

# **OLOM CO-ED SLOW PITCH SOFTBALL LEAGUE 2017 RULES**

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## **GOAL**

While competition is inherent in any sporting event, the goal of the Our Lady of Mercy Co-Ed Softball league is to provide an opportunity for fun and fellowship for all adults affiliated with Our Lady of Mercy Parish and School.

## **TEAMS**

Each team shall consist of a maximum of 16 players all of whom are over the age of 21 by the start of the season. Out of the 16 players, 12 must have at least one of the following affiliations with OLOM: current parishioner, alumni, parent of student or employee of OLOM.<sup>1</sup> The remaining 4 players may be “guest” players without this affiliation. The purpose of this rule is to avoid a league dominated by non-OLOM related “ringers”. Please keep with the spirit of this rule when considering a non-OLOM related person.

## **TEAM CAPTAINS**

Each team must have a designated captain and co-captain. The captain will be responsible for putting the team together, attending one pre-season meeting, communicating with the commissioner and other captains on behalf of his/her team, providing a roster to the referee on game day and for the general behavior of his/her team. The co-captain must be available to step in and act as captain when the captain is unavailable.

## **COSTS/REGISTRATION**

Registration can happen individually or as a team. The cost per player is \$40. Each player will receive a league jersey. **DEADLINE TO REGISTER IS MAY 17<sup>th</sup> 2017.**

## **CO-ED SOFTBALL RULES**

Unless a more specific rule is specified below, the League’s rules are taken primarily from those set forth by the National Softball Association for “slow pitch” games. The Rules are as follows:

### **Rule 1. The Playing Field**

All games will be played at the North and South baseball fields located on Blue Jay Field at Our Lady of Mercy. The distance between bases will be approximately 65 feet. The pitching rubber will be approximately 50 feet from home plate.

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<sup>1</sup> Any exceptions must be approved by the Commissioner

## Rule 2. Equipment

- a. **Bats.** The League will provide game bats. Players may also use their own bats.
- b. **Balls.** The League will provide all game balls which are 11 inches.
- c. **Gloves.** There is no restriction on the type of glove worn by any player.
- d. **Footwear.** Metal cleats are not allowed.

## Rule 3. Players, Substitutions & Rosters

- a. **Rosters.** The requirements for eligibility to play are set forth above. Before each game, the captains will exchange rosters and line-ups with names. Only those present may be included in the line-up. Late arriving players may be added to the line-up, but can only be inserted at the end of the batting order. No more than 2 male players may bat consecutively.
- b. **Fielding a Team.** All teams must have a minimum of 8 and a maximum of 10 players on the field defensively. Each team must have a **minimum of 4 women on the field to play.**
- c. **Forfeits.** A team must have the minimum number of players at the start of the game as set forth in section “b” above. Failure to comply will result in a forfeit.
- d. **In Game Substitutions.** As long as it does not delay the game or violate section b above, there is no limit to in-game substitutions from players on the roster who are currently not in the field. Once a pitcher is substituted, he/she may not return to pitch again that inning.

## Rule 4. The Game

- a. **Length of Games.** All games will end after 7 innings or a maximum of 1 hour. No new inning may start after 60 minutes of play. A new inning officially begins when a home team scores its 7<sup>th</sup> run (see “Mercy Rule” below, Rule 4b) or a third out is recorded. The League Commissioner will keep the official time.
- b. **Special OLOM Rule – End of Inning/Mercy Rule.** *The inning ends when 3 outs are recorded or when one team scores its 7<sup>th</sup> run. The exception to this “Mercy” rule is when either team is down by more than 7 runs in the final 15 minutes of game time, that team may bat and score as many runs as necessary to take the lead by 1 run. In this exception scenario only, once a trailing team takes the lead by 1 run, the inning ends.*
- c. **Rain Outs.** If during the day it is apparent the games should be cancelled due to weather or field condition, the League commissioner will inform all captains via email and post it on the League website. If during or just before a game an umpire or League official determines the game should be called due to weather or field condition, either one may cancel the game. **MAKE UP DATES WILL BE ANNOUNCED.**

