

**THE CURLING SOFTBALL LEAGUE**

**OFFICIAL RULES**

**FOR**

**THE 2011 SOFTBALL SEASON**

# **SECTION 1 The Curling League**

## **1.1 The Curling League**

- A) The Curling League shall represent those curling clubs in the Montreal area who wish to participate in a mixed recreational softball league.
- B) The Curling League is to provide the following services:
  - ◆ One field per week per pair of teams participating
  - ◆ A banquet at the end of the season
  - ◆ Rules of play and conduct which shall govern the playing of games between teams
  - ◆ A schedule of games to be played
  - ◆ Game balls for each team

## **1.2 League Fees**

- A) League fees are to be paid by each individual to their respective manager.
- B) Team fees are to be paid no later than the first Friday in June.
- C) Each team will be responsible for submitting a total of \$550.00 to the Curling League.
- D) Each team may charge additional fees to their members for the purchase of equipment.

# **Section 2 League Play**

## **2.1 League Play**

- A) League play shall commence in May and end in August.

### **2.2.1 Games**

- A) Games shall last nine (9) innings.
- B) Extra innings shall be played to resolve any ties unless weather conditions or darkness dictate otherwise.
- C) Consumption of alcoholic beverages is not permitted in any of the parks.

### **2.2.2 Rainouts**

- A) Rainouts are to be arranged by the two managers involved and the league office must be notified 5 days in advance of the game being played.

All rainouts are to be made up by August 13<sup>th</sup> 2011.

### **2.2.3 Postponing Games**

- A) The only valid reason for postponing games is due to inclement weather.
- B) In the event of a stormy day, the team managers will communicate and decide whether to play the game.
- C) The decision to play the games is to be made no later than two (2) hours before game time.
- D) The league office must be notified of any postponement.
- E) It is each player's responsibility to find out if the game is to be played.
- F) Failure to communicate may result in the team forfeiting the game.
- G) When in doubt try to play the game. Games are very difficult to re-schedule.
- H) Postponements are to be made up and arranged by the two managers involved.

## **2.2.4 Legal Game**

- A) Five (5) innings shall constitute a legal game.
- B) If five (5) innings are not completed before inclement weather or darkness overcomes the field, the game shall be restarted from scratch and play a full nine (9) innings for the game to count.
- C) If more than five (5) innings are completed, but inclement weather or darkness takes over the field during an inning and cannot be completed, the score shall revert to the last fully completed inning. In other words, the game is in the seventh (7) inning and inclement weather takes over and the game cannot continue the final score of the game is the score at the end of the sixth (6) inning.
- D) If more than five (5) innings are completed and the score is tied, but inclement weather or darkness takes over the field and the teams wish to finish the game. It shall be restarted from scratch and play a full nine (9) innings for the game to count.

## **2.2.5 Playoff eligibility**

- A) In order to play in the playoffs, a player must appear on the official team roster and have played at least four (4) games. (The roster can include the names of available spares)
- B) Official team rosters are to be supplied to the league office by August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011 The roster can be either emailed, handed in to the commissioner or can be updated on the CSL Web site.

## **2.3 Umpires**

- A) The umpire(s) have absolute authority over the play of the game.
- B) It is forbidden to argue with an umpire. The umpire's decision is final.
- C) Only team managers may discuss any disputed calls with an umpire.
- D) Any appeals of an umpire's ruling may be made to the league office, however the league office may only interpret the league rules as they pertain to the dispute.
- E) The umpire has the right to eject any player who acts in an unsportsmanlike like manner.

### **2.3.1 Supplying Umpires**

- A) If an impartial person who is not playing can be found before the game and both managers agree upon it, then this person becomes the umpire for the game.
- B) If no said person can be agreed upon and if one or both teams have an extra player, then a player who is not in the line-up at the time is to be designated the umpire until such time as said player enters the game. Then another player who is not in the line-up is designated the umpire.
- C) In the event that the before mentioned cannot be satisfied, then each team shall supply an umpire while they are at bat. Each inning, the umpire must be declared to the opposing team before the first pitch of the inning.
- D) The pitcher will be used as the third umpire.
- E) Umpires for the playoffs and finals will be selected from teams that have been eliminated.
- F) Any team renegeing on umpire duties without a suitable replacement will be responsible for the purchase of one (1) case of twenty four (24) of beer per team (both involved in the game) affected, at retail bar prices, at the closing banquet.
- G) Teams must ensure those chosen as umpires are aware of both the rules, the fact they are acting as an impartial judge and which calls they are supposed to make ( I.e. first base umpire makes calls at first base and home plate.

## **Section 3 League Rules**

### **3.1 League Rules**

- A) The league rules are to be interpreted as exceptions to the rules provided by The Canadian Softball Association.
- B) The umpires are to be the interpreters of the rules during play.
- C) The league commissioner is the final interpreter of league rules.

#### **3.1.1 Teams**

- A) Teams shall consist of an unlimited number of players.
- B) Each team must have at least two (2) women playing or shall lose the game by default.
- C) Each team shall field a maximum of ten (10) defenders at a time.
- D) There must be at least three (3) women fielded at any time in order to have ten (10) players on the field. If only two (2) females are available, then a team can only field a maximum of nine players.
- E) Each team may have an unlimited number of players in the batting order at any time. However during any team's 'At Bat' only a maximum of 5 runs may be scored. As soon as the 5<sup>th</sup> run crosses the plate, play will stop and that half of the inning ends.(with the exception of the 8<sup>th</sup> an 9th when it is considered open innings for both teams).
- F) No player can only bat or only play in the field
- G) Any ten (10) players may play in the field (respecting 3.1.1.D) so long as they remain in the batting order.
- H) If a team cannot meet the above requirements, the game shall be defaulted. It doesn't stop you from playing, just that the results don't count in the standings

### **3.1.2 Team Membership**

- A) Once a player has played more than one game for a specific team, they may not play for any other team.

### **3.2 Game Ball**

- A) A new ball will be supplied for each game to the home team by the league.

### **3.3 Substitutions**

- A) Substitutions can be made at any time subject to the following exceptions
  - ◆ A player cannot be taken from the bench to replace another player in the field during an inning; they must wait until the next inning.
  - ◆ A man may not substitute for a woman unless there are more than three (3) women already in the game.
  - ◆ A man may not substitute for a woman unless that woman has batted at least once in the game.
  - ◆ The batting team may only replace a player when that player is at bat.
- B) The preceding exceptions may be voided in the case of an injury at the umpires' discretion. This includes the situation if a player is « on standby » for their company.
- C) A player who leaves the game due to injury may return if and only if they are available to complete the team's line-up. In other words, you can't ask a spectator to start playing during the game because of an injury on the field.
- D) Players may join at ANY time during a game. The player will be placed last in the batting order.

### **3.4 Pitching**

- A) The « four (4) pitch » rule is in effect.
- B) The pitchers pitch to their own team. The pitcher does not have to be in the batting order.
- C) A maximum of four (4) pitches can be thrown to any batter (except for ground rules). If the batter has not put the ball into play after four (4) pitches, the batter is out.
- D) If the last pitch is batted foul, the batter is out.
- E) If the last pitch is bounced before crossing the plate or the batter has to cross home plate to reach the ball and is batted fair, the ball is considered in play.
- F) If the batted ball hits the pitcher, the batter is out.
- G) The pitcher cannot take a throw from the outfield, but must take a throw from any fielder from the infield. In other words, the ball must be in the infield before being delivered (either tossed or handed) to the pitcher by any defending player.

When the pitcher receives the ball, any runner who is not on a base must return to the last touched base. Once the runner has crossed the force line (see 3.7.A), and the pitcher receives the ball, the run is considered scored.

### **3.5 Batting**

- A) A batter will not be permitted to switch hit after he has taken one pitch.
- B) Bunting or **chopping** the ball is not allowed. There will be a single warning then each subsequent chop will result in an automatic out.

### **3.6 Base Leading, Stealing**

- A) No stealing is permitted.
- B) No leading is permitted.
- C) No base runner can leave the base until the ball is batted into play. Any player leading off whether accidental or not will be called out by the appropriate umpire.
- D) Tagging up on fly balls is permitted.

### **3.7 Home Plate**

- A) A line shall be drawn between third and home plate, twenty feet from home plate called the force line. This line will be agreed upon by the team captains if not in place.
- B) Any player running from third to home can not return to third base once they have crossed the force line. A player is out if they return over the force line back to third base.
- C) To avoid collisions at home plate, the runner shall NOT touch home plate. Instead, the runner will cross the line drawn behind home plate. This line is an extension of the first base line from the plate to the fence.
- D) A base runner shall be ruled out if a defender who has possession of the ball touches home plate while the base runner is between the force line and home plate.
- E) Tag outs are NOT PERMITTED between the force line and home plate.
- F) IF THE RUNNER TOUCHES HOME PLATE, THE RUNNER IS OUT.

### **3.8 Sliding**

- A) Sliding is permitted.

### **3.9 Pinch Runners**

- A) Must be the same sex.
- B) Must be the last out of the inning.
- C) The team using a pinch runner must announce it clearly to the other team before the first pitch is thrown to that batter.
- D) A player pinch run for cannot become pitcher until said pinch runner has been called out or has scored.
- E) Starting position
  - ◆ Behind the third base line (a line will be drawn)
  - ◆ Must be holding onto the batting cage
  - ◆ Cannot leave until the ball is batted into play

### **3.10 Base Runners and Obstruction Calls**

A runner is awarded the base when a fielder obstructs the runner from making a base, unless the fielder is trying to field a batted ball, has the ball ready to touch the runner, or is about to receive a thrown ball (pg. 75 Rule Book)

NOTE: "About to receive a thrown ball," means the ball must be between the advancing runner and the defensive player about to catch the ball. If the ball is outside this area, "obstruction" should be called.

