

**MINERAL WELLS PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT
SOFTBALL PROGRAM
USSSA LOCAL RULES AND REGULATIONS**

I. General Information

- a. Team addition: The Mineral Wells Parks and Recreation Softball Program reserves the right to combine, open, or change a team's league to allow for more teams to register and avoid canceling leagues.
- b. Photos: The Parks and Recreation Department routinely takes photos/video of participants and visitors in our programs and facilities for promotional purposes. Please be aware that by participating in or utilizing our facility, you are granting the City of Mineral Wells and its agents the right to use and publish your image or your minor children's image, and that will give no monetary remuneration.
- c. Games: Each team will play 6 regular season games followed by a double elimination tournament.
- d. Game Scores are posted on the website within 24-48 hours following each night of play. Any score discrepancies must be reported within 48 hours of your game.
- e. Seeding for the playoffs will be determined by the most games won after the final game of the season.
 - 1. If two or more teams are tied, the winner will be the team that defeated the others (head-to-head) involved in the tie (if applicable) after all games have been played.
 - 2. If there is a split between 2 or more teams, the winner will be the team that has the highest average run differential (total number of runs scored minus the total number of runs scored by opponents; divided by the number of games played) for the entire season.
 - 3. If still tied, the winner will be the team that allowed the fewest runs against all opponents.
 - 4. Once the league winner has been determined and there is now a tie between 2 or more teams for 2nd place, the winner will be determined using the same process.
- f. Information: A league representative is on duty at the complex every night of league play. If you have a question regarding awards, rainout dates, etc., please find the league representative. If they cannot answer your question, please contact the Parks and Recreation Office at 940-328-7803 yourself the following business day.
- g. Reschedule: The Parks and Recreation Department will not reschedule games at the request of any team or manager after schedules are printed.
- h. Team Name: The Parks and Recreation Department has the right to reject any team name that is deemed inappropriate.

II. Softball Program Playing Rules

- a. All games will be played in accordance with Official USSSA Slow Pitch Playing Rules unless specified in this rule book.
- b. Every team will have an even number of home and visitor games throughout regular season play. There are no designated dugouts.
- c. The MWPARD reserves the right to change a team's field of play to get back on schedule or stay ahead of schedule at any point during the night.
- d. Team rosters will be required from each team before the first game. Each team's roster must be complete in full and turned in to a league representative before the team plays its first game.
 - 1. Teams will have up to the THIRD WEEK of REGULAR season play to add additional players. It is the responsibility of each team's coach to add all players to the official roster in possession of the league official. Failure to do so will result in forfeiture of games played during and after the last week while the illegal player played. After the THIRD WEEK of the REGULAR season, all rosters will be lock and no new players may be added.
 - 2. Players must play in at least 4 games to be considered to be eligible to play in the tournament.
- e. (Lineup cards will be provided by MWPARD) All lineup cards must be filled out completely listing each player in the order in which they will bat. Lineup information must be legible and must include the player's full name and uniform number if given. If a team does not have enough players to begin the game, that team shall submit a lineup card listing the players that are present and the game clock will be started. They will then have 5 minutes to field a team, or the game will be forfeited.
- f. All players will come to the plate with a 1-1 count. Players will not be given an extra courtesy foul. In cases of tie games at the end of regulation play Men's and Coed Leagues will play 1 pitch with no foul.
- g. Mercy rule will be in affect and is as follows: 12 after 4, and 10 after 5
- h. Home runs allowed:
 - Men's League - 3 per game
 - Co-Ed League -1 Homeruns

Once teams have hit the allotted number of homeruns, a batter will be out for every additional homerun hit over the fence.

i. Halo Rule: (ALL leagues)

- The FIRST time a ball is hit up the middle, the offending player will receive a warning and an out will be issued. The SECOND time a ball is hit up the middle, the offending player will be ejected from the game and an out will be issued.

ALL LEAGUES: IT IS THE UMPIRES AND OFFICIALS DISCRETION IF THE HIT IS INTENTIONAL THE HITTER COULD BE EJECTED, SUSPENDED OR BANNED

*Warning will be given to coaches before each game. *

j. Each team will be allowed 1 courtesy runner per inning. Courtesy runner can be any player on the roster.

1. If that player is on base as a runner when it is his turn to bat, then an out will be assessed for this place at bat.

k. Both home and visiting teams must provide \$15 each to the official during regular season & tournament play. All money must be paid before the start of the game. If a team does not provide said money within 5 minutes of scheduled game time, the team must forfeit.

1. If schedule allows, an extra umpire will be placed on the field for the championship tournament for Men's League. The cost will be incurred by the teams (i.e., both home and visiting team will pay \$15 each per game during the playoffs)
2. The Championship game will be a complete game (7 innings) run rule will be in effect.

