



## Middlesex Senior Softball League Rules – 2013

### General Rules

1. Batting practice is allowed before the first game. No batting practice between the games.
2. Games must begin at 9 AM.
3. 11 defensive players will be used. You may start the game with a minimum of 8 players. The other team will supply a catcher to make 9, 10, or 11 defensive players.
4. A max of 5 runs per inning. The last inning is unlimited.
5. The batter starts with a 0 - 0 count.
6. No tie games. Extra innings will be played until one team wins.
7. Intentional walks are allowed **only** in the 7<sup>th</sup> inning and beyond. Coaches are responsible to enforce this rule.
8. 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base coaches, if provided, will make the calls on the bases. The home plate umpire calls balls, strikes, and foul balls and safe or out at the home plate.
9. Swearing is not allowed. It is up to each coach to control this.
10. Coaches need to immediately intervene in any disputes about calls and resolve the dispute quickly – coaches have the final word.
11. 6 to 12 feet arc is required for a legal pitch.
12. All players are encouraged to wear any protective gear they feel necessary including shin guards, helmets or protective masks (pitchers). The league will supply 1 pitcher's protective mask and helmet per field.
13. No alcoholic beverages are allowed on the field, in the parking lots, or general area of play.

### Running and Playing Rules

14. No sliding into any base (except returning to the base – see rule # 19a). If so the runner is out.
15. If a foul ball happens on the third strike the batter is out.
16. First base will be a double base with the inner base placed in fair territory and an outside base placed in foul territory. The defensive player must tag the inner base prior to the runner reaching the outer base in order to record an out. In running to first base, if a play is being made, the runner is out if he touches the inside base or if he slides into first base. Exception: The runner may be called safe if, in the judgment of the umpire, contact with the defensive player was avoided by the runner touching the inner base. After reaching first base he may slide if he is returning to the base. On extra base hits or balls hit to the outfield, the runner may touch the inner or outer base. Should the runner return to first base, he must return to the inner base.
17. A "commit line" will be 20 feet from home plate. Once a runner crosses this line he is committed to run to home and cannot return to 3<sup>rd</sup> base.

18. Any player can pinch run but only once per inning. If that pinch runner is still on base when his turn to bat comes it will result in an automatic out. That player will be allowed to bat.
19. Overrunning 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base is allowed.
  - a. If the base is overrun the runner must retag the base before advancing to the next base. Sliding back into the base is allowed.
  - b. The runner must “attempt” to avoid contact with the defensive player if possible. This includes altering his path to avoid not only the defensive player but also not interfering with the throw during an attempted double play, etc.
  - c. In the case of a forced-out the runner **does not have to tag the bag itself**. If the runner crosses abeam the bag and beats the throw he is safe. This will be determined by the base coaches or the home plate umpire.
  - d. The bottom line to remember is the defensive player has the right to the bag and the runner must “attempt” to avoid contact. “Attempt” is the key word and avoidance will not always be successful. If the runner does not make this “attempt” and makes contact with the defensive player or interferes with the throw then he will be called out by the base coach or home plate umpire.
  - e. The defensive player must avoid the runner if he is not defending the bag. An example would be a long hit and the runner is obviously going to make it a double, triple or even an in the park home run.
20. The catcher/defensive player must make a put-out at home by stepping on any part of the entire plate including the extension.

### Special Rules Involving the Playing Field

21. **The School Field** – any ball that strikes the trees/bushes is a dead ball. If the ball hits a tree/bush in foul territory then it is considered a strike. If it happens to be the 3<sup>rd</sup> strike the batter is out. If the ball hits the trees on the fly and it is in fair territory then it is a dead ball and does not count against the balls and strikes count. The umpire will determine the call. If there is no one calling then the catcher will make the call. Final arbitration will be between the managers.

### Addendum – Overrunning techniques

1. Overrunning can be confusing. It is implemented for safety – for both the defensive and offensive player. According to sports medicine sliding is the major cause of injuries in senior softball.
2. A good rule to follow is if you are the runner “attempt” to avoid contact and or interfering with the defensive player.

Some examples:

You are running to second base and the next batter’s hit makes it possible for the defense to make a double play. You DO NOT have to tag the bag but following the overrun rule you will alter your path and run past the bag. If you cross abeam that bag before the defensive player catches the ball you are safe. Remember that if there is an overrun in this case then the runner must retag the base before continuing to the next base.

The defensive player has the right to the bag – to stand by or on it even if there is no apparent play at that bag. The only exception would be if his actions were to intentionally interfere with the runner.