

FOX VALLEY ATHLETICS, LLC
LOCAL RULES AND PROCEDURES (2020)
APPLETON MEMORIAL AND WILLIE BEAMONS

Note: The current edition of the A.S.A. Official Rules of Softball will be the official rulebook for this program. Local rules and procedures will supersede where applicable. Two competing teams or managers may not agree to alter any rules, except the use of additional courtesy runners in the case of an injury.

I. Facility Policies

- A. Participants and spectators may not carry-in alcoholic beverages at any time.
 - i. This policy shall be enforced by the umpires; the Fox Valley Athletics, LLC Director; and/or designated field supervisor.
 - ii. If participants violate Policy I-A, they may be suspended from participation or their team may be removed from the league.
- B. Music will be allowed in the dugout and at the facility.
 - i. The volume of the music played must be reasonable and subject to change depending on the discretion of the Fox Valley Athletics, LLC Director; designated field supervisor; and/or umpires.
 - ii. The music must be in good taste and appropriate for a park setting with children and families in attendance.
 - iii. If the opposing team objects to the music in the dugout, the team captain must inform the umpires and the umpires will require the music to be turned off.

II. Equipment

- A. Metal spikes are not allowed. Player must remove to continue participation; refusal to do results in disqualification from game.
- B. Only official softball bats as outlined by ASA Rule will be allowed. See <https://www.teamusa.org/USA-Softball/Certified-Equipment/Equipment-Bats>.
 - i. An umpire or the opposing team may challenge whether a bat is approved.
- C. Teams must provide their own 52/300 12 inch ball. Balls must be yellow in color except during the month of October where they may be pink to support Breast Cancer Awareness.
 - i. It is the responsibility of the opposing team's pitcher to ensure that the ball meets the above requirements.

III. Players and Substitutes

- A. Batting Order:
 - i. Teams may begin, and play a game with only 8 players.
 - 1. If a team playing with 8 players has a player ejected or if a player leaves the game for any reason, that team will forfeit the game if they have less than 8 players.
 - ii. The 8 players must occupy the first 8 spots in the batting order.
 - iii. If additional players arrive late, they may be added to the bottom of the lineup.

- iv. If a player is injured or must leave the game with no eligible substitute available, their position in the batting order is left vacant and no penalty is assessed. The player may not return to the game.
- v. If a player is ejected, an out will be assessed each time that player was to bat after the ejection.

B. Courtesy Runner:

- i. Teams will be awarded 1 courtesy runner per inning.
 - 1. If the same player comes up twice in the same inning, they will be permitted a second courtesy runner.
- ii. The courtesy runner must be in the batting order and will be the player who made the last out. In coed, the courtesy runner must be male for male, female for female.
- iii. If a courtesy runner situation arises in the first inning and no outs have been recorded, the courtesy runner may be the last batter listed in the batting order.
- iv. A courtesy runner may be used at any base and may be used for the runner starting on second under the Tie Breaker rule (Policy IV-T). In the case of a Tie Breaker, the courtesy runner would be the player who made the second to last out.
- v. If the player serving as the courtesy runner comes up to bat while on the bases, they will be out on the bases. If there are less than two outs at the time, they will still be able to bat.

C. Fielding Positions:

- i. There will be total free substitution of players in the field on defense. However, there can never be more than 10 players playing in the field at any one time.
- ii. There are no restrictions regarding where male and female players have to play on defense in coed.
 - 1. In coed, all outfielders must have both feet behind the outfield coed line until the ball is hit when a female player is up to bat.
 - 2. In coed, teams may not play a 5-person infield.

D. Coed (Willie Beacons):

- i. Teams shall have 6 male and 4 female players in the field, although a team may play with less than 6 males and more than 4 females.
 - 1. Teams may field 10 players (minimum 4 females), 9 players (minimum 4 females), or 8 players (minimum 3 females). If a team fields more than 10 players, they are only allowed to bat two more males than females.
 - a. **Male players may only play on one coed team per night. Female players may sub as often as needed.**
- ii. When batting, males and females do not have to alternate positions in the batting lineup.