III. Team/Player Eligibility

- a. The Coed team will play a 6-4 distribution. This means that 4 women must be on the field when on defense and must be present in the hitting line-up.
- b. Float Rule- In Coed, we will float the line-up. No men should bat back-to-back in the line-up. Women must stay in their own order and will restart after the fourth woman has batted.
For example: B, G1, B, G2, B, G3, B, G4, B, G1, B, G2
- c. Teams are allowed to start with no fewer than eight players (Men's, Co-Ed, & Church). However, an out must be taken in the ninth and tenth batting position respectively until the missing player(s) arrive for Men's League.
- d. Men's League and Coed League can play with a minimum of 8 players batting without taking an out when the ninth and tenth players are supposed to bat.

- e. It is the team manager's responsibility to inform the home plate umpire at the pre-game meeting if their team is playing short-handed. Once the game starts, if it is determined by the umpire or by the opponent that the short-handed team failed to inform the home plate umpire about the missing player, the game will be forfeited.
- f. When Leagues are combined, a team can play with eight players and not take an out when the ninth and tenth batters are due in the lineup.
- g. Participants must have attained the age of 16 prior to the first game to be eligible to play in Mineral Wells Softball leagues. Participants 16 and 17 years of age may play only after a parent signs the registration form for them. These forms may be obtained at the Mineral Wells City Gym or printed off the city's website.
- h. A player MAY NOT play on two teams in the same league. However, a player may play on other teams in the different leagues as he wishes if he has signed the team roster for each.

IV. Disciplinary Action

- a. Any player ejected from any Mineral Wells league or tournament game will not be allowed to return to any team area while under suspension. Failure to adhere to this policy will result in a second suspension. A league official will determine the length of suspension.
- b. If a suspended player from one league is registered in another league that is managed by the MWPARD, the suspension for said player will be enforced for the second league as well.
- c. An umpire/league representative may eject any player, manager, or spectator for unsportsmanlike conduct immediately before, during, or after a game.
 - 1. Any player or coach ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct may be suspended for the next 14 days from all MWPARD softball leagues/tournament play. The ejecting umpire/league representative has the right to determine if a greater/lesser suspension is warranted.
 - 2. If a player or coach is ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct relating to violent acts, threats or attempts to injure another, the player will be suspended for the remainder of the softball season, but not less than 4 weeks. If the suspension is near the end of the season, the suspension will be extended to the following softball season and can be up to one year or lifetime suspension. The ejecting umpire/league representative has the right to determine if a greater/lesser suspension is warranted.
 - 3. No ejected player may remain in any team area during his or her suspension dates. If the ejected player impedes the progress, or makes a travesty of the game, said game may be forfeited to the

opposing team. The ejecting umpire/league representative has the right to determine if a greater/lesser suspension is warranted.

- d. If the player or coach is ejected on a second occasion, that player or coach (and the remainder of his or her team) may be suspended from all athletic division activities for a minimum of one (1) year from the date of the second offense.
- e. Team captains are responsible for the behavior of their spectators. Spectators are defined by any relationship in any form to any registered player on your roster. Failure to control the actions of the spectators will result in forfeiture of the game.
- f. Anyone (player, coach, or spectator) threatening or handling an official or umpire may be liable to charges and banishment from all future MWPARD athletic activities for a minimum of one (1) year or an indefinite suspension at the discretion of the MWPARD.
- g. Any person or team who commits fraud or is involved in any act of fraudulent activity while participating as a player, coach/manager, may be liable to charges and removal from all future MWPARD activities for a minimum of one (1) year or an indefinite suspension at the discretion of the MWPARD. This includes playing under an assumed name or falsifying rosters or I.D.
- h. Disqualified Player: A disqualified player is one who has used an illegal bat, illegal ball, foul language, or has committed actions, which would have been deemed by the Umpire as unsportsmanlike behavior. Disqualified players may remain in the dugout or coach but have lost their eligibility for the game in which they were disqualified from.

V. Forfeits

- a. A forfeit score will be posted as 7-0 in favor of the offended team. If a team leaves the field of play to intentionally forfeit a game, the offended team will be awarded the score at the time the offending team left the field.
- b. A \$30.00 (\$60.00 if double header) forfeit fee will be assessed to teams who fail to show for their scheduled game time or who fail to notify the MWPARD by **5 p.m. the day BEFORE their scheduled game**. This fee will be paid to MWPARD and will be used to pay the umpire. Fee must be paid to the MWPARD at the Mineral Wells City Gym no later than 48 hours prior to your next scheduled game time. Any team forfeiting the last 2 weeks of the season will/may also forfeit their eligibility for postseason play. If fee is not paid, then further games are forfeited as well.
- c. **Forfeiting playoff games must be done by the Friday before the games.**