## Rule 5. Batting

- a. ***Line-up Requirements.*** All players on the line-up must bat and in their designated order unless they are removed completely from the game by injury or ejection. If a batter misses his/her turn, it will be recorded as an out.
- b. ***Injured Player.*** If a player listed on the line-up cannot bat due to injury that player may not return to the game in any capacity.
- c. ***Missing Player.*** Any player not present when it is his/her turn to bat will be ruled out and the next batter on the line-up will be called. That player may return to the game and may bat at his/her next turn as shown in the line-up.
- d. ***Special OLOM Rule. All men under the age of 60 must bat opposite handed.***
- e. ***Bunting.*** To avoid umpire discretion and for safety purposes, bunting is not permitted. If a struck ball fails to travel beyond the painted 8 foot “bunting line” provided, that ball will be considered a foul ball.
- f. ***Special OLOM Rule – Pitch Count. All players will start with 1 ball and 1 strike. Foul balls are considered strikes. All players will be called out on their 2<sup>nd</sup> foul on the 2<sup>nd</sup> strike.***
- g. ***Special OLOM Rule – Walks.*** THERE WILL BE NO WALKS!

## Rule 6. Base Running

- a. ***Sliding.*** Sliding is prohibited. Any player who slides will be called out. If a player trips towards a base, it is up to the discretion of the umpire to determine if the runner is safe or out. **Defensive players will not be allowed to stand on top of the base, therefore impeding the runner. If this is the case the runner will be safe.**
- b. ***Base Stealing.*** Base stealing is prohibited. Any player who attempts to steal will be called out.
- c. ***Leading.*** A player may not leave base until the ball crosses home plate or the batter hits the ball. If the player takes an early lead he/she will be called out.
- d. ***Tagging Up.*** A base runner must tag up on any pop fly.
- e. ***Special OLOM Rule – Running Home.*** There will be a line marked halfway down the third base line that, once crossed, a base runner cannot return back to third base *and* the play at home will be a force. There can be no tag-outs at home plate.
- f. ***Special OLOM Rule – Runner’s Home Plate.*** There will be a “runner’s” home plate behind the established home plate for all runners to use. In a throw to home, the defensive player must use the established home plate and the runner the runner’s home plate. There are no tag-outs at home plate. The runner will not be considered safe until touching the runner’s plate. Running

to the established home plate will not render a runner safe. Likewise, there can be no play by a defensive player using the runner's home plate as all defensive plays must use the established home plate.

- g. ***Courtesy Runners.*** A courtesy runner will only be allowed for an injured player once they make it to first base.

## **Rule 7. Pitching**

- a. ***Slow-Pitch.*** All pitches must be delivered underhand and have a solid arc. Ideally, the top of the arc should be no lower than the shoulders of the batter and no higher than 10 feet. A batter may swing at any pitch thrown regardless of arc. If the batter swings, then there can be no call for improper arc. If a batter does not swing, a pitch with an improper arc will be ruled a ball.
- b. ***Calling Pitches.*** An umpire consisting of a league player from a team not playing will be provided for each game. Whether a pitch has a large enough arc is open to interpretation, and team captains are encouraged to speak with each other and the “umpire” provided prior to the game to determine what is not acceptable. A strike will be called if the pitch has the correct arc and lands on the runners’ plate (which is behind the actual plate). The ball must cross in the batter’s strike zone (chest to knees). Please see Rule 9 for further rules concerning umpires.
- c. ***Warm-up.*** Pitchers will be allowed a few courtesy practice pitches each inning and/or when they first take the mound.

