Brevard Super Senior Softball League

Rules and Regulations

**Preamble:**

**Statement of purpose:** The purpose of this league is to provide a venue for **Super Senior Softball Players (55 years old and over)** to play softball in an atmosphere that emphasizes sportsmanship and friendly competition.

The Brevard Super Senior Softball League will be governed by playing rules from the **“Official Senior Softball USA Rulebook” (ISA Games)** and these local Rules.

Rules

**I. Definitions**

A. *Available player*- a player is available if assigned to a team, present at game time, sufficiently healthy to play, and not under suspension.

B. *Short-handed team* - a team that cannot field at least eleven (11) players from its roster.

C. *Strike zone mat* - a rectangular mat measuring 19” X 34½“ shall be utilized. The mat shall be placed with the front edge immediately over home plate to establish the strike zone.

D. Games will consist of seven (7) innings.

**II. Player & Roster Rules**

A. **Team Rosters** - Each team will have a roster of players assigned to the team that will be conducted as provided in this rule.

1. In order to be eligible to play, each player must reach the age of at least fifty-five (55) years of age during that calendar year and must sign the appropriate application and waiver of liability. The board may also elect on a by case basis to allow a player under the age of 55 to play.

2. All players will be assigned a point value rating by the board. The board shall oversee the draft or assignment of the league players to the teams to ensure to the degree possible competitive balance between the teams. The highest player rating possible is 6) points and the lowest permitted rating is one (1) point. The numerical ratings are assigned pursuant to the following criteria:

 (6). A game changer.

(5) - Consistently dangerous hitter, a strong defensive player, at least adequate speed

 (4) - An all around solid player or a player who would be rated a 5 but for one very significant weakness.

(3) - A relatively solid player with some skills but some shortcomings

(2) - A player with modest ability who makes occasional contributions.

(1) - A player lacking experience or ability; or who isso injured, ill, or infirm as to be almost unable to contribute

3. Based upon player ratings the board will assemble teams so as to promote competitive balance.

4. Players selected for a team and placed upon a roster will remain assigned to that team throughout the entire league season except as provided by these rules.

B. In the event that a team is regularly shorthanded while another team regularly has a surplus of players, one or more players may be assigned by the Board to a different team with the consent of the managers of the respective teams and of the players to be reassigned.

**III.** **Player utilization** -

A. The maximum number of players who can play in the field (defensively) at one time is eleven. Managers are encouraged to play each available player on defense for at least three half innings per game. Each available player is to be placed in the batting order.

B. Managers are requested to provide the scorekeeper with line-ups not later than ten (10) minutes prior to game time. The manager may provide that line-up in written form, or by use of a magnetic manager’s board or similar device.

C. A player who arrives after the start of the game may be put in the line-up without removing another player, but must be placed last in the batting order.

D. A player with an injury may be removed from the lineup without being declared an out. A player who exits the first game is also out for the second game. Said player may, if able, play defense, if needed ,to ensure at least 10 on defense and he will not have to bat. A team that shows with nine only may have a player who is out on injury play defense only.

E. If a team cannot field at least eleven (11) players from its roster, the following rules apply:

1. A team that has 7 or fewer players will forfeit.
2. A team that is short players can pick up players borrowed from the other team on a rotating basis.
3. A team that has 8 will play with 2 players borrowed from the other team on a rotating basis for a total of 10. They will not have a middle fielder.
4. A team with only 9 will play with 1 player borrowed from the team they are playing. They will not have a middle fielder. If both teams have only nine, they will not play nine on nine. They will each borrow a player to play ten on ten. They will not have a middle fielder.
5. A team with ten of their own players MAY opt to have 3 outfielders of their choosing and bring the 4th outfielder in as a middle fielder. However, that middle fielder must play middle field for the entire inning. The middle fielder may play anywhere the middle fielder is allowed to play.
6. The borrowed player(s) will rotate and will bat with their own team. The borrowed player(s) will replace the missing players on defense as agreed to by the two managers.
7. In the unlikely event a team has no pitcher available, the Board will make a game time determination to provide a pitcher from another team if possible.
8. Waiting list players and players from a BYE team will not be used as fill in’s for teams that are short.
9. In the event of a forfeit, the two teams may still play their games, swapping players as necessary.

