SLOW PITCH SOFTBALL 2014 RULES **revised 7/8/14**

Games are played under the guidelines and rules of the current ASA rulebook. All other rules will remain, with the following exceptions, deletions or modifications:

1) The team listed second on the schedule will be the home team. The home team will always use the third base dugout, and must keep the official score for both teams. The home team is responsible for keeping score of the game. The umpire will request the number of runs scored following each half inning, and will record the official score. **NOTE:** If one team is keeping a complete book and one team is only keeping run tally marks, the complete book will be the official book. Bats will be kept in the dugout area at all times.

2) The Kirkwood Parks & Recreation softball league will be using a one and one count with no courtesy foul in all leagues. Each batter will start his/her at bat with a count of one ball and one strike.

3) Players may participate on only one team per league, where interdivisional play is involved. Players may play on only one team per division where there is no interdivisional play. Players are limited to playing for two teams per day of the week. Players must be on the team roster to participate in any game. (See roster regulations)

4) A legally pitched ball must, in the judgment of the umpire, reach a minimum arc of six (6) feet and shall not exceed a maximum height of twelve (12) feet from the ground. Any ball that, in the umpire's judgment does not meet these requirements will be a delayed dead ball. The umpire will make a visual and/or verbally signal to indicate an illegal pitch. A batter may choose to swing at the ball and in doing so negates the dead ball. In which all results of the play are valid. If the batter chooses not to swing, the pitch will be called a "ball". No fake pitches are allowed whether while on the pitching rubber or not. Pitcher must come to a complete stop prior to pitching the ball. (No walking starts or quick pitches)

5) If, after a catch, a player's momentum carries him out of bounds, the player may not return to the playing field to make a throw. The ball is dead and out of play. Out of play lines will be marked on all fields. Base runners may advance one base without liability to be put out. On Diamond's #3 & #5, the outfield fence will be played the same as an out of play line. If a player goes over the fence without having contact within the playing field, a home run will be awarded to the batter.

6) Runners may leave the base as soon as the ball crosses the front plane of the plate or when the ball is contacted with the bat, which ever comes first. If a runner on base leaves too early, he/she will be called out and a NO-PITCH will result.

7) Free substitution will be allowed to promote participation. If used, free substitution must be employed for the entire game. Players may be substituted freely defensively at the beginning of each inning, and all players present will be put in the batting order. Players arriving after the game begins will be placed at the end of the batting order.

8) No new full inning may start more than fifty-five minutes after the starting time of the game. Games tied at the conclusion of the allotted playing time will revert to the score of the last full inning played, and may be recorded as a tie. A run ahead rule will be in effect, 10 runs after five innings, 15 after four innings, and 20 after three innings.

9) Fielders must leave access to all bases and home plate. Failure to allow a runner clear access to any base will result in the runner being awarded that base. In addition, it is the runner's responsibility to avoid contact with the defensive player at all bases. If, in the opinion of the umpire, any contact outside of incidental, the runner will be called out and will be ejected from the game . A runner who initiates contact in an effort to dislodge the ball from the fielder's grip will be declared out, and may be subject to the penalties of Rule 10.

10) At the discretion of the umpire, any person who instigates a fight, provokes a physical confrontation, or attempts to maliciously injure another player, will be ejected from the game immediately, and will be suspended for an additional game(s) up to, and including the remainder of the season. Any player participating in, or continuing in, an

outbreak of physical violence, who did not necessarily instigate such action, will be ejected from the game immediately, and will be suspended for an additional game(s) up to, and including the remainder of the season.

11) Profanity Rule: If a player audibly uses profanity as judged by the umpire, both teams will be warned not to use profanity. If profanity is used again by a player from either team, that player will be ejected. If it is an offensive player an out will be immediately accessed to the team. If it is a defensive player or there are no outs remaining in the current inning for the offensive team, the out will be accessed to begin the next inning. **Please note**: no batter will be skipped in the lineup due to this out being recorded.

12) At no time will players, teams or spectators be allowed to threaten, harass, berate, belittle, make loud obnoxious remarks, "trash talk", or make obscene remarks or gestures about other players, teams, spectators, or umpires. Any verbal abuse will be considered unsportsmanlike conduct and will not be tolerated. Unsportsmanlike conduct will be left to the discretion of the umpire and failure to observe these rules will mean ejection from the game and a one game suspension. For double header leagues, the next scheduled night of play. Offender(s) will be subject to ejection from the league, without prior warning, pending further investigation.

13) No steel spikes are to be worn at anytime. If the umpire notices anyone with them, they will be asked to change into other shoes. If they do not have a pair, they cannot play until they can find another pair. Playing in sandals or bare feet is not allowed.

