

SYNAGOGUE SOFTBALL

OFFICIAL LEAGUE RULES

2009 SEASON

OPENING DAY, FIELD LOCATIONS:

The 2009 season will begin on January 25, 2009. Our fields for the 2009 Season will be: Woodland Hills Park, diamonds #1 and #3, Balboa Park, diamonds #1 and #4, located on Balboa Blvd. at Burbank Blvd., and Cheviot Hills Park (Rancho Park) in West LA, diamond #3, located on Motor Ave., just south of Pico Blvd. Starting in mid-April, the games from Balboa Park will move to Mason Park located at 10500 Mason Ave., north of Devonshire. Also in mid-April, the games from Cheviot Hills Park will be moved to Pan Pacific Park, located at Third St. and Gardner Ave. in Los Angeles.

GAME DAY, GAME TIMES,..... THE GAME:

All games are played on Sunday, with starting times of 9:00 am, 11:00 am and 1:00 pm. Games are scheduled for seven (7) innings, time permitting. A game must play a minimum of four (4) full innings. Due to time, a game may be four, five, or six innings. No new inning shall begin one hour and fifty minutes (1:50) past the games official starting time. The umpire's watch shall determine any questions concerning the time limit, which will be official. No regular season game shall exceed more than seven innings regardless of the score (tied) and/or amount of time that may be available after seven innings are played. Playoff and Championship games will play extra innings (if necessary) to determine a winner. There is no mercy rule.

AMOUNT OF PLAYERS:

A team must play with a minimum of nine (9) players. The maximum amount of players a team can field is ten (10). The maximum amount of players a team may have in a starting line-up is thirteen (13), see next page -" batting order." At game time, in the event a team has less than nine players on hand, the Umpire shall permit a team a grace period, not to exceed seven (7) minutes, for that team to field a ninth player. The grace period shall become part of the playing time. Upon the failure to reach nine players within the designated grace period by the team with eight players, the game will be forfeited to the other team. A **forfeit** by any team is an automatic \$50.00 fine. *The fine must be paid in full prior to the start the next scheduled game. If not paid, the next game will also become a forfeit, subject to an additional \$50 fine.*

If a team forfeits more than two games, that team's Manager shall meet with the Executive Committee to discuss his/her team's problems and determine what steps will be taken (if any).

Upon the first pitch of a game, a team cannot alter their starting line-up with regard to amount of players in said lineup, except if playing with only nine players and a tenth arrives ---. If a team is playing with nine players and a tenth player shows up *at any point in the game*, that player may be inserted immediately into the lineup and becomes that team's tenth batter in the lineup.

A player (not in the starting lineup) can come into the game at anytime, replacing a player in the starting line-up. That replaced player cannot return to that game.

TEAM ROSTER:

Each team shall be permitted to carry as many as twenty-four (24) players on their roster. Each team Captain will be responsible to deliver to the League's office, on or before December 31, 2008, signed waivers and an original roster with each player's name, age, home address, phone numbers (including their cell number) and email address clearly written or typed. Managers shall be allowed to deliver their documents described above at the Managers Meeting held in January 6, 2009.

The League has a ruling on what qualifies as a player on any team. A player on any team must be a "member" of that Temple. The League refers to a member as an individual who is a current dues paying member of that Temple, in good standings with that Temple, or an immediate member (spouse or child) of a family who is a current dues paying member of that Temple. A person playing on a team must be a "Member In Good Standing", meaning one who has applied for membership, paid a regular published dues amount, participates within the temple as they choose, and is not joining that congregation simply to play on that temple's softball team. Temporary or discounted memberships are not accepted and those players who enlist with a temple for a short period of time (six months or so) and/or one who pays a discounted membership amount (\$100 or \$200), who is joining that temple simply to play softball, shall not be permitted to participate in Synagogue Softball.

The League's Executive Committee shall approve all players at its reasonable discretion. The Committee will confirm the status of each player on each roster submitted. It is the responsibility of the team Captain to conduct their due diligence relating to the background and history of all his/her players and to deliver a roster knowing all names appearing on their roster fits the criteria/spirit of Synagogue Softball rules. Managers should discuss with the Commissioner any question they may have regarding any of his/her players.

The penalty for failing to honor the rules regarding players on a team, if identified prior to the start of the season (league play), is removal of the player in question. The Manager of that team will be fined \$100.00 and suspended for the first three (3) games of that team's schedule. If said fine is not received on or before 5:00 PM the fifth calendar day following the date of the notice delivered to a Manager from the Commissioners Office, that team will forfeit the next scheduled game, and every game thereafter, until said fine is paid. If identified after league play has begun, the same penalty shall apply, with the addition of that team forfeiting all games won by that team that had a player participating who has been determined to be an illegal player.

