



2024 Zearing Days Slow Pitch Softball Tournament Rules

By registering your team, each player is agreeing that each and every player does so at their own risk. Zearing, Zearing Days, or any other entity hold absolutely no liability for any injuries or damage that may occur while on the grounds or during competition.

PLEASE NOTE: Highlighted rules designate change from 2023

I Playing Field(s)

1a. Umpire will designate a field suitable for play in accordance with the following provisions.

which equal the dimensions of a softball field:

1b. The softball diamond is a square with equal sides of 60-70 feet.

1c. The pitching strip is in the center of the diamond, 46-50 feet or just over 15 paces from home plate, and directly aligned with the first base/third base diagonal.

1d. Commitment line will be utilized halfway between 3rd and home base with guidance marker shortly outside right-handed batters box.

1e. If enough teams enter tournament both fields will be used.

Field 1 (West field, 200ft fence)

Field 2 (East Field, 175ft fence, an additional 4ft snow fence may be added to the top Field 2.)

II. Equipment/Attire

2a. Athletic shoes or soft/hard rubber cleats are required. **Metal cleats are not allowed.**

2b. Uniforms are not required but shirts and bottoms (shorts / baseball pants) are mandatory as

this is a family friendly environment. (Jerseys containing buttons must have at least 3/4 of

buttons functioning and shirt will remain closed in the front, unless 2nd shirt is worn underneath opened shirt)

2c. ASA regulation equipment required; each team shall furnish all team equipment necessary.

2d. 14-inch game balls for men, 12-inch game balls for women will be supplied. Only the balls supplied and designated by the Umpire will be allowed. Teams will be responsible for retrieving home run and foul balls. Teams will incur a \$10 replacement fee for any un-returned balls.

III. Officials

3a. Umpire(s) will be provided for all games.

3b. No player may argue with or insult the umpires.

1) First offense, a warning will be issued to the team captain.

2) Second offense, the player will be ejected from play for the remainder of the tournament.

3) Third offense, the entire team will be disqualified from the tournament.

3c. Tournament Director has jurisdiction over play and may call off a game due to darkness, rain, or other cause at the tournament director's discretion.

IV. Player Eligibility

4a. All participants must be on the team roster.

4b. Any roster changes before tournament start must be declared at check in

V. Team Rosters

5a. Each team roster must contain a minimum of 10 and no more than 15 players.

5b. Each team shall have one Captain; the captain will be responsible for the team.

The Team Captains must ensure that:

- All team players must bat in the same order.
- Only the Captain may request a conference with the umpire to dispute calls.
- Each Team is responsible to pick up their dugout after each game.

VI. Line-ups/Game Time

6a. Teams will occupy the dugouts on a first come basis.

6b. Home team will gets decided by a coin toss prior to game.

- Team captains will play Rock, Paper, Scissors to decide who calls the flip.

- Captain who wins the flip chooses home or away for the game.

6c. Line-ups: Teams must field at least 8 players and no more than 10. Everyone on the roster

must bat. Teams can field 10 players (minimum 4 females), 9 players (3 females), or 8 players (2 females). ((NOTE: If there are only 2 females on the team, the team will take an out for the missing female when the next female would have batted.))

6d. Batting order: Everyone on the roster must bat, alternating male and female or female and male.

- { If a player is removed from play due to injury, ejection, or illness, there is no penalty if the batting order rule is not followed. PENALTY ONLY IF the player removed is the female and their removal leaves the team with only two females, the team will take an out when the female would have batted. }

6e. All team players must bat in the same order each time through the line-up.

6f. A team having eight (8) players present at game time prior to the first pitch must begin play immediately or the umpire, after a two-minute fair warning, will forfeit the game. Teams may start with 8 players (minimum 3 females) without charged out penalties for missing players. Teams having 8 players with only 2 females can still play but must take an out for the missing 3rd female.

6g. The game time is indicated on the schedule. Incomplete innings and tie-games are to be played to completion; otherwise, no new innings shall be started after 55 minutes of playing time. The umpire's watch shall be the official time. Teams may ask the umpire the start time. EXCEPTION: If both captains agree, the game may be started before scheduled game time.

6h. Mercy Rule: If five (5) innings have been played and one team is leading by ten (10) runs or more the game shall be called; also 15 runs after 4 innings, and 20 runs after 3 innings.

6i. A team failing to place at least eight (8) eligible players on the field at game time will forfeit the game. Late players may enter the game at the bottom of the line-up as long as batting order rules are still followed.

XII. Defensive Positions

7a. Males and females do not have to alternate defensively in the infield, outfield, or at pitcher/catcher. However, there must be at least one (1) female in the outfield and at least one (1) female in the infield (pitcher and catcher count as infield regarding this rule)

7b. All infielders must remain with both feet on the infield and all outfielders must remain behind the painted line in the outfield until the ball is hit.

7c. Must have 4 outfielders, Rover on infield is not allowed.

