



CVSSC Slo-Pitch Rules

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1. Spirit Points: The “Spirit of the Game” is extremely important for all CVSSC leagues and these “spirit points” ratings will factor into the final standings starting for the Spring/09 leagues. Each team will give a spirit rating of between 0-5 points to their opponents after each game based on how fun they were to play against (showed up on time, met the female/male player quotas, called their own fouls, refrained from yelling and had fun). Spirit scores will be kept private until the end of the season, where they will be calculated and used as the first tie-breaker in the standings.

*Smile, have fun, play fair, know the rules, and show up on time and you’ll do awesome!

*If you don’t report a “spirit score” for your opponent, they get an automatic 5 and you get an automatic 2.5 (unless graded lower by your opponents).

*Report the “spirit score” and game score to the CVSSC rep after the game. Or, if not there, email it to info@comoxvalleysports.ca or call it into Scott at 250.898.7286 by the following day.

2. Weather Policy: It is quite difficult to reschedule games, especially with a number of fields shut down for the summer, so please be prepared to play through some rain and wind during the season. Teams should show up to the field regardless of weather and give 20 minutes grace period for things to clear up (unless it is absolutely disastrous out). That

being said, all teams have the possibility of one make-up game. If this happens, schedules will be updated and re-posted online.

3. Equipment:

- **Teams:** All teams will be provided with three game balls for use during the season, and team captains will be provided with keys to access the storage room and washrooms at the Highland School Ball Diamonds. These keys will be used to access and store the bases, lining equipment and washrooms on game days only. The CVSSC has signed out these keys and they come with a \$250 fee if they are not returned at the end of the season, or if all rooms aren't properly locked after use and it results in any vandalism. That responsibility is in turn passed onto the team captains in possession of the keys and listed as in charge of the set-up and lock-up duties.
- **Singles Teams:** Teams made up of singles and small group registrants will be loaned a bat for the duration of the season, to be returned in good condition at the end of the season.
- **Player Equipment:** Metal cleats are not permitted for safety reasons. There is also a link to a list of banned bats on the slo-pitch portion of the CVSSC's website. Team jerseys/colours are encouraged and teams can notify me of a team colour and I will update it on the schedule. Of note, we have a deal with Aero Art Screenprinting in Comox (\$16 t-shirts for a single colour front and either name or number on the back). Baseball-style shirts may be a little more.

4. Field Set-Up:

The schedule denotes which teams are responsible for setting up their diamonds and unlocking the washrooms before the games and which teams are responsible for cleaning up the fields, storing the equipment and locking everything up at the end of the night. If you are setting up, please arrive early to finish the job and still get your warm-up in and lineup ready. *If you are cleaning up, it is imperative that everything is properly stored and locked away at the end of the night.*

- **Click the "Field Set-Up" link** on the slo-pitch page and it shows an image of the proper way to set up the field for a slo-pitch game. Please print off a copy of this and keep it handy to refer to for games along with your score sheets, scrap paper for line-ups and other slo pitch gear.
- **Base Locations:** There are plugs installed in the ground where the bases will go. Please remove the plugs, put them somewhere obvious on the bench, and place the bases over top. Re-install the plugs as part of the clean-up.
- **The Commitment Line** is halfway between third base and home plate. Once a runner touches or crosses this line, they cannot retreat back to third base and the play at home plate is a force play (the catcher just has to touch home plate with possession of the ball). It can be drawn with the field marking compound, or by simply carving a line in the shale with your foot and using a field cone to help visibly mark the edge of it.

- **The Home Plate Line** is directly in line with the front left edge of home plate and heading back towards the backstop. Runners must cross this line in order to score, but may not touch home plate in order to avoid potential collisions. Teams may either use a line (field marking compound or drawing line in shale with foot), or place an extra base approx. a few feet deep along the home plate line to show the line.
- **The Respect Line** is a coned off area approximately 30 paces beyond the bases. Three or four cones are used to create an arcing line in the outfield that three of the outfielders can't cross until the ball has been contacted by the bat. However, the rover is allowed anywhere within that area before the pitch. Two of the cones will serve to help extend the third base foul line and 1st base foul line into the outfield.
- **Out of Bounds Line:** Use the backstop and dugout front posts as a guide for when the ball becomes "out of bounds" on an overthrow by the fielding team. If the ball passes that invisible line on a defensive play, play is dead and the runners are able to advance one base. If a runner would've received the base they were headed to easily and unchallenged, they get that base and one more. Of note, any pop up is fair play for catching, whether it crosses the out of bounds line in the air or not. If it is caught, runners on base can choose to tag up and try to advance.

5. Match Play/Format:

- Games will be seven innings, or up to 90 minutes. There must be at least 10 minutes left in the time slot to start a new inning, otherwise the game should be deemed completed.
- Games are 9-on-9 this season (catcher, first base, second base, shortstop, third base, three designated outfielders and a rover), with teams pitching to their own hitters using the "5-Pitch" model for games.
- **Male/Female Ratio:** At least 3 of the defensive players on the field should be female as the standard, though teams may play more if they so choose. Teams can field a minimum of 2 female players in the field if they are short, but will play with one less defensive player as a result.
- **Minimum Roster:** Teams must be able to field a minimum of 7 players, including at least two female players. If a team can't field that many players within 15 minutes of the start time, the game will be considered a default with a recorded score of 20-0.
- A game of RPS (rock, paper, scissors) between the two captains before the game will decide the home team and visitor team (which team bats first to start the inning and which team bats second to finish the inning).
- Both teams are responsible for keeping score and double-checking with each other over any discrepancies as the game goes on, and at after it is complete. Links to two versions of score sheets are available on the slo-pitch page of the CVSSC website for printing and use by the teams.
- The captains should report the score and "spirit points" rating to the CVSSC after the game via phone at 250.898.7286, or email at info@comoxvalleysports.ca. Please do so by the afternoon of the following day. Standings are usually updated online each Friday.

