

## WELLAND LADIES RECREATIONAL LEAGUE RULES 2025

The rules as set out in the current year Softball Canada/SPOA Handbook shall apply with the following exceptions for league play.

**CODE OF CONDUCT:** Participants must behave respectfully and courteously in the spirit of Fair Play both on and off the field, not only towards the umpires, but also towards other officials, opponents, teammates and spectators. Any type of harassment, verbal or physical abuse towards other teams/players, officials, and/or league associates will not be tolerated and may result in suspension from the league for the individual(s) involved. Anyone who commits an act that could be considered unsportsmanlike conduct with result in either prompt removal or ejection of the offender from the game. The league executive together with the UIC will determine the length of suspension, if necessary, based on the information provided.

### 1: Registration/Players

1. Each team will have the majority of players over 18 years of age. However, each team may have a maximum of 2 players who are 16 to 18 years of age. Players who are 16 to 18 years of age must have a "Release and Indemnity & Consent of Parent(s)/Legal Guardian(s)" signed by their parent(s) or legal guardian(s).
2. It is the responsibility of all team captains to confirm all players have registered with SPO, have paid for the **Play Slo-Pitch** All Access Pass and accepted the PSP Player's Release, Waiver & Assumption of Risk Agreement before they are allowed to play any game. Any player who registers as a "base player" with PSP is **ineligible**. The team captain must submit a final roster to executive before the first scheduled game.
3. Each team is allowed no more than 25 players on their roster, and dress no more than 20 players per game. Any changes made to a submitted roster, deletions, additions or name changes must be submitted to Play Slo-Pitch **before August 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025**. The league executive (president and secretary) must be notified in writing of change. *(Amended 2024)*
4. The registration fee must be paid in full prior to the start of the first game of the season.
5. Any team that applies to join our league must be rated by Slo Pitch Ontario (PSP) as Recreational to be accepted in the league.
6. Each team may have no more than two (2) **A** or **B** SPO (PSP) ranked players on their roster. *(Amended 2018)*

### 2: Equipment/Umpires

1. All Slo Pitch Ontario Rules (rules of choice for the Umpires Association) apply when discrepancies occur with respect to decisions regarding rulings that are not covered by these Welland Ladies Recreational League rules.
2. No steel spikes are allowed. Rubber tips are allowed.
3. First base, catcher and pitcher are the positions that a trapper may be used. Once a trapper is noticed at any other position, it must be removed. If it is not removed, the player will be ejected from the game.
4. Balls – 11 inch must be used by each team. The home team must provide a new ball; otherwise home team advantage is lost. Visiting team supplies a good used ball.
5. Teams may continue using any bat that has the new USSSA logo, or the older "USSSA BPF 1.20" wording stamped on the bat.

6. Carded umpires are required for the umpiring of all games.
7. If an umpire does not attend your game please notify the President immediately, so we can request a courtesy game for each team involved, from the umpires.