## **Rule 8. Fielding**

- a. ***Players.*** Please see Rule 3b.
- b. ***Playing Requirement.*** All players who appear on the line-up must play at least one entire inning in the field unless injured and removed from the line-up.
- c. ***Infield Fly Rule.*** The Infield Fly Rule will be in effect when there are base runners at first and second or first, second and third with none or one out. An infield fly is interpreted as an “easily” catchable ball popped up in the infield. The determination of whether the Infield Fly Rule applies will be made by the umpire, ideally while the ball is in the air. (Rule Rationale: don’t drop balls on purpose).
- d. ***Infield Restrictions.*** Only 6 players may play in the infield at one time.
- e. ***Outfield Restrictions.*** All outfielders must line up a minimum of 20 feet behind the baselines before the ball is hit. A line will be provided. Failure to comply will result in the batter being awarded a base and all runners advancing one base or if the result of the play is better, then the play will stand.
- f. ***Positions.*** There are no restrictions on a player as to which position he/she may play except as specified in 3d (concerning pitchers).

- g. ***Special OLOM Rule – Wooden Fence.*** If a ball is hit over the wooden fence it is considered out.
- h. ***Participants.*** Only registered OLOM Softball League players may be in the field or attempt to field a ball. Children are not allowed to accompany their parents playing in the field nor are any non-registered persons allowed in the playing field or dugout. Any violation of this rule will either result in a base hit and advancement of bases for the other team if it is on offense or an out if it is on defense. Repeat violations will result in the parent/player being asked to leave the game.

## **Rule 9. Rule Interpretation**

- a. ***Umpires.*** An umpire consisting of a league player from a team not playing will be provided for each game.
- b. ***Umpires – Authority over judgment calls.*** The volunteer umpire will have absolute authority and the last say for any judgment call. There can be no dispute over a judgment call.
- c. ***Question Over Rule Interpretation.*** Any question over a rule interpretation must be addressed with the umpire by the captain or co-captain, only. Please be respectful of the volunteer umpire. If the question cannot be resolved between the captains and umpire, then the League Commissioner can be asked to render a ruling. His ruling will be absolute.
- d. ***Rules.*** If a particular rule is not working as intended, please bring it to the attention of the League Commissioner so appropriate changes for this or next year can be considered.
- e. ***Commissioner Authority.*** The League Commissioner has the authority to enforce any rule and/or resolve any dispute. That authority includes ejection of any player(s), allowing a team to advance bases, ruling a runner or batter out and/or ending any game at any time.
- f. ***Ejected Players.*** Any ejected player must leave Blue Jay Field and surroundings, including the parking lot and street, immediately. Game play will be suspended until he/she has left the field. Failure to comply will result in a forfeit of the game and a forfeiture penalty will be assessed. All ejections will be reviewed by the League Commissioner, Committee and other OLOM officials to determine if future sanctions are required.
- g. ***Physical Altercation.*** Physical abuse or altercation will not be tolerated. Any individuals involved in a physical altercation of any type will be expelled from the league immediately, banned for the next season and acceptance for the following season will be subject to the determination of the Commissioner and League officials. If it is apparent one individual is provoking a physical altercation but no physical altercation has taken place yet, that person will be ejected from Blue Jay Field. In addition, the police will be called for every altercation, a police report will be made and the offending individual will be legally prosecuted. Captains are responsible for informing their team of these rules.

## **Rule 10. Concessions, Conduct & Kids**

- a. ***Team Umpiring Responsibilities.*** Every team will be responsible for designating at least one team member to umpire games in the time slot that you are not scheduled.
- b. ***Alcoholic Beverages.*** Beer will not be sold at the concession stand, but each team is allowed to bring **1 ice chest** of beer to their game if they would like.
- c. ***Concession Stand.*** The concession stand will be open and running on game nights. Participants may not bring outside food to Blue Jay Field.
- d. ***Adult Conduct Requirements.*** There will be children and guests at the field during the games. All adults are expected to display sportsmanship, family appropriate language and actions during the games. Further, any person whose intoxication is apparent will be asked to leave Blue Jay Field.
- e. ***Children Conduct.*** Parents are responsible for their children. Children shall not interfere with game play or enter playing fields at any time. Parents are required to make arrangements for the supervision of their children. A parent and child may be asked to leave Blue Jay Field for any violations of this rule or any rules set forth above.
- f. ***Damage to Property.*** Any player who damages OLOM property or that of a third person is liable for that damage and is responsible for fixing same. This includes vehicles damaged due to foul balls.