- **Scoring Limits:** There is a “catch-up plus 5” rule in place in each inning. This means that teams can score enough runs to catch their opponent and then surpass them by 5 runs in each inning. There are no open innings.
- **Mercy Rule:** If a team takes a lead of 20 runs and that inning is complete, scorekeeping is stopped and the game is considered complete. Teams are encouraged to continue playing for fun.
- **Substitutions:** Teams can sub players in and out of whichever positions they like between innings, but not during innings (unless there’s an injury).
- **Courtesy Runner:** If a player is injured in a way that affects their running, a team may substitute another available player of the same gender and preferably similar running ability onto the basepaths.
- **Ties:** Regular season games can end in a tie, though teams can agree to play an additional inning if they have at least 10 minutes left in their time slot. In the playoffs, teams will go to extra innings to decide a victor.

6. General Rules:

- **5-Pitch Model:** Each team supplies their own pitcher. Each batter gets a maximum of 5 pitches from their own pitcher, unless there is a re-pitch based on a ball contacting the pitcher.
- **Pitcher-Interference:** The pitcher should do his/her best to stay out of the defence’s way. If a batted ball contacts the pitcher, the play is dead and there is a re-pitch.
- **Stopping Play:** Play is dead when an infielder throws the ball to the pitcher. The pitcher should not field a ball thrown from the outfield!
- **Pitcher’s Mound:** The pitcher’s mound is approximately 45-50 ft. away from home plate and in line with second base.
- **Bunting** is not allowed for both sexes. A full swing resulting in a short hit is fine.
- **Banned Bats:** There is a link on the slo-pitch page of the CVSSC website that goes to a list of banned bats. Teams are not allowed to use any bats on that list.
- **Base-Running:** There are no lead-offs or stolen bases allowed. Runners must wait to leave the base until the ball is contacted with the bat. Please respect this rule and remind players if you see infractions. Tag-ups are allowed on pop flies. Baserunners can no longer attempt to advance once the ball is back to the pitcher. Sliding is allowed at second base and third base only. All ties go to the runner.
- **OUTS** – The batting team can (i) strike out (do not put a ball in play after five pitches); (ii) be tagged out with the ball; (iii) caught out on a fly ball; (iv) forced out by the fielding team tagging the base they must advance to on a ball in play (this includes home plate after touching/crossing the commitment line); (v) hit by a batted ball, thereby affecting the fielding team’s chances of making a play; (vi) on the infield fly rule (a batter is automatically out on an infield fly that goes at least 8’ high and doesn’t leave the infield, when there are less than two outs and runners on base – thus preventing the defence from intentionally dropping the ball to get more than one out on force plays); (vii) and be called out for leaving the base path to avoid being tagged; and (viii) have an automatic “Jane Doe out” in their lineup if they are unable to have at least three females in the batting lineup

(ie. Each time the third woman in the lineup would be up to bat, she's considered an automatic out and the next player comes to the plate).

- Fair balls and foul balls are the same as all baseball leagues. The ball is judged based on its first point of contact with the ground and whether it passes first base/third base in fair territory.
- **Runner Interference:** This is when a runner is obstructed from advancing to a base by a fielder, or a fielder is obstructed from making a defensive play by the runner. It is too subjective to have one rule cover all instances. If this happens and it is not obvious what the decision should be, re-do the at-bat..
- **Foul Tips:** To be out on a foul tip caught by the catcher, the tipped ball must travel at least above the batter's head.
- **Infield Fly Rule:** This is a complicated rule used in many baseball and slo pitch leagues to keep infielders from purposefully dropping an infield fly ball to try and turn a double play or get a more advantageous out at another base. However, because it is complicated and contentious, it does not exist in our recreational league and the impetus is on the players and team captains to make sure it's not being taken advantage of with purposefully dropped fly balls. Runners are on their own to decide whether they want to try and advance or not on an infield fly. Infielders are on their own to do their best to make the catch and appropriate play.

7. Batting Lineup:

- The entire team can be placed in the batting lineup, regardless of whether they're playing defence in the field for a given inning.
- There can never be more than two guys batting in a row in the lineup, including the switch from bottom of the order to top of the order. That means a girl should be up at least every third batter.

Proper Batting Line-Up Example: M-M-F-M-M-F-M-M-F

Improper Batting Line-Up Example: M-F-M-M-M-F-M-M-M-F

- To make this ratio possible, some teams may have to rotate girls through the order a bit faster than the guys. In this instance, it helps to have separate batting line-ups for the guys and girls. In the example below of what this looks like on a score sheet where the team has only three girls, the girls would rotate through the different female spots in the batting order, taking turns being "Girl" as their spot in the ladies order comes up.

XTRA Guys Line-Up Example:

Joe, Jim, **Girl**, Jay, Gus, **Girl**, Bