly competitive league designed specifically for those who have previous experience playing the sport competitively. Players in this league generally have played high school varsity sports and remain active in that sport and their intramural teams may even hold practices.** These teams have frequently qualified for and advanced past the first round of the playoffs. Individuals and teams in this division are very competitive and the skill level of participation ranges from intermediate to advanced. Teams in this league that qualify for the single elimination tournament will have an opportunity to win an Intramural Champion T-shirt and may advance onto state or national tournaments. **NOTE: Club Sport members must participate in this division.**

2. Division B (Recreational)

Some of our sports will differentiate between competitive and recreational leagues. The Recreational league is designed for teams whose primary objective is to enjoy intramural sports and to have fun. This league is less competitive than the A Division. **This league is designed for those who understand the game but do not have the experience and skill of an advanced player. Most players on these teams have not played at the varsity level and may be slightly active in the sport.** Individuals and teams entered in this division are recreationally oriented. Skill level of participants ranges from beginner to intermediate, along with some more advanced players. Most teams that have never played together before or are first-time participants are better suited to play in the recreational league. If there is a question as to whether or not your team is competitive or recreational, you are likely a recreational caliber team. Teams that have won the recreational league more than once are no longer eligible to participate in that league and must play in the competitive league. The recreational

league will have the same regular season as other leagues, along with a separate single elimination tournament, where the winners will receive an Intramural Champion T-shirt.

*Intramural Sports reserves the right to deny entrance to the recreational league tournament to any recreational league team that, in the opinion of the intramural sports staff, should not be participating in the recreational league due to a competitive advantage of talent. A team's record will not be the only factor considered, meaning there is no incentive for a team to purposefully lose games to avoid detection.

PLAY for "ONE TEAM" You may PLAY for ONE TEAM within a tournament. Playing in ONE game "declares your team" for the remainder of that tournament. You cannot switch teams or brackets within a tournament. See "Protests" for penalty.

A participant may play on one team and one team only in its respective division (men's, women's, coed). I.e. A participant may play on one men's team, and one coed team in the same sport, but not two men's teams, or two coed teams. Any participant playing on two teams in the same division (men's, women's, coed) will automatically be disqualified from participating in the division in which the offense occurred for the remainder of that sport season. In addition, any game(s) the participant played illegally will result in a forfeit. **Teams violating eligibility rules or forfeiting will be ineligible for playoffs.**

UMPIRE'S AUTHORITY: The umpire has authority to rule promptly, in the spirit of good sportsmanship, on any situation not specifically covered in the rules. The umpire's decisions are final in all matters pertaining to the game.

PROTEST PROCEDURE:

- Whenever a matter of protest arises during a contest, the captain or manager of the protesting team must notify the official and the opponent of his protest BEFORE THE NEXT BALL IS "LIVE." Failure to lodge a protest will void the protest.
- Upon notification of a protest, the official in charge will suspend play.
- The protesting captain or manager will state specifically the basis for his/her protest. In turn, the official in charge will explain the basis of the decision.
- If the protesting party wishes to appeal the decision of the official in charge, he/she must request that the field/court supervisor review the decision before play resumes. The supervisor will render a decision on the question.

INELIGIBLE PLAYER Policy: Bloomsburg ID Cards will be required for eligibility verification prior to each contest and at any given time. Refer to the "ELIGIBILITY" and "ONE TEAM" sections for details on eligibility.

The use of "ineligible players" will result in...

1. Default of Game* involved.
2. Ineligibility of Player from future IM play within that tournament.
3. Ineligibility of both Teams for playoffs within that tournament.

* Note: Eligibility violations discovered after the 24-hour limit will NOT result in game default; however, #2 & #3 will still apply.

ELIGIBILITY PROTESTS: Protesting the eligibility of players will be the responsibility of the individual team or team captain and should be made at the start of the game or when the player in question arrives at the game site, but must occur prior to the next contest.

- In protests regarding player eligibility, all pertinent information (i.e. date, time, location of contest, and names) must be noted as well as notifying the supervisors at the game site, if possible. If player identification is needed, the supervisors or officials will be utilized.
- Individual players found ineligible automatically forfeit the game in which they participated. During playoffs, eligibility protests must be filed before the accused team plays another contest or the protest becomes null and void.

If you suspect an ineligible player AFTER THE GAME HAS ENDED... You have a 24 hour limit from game time to submit a Written Protest Form to the Intramurals Office to receive a "Win by Default". Teams found to involve ineligible players will be dealt with according to the above policy. Provide the players name (if possible), team name, the game date, time and location, and why you believe they are ineligible, to assist with verification.

RULE INTERPRETATION PROTESTS: (Judgment calls by an official cannot be protested)

Protests concerning interpretation of playing rules will be allowed, that is, failure of an official to apply a proper rule, penalty or violation to a given situation that has a direct and immediate impact on the outcome of a contest. The protest must be handled immediately following the play or decision on the field.

WRITTEN PROTEST: Must be presented to the Intramural Director within 24 hours after the event. All protests will be given to the Intramural Director for a ruling. Protest forms will be available at every contest.

SAFETY CONCERNS: THIS IS A NONCONTACT SPORT. Hats, jewelry, or metal joint braces will not be permitted. We have these rules to protect the participants' safety. Please respect this policy.

BLOOD BORNE PATHOGENS: If a player is found to be bleeding, they must immediately leave the game. Substitutions may occur at this time and the official may take a timeout. The player may not reenter the game until all bleeding stops, and all injuries are properly cleaned and bandaged. All blood soiled clothing must be removed before the player can reenter the game.

UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT: Any offensive behavior towards officials, fans, and opposing teams will result in an unsportsmanlike foul. If a player receives two of these fouls they will be ejected. Behavior that would be considered an immediate ejection would include foul language towards an official, hitting another player or fan, an alcohol related incident, and any other action an official deems worthy.

EJECTIONS: If any one of these instances occurs, a player will be automatically ejected.

All ejections will result in at least a one game suspension and scheduled meeting with the Director of Intramurals and that sports coordinator. The player that is ejected will be given 2 minutes to leave the playing area and field. If the player does not leave within 2 minutes their team will be penalized a misconduct penalty. If the player has still not left the playing area and field the game will be called a loss to the team the player was a member of.

- Combative behavior.
- Threatening the wellbeing of another person.
- Intentional contacting an official.
- Extreme circumstances deemed unsafe by officials.

FAN SPORTSMANSHIP: Team captains are in charge of their fans. If fans become unruly the acting supervisor may stop the game and ask the fans to leave the area or take action accordingly