WIFFLEBALL RULES  Revised: August 2014

Any rule not specifically covered will be governed in accordance with the 2013-2014 National Federation of State High School Associations Softball Rule Book.

ASSUMPTION OF RISK STATEMENT

All Intramural participants are responsible for their own medical expenses. Any participant unsure of his/her physical condition should check with their physician or the University Clinic before participating in an Intramural Sports contest.

Teams are responsible for keeping their spectators under control. Misconduct of participants, coaches or spectators can result in an unsportsmanlike penalty, ejection or forfeiture of the game. Team Captains will be held responsible for spectator, team and sideline misconduct. Two ejections from any contest will result in an automatic forfeiture.

RULE 1: ELIGIBILITY

1. PARTICIPATION: Participation is limited to currently enrolled, fee-paying University of Southern Mississippi students and faculty/staff members with Recreational Sports Memberships.

2. SOUTHERN MISS ID CARD: A current Southern Miss ID must be presented to the Supervisor to participate.

3. NUMBER OF TEAMS: Players can compete for only one single sex team and one coed team, regardless of league classification (example: participants cannot play for a men’s recreational team and a men’s competitive team).

4. SIGNED IN: Once a participant has signed in for a team, he/she may not transfer to another team.

RULE 2: TEAM COMPOSITION

1. TEAMS: Each team will consist of 4 players on the field at one time. A minimum of 3 players are required to start the game. You may bat 6 players.

2. CAPTAIN: Each team shall designate a team captain to make all decisions.
3. **PARTICIPANTS**: Team representatives including players, coaches, spectators, and other persons affiliated with the team are subject to these sport rules and all intramural policies.

**RULE 3: DEFAULTS, FORFEITS AND PROTESTS**

1. **FORFEITS**: If a team fails to appear with the required minimum number of players, ready to play, at the scheduled location at the scheduled start of the game, a member of the Intramural Sports Staff will declare the contest a forfeit. Teams that forfeit will receive a ‘C’ for sportsmanship and will be required to pay $15 to the Recreational Sports Office. **The team captain will be suspended from play until that payment is made.** Teams are only allowed one forfeit per sport per season. If a team forfeits twice, it will be removed from the league for the remainder of the season.

2. **DEFAULTS**: If a team knows that they will be unable to play a scheduled game, the Team Captain must contact the Intramural Sports Office by 12:00 PM the day of the contest to declare a default. The defaulting team will receive a loss and a ‘B’ for sportsmanship. Teams are allowed one default or forfeit per sport. Upon the second infraction that team being dropped from the league.

3. **PROTESTS**: Involving rule interpretations will be considered immediately following the incident in question. Play will be suspended until an Intramural Sports supervisor rules on the protest. If a team continues to play without calling the supervisor to the game site, then that team forfeits its right to a protest. Protests will not be honored after play has resumed. Judgment calls cannot be protested. If the protest is not approved, the protesting team is charged with a time out. If the protest is upheld, the delay shall count as an official’s time out. Official’s judgment calls cannot be protested.

**RULE 4: PLAYING AREA AND EQUIPMENT**

1. **PITCHERS MOUND**: The distance between each base will be approximately 45 feet. The pitching rubber will be approximately 30 feet from home plate.

2. **HOME RUN**: The home run boundary will be approximately 90 feet from home plate. Any ball that passes under the fencing will be a ground rule double.

3. **BALLS**: Balls will be provided by the Intramural Sports Program.

4. **BATS**: Bats will be provided by the Intramural Sports Program.

5. **SHOES**: All players must wear shoes. Tennis/running shoes are required. Rubber cleats may be worn without metal spikes. No bare feet, no sandals or no flip flops.
6. **JERSEYS/SHIRTS:** Teams are encouraged to furnish their own like-colored jerseys.

7. **ATTIRE:** Players must wear athletic attire.

8. **SUNGLASSES:** Players may not wear sunglasses that are metal or rigid.

9. **PADS/BRACES:** No pads or braces made of unyielding or ridged material may be worn above the waist.

10. **HEADWEAR:** Players are permitted to wear baseball style caps. Knit and stocking caps are allowed.

11. **JEWELRY:** No jewelry may be worn. Jewelry must be removed before the participant will be allowed to participate. Medical alert bracelets are permitted but they must be taped down. Taping of all other jewelry is not permitted.

12. **BLOOD RULE:** When a player is bleeding, has an open wound, or an excessive amount of blood on his/her uniform the player will be directed to leave the game. The injured player is not to return until the bleeding has stopped, the wound is covered, and the bloody uniform is changed.

**The Intramural Sports Staff has the right to deem certain equipment unsafe or illegal.**

**RULE 5: LENGTH OF THE GAME AND TIMING**

1. **LENGTH OF THE GAME:** The length of the game will be 6 innings or 50 minutes, whichever comes first. If at the end of the 50 minutes an inning is still in progress it shall be completed, but if the home team is ahead when they come to bat the game is over. In case of inclement weather, an official game will be 3 completed innings. During the regular season, ties are allowed.

2. **COIN TOSS:** 3 minutes prior to the start of the game, the referee will toss a coin, and the visiting team captain shall call the toss. The captain winning the toss shall have the choice of options on whether he wants his team to bat first or take the field first.

3. **MERCY RULE:** If a team is winning by 10 or more runs after the 3rd completed inning, the game shall be over.
RULE 6: PLAYING THE GAME

1. **START OF THE GAME**: The Official shall have a Captains’ Meeting before each game, where he/she will remind players of specific rules and take clarification questions from captains. The coin toss will be made 3 minutes prior to the game.