IV. Responsibilities of Managers

1. Each team will have a manager who is also a member of the Board of Directors of the league. They are responsible for all communication with the Board and the players. In addition to performing on field manager duties, the managers are encouraged to work in close harmony with the other managers to ensure that the games are played in a friendly and professional manner.
2. The manager has the authority to direct a player to leave the field or their bench if the players’ conduct is determined detrimental to the team by the manager.
3. The manager is expected to cooperate fully to the degree possible with the provisions of III E above when providing players to the opposing team.

**V.** **Late registrants** –

1. Any late registrants who seek to join the league after the initial roster assignments will be placed on a waiting list until a team is in need of a player.

B. The assignment of the late registrant to a particular team shall be accomplished by the Board so as to promote competitive balance in the league.

1. When a player is injured, the manager has the responsibility to follow up and determine when the injured player may be ready to return. If the player is reported by the manager as “out for the season” the Board will assign to that team a replacement player from the waiting list with as close to the same rating as possible as the player that was injured if possible. This will be done regardless of when a player signed up and was placed on the waiting list. This will be done with the manager’s concurrence.
2. The injured player that is “out for the season” will no longer be a member of that team. If the player comes back from injury before season’s end, they will be placed on the waiting list and assigned according to need. The manager has the responsibility to communicate this fact to the player and team involved. The intent is to maintain competitive balance as much as possible.
3. If a player is injured and the manager determines there is a chance the player will return soon (two to four weeks), then no replacement player will be assigned and the procedures of III E above will be followed if necessary.

1. Under no circumstances will a player not assigned to a team play.

**VI. Schedules**

**A**. **Season** - During the season each team will be scheduled to play not less than twenty-six (26) games consisting of thirteen (13) double headers.

**B.** **Dates of play** - Regular season games shall be played on Monday evenings at the Liberty Park fields. The first game shall begin at 6:40 P.M. or as close thereto as possible, and the additional games will begin no more than five (5)minutes following the completion of the first game. Each game will be seven complete innings unless run rule applies. Home team and visiting team for each game will be indicated on the schedule.

**C**. **Postponements** - Games that are postponed will be made up after the completion of the regular schedule. Whether a game is to be postponed due to inclement weather shall be determined by the Board and the representative of the Brevard County Parks and Recreation Department. Games that are interrupted due to rain or other factors will be considered a complete game if at least 4 ½ innings have been played with the home team in the lead. This applies to all regular season games and playoff games.

**VII. Playing Field**

A. Bases shall be sixty-five (65) feet apart.

B. The distance from the back of home plate to the front of the pitcher’s rubber shall be fifty (50) feet.

C. A strike zone mat shall be utilized. The catcher shall utilize the mat for plays at home and may not tag the runner after the runner crosses the commitment line.

D. A separate scoring plate at the end of the scoring line shall be placed such that the front of the scoring plate is 65 feet from third base and the point of the scoring plate is eight feet from the point of home plate.

E. To avoid collisions a double first base consisting of two juxtaposed bases - one white inner base in fair territory and an outside orange base in foul territory - shall be utilized.

1. A 200 foot line will be utilized in the outfield. The four outfielders must remain behind the line until the ball is hit. The four outfielders may not throw a batter out at first base.
2. The infielders (1B, 2B, SS and 3B) must be on the infield dirt when the ball is hit. The middle fielder may play on the dirt or back on the grass anywhere from left foul line to right foul line. The middle fielder may not change places with another infielder for the convenience of one batter. Any batted ball that any of the five infielders can get to may result in a player being thrown out at first base.
3. Should a team with less than eleven on defense decide to play three outfielders and move an outfielder to the middle fielder position, that middle fielder must always be on the dirt. The defensive manager must inform the other manager of the switch.