The minimum age for a player is one who turns twenty (20) years old in 2009. There is no maximum age. Men and women are welcome to play. There shall be a limit of no more than three (3) players per team under the age of twenty-seven (27) years old.

If a legal player has played for two (2) years or more on a team and for whatever reason is no longer a member of the temple for which he/she played, that player is "Grandfathered." He/she may still play with that team. If that player has joined another temple in our league, he/she has the option of playing for the newly joined temple (team) or the team he/she had been playing with.

The managers have voted to allow a team to adjust their roster once the season has begun. A team will be allowed to add up to two (2) players prior to the end of the third week of the

season. If one or two players are added to a team's roster during that three-week period, that new player(s) cannot be a player currently participating in Synagogue Softball. If a player is dropped from his/her roster during that three-week period, that player may not be added to any team in the league during the 2009 Season.

GAME CHECK IN:

All players must sign in on their team's official game-day sign up sheet. Each player will sign their own name alongside their printed name. Managers will be responsible for bringing their team's sign up sheet to each game. Said sheet must be handed to the Umpire (completely signed) prior to the end of the first inning (we prefer it be handed to the umpires prior to the start of the game). The Executive Committee shall treat improper signatures swiftly and seriously (see penalties above). The umpire will forward the sheets to the Commissioner's Office, as pre-arranged.

Prior to the start of each game, each Manager must deliver a line-up card to the opposing Manager. Said card must have the team's starting line-up and the names of any other players not in the starting line-up who may participate in that game. Each Manager must inform the opposing Manager (as well as the Umpire) of any line-up change. Managers need not report defensive changes if those changes involve players who are in the starting lineup.

EJECTIONS/SUSPENSIONS:

Any player ejected from a game must leave the field (out of sight) immediately. If an ejected player does not leave the field immediately when required to do so, a forfeited game shall be declared by the Umpire in favor of the opposing team, regardless of the score. No financial penalty shall result from this forfeit. That player will receive a minimum one-game suspension, that being the next scheduled game, in addition to the game he/she was just ejected from. The suspended player is not permitted to attend that next game. Managers must report any player ejected from a game to the Chairman of the Rules Committee within 48 hours of the completion of the game the player was ejected from. Based on the circumstances regarding an ejection, The Executive Committee shall determine whether or not the player in question will be suspended any additional games beyond the next scheduled game. If a Manager is ejected from a game, in addition to the same suspension, he/she may be asked to meet with the Executive Committee prior to the next game he/she is scheduled to play in.

If a suspended player plays in or attends a game during his/her suspended period, that game he/she plays in or attends will be an automatic loss (forfeit) to that player's team, regardless of the outcome of that game. The Executive Committee will determine the additional suspension (if any) the ejected player may receive, as well as any suspension its Manager may receive.

COURTESY RUNNERS:

A team at bat may use a maximum of one (1) courtesy runner each inning. Voted in for the 2009 Season allows a second runner (per inning) for the C and D Divisions games. The courtesy runner must be the player who made the last out prior to the play for which a runner is needed. If a player uses a courtesy runner in an inning, and bats for a second time in that same inning, he/she shall be allowed the use of a runner again. If a player needs a runner during the first inning and an out was not yet recorded, use the player in the last position of the starting line up.

A team Manager of the B and A Divisions may request (from the opposing team's Manager) a second courtesy runner in any inning, only if truly necessary. That request may be approved or rejected by the Manager being asked.

Please keep the use of courtesy runners to the least possible. Please do not abuse the use of courtesy runners.

BATTING ORDER:

The batting order (starting line up) must be established before the start of the game. Managers must deliver a copy of their lineup (along with players not in the starting line-up) to the Umpire and opposing Manager prior to the start of the game.

The only time a batting order is altered is when a non-starting player replaces a starting player. The replaced player may not return to that game.

A team has the option to use an extended batting order, more than 9 or 10 players. The maximum amount of batters allowed in a starting line up is thirteen (13). Players within the starting lineup (beyond ten) may rotate in and out of the fielding positions as desired, but may not alter their position in the lineup.

If a player in the starting lineup misses his/her time at bat for whatever reason, that batter will be called out for the missed at bat. The next time his/her at bat comes that player could take their at bat (if available), or the team may skip that at bat without penalty.

DURING THE GAME:

There is no base stealing. There is no bunting. If the Umpire feels a batted ball was bunted, the ball is dead, all runners (if any at the time) return to the previous base, and the batter will be called out.