#### **EFFECT**

When any obstruction occurs (including rundown), the umpire will signal a delayed dead ball. The ball will remain alive:

- 1) If the obstructed runner is put out prior to reaching the base he would have reached had there not been obstruction, a dead ball is called and the obstructed runner and each other runner affected by the obstruction will always be awarded the base or bases he would have reached, in the umpire's judgement, had there not been obstruction. An obstructed runner may never be called out between the two bases where he was obstructed unless properly appealed for missing a base, leaving a base before a fly ball was first touched, or for creating an act of interference. This runner would either be advanced or returned to last base

NOTE: Any act of interference by the obstructed player will result in the obstruction being nullified. The penalties for interference shall be enforced.

- 2) If the obstructed runner is put out after passing the base he would have reached had there not been obstruction, the obstructed runner will be called out. The ball remains live.
- 3) When a runner, while advancing or returning to a base, is obstructed by a fielder who neither has the ball nor is attempting to field a batted or thrown ball, or a fielder who fakes a tag without the ball, the obstructed runner, and each other runner affected by the obstruction, will always be awarded the base or bases, he would have reached, in the umpire's judgement, had there been no obstruction. If the umpire feels there is justification, a defensive player making a fake tag could be ejected from the game.

NOTE: In case of a "fake tag", a warning should be given to both teams. The next "fake tag" should result in the ejection of said player

### **3.11 Infield Fly Rule**

- A) The infield fly rule is in effect
- B) An infield fly is when there are less than two (2) outs and at least runners on first and second bases and the ball is popped up on the infield (the infielder must have a good period of time to position him/herself to receive the ball to be considered an infield fly). The batter is out and the base runners may advance at their own risk

### **3.12 Mercy Rule**

- A) A team may quit by « throwing in the towel » any time in the game.
- B) The eighth and ninth innings are an open innings for both teams, there is no limit to the number of batters that bat.

### **3.13 Ground Rules**

- A) Some ground rules have been set for the fields used by the Curling Softball League. Team managers should meet before each game to agree upon the ground rules.

**Infield Rule:**

- ◆ There is a buffer area within the infield that allows any hitter the peace of mind to hit the ball and believe they can safely get on base. This buffer area starts from home plate and extends one pace behind the base lines. No defending player can enter this buffer area until the hitter has batted the ball into area.

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- ◆ If the ball is batted onto 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue without previously touching the ground, it is a home run.
  - ◆ If the ball given chase by an outfielder rolls onto 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue, it is considered a home run.
  - ◆ If the ball is batted into the left field trees without hitting the ground and not being caught, it is a home run.
  - ◆ If the ball rolls into the left field tree area (crosses a horizontal line between the two trees the ball passes between) it is a ground rule double.
- B) Anything else will be discussed upon between the opposing managers and umpires.
  - C) If the ground rules cannot be agreed upon, the views of the umpires shall be upheld.

### **3.14 Forfeiture**

- A) A game shall be forfeited if a team cannot be fielded 30 minutes after the scheduled time.
- B) Teams must start games on time if the required numbers of players are present.  
Interpretation: Start the damn game
- C) Try to get the game going as early as possible because most of the fields we use rely on daylight, which has an uncanny ability of disappearing.
- D) Games scheduled to start at 7:00 must start at 7:00 there is no leeway.

### **3.15 Equipment**

- A) Each team must supply a catcher's mask to be worn at all times while in the field while a pitch is being delivered. The mask may be removed once the ball is batted into play.
- B) No metal cleats are permitted.
- C) Each team supplies their own bats.
- D) No aluminum BASEBALL bats are permitted and will be removed from play and returned to the offending player after the game is over.
- E) All bats must be legal under the current guidelines set down by the ASA (Amateur Softball Association). A list of bats (legal and illegal) may be obtained from the following link:  
**[http://www.asasoftball.com/about/certified\\_equipment.asp](http://www.asasoftball.com/about/certified_equipment.asp)**
- F) All wooden bats are allowed.

### **3.16 Standings**

- A) Standings ties are broken in the following manner:
  - ◆ Head to head competition between the teams W-L-T.
  - ◆ +/- Runs for and against between the teams
  - ◆ +/- Runs for and against overall in the league.
- B) Standings will be updated on a weekly basis.

### **3.17 Score Keeper**

- A) Home team is the official scorekeeper.
- B) Both teams are to keep score and the score after each half inning is to be agreed upon.
- C) The umpire shall be called upon to mediate any disputes.
- D) The manager of the visiting team is to sign the home team's score sheet.
- E) The home team is responsible for reporting the game results to the league office.

### **3.18 Safety Base**

- A) First base shall be a safety base. If there is a play at first base then the infielder must only touch the white section. If an infielder receives a ball and uses the orange section then the runner will be called safe in all instances. This shall be called with discretion such that incidental contact with the wrong bag will be tolerated. The runner must contact only the orange base. If the runner makes a clear intent and contacts the white section then he or she shall be called out.
- B) In the event that a ball is batted into the outfield and there will clearly be no play at first then the runner must contact the white base as they turn for second. The first baseman MUST allow the runner this path without obstruction.
- C) If obstruction occurs and it was clear that the base runner would have achieved a second base then such base will be awarded.
- D) It is the responsibility of each team captain to have duly informed their teams of this unique base and its various implications.

**Have a fun and safe summer!**