14) No beverages, including alcohol, are allowed on any playing territory of the field. Players who abuse this privilege, or who show signs of inebriation, will be removed immediately from the game, and will be suspended for one additional game for the first such occurrence, and three games for a second such occurrence. **Glass bottles are not allowed in the park.** The manager and players of each team will be responsible for policing themselves and their spectators with regard to conduct, abusive language as well as the physical appearance of the park during and after they have used its facilities.

15) All bats must meet the current ASA bat list to be considered legal for all divisions at Kirkwood Park. Any bat that is on the ASA non-approved bat list will be considered an illegal bat. Use of an illegal bat will result in immediate forfeiture of the game in progress. Player(s) using the bat will be suspended for that night and an additional night of play. Players have the primary responsibility to determine that the bat they use is legal. You may get the list from **http://softball.org/about/certified_equipment.asp**

16) Teams may use one (1) pinch runner per inning. The pinch runner shall be the player who made the last recorded out. In the 1st inning before an out has been recorded, the pinch runner shall be the player that is the farthest position in the batting order from the original runner. NOTE: If at any time the pinch runner's batting position is due up when he/she is on base, an OUT will be recorded. A second runner will only be allowed if a player is injured during the play and can not continue with the game.

17) Kirkwood parks & Recreation reserves the right to place teams in an effort to create a competitive balance within each division, league, or night. Any team that wins a lower division may be moved to a higher competitive division on the same night. If no higher division is offered, the team may be moved to another night offering a more competitive level of play. When moving nights, you will not be allowed to move back to the old night without moving divisions.

18) Any team that loses a division will have the option to move down to a lesser division the next year if they choose to do so. At no other time will a team be allowed to move divisions with out permission. In a case of a tie for last place in the higher division, head to head record will be the determining factor which team will be allowed to move. If still tied, the 2 teams will remain in the higher division unless there are 2 spots open in the lower division.

19) Players throwing or flinging bats into backstops or safety fences will be immediately ejected from that game.

20) The umpire(s) have the authority to deny the participation any player, who in their opinion, appears to pose a threat to themselves and/or others due to intoxication or influence by a controlled substance.

21) For all games on Diamond #4, the following rule will apply: For any ball hit over the outfield fence that touches or travels between the two center light-posts, a homerun will be awarded. Any ball hit that travels over the outfield fence between the foul-ball post and an inside light post, a ground-rule double will be awarded. Two homeruns & two doubles per inning will be allowed, any more than two in an inning will be charged an out.

22) On homeruns over the fence, a hit and sit rule will apply. You do not have to touch <u>any</u> of the bases. **<u>BUT YOU DO NEED TO RETRIEVE THE BALL.</u>**

23) The Kirkwood Parks & Recreation Department will supply a maximum of 1 new & 3 used softballs for each game. If any of these balls are hit outside of the field area, it is the responsibility of that team to retrieve the ball for play. The umpires will start assessing outs of any ball that is not attempted to be retrieved. The home team for the women's leagues will bring the 11" ball that was supplied to them at the mangers meeting.

<u>ADDITIONAL RULES FOR COED LEAGUES</u>

24) The batting order shall alternate men and women (starting with either) in the order. In the event that free substitution is employed, and a different number of male and female players are participating, a batting order for female players and a batting order for male players will be established. Female batters will continue to bat in the same order in relationship to each other, as will male batters, while the team continues to alternate male and female batters.

25) Any walk to a male batter will result in a two base award. With less than two out the next female batter must bat. With two outs the next female batter, has the option to walk or bat. The female batter must declare her intentions prior to stepping into the batter's box for her time at bat.

26) During all coed games, the men will hit the 12" ball, and the women will have the option of hitting an 11", 44/375, optic yellow ball. The coach of each team will be responsible for putting the correct ball into play for each batter. Both balls will be the responsibility of the hitting team to provide to the pitcher, not the umpire.

27) No restrictions regarding placement defensively of male or female players will be mandated. If playing with nine players, at least four of the players must be female. If playing with ten defensive players, five must be female.

<u>General Policies and Procedures</u>

<u>Sportsmanship-</u> The ump will grade each team, each night on that night's game(s).
4 = Excellent, Displayed good sportsmanship to even out the game. I.e. A runner was safe and they confessed they were out or they trapped the ball instead of catching it. (Not impossible to get but not handed out easily.)
3 = Nothing to report, the team/players did what they should of.
2 = Minor issues, single player Issue. Constant bickering/arguing for calls. (people are going to questions calls, it's what they continue to do after the question that gets them this)
1 = Major issue, multiple players, or an Ejection. (same as above but on a team basis.)
Teams that cannot carry a 2.5 will not be allowed in the playoffs (if applicable) and will not be allowed back for future years/session. A Team that receives a 1 <u>could</u> be removed from the league immediately.