Runners may tag up on any ball caught in foul territory. Runners may advance one (1) base on a ball caught in foul territory and carried out of play.

A batter hit by a pitched ball will be awarded first base. The batter must make an attempt to avoid getting hit by the pitched ball, if possible. If the Umpire feels the batter could have avoided the pitched ball and did not, he/she may not award the batter first base and will call the pitch a ball.

A base runner cannot leave the base until the pitched-ball has left the pitcher's hand. If a base runner leaves the base prior, he/she will be called out.

If the catcher throws to a base (following a pitch), the base runner will be called out if the baseman tags the base with possession of the ball before the base runner returns to the bag, or tags the runner before he/she returns to the base. It is a force play. If the catcher throws to a base, any base runner may advance once he/she has tagged up.

If a player is attempting to advance on a ground ball and the defense is about to attempt a double-play, the lead runner **MUST** either go down (slide) or run clearly out of the way (into short outfield). If that runner is close to the base and did neither, the Umpire may determine the player violated this rule and call a dead ball, awarding the defensive team a double play. In this situation, the Umpire must conclude that the fielder was attempting to complete a double-play.

A base runner or batter (running) will be called out if he/she bumps or interferes with an infielder that the Umpire believes has the right to make the play affected by the interference.

A base runner must be on the base when the pitcher begins his/her delivery, or they will be called out, and the pitch is a dead ball, no pitch.

If a pitched ball rolls away from the catcher, the batter should not make contact with the ball with his/her cleat or bat (tipping the ball back to the catcher). If it occurs, the batter shall not be called out.

If there is a **close play** at home plate, involving a base runner and the catcher, that base runner must slide. If such a play occurs (again, a close play) at home plate and the base runner does not slide, he/she may be called out. It is the determination of the Umpire to decide if the play (at home) is close enough to call for a slide. This rule is an attempt to avoid injuries.

If there is a collision, at any base, that the Umpire determines to be blatant, and unsafe, the base runner may be subject to ejection from the game, and may be subject to further discipline from the Executive Committee.

No two-strike foul rule.

All fields will be equipped with the orange extended first base. The orange portion of first base is in play for the safety of a close play at first base. When a batter hits a ball and a play is about to be made on that batter at first base, the batter is only allowed to touch the orange base, and the first-baseman is only allowed to touch the white portion of the base. It is a safety feature. Voted in this season by the managers allows a batter to touch either the white or orange portion of the base as he/she rounds first base on a single or in route to a double, triple or homerun.

If a ball is hit fair and travels past first or third base, then goes foul and ultimately goes out-of-play, at the time the ball goes out-of-play, it is called a dead ball. The runner(s) get the base they were going to, at the time the ball was called dead, plus one additional base. It is important to note that it will be the Umpire's judgment to determine the base(s) the runner(s) were going to at the time that the ball went out-of-play.

TYPE OF PITCHING:

Synagogue Softball is a modified fast-pitch league. No high-arch, no loft, no side arm, no three-quarters, no windmill, no complete revolution can be made in the delivery. Delivery of a pitch will be a simple straight "bowling" type. A "bowling type motion" requires the Pitcher to bring the ball straight up, behind his/her back, at a 90 degree angle from the shoulder. The ball must not be outside the pitcher's wrist at the top of the back swing (during the back swing), and at the top, the elbow must be locked -- the arm cannot be bent during the complete forward delivery. The release must have a complete smooth follow through, with no abrupt stop of the arm near the hip. On the forward swing of the pitching arm, the elbow must be locked at the point of release and the driving hip must be squared (basically) to home plate when the ball is released.

An illegal pitch is one that the Umpire has determined violated the league's rule. The first illegal pitch called is a dead ball and an automatic ball to the batter. It is also an **automatic warning**. On a second occurrence, if that team's pitcher is called for another illegal pitch, it is an automatic ball and any base-runner(s) will advance one base. If a third illegal pitch is called on a pitcher, again, an automatic ball, runners again advance one base and that pitcher must be removed from the mound (but not from the game) at that point and may not return (as a pitcher) during that game.

There aren't balks in softball. Although, if a Pitcher does not have the ball while on the mound and going into his/her windup/delivery, the Umpire shall call a dead ball (an automatic ball to the batter), and any base-runners shall move up one base.

The Pitcher must start their windup with at least one foot on the rubber. The Pitcher is allowed to step back to begin his/her windup.

EQUIPMENT:

The participating teams must furnish all equipment, both game and personal. The league is in no way responsible for any game or personal equipment. The league shall supply all game balls.