- iii. On a walk to a male batter, the male batter will advance to second base and the following female will be given the option of hitting or receiving an automatic walk.
- E. Coed (Appleton Memorial):
- i. Teams shall have 5 male and 5 female players in the field. You are permitted to have more females than males, but never more than five male players in the field. Teams must have 8 players to start a game (at least 4 females).
 - ii. When batting, males and females must alternate positions in the batting lineup.
 - iii. On a walk to a male batter, the male batter will advance to second base and the following female will be given the option of hitting or receiving an automatic walk.
- F. Conduct:
- i. Any player, manager, coach, or spectator resorting to unsportsmanlike conduct may result in possible ejection and suspension from league play. Unsportsmanlike conduct includes but is not limited to: threatening or physically assaulting another person; vulgar, demeaning, or disrespectful behavior toward an umpire, player, manager, coach, or spectator; excessive profanity; and throwing bats.
 - ii. **Any player, manager, or coach ejected from a game under any circumstances is automatically suspended for at least the next two games played by their team.**
 - 1. The final decision will be made by the Fox Valley Athletics, LLC Director.
 - 2. Unless determined otherwise by the Fox Valley Athletics, LLC Director, the suspension only applies to the team that the offender was playing on at the time of the ejection.
 - iii. The umpire, Fox Valley Athletics, LLC Director, and/or designated field supervisor have the discretion to direct the ejected participant to exit the playing facility.
 - 1. The manager of the team affected shall be responsible for the removal of an ejected participant directed to exit the playing facility. The Fox Valley Athletics, LLC Director or designated field supervisor will assist in this removal, if necessary. If the offender fails to leave within three minutes of being directed to exit the playing facility, the umpire will award a forfeit to the opposing team.
 - iv. It is the manager's responsibility to control this suspension and upon proven violation, both manager and player are subject to additional suspension.

IV. The Game

- A. Weather Cancellations:
 - i. Willie Beamons:

1. The moment that the fields are deemed to be unplayable, the Fox Valley Athletics, LLC Director will email all managers and post notice on the “Fox Valley Athletics, LLC” Facebook page.
 - ii. Appleton Memorial:
 1. The Appleton Parks and Recreation Department makes all weather cancellation decisions prior to 5:00 p.m. Once a decision is communicated to the Fox Valley Athletics, LLC Director, managers will be notified by email and notice will be posted on the “Fox Valley Athletics, LLC” Facebook page.
 2. If weather conditions require cancellation after 5:00 p.m., the Fox Valley Athletics, LLC Director or designated field supervisor will make the decision. The Fox Valley Athletics, LLC Director will email all managers and post notice on the “Fox Valley Athletics, LLC” Facebook page.
 - iii. Managers and players are encouraged to like and follow the “Fox Valley Athletics, LLC” Facebook page to receive all league updates.
- B. Games will begin at the scheduled starting time.
- i. **Exception – If a team is scheduled to have a doubleheader or if a men’s or coed team has players finishing up another coed or men’s game at their scheduled starting time, then the scheduled starting time shall be delayed.**
 - ii. Teams should warm up prior to the start of their game.
 - iii. If the preceding game runs past the scheduled starting time of the next game, the grace period will start at the completion time of the preceding game.
- C. A coin flip will determine the home team.
- i. Once the game begins, teams may not “flip” who is home and away.
- D. Games will be 7 innings or 55-minute time limit. No new inning shall be started after the time limit expires unless the game is tied.
- i. The game clock shall not start until the first pitch has been released.
 - ii. If there is any time left on the clock (e.g. 1 second) when the third out is made to end an inning, the next inning will be played.
 1. The umpire/scorekeeper shall have the horn function engaged on the scoreboard or timer to signify when time has expired.
 2. A team may opt to take outs without sending a batter to the plate; however, those outs apply to the next hitters who are scheduled to bat and those hitters will not bat the following inning.
 - iii. If the home team is batting and leading in score when the time limit expires, the game is over.
 - iv. Any time the score is tied and the time limit has expired, the next inning will begin using the Tie Breaker rule (Policy IV-T).
- E. The run rules are as follows:
- i. 20 runs after 4 innings.
 - ii. 15 runs after 5 innings.

- iii. 10 runs after 6 innings.
- F. At Appleton Memorial, the home run limit shall be 5 home runs per game, per team. Home runs hit after the limit has been reached shall be outs.
- G. There is no batter's box, however, the ball will be dead and the batter will be called out if at the time of contact on a fair or foul ball any part of either foot is on the plate or mat, on the other side of the plate or mat, directly in front of the plate or directly behind the mat. The umpire has the discretion to issue a warning for this violation.
 - i. The batter is out and the ball is dead if at the time of contact the batter's foot is 1 bat length in front of home plate. The umpire does not have the discretion to issue a warning for this violation.
- H. No courtesy step on a swing and miss.
- I. Over the fence home runs do not need to be run out; the batter and base runners may leave the field without establishing the next base.
- J. Three balls will constitute a walk. A strike-out will consist of any combination of two strikes:
 - i. Two called.
 - ii. One called - one swing and miss.
 - iii. One called - one fouled.
 - iv. Two fouled balls.
 - v. One swing and miss and one foul ball.
 - vi. Two swinging misses.
- K. Foul Ball/Foul Tip - The reference to the "height of the batter's head" as it relates to a Foul Ball and Foul Tip no longer applies. This change allows more opportunity for the catcher to obtain "outs" by catching foul batted balls the same as the first and third base person.
- L. Home plate and the mat will be used in determining balls and strikes. If any part of the pitched ball lands on any part of the plate, including the black perimeter, and/or mat, it shall be a strike.
- M. Arc limits will be a minimum of 6 feet and no maximum. In coed, there shall be a maximum of 12 feet for female players.
- N. On a play at home plate, the runner may touch the white home plate or the mat, and the defensive player must touch the white home plate on force outs. Runners can be tagged out at plays at home plate. If there is no play at the plate or the runner is trying to avoid contact, the runner may touch either the mat or the white home plate.
 - i. If the mat becomes displaced during a play (e.g. a preceding runner slides and the mat is kicked out into the left-handed batters box), a runner must touch the white home plate on a force out or non-force out play.
- O. No Fake Tags. Anyone caught fake tagging will be given 1 team warning. A second violation will result in an ejection.
- P. Collisions – deliberately crashing into a fielder with the ball:
 - i. When a defensive player has the ball and the runner remains on his/her feet and deliberately crashes into the defensive player waiting to apply the tag, the