<u>Rosters-</u> Each team must submit a completed roster, with a maximum of 20 players, prior to the start of the season. Failure to complete a roster by this deadline will result in forfeiture of any protested game, and the loss of opportunity to participate in playoffs and subsequent seasons. Only 4 players can be listed on a roster that is also listed on another roster from a higher division. At no time will a team be allowed to play with more than 4 players from a higher division or league. Roster changes can be submitted for approval by 4:30 p.m. of the day before prior to the playing of a team's 4th game or set of games in the summer and 2nd game or set of games in the Fall. After this time, changes can be made only for medical reasons, or if a player moves out of town. No roster changes will be allowed once a team qualifies for playoffs. All roster changes must be made on the roster provided and sent to the Recreation Department office. They cannot be made to the umpire. If you are replacing a Kirkwood resident on your roster, the replacement player must be a Kirkwood Resident. A non-resident cannot replace a resident on the roster. If you are replacing a non-Kirkwood resident, either a resident or a non-resident may replace them. A player must appear on the roster in order to legally participate in a game. Roster changes are subject to approval by the softball supervisor. All players must have some sort of picture ID at each game to establish their identity; failure to do so will be grounds for forfeiture. Each team (all players) will be checked prior to all playoff games with regard to their official team roster.

<u>Protests</u> - Judgment calls cannot be protested, only an interpretation of the rules. If a protest is necessary, **lodge the protest immediately with the umpire**. The game shall be stopped and the umpire should note which game, the score, and position of any players at the time of the protest. A written letter of protest and a $25 protest fee must be submitted to the Parks & Recreation Department no later than the end of the 2nd business day after the disputed game. The $25 protest fee will be refunded if the protest is ruled in your favor. Protests will be ruled upon within 1 week of the protest submitted. Roster protest must be done before the game begins or at the time the protested player enters the game.

Eligibility - All players must be listed on your roster filed with the Program Supervisor at the Parks and Recreation office to be eligible to play. If a team uses a non-roster or otherwise ineligible player and protests is upheld, the offending team will forfeit that particular game. Protest regarding eligibility of players regarding age, gender or roster inclusion must be made prior to the start of the game unless a player arrives after the start of the game, in which case only the player arriving late is subject to review. Individuals must present a valid state issued photo I.D. to the umpire if requested to do so to verify their identity. Failure to produce a state issued photo I.D. by the player in question are grounds for a protest being upheld. Protesting team must follow up with a written protest and fee as described above.

Strike Zone Mats- All umpires, on all leagues and divisions will use a strike zone mat.

Forfeits - If you will not be able to field a team for whatever reason, please call 314-822-5855 to allow us to inform the other team. If a team forfeits three games in the summer, two in the fall, it will be dropped from the remainder of the schedule. Additionally, any team that forfeits more than twice will lose its "returning team" status for the next summer season.

Reschedules -Games that were canceled due to poor field conditions will be rescheduled on the same night as the original games for the first two occurrences, if possible. After the third occurrence, games may be rescheduled for a different night or cancelled with a refund of un-played games, and the current standings used to determine the winner of each league.

Number of players - A team must have at least nine players present to take the field within 5 minutes of the assigned starting time, or forfeit the game(s). If a team is unable to field at least nine players at the designated game time, that team will automatically assume the rule of "visitor". Once a team has assumed the visitors' role, home team privileges will not be returned to them even if additional players arrive. If their ninth player has not arrived by the time the 1st half inning of play is completed or all present players have batted one time, the game will be forfeited. If neither team has nine players, a double forfeit will result. For coed leagues four of the nine must be female players. No additional penalties will be enforced for having only nine players. If a change in Home teams is made during the first game of a double-header, the teams will not switch Home and Visitor for the second game. (Same team will be Visitor for both games). If the first game is forfeited in a double-header league, the team that has the insufficient number of players will have 15 minutes to get nine players on the field. If they cannot, the second game will be forfeited as well.

League Tiebreakers - Tiebreakers for League play is as follows:

- Least number of forfeits.
- Two teams:
- Head to Head competition between the teams tied.
- If two teams still tied, the team with the greater margin of victory head to head.
- If still tied, this process will be repeated beginning with the team with the best record in the standings and continuing with each subsequent team until the tie is broken.
- Three or more teams (until only two teams tied, then follow two team process):
- Least number of forfeits
- Head to Head competition between the teams tied.
- Margin of Victory with all tied teams
- Fewest runs allowed head to head
- If still tied, this process will be repeated beginning with the team with the best record in the standings and continuing with each subsequent team until only two teams remain tied

Ejections - Ejected players must leave the field and vicinity of the field or a forfeit may occur. Umpires have the authority to eject an individual from the park if their action so warrants. Any player ejected from any game, will be ineligible for the next scheduled game. If it is the 1st game of a double-header, they will be considered ineligible for the second game. Any team that has three or more players ejected from one game will forfeit that game and may be subject to additional penalties. Reminder, the manager will always be accountable for the players on his/her team.