Bats: No bat may exceed 36 inches long and no more than 2 ¼ inches in diameter at its largest part. A bat must have a safety grip of cork, tape or composition material. The safety grip shall not be less than 10 inches long, and shall not extend more than 15 inches from the small end of the bat. The handle/neck of the bat may be made of a separate piece from the barrel of the bat. The Executive Committee will provide a separate Banned Bat List to each Manager prior to the start of the season.

Cleats: Standard softball cleats only. No metal cleats, or hard plastic cleats (football cleats) are allowed. We recommend tennis shoes not be worn due to slipping and injuries that may occur.

Catcher's gear: A mask is mandatory, but chest protectors and/or shin guards are optional.

UNIFORMS:

All players are required to wear the team's T-shirt or jersey. All T-shirts or jerseys must have player numbers on the front and/or rear. The purchase of all t-shirts or jerseys is the responsibility of each respective team. Any additional pieces, such as baseball pants and caps, are optional and also the responsibility of the respective team. A player who does not have his/her jersey may play but is required to own a jersey. Any player repeatedly playing without a team jersey will be asked to wear their jersey or will not be allowed to play. Each Manager would be wise to carry extra jerseys to provide to players arriving without their jersey.

Teams should maintain apparel unity. Example: please try to avoid a player wearing yellow shorts and a purple t-shirt when the rest of the team is wearing the team's red jersey and white baseball pants.

Due to the possible need to slide, and potential injury, shorts are not recommended.

INJURIES/INSURANCE:

Synagogue Softball is very concerned with avoiding all injuries. We are aware of the "weekend athlete," the person who comes out, hasn't played ball for many years, and overdoes it and ends up with a serious and often silly injury. There is always the potential of an injury to any player at any time during a game and SS is very concerned about avoiding injuries. SS cannot and will not be responsible for any injury that may occur during a game. SS does not carry a liability insurance policy. SS does carry a specific insurance policy required by the City but said policy does not cover any type of injury that may occur from participating in our league.

Each team member will sign a waiver/release disclosure statement prior to the start of the season. Said waiver shall hold Synagogue Softball, its officers and agents, LA City Dept. of Parks and Rec., its officers and agents, the respective Temple that is associated with a team, and any player in the league, harmless from any loss or injury that may occur during league play.

SPORTSMANSHIP:

Synagogue Softball requires that each and every player conduct himself/herself in a mature and peaceful manner. Knowing how competitive sports can bring out the vigor in someone, we welcome that positive, winning spirit that league softball generates. But the spirit of this league is not intended to create any negative or destructive result whatsoever. Players must maintain a cool head.

This league will maintain a “zero tolerance rule,” and will not stand for any fighting or a display of foul, abusive, or distasteful language or behavior. Any player engaged in any conduct unacceptable to the spirit of SS will be ejected from the game by the Umpire and will be dealt with on a case-by-case scenario by the League's Executive Committee, which may result in an extended or permanent dismissal.

Players must maintain good sportsmanship at all times. Managers are not always responsible for their players' behavior. However, the Manager is expected to have control of their team, their players. We must all be aware of the spirit of Synagogue Softball. If a player continues to show a lack of sportsmanship, that player, along with his/her Manager may be asked to meet with the League's Executive Committee to discuss the issue and determine what extended suspensions (if any) may be handed out. Managers are also responsible for reporting to the League Officials any player whose conduct is not within the spirit of Synagogue Softball.

RULES COMMITTEE:

All managers become members of the Rules Committee. From that group, three (3) members will be randomly selected as an adhoc committee if and when an issue arises requiring a review of a rule or circumstance resulting from the play of a game. If and when a team(s) is involved in a dispute requiring a review by this committee, the Managers from that team(s) Division will be removed from being selected. The three representatives will review the circumstances of that respective issue only and a decision will be made. The decision this committee members makes is final, unless the Executive Committee believe an error was made by that three-man panel and may veto their decision. If so, the Exec. Comm. would then make the final decision.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

The Executive Committee was formed in 2000 to aid and assist the day-to-day operations of the league. The committee consists of up to seven (7) members: the Commissioner along with six others selected by the Commissioner. Each committee member shall serve on the committee for a one (1) year period. Committee members may be asked to return for another year. The committee will discuss and vote on league business and activities. Each member has been assigned an area of activity they will be directly involved in with the Commissioner. The committee members joining the Commissioner for the 2009 Season include: Paul Lawrence (Sinai Temple II), Corey Angel (formely of Temple Israel of Hollywood), Harry Cynamon (VBS Members), Brad Kesner (Temple Emanuel), Jim Malcolm (formely of VBS) and Joe Blachman (Ahavat Shalom).