XIII. Substitutions

8a. Teams may substitute freely on defense between each inning as long as minimum female head count is within requirement.

8b. Mid inning substitutions will only be allowed for injury; substitution must be same sex and female headcount requirement still active. If headcount is unable to be maintained substituting team will start next half of inning with 1 out.

XIV. Regulations Games

9a. Regulation games last 7 full innings or 55 minutes (see rule 6g) whichever comes first.

9b. A game that is called off by the umpire for darkness or other safety reason after 4 full innings of play shall be considered a regulation game. The game score at the end of the last full inning shall determine the winner.

9c. In the event of a tie score at the end of the 7th inning or 55 minutes (whichever comes first), extra innings shall commence until a winner is determined. In the event a game goes into extra innings: each team will begin their half inning with a runner on second. This runner must be the last person who batted in the prior inning.

9d. A team captain may call time and raise protest with the Umpire for blatant rule infraction but will accept the umpire's final ruling.

X. Running

10a. Runners must stay within the baseline. Fielders must stay out of the baseline. Fielders trying to make an out on base may have their foot on base but must lean out of the baseline. Runners hindered by any fielder within the base line shall be safe at the base to which they were running.

10b. Leading off base and stealing are not allowed. A runner off his/her base when the ball is pitched is out.

10c. After a batted ball is caught; runners must tag their originating base before running to the next base. Runners may overrun first base only.

10d. In an effort to speed game play, after an over the fence homerun all runners may leave the field of play immediately. All runners on base and the batter will count as runs scored.

10f. In an effort to avoid collisions at home plate this year, We are going to implement a commitment line. Line will be located halfway between home plate and the 3rd base line.

- If the base runner crosses this line they will no longer be able to return to 3rd base and the race to the home plate line is on.

- If the catcher secures the ball AND touches home plate before the player crosses this line they are considered out.

- If the runner crosses the line before the catcher secures the ball AND touches home plate the run will be considered safe.

XI. Fouls

11a. Anytime contact is made with the ball and does not remain in the field of play.

11b. Foul ball counts as a strike

11c. A foul ball with 2 strikes is an out. No courtesy foul.

XII. Outs

12a. A count of three outs by a team completes that teams' half of the inning.

12b. An out is:

1. Runner tagged by the ball in the fielder's hand or glove at ANY time while not on base.
2. Any batted ball (fair or foul) that is caught.
3. A fielder catching the ball with their foot on the base to which a runner is forced to run.
4. A runner off his/her base when the ball is pitched.
5. A ball hit when the batter steps out of the batter's box.
6. An intentionally bunted ball.

12c. Infield Fly Rule: An infield fly is a fair fly ball (not a line drive) which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort provided there are runners on first and second, or first, second, and third with less than two outs. The umpire will declare the infield fly rule and the batter is immediately out. Base runners cannot be forced out and cannot advance, ball is dead.

XIII. Ball in Play

13a. Ball is in play until the umpire declares "TIME" to signify the play is dead and runners can no longer advance until the next live ball.

XIV. Designated Runner/Player

14a. In cases of injury or illness, a time-out may be requested for participant removal and replacement with a substitute of the same sex. If the participant later returns to play, the participant must be inserted in the same batting order position previously held.

14b. If a player is ejected, injured, or becomes ill and cannot continue, and a substitute is not available, the lineup will continue in the same formation, without the removed player.

14c. The pitcher may be replaced on the mound once per inning.

14d. Frequent Flyer Band - This additional 25\$ band (limit 1 per team) allows one appointed person of choice to be considered an all-time designated runner for the team no matter the sex they are courtesy running for. There is no limit to the number of times this individual can run for players on base in an inning. If the Frequent Flyer is placed on base by the team captain and his/her turn arrives in the batting order he/she will be removed from the base currently on and considered an out. The individual will then bat in his/her respective position in the batting order.

14e. Home Run Band(s) - These additional 25\$ each bands (limit two per team, limit 1 per sex) allows the appointed wearing individuals unlimited home runs no matter the current home run tally held by the remainder of the team.

XV. Pitching

15a. Pitches must be a lob pitch. Meaning, it has an arc. The arc of the pitch must reach at least 6 feet upon its release, but it should not rise any higher than 12 feet at any point during the pitch.

15b. A 14-inch ball will be used when pitching to a male player. A 12-inch ball will be used when pitching to a female player.

15c. Pitchers may pitch from the backside of the pitching mound if desired but must remain a centered approach to home plate within reason. This can be addressed from the opposing team captain or corrected by either umpire during the game if the pitcher is outside the respected limits.

XVI. Batting

16a. At bat will start with 1 ball and 1 strike.

16b. A strike is called anytime for:

1. Any time that the batter swings but does not make contact with the ball.

2. On any foul ball (see sec XI)

3. Any time that the ball lands within the strike zone or on the plate.

16c. Team allowed 2 over the fence home runs. (HR band players do not count towards this total) Additional home runs will be considered outs and runners may not advance.