### **3: Diamonds**

1. The home team will be responsible for lining the diamonds, bases etc. The home team must supply a mat. If a team has not completed lining the diamonds at 5 minutes prior to game start time, they forfeit home advantage. If the diamond is still not lined at game time the team must pay the umpire's full fare. The team must still line the diamond and lay out the bases even after losing home advantage and paying the fees.
2. A safety bag on first base is mandatory.
3. The first baseman must touch the inside bag to make the runner out. If the batter hits the ball to the infield, she must touch the outside safety bag at first base. If the ball is to the outfield, the runner may touch the inside bag if there is no play at first base. The runner will stand on the inside bag after being declared safe.
4. There will be 70 ft between the bases; the pitcher's mound will be 50 - 60ft from home plate. The pitcher must have one foot on the plate when starting a pitch. *(Amended 2025)*
5. There will be a commitment line (21feet from home plate) between third base and home plate.
6. When a runner is going home and steps across this line, she cannot return to third base. The runner must go home.
7. The rule for all diamonds, when the ball hits a tree in play it is a dead ball at the umpire's discretion.
8. Specific Park Ground Rules:
  - **Cooks Mills Park:** If the ball flies into the woods, it's an automatic homerun. If the ball rolls into the woods and is not visible, the fielder is to raise her hand and it will be a ground rule double. If a ball is hit towards the playground, it is all you can get.
  - Ground rule for **Plymouth Park:** If the batter hits the ball over the fence it's an automatic homerun. If it goes under the fence the fielder must raise her hand and it will be a ground rule double.
  - Ground rule for **Dain City Park:** If the batter hits the ball over the road it's a 4 base award. If the ball rolls onto the road, or goes into the bush and is not visible, the fielder must raise their hand and it will be a ground rule double. *(Amended 2019)*
  - Ground rule for **Chippawa Park:** If a batter hits the ball over the hill in right field, the fielder must raise their hand, if the ball hits the ground first and rolls down the hill it will be a ground rule double, if the ball goes over the hill in the air, the batter will be awarded a homerun. *(Amended 2023)*
  - Ground rule of **Bemus Park:** If the batter hits the ball over the sidewalk it's a 4 base award. If the ball rolls onto the sidewalk, it will be a ground rule double. *(Amended 2019)*

### **4: Play**

1. Ten players (including pitcher) will be fielded. If the tenth batter is injured, the game will continue with 9 players and the injured player can be removed from the roster and the injured player's spot in the batting order is an automatic out. If a team is playing with more than 10 players in their line-up and an injury occurs, the injured player's name is removed from the roster. The injured player **will not** be an automatic out. If there are not 9 players the game is forfeited.

2. There must be 8 players to begin a game or the game is forfeited. Any team that forfeits a game is responsible for paying the umpire fee for both teams. If the team who forfeits does not pay the umpire, the money will be collected from the team by the Treasurer. The Treasurer will pay the applicable team who paid the umpire fee. Before a called forfeit, a fifteen minute "grace" period is to occur. After a team forfeits a total of three games their next forfeit could equal expulsion from the league at the discretion of the executive. A team may not reschedule a game simply to avoid a forfeit. *(Amended 2024)*
3. **Games are 9 innings with a maximum cap of 7 runs by a team in each inning with the exception of the final inning which is unlimited.** Full five innings constitute a complete game in case of rain or darkness. Mercy rule after 7 innings if there is a 12 run advantage and the game will be called. There is a time limit of 90 minutes at all diamonds. No new inning begins after 80 minutes. Should a game be tied after 9 completed innings, the game will be continued to break the tie as long as the game remains within the allocated play time. SPO tie-breaker rules will apply. If time runs out, a tie is granted.
4. If an extra player comes late in the game, you must let the other team know and add her to the bottom of the batting order. If a player comes after **five** complete innings of play, she cannot play.
5. All players must bat. This will apply right through playoffs.
6. Every player must play in the field for a minimum of three (3) innings during a game. If opposing team believes that a player has not met this requirement, they should bring it to the attention of the opposing team's captain and the umpire by the 7th inning. If a player does not, or cannot, play at least three innings in a 9-inning game, the team will forfeit the win. *(Amended 2018)*
7. Teams may use an unlimited number of courtesy runners:
  - o The courtesy runner must be the **last recorded out** prior to the player needing a runner.
  - o The runner or team rep must clearly announce the substitution and name to umpire and opposing team's scorekeeper.
  - o If the most recent out is unable to run, either because they are coming up to bat or are physically unable to run, the team must use the out before that.
  - o If the courtesy runner's turn at bat comes up while she is still on base, she is an automatic out.
  - o If a player needs a runner in the first inning before any outs have occurred, the runner will be the last player listed in the lineup.
8. The runner cannot touch home plate or she is automatically out. A line is extended from the front of home plate. The catcher has to have the ball while touching the home plate before the runner crosses the line. If the runner crosses this line before the catcher has the ball at home, the runner is safe. The runner can only have one foot over this line and she will be called safe. No tagging of the runner at home plate is allowed.
9. Sliding is allowed, but intentional body contact is not allowed. There will be no sliding at first base or home plate.
10. The batter cannot step on the plate or mat while making contact with the ball, but the batter can step on the plate on her way to first base.
11. A foul tip **regardless of the height** if caught by the catcher is an out. **A foul tip on the third strike does constitute an out.**
12. Verbal appeals are to be made by the pitcher.
13. **The winning team must report the scores to the statistician within 48 hours** either by phone or email. If scores are not called in the winning team loses 2 points, but the extra points are not allotted to the other team, so the other teams are not affected in the final standings. Tie games both team report score. *(Amended 2019)*