**VIII. Pitches and Pitching Screens**

A. To be legal a pitched ball must reach a maximum height of between six (6) feet and twelve (12) feet above the playing surface. A pitch that is illegal shall be vocally declared as such by the umpire as soon as the umpire has determined that the pitch is illegal. An illegal pitch is ruled a ball unless the batter swings at it.

B. A legal pitch that lands on the strike zone mat shall be called a strike.

C. Any pitch that is swung at and is not hit into fair territory shall be called a strike, including the third strike.

1. The batter shall begin with a count of one ball and one strike.
2. All pitchers are required to use the Pitching Screen in accordance with Florida Half Century Rules as follows:
3. Pitching screen must cover at least half of the pitching rubber. The pitching screen can cover the entire pitching rubber. The pitcher may pitch from either side of the screen as long as he has one foot located in contact with the pitching rubber.
4. Placement of the screen. The pitcher may place the screen up to four (4) feet in front of the pitching rubber as long as a perpendicular line from the leg of the screen would intersect ½ of the rubber.
5. Once the screen is in place it may not be moved in that ½ inning unless a pitching change is made or the screen is knocked out of place. An incoming pitcher may adjust the screen so long as it complies with 1 and 2 above.
6. Pitchers must release the ball with at least one foot on the pitching rubber.
7. After the pitcher releases the ball he must move behind the pitching screen. Once the ball is hit he is free to attempt to field the ball if he can. If, in the umpires opinion, the pitcher does not get behind the screen after he releases any pitch, he shall issue a warning to the pitcher **and** the manager indicating that next time the pitcher does not get behind the screen after releasing a pitch, he will be removed from the position of pitcher and the team will be required to insert another pitcher. The removed pitcher may remain in the lineup and may play any other position but may not pitch for the remainder of that game. If a warning has not been issued to the pitcher and he fields a ball without getting behind the screen, the umpire shall call it a dead ball, with the batter being awarded first base and any forced runners moving up one base. The umpire shall then issue a warning to the pitcher and **the manager**. If the pitcher has already received a warning, the umpire shall make the same call with the batter being awarded first base and any forced runners will move up one base. The pitcher shall then be removed.
8. Players start with a 1-1 count. A batted ball that hits the screen counts as a foul. If the count is 1-1, then its strike 2. There is no “courtesy foul”. If the count is already 1-2, then a batted ball into the screen becomes an out. So, with the count 1-1, you could have two batted balls into the screen to produce the out.
9. After a batted ball is fielded, a thrown ball by an infielder or outfielder that hits the screen remains a live ball.

**IX.** **Base running**

A. The batter-runner must run to at least first base without the aid of a courtesy runner. A batter who hits the ball to one of the four outfielders may not be thrown out at first base.

B. After reaching a base safely, and after time-out is called, a courtesy runner may take the place of the original batter-runner. No player may serve as a courtesy runner more than once per inning. Any player who serves, as a courtesy runner an additional time in the same inning shall be called “out.” A courtesy runner who is on base when it is his turn to bat will be called “out” and removed from the base. Then such player will take his normal turn at bat.

C. A courtesy runner who has touched a base may not be replaced by another courtesy runner nor the original player for whom he was running. However, if a courtesy runner is injured and removed from the game, a second courtesy runner may be utilized. If the umpire observes a violation of this rule or the infraction is brought to the attention of the umpire, the umpire shall confirm the violation prior to declaring “out.”

D.  A baserunner must veer off to avoid a collision with a defensive player at second or third base. If the defensive players drops the ball or otherwise doesn’t make the play, the base runner shall be called safe. Umpires must call INTERFERENCE if the runner interferes physically or verbally with the defensive player.

**X**. **Double first base**

A. When a batted ball produces a play at first base, the batter shall touch the outside/orange base or be called out. The runner having tagged the wrong base is not an appeal play. A batter whose foot touches both bases simultaneously shall be called safe. The fielder at first base must touch the inside/white base or tag the runner in order to make a put out.