VI. Protests

- a. Only protests based on interpretations of the rules and player eligibility, including roster protests, will be accepted. Protests based on judgment calls will not be accepted.
- b. All protests must be executed in the following manner:
 1. The notification of intent to protest rule interpretations must be lodged verbally to the plate umpire immediately prior to the next pitch, by the opposing team's coach.
 - a. Notify the plate umpire that the game is under protest on a rule interpretation.
 - b. If the protest is upheld, the game will be replayed from the point at which time the incorrect decision was made with the decision corrected.
 2. The notification of intent to protest player eligibility of a player must be made by the opposing team's coach within the first time through the line-up of the protested team.
 - a. Notify the plate umpire that the game is "Under Protest" on player eligibility and state which player on the opposing team you are protesting.
 - b. If the protest is upheld, the following inning in which the team that used the illegal player or bats, will be forfeited to the offended team. The ineligible player or players may also be suspended from all Gainesville Softball play for up to a 14-day period, determined by the Parks and Recreation staff.
 - a. If there is no following inning the game will be forfeited in favor of the offended team.
 3. Eligibility of the protesting team will also be checked.
 4. A protest fee of \$10 will be assessed if the protest is not upheld.

VII. Time Allotment and Payment of Games

- a. If shorthanded, teams will be allowed 5 extra minutes to field a team of 8 players. However, once a team has eight players present, they must begin play or choose to forfeit.
- b. The watch of either umpire will be considered the official clock. Managers are urged to synchronize watches with the official clock before the beginning of the games.
- c. Time limit for regulation play is 50 MINUTES. Any inning that has started when time expires shall be completed. No inning shall begin after 50 minutes have expired except in the case of a tie. Note: A new inning begins after the final out of the previous inning.
- d. The game clock will begin at the scheduled game time or at the completion of the pre-game meeting, whichever is appropriate.

VIII. Equipment and Uniforms

- a. **Balls:** All teams will be required to supply their own balls. Teams caught using an illegal or modified ball will be assessed an out and will result in the coach's disqualification. If a legal ball is not produced within 2 minutes the game will be forfeited.
 1. If an illegal ball is supplied by the opposing team, the pitcher will not throw it. The opposing team must supply the pitcher a proper ball.
- b. **Bats:** All bats must be stamped official softball. Bats shall not exceed 34 inches in length, 31 ½ ounces in weight, and 2 ¼ inches in diameter. The Bat Performance Factor (BPF) shall be 1.20 or less. All bats shall be marked USSSA BPF 1.20; bats manufactured prior to January 1, 2004, must be marked BPF 1.20 or 1.20 BPF and all marking identifiable to the umpire/league official.
 1. All bats must be tested before use. If the bat complies with the equipment rules and pass the compression test it will be given tape that indicates that it is a legal bat. This tape must remain on the bat during the remainder of the league. If tape comes off during the league the bat will need to be retested. A league official will indicate if the bat passes compression testing, and thus will allow the bat into play.
 2. If a player stands in the batter's box with a bat that has not been tested, the player will be called out.
 - a. If any team member uses a bat that is not tested, that bat will be immediately tested, consequences depending on results of the bat testing.
 - b. Any team member that uses an untested bat after the first violation of a given game will be given an automatic ejection for the rest of the game.
 3. Any bat outlawed by USSSA will also be outlawed by MWPARD (Miken Ultra 1 & Ultra 2).
- c. **Shirts:** All players are required to wear similar colored shirts. Shirts with abusive language or vulgar signs or symbols printed on them will not be allowed. A participant caught playing with a shirt containing abusive language will be asked to put on a legal shirt. Failure to do so will result in the player being disqualified. An opposing team can protest the game if all players are not dressed in the guidelines. The protest must come before the game begins or as soon as an illegally dressed player enters the game. Protests after the final out will not be upheld.
- d. **Cleats:** Metal cleats of any kind are not allowed. No exception.
- e. **Jewelry:** MWPARD strongly recommends the removal of all jewelry before playing any athletic activity. However, no penalty will be assessed to players choosing to play in jewelry. A player may be asked to remove any jewelry

deemed to be a safety issue. Failure to remove any jewelry once requested by the umpire will result in a game forfeiture. MWPARD IS NOT liable for injuries incurred due to jewelry.

- f. Pitcher's Masks: For safety reasons, it is highly recommended but not required that pitchers wear appropriate masks/protection during each game.

IX. Cancellation and Postponement of Games

- a. Rainout information: It is the team manager's responsibility to contact MWPARD on this number, 940-328-7803, regarding playing conditions.
- b. If a game is suspended or cancelled due to inclement weather, 3 ½ innings will constitute a complete game if the home team is winning or 4 complete innings if the home team is not winning. All games postponed before this time will be continued at the point where the game was stopped.
- c. If a game is cancelled due to whatever reason, the season will be pushed back by one week, only one time. If there is a second canceled regular season game, the cancelled game will be made up the next available Friday. Mineral Wells Parks and Recreation reserves the right to make any changes to the schedule if necessary.
- d. In the case of tournament weeks and holidays, the same will apply as (c).