runner is out, the ball is dead, and all other runners must return to the last base touched at the time of the collision.

- ii. If the act is determined by the umpire(s) to be flagrant, the offender shall be ejected.
- iii. In order to prevent a deliberate crash ruling, the runner can give up, slide, go around the defender within the baseline, or return to the previous base touched.
 1. Simply running and advancing to the base needed to be safe is not an act of interference.
 2. **While there is no mandatory slide or veer rule, runners are encouraged to slide or get out of the way on a double play.**
- iv. This rule will be strictly enforced in order to prevent injury and protect the defensive player who has possession of the ball.
- v. Fielders shall not block the base without possession of the ball (that is obstruction), they shall stand to the side of the base, catch the ball, then apply the tag.
- vi. If a defensive player is fielding a thrown ball and the flight of the ball draws the fielder into the path of the runner, this would not be a deliberate crash.
- vii. If the ball, runner, and the defensive player all arrive at the same time and contact is made, the umpire should not invoke the crash rule or obstruction – this is merely incidental contact.

Q. Double First Base:

- i. A double first base is used at all facilities.
- ii. A batted ball hitting the white portion is fair and a batted ball hitting the colored portion is foul.
- iii. Whenever a play (ball must be thrown to first base in an attempt to record an out) is being made on the batter-runner, the defense must use the white portion and the batter-runner must touch the colored portion. If the batter-runner uses the white portion, the batter-runner is out (see exceptions below):
 1. If a play is made at first base, but the ball is overthrown or the fielder is pulled off the base by an errant or missed throw, the batter-runner is allowed to use the white base if trying to advance to second base.
 2. On a play attempt on the batter-runner from the foul side of first base, or by an errant throw pulling the fielder off the base into foul ground, the batter-runner and the fielder can use either white or colored portions of the base.
 3. On extra base hits or balls hit to the outfield when there is no play being made at the double base, the batter-runner may touch the white or colored portion.
 4. The batter-runner is allowed to legally return to either color base after he or she has touched or missed first base.
- iv. Once the batter-runner has touched the colored portion of the base on their first attempt at first base, they must then use the white portion of the base:

1. When taking their position prior to the next pitch.
2. When tagging up on a fly ball.

R. Overrunning a Base:

- i. The batter-runner is not out if they overrun first base and turn *either way* unless they make an attempt to advance to second base and are touched with the ball while off base. All other runners are out if they overrun a base and are tagged with the ball while off the base.

S. Base Path:

- i. The base path is three feet either side of a direct line from one base to another. The runner does not need to run in the base path unless a play is being made on him/her. In running the bases, a runner establishes the base path (e.g. batter-runner rounds first base on the way to second, the base path is on an arc). The ball remains in play if a baserunner is called out for running outside the base path to avoid a tag.

T. Dead Ball Area:

- i. Ball Carried Into Dead Ball Area - When a live ball is unintentionally carried by a fielder from playable territory into dead ball territory, the ball becomes dead and all baserunners are awarded one base from the last base touched at the time he/she entered dead ball territory.
- ii. Catching Ball in Dead Ball Area - When an imaginary line is used for the dead ball area, it is not a catch if either foot is entirely across the line on the ground when the catch is made.

U. Tie Breaker:

- i. If a score is tied after 7 complete innings, the 8th inning will begin using the tie-breaker. If a score is tied and the time limit has expired before 7 complete innings have been played, the tie breaker rule will be used to begin the next inning.
 1. The visiting team will place a runner (the last out from the previous inning) on second base. If available, a legal substitute may be used.
 2. The visiting team has 3 outs with which to score as many runs as possible.
 3. After 3 outs are made, the home team will follow the same procedure as outlined in 1. and 2.
 4. The team that scores the most runs is declared the winner. If the score is still tied at the completion of each additional inning, the procedure will be repeated.

V. Umpires

- A. Umpires are representatives of Fox Valley Athletics, LLC and are officially in charge of each game.
- B. All calls are appealable to either umpire.
- C. Umpires will discuss rule interpretations only with managers of the two teams.

D. Umpires are empowered to eject players and managers from games for violations of official rules and regulations or unsportsmanlike conduct.

VI. Any circumstances arising that are not covered by the rule book or local rules will be left to the discretion of the Fox Valley Athletics, LLC Director or designated field supervisor.