2. **PLAYERS**: Each team is required to provide a non-player to keep the score sheet during the game, who will sit together and report the score at the end of each turn at bat. If a non-player is unavailable, a protest over the score cannot be made by that team. A team shall consist of 4 players in the field, but are allowed to bat 6 players.

3. **SUBSTITUTIONS**: Free substitutions will be allowed and all substitutions must be reported to the Umpire, who will notify the scorekeeper and opposing team. Any player in the current roster can play any position in the field at any given time, provided that any substitutions during a half take place during a dead ball, but must always remain in the same batting order.

4. **PITCHING**: The pitcher shall have one or both feet on the rubber facing home plate throughout the entire pitching motion. The pitch shall be at 3/4 speed and cross the plate and between the batters shoulders and knees to be declared a strike.

5. **BATTING**: The batter starts with a 0-0 count. If a batter attempts a 1-handed swing, they will receive an automatic out. No bunting or chopping down on the ball is allowed. This will result in an automatic out. There is no infield fly rule.

6. **BASE RUNNING**: Runners may not leave their bases until the ball crosses the plate or is hit by the batter. If a runner leaves early, they will be called out and the ball is dead. When a defensive player has the ball and the runner remains on his/her feet deliberately with great force, crashes into the defensive player, the runner is out, the ball is dead, and each base runner must return to the last base touched at the time of the collision. If the defensive player was attempting to make a play on another runner at the time of the collision, both runners will be called out, and an automatic ejection from the game for the offensive player that initiated the contact. If the act is determined flagrant or intentional the offender shall be ejected. Players are not required to slide. However, if they choose to do so, they may slide feet or head first. Any runner in fair territory and not on a base shall be called out when contacted with a legally hit ball except when:

- The batted ball has passed a defensive player other than the pitcher.
- The batted ball is touched by any defensive player, but the player did not gain control of the ball.
- If a defensive player contacts a runner with a thrown ball, the runner shall be safe and play will continue as normal.
• If the runner makes an obvious attempt to alter the trajectory of the thrown ball, he/she shall be called out unless the contact in an attempt to prevent injury.

7. **FIELDING**: Each team must provide a pitcher, but there shall be no other restrictions on positions. The defensive team is responsible for returning any pitches not hit to the pitcher. There shall be no “pegging” or otherwise contacting a runner with a thrown ball to put the runner out. Upon any overthrows that cause the ball to leave the playing field and travel “out of play”, any runners shall be awarded 2 bases from the time the ball was thrown. In the event that a runner is between 2 bases, the runner shall be awarded the second base, no matter in which direction he/she was running, plus 1. The official shall determine the runners’ positions at the time of the throw and shall award the bases accordingly. If there are 2 runners between the same 2 bases, the front runner shall be awarded 2 bases, and the other runner shall receive the bases behind the front runner.

8. **STRIKE ZONE**: In order for a pitch to be considered a strike it must be legally thrown into the assigned rectangular space attached to the netted backstop. The wiffleball must also cross the plate between the front knee and back shoulder of a batter to be considered a strike.

**Rule 7: Sportsmanship**

1. **RATING**: Each team will begin the contest with a A (4.0) sportsmanship rating and shall be rated by the officials at the end of the contest. The authority of the officials’ ratings exists prior to, during, and following all contests to which that official is assigned, and extends to all persons on, at, or near the playing site. Sportsmanship ratings shall be marked on the score sheet prior to captain signing off on the score and sportsmanship rating.

   **A. (4.0) – Excellent Sportsmanship**: Players cooperate fully with the intramural sports staff and opposing team members. If necessary, the captain converses calmly with officials about rule interpretations and calls.

   **B. (3.0) - Good Sportsmanship**: Team members verbally complain about some decisions made by the intramural sports staff and/or show minor dissent which may or may not merit a conduct warning (unsportsmanlike penalty / technical foul / yellow cards / etc.). Teams that receive one conduct warning will receive no higher than a "B" rating.

   **C. (2.0) - Mediocre Sportsmanship**: Team constantly comments to the intramural sports staff or the opposing team. The team captain exhibits little or no control over teammates or him/herself. Teams that receive one ejection or two conduct warnings (unsportsmanlike penalty / technical foul / yellow cards / etc.) will receive no higher than a “C” rating.
D. *(1.0) - Below Average Sportsmanship:* Team constantly comments to the intramural sports staff or the opposing team. The team captain exhibits little or no control over teammates or him/herself. Teams that receive one ejection and one conduct warning or a combination of three conduct warnings (unsportsmanlike penalty / technical foul / yellow cards / etc.) will receive no higher than a "D" rating and the game will be forfeited.

F. *(0) - Unacceptable Sportsmanship:* Team is completely uncooperative. Captain has no control over teammates and/or him/herself. Any team that receives two ejections or four conduct warnings (unsportsmanlike penalty / technical foul / yellow cards / etc.) will receive an "F" rating and the game and season will be forfeited.

**Rule 8: Co-Rec Clarifications**

1. **TEAM:** Teams must have the same number of men and women batting, as well as in the field. If a team only has 3 players, they may play either 1 male and 2 females, or 2 males and 1 female. When the empty 4th spot comes up it will be an automatic out. The batting order must alternate between men and women and may start with either sex. Each time a male is walked he will be allowed to go to second base. With 2 outs the female batting behind the walked batter will have the option to advance to first.

2. **MERCY RULE:** If a team is winning by 10 or more runs after the 3rd completed inning, the game shall be over.