B. When the batted ball does not produce a play at first base the batter may touch either of the two bases but in all cases shall attempt to avoid contact with a defensive player.

C. A runner returning to first base and the defensive player must use the inside/white base.

**XI.** **Home Plate and Scoring Plate**

A. On a play at the plate, a defensive player records an out if he is in contact with the home plate mat and in possession of the ball before the runner touches the scoring plate. Tag plays are not permitted at the plate.

B. A runner who touches the home plate mat before touching the scoring plate is “out.”

C. A commitment line twenty (20) feet from the scoring plate will be used. Once the runner’s foot touches the ground on or past this line, the runner is committed to advancing to the scoring plate. If a runner re-crosses the commitment line, he will be declared out and the ball remains alive.

**XII**. **Scoring**

A. When a team scores five (5) runs in their half inning the scoring is complete for the half inning except that this rule shall not apply in the seventh or subsequent innings of a game.

1. A game will be terminated by the “mercy rule” when a team is behind by fifteen (15) or more runs after the bottom half of the fourth inning or any later inning.
2. When the visiting team is ahead by 7 or more runs after six full innings, the teams will flip-flop so the home team bats first in the seventh inning. In the event the home team ties the score or goes ahead in the seventh inning, then the visiting team will bat. In the event the game ends up tied after flip-flopping, the teams will revert to the regular order in the eighth or subsequent inning.
3. When the visiting team leads by seven (7) or more runs after six complete innings, the teams will “flip-flop” so the home team bats first in the seventh inning. In the event the home team ties the score or takes the lead in the top of the seventh inning, the visiting team will then bat. In the unlikely event that the teams end up tied after “flip-flopping” they will revert to the regular order for the eighth and subsequent innings.

**XIII. Rules of Conduct**

A. The umpire has the authority to eject, without warning, any player or manager, whether in the line-up or not, for unsportsmanlike conduct. In the absence of umpire action, each manager has the authority to remove from the line-up a player who is engaging in unsportsmanlike conduct. A manager who removes a player for unsportsmanlike conduct will immediately inform the umpire and the scorekeeper of the removal. A player removed by the manager but not ejected by the umpire shall not count as an out at his turn to bat. A player removed by the manager under this rule shall depart the dugout and immediate playing area unless given permission by the manager to remain.

B. Unsportsmanlike conduct includes, but is not limited to, using or threatening to use force or violence; uttering fighting words, racial epithets, or similarly offensive insults; spitting on or toward another person; or other conduct reasonably deemed by the umpire to be intolerable given all circumstances.

C. Unsportsmanlike conduct does not include good-natured banter between members of the same or different teams, nor the respectful questioning of an umpire’s call.

D. The Board of Directors has the authority to suspend players who engage in unsportsmanlike conduct. In determining the length of a player’s suspension, the board will consider all relevant factors including the seriousness of the matter, prior conduct by the player, and the player’s willingness to comply with guidance from his manager regarding his conduct. If the board determines that the length of the suspension will exceed three (3) games, the suspended player will be offered the opportunity to be heard by the board.

E. The Rules of Conduct do not supersede nor limit the authority of the Brevard County Parks and Recreation Department to impose sanctions, including ejection and criminal prosecution for unacceptable or unlawful conduct.

**XIV. Board of Directors**

A. The league has a board of directors consisting of Paul Mouritsen, Dan Deratany and the Managers of each team.

B. If any board member is unable to continue serving on the board, the Board will fill the vacancy by unanimous agreement.

C. Duties of respective board members will be determined by consensus of the board.

**XV. Adoption of Rules**

The following signatures are of the Board of Directors for the year 2023 Spring season and manifest the adoption of these rules on this 4th day of April, 2023.

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**Paul Mouritsen (President) Joe Pavlock (vice president)**

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**Harry Bermudez Dan Deratany (treasurer)**

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 **Jerry Larsen Stan McDavid**

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 **Larry Cudney Rich Cote**