LEAGUE FEES, BANQUET COST:

The total cost for each team for the 2009 Season is one thousand four hundred dollars (\$1400.00). This amount was adjusted (by a vote of the managers) adding \$100 per team to go to the Spring Classic. The amount, in full, is due on or before December 31, 2008. Managers will

be allowed to pay their fee at the Managers Meeting held January 6, 2009. The fee covers all the cost to run the league which includes but not limited to, the cost for all the fields for the regular season and playoffs, game balls for the regular season and playoffs, all Umpire costs including a scheduling fees for Umpires for the regular season and the playoffs, all trophies and other special awards, scorebooks for each team, team bags for those who need one, lineup cards for the season, new bases, cost to line the fields, LA City Parks & Rec. annual bond, City administration costs, City required insurance expense, league administrative costs, league miscellaneous expenses (advertising, copies, printing, stamps, supplies, etc.), full cost for the Annual Awards Celebration and Dinner, which includes ten (10) tickets to the Banquet for each team, along with other league expenses. (The opportunity to purchase additional Banquet tickets will be announced during the season).

Late payments will automatically include a fine. Non-payment will result in that team's suspension for the 2009 season.

FILING A PROTEST:

Any Manager filing a protest may do so under the following guidelines: A protest must be established immediately with the Umpire, in fact, *prior to the next pitch*, if the protest is a result of a misinterpretation of a play or rule during a game. If the manager wishes to file a protest as a result of the last play of the game, he must inform the umpire immediately. If the umpire has left the field, the manager must inform the opposing manager of his intention to file a protest and he must contact the Commissioner's office by fax, email, or by mail. If by mail, it must be postmarked by 5:00 PM of the next business day following said game.

If a protest is a result of a "Player Eligibility" violation of a rule, that protest must be established with the Umpire prior to the third out of the fourth inning. Exception: late arriving substitutes who enter a game after it has started may be protested at any time before the game ends. In either case, a written explanation must be sent to the Commissioner's office by fax, email, or by mail. If by mail, it must be postmarked by 5:00 PM of the next business day following said game. A check in the amount of \$50.00 must be sent either with the written protest or forwarded to the Commissioner's office and postmarked by 5:00 PM the next business day following the game in question. If your protest is successful, the full \$50.00 will be refunded. If unsuccessful, you forfeit the amount. These guidelines will be strictly enforced.

As always, a complete and thorough review will be conducted with any protest filed. The Executive Committee will respond to the protest prior to the next scheduled games. If a protest requires the Rules Committee's review, it may take longer than a week to resolve.

DIVISION BREAKDOWN AND PLAYOFFS:

We have four divisions; Division A, Division B, Division C and Division D. There will be no inter-division play.

In all four divisions, the top four (4) placing teams at the conclusion of the regular season will enter the playoffs. The first place teams will face the fourth place teams in the first round while the second place teams will face the third place teams. Those two winners will meet in the finals. A player must play in a minimum of four (4) regular season games to be eligible to play in the Playoffs.

If two teams finish the regular season in a tie for a playoff position, the determination of who enters the playoffs will be handled as follows: 1) Who won and lost in the respective head-

to-head competition during the regular season. If not settled, 2) The greatest margin of victory, between those teams, during the regular season. If the matter is still not settled, 3) A coin toss.

The first place finishing team of Division B1 along with the division champion, if it isn't the regular season first place finishing team, will be considered for advancement to Division A in the 2010 Season. The last place finisher of Division A will be considered for transfer to Division B1 for the 2010 Season. The team that finishes the regular season in first place in Division C and the division champ, if it isn't the first place finishing team, may be bumped up to Division B2 for the next season. In each case, the Executive Committee shall review all teams that fall in any of the above-mentioned positions for final decision as to who gets placed in a higher or lower division for the 2010 Season.

HOME TEAM:

The home team (the team on the right column on the schedule) shall use the first-base side dugout.

MISC.:

A player cannot participate in a game if he/she is wearing a cast of any type or an exposed metal hand, ankle, or knee brace. It may further injure the player and/or harm another player.

A team may place their fourth outfielder in a "normal position" anywhere on the outfield grass. Infielders may play in a defensive position located deep in the infield, or in shallow outfield grass.

Rules/situations not covered in Synagogue Softball Rules shall be guided by ASA Rules.

The Executive Committee wishes every player a safe and enjoyable season, the fourteenth of Synagogue Softball.

Rules Chairman

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