14. Rain or shine, you must show up at your scheduled diamond. If it is raining it is up to the umpire to make the call whether or not the game is cancelled. Should this occur, home team must notify League President that evening.
15. In the case of a diamond wash out, the City will contact the President to cancel diamond(s) that are affected. The President will notify teams by email and or Facebook by 5:00 pm. After 5pm teams must go to diamond.
16. **Rained out games: Home team must notify President of a rained out game the same evening the rain out occurs.** Failure to do so will result in a loss for home team. Rained out games are rescheduled between the two teams. Once a decision has been reached, home team must notify the President, so the diamond can be booked. Also, the home team is responsible for contacting the Umpire in Chief (Glenn Anthony at umpire7@gmail.com) to schedule the Umpire and the President of the League must be copied on the request.
17. Rescheduling of games, with the exception of rain outs, is not permitted.

### **5: Play-Offs**

1. A player listed on a team's roster must participate in at least one-third of that team's regular season games to be eligible for playoffs.
  - Exceptions due to extenuating circumstances (e.g., injury) may be appealed to the executive committee.
  - It is mandatory for each team to retain score sheets for *both teams* for every game throughout the season. These score sheets must be made available to the executive upon request. Failure to do so will result in forfeiture of playoff eligibility.
  - Team reps must submit their list of eligible players prior to play-offs.
2. If a team cannot participate on the scheduled playoff weekend, they must notify the executive **at least two weeks prior** to the playoff date. No refunds will be issued under any circumstances, as the league is responsible for paying the city for field use during playoff weekend.
3. Any team that does not show up or withdraws during the playoff weekend will be **excluded from league and playoff participation the following season**.
4. All teams must return their home park keys to the executive at the play-offs, prior to their first game.  
(Amended 2025)

### **6: Executive –League Policies**

1. Any team which is not represented at the league meetings will be fined \$50.00 for each meeting missed. The absent team has until the next meeting or game, whichever comes first, to pay the fine or all subsequent games are forfeited until the fine is paid. Each team representative (executive members are considered to be team representatives for their team) must stay for the entire meeting or the team will be considered absent and the \$50.00 fine will apply. Representatives are considered late and therefore absent after 15 minutes from meeting start time.
2. The President of the league will be required to vote to break a tie. Therefore, the team whose player is President of the league will be required to have another team representative for voting purposes.
3. Any concerns or issues regarding umpires, field conditions, teams, or spectators must be submitted **in writing** to the President within 24 hours. The report should include detailed information such as the game date, location, teams involved, umpire, witnesses, and specific issues. Verbal complaints will no longer be accepted. (Amended 2025)

4. Filing a Protest. Protests must be made at the time of infraction and the umpire must be notified of a potential protest situation. **This is your only avenue of appeal; do not argue with the Umpire on the field.** The team must contact an executive member immediately after that game and hand in a \$30.00 fee to the league. If the protest is won, the money is refunded back. If the protest is loss, the league retains the money.
5. To ensure fair representation and balance within the league, the executive team should consist of members from different teams. If two individuals from the same team hold executive positions, only one may vote on executive matters and decisions. This rule helps maintain impartiality and ensures no single team has disproportionate influence over league decisions.
6. Any replacements for the Executive positions are to be drawn at the last meeting of the season. The new executive will take their places at that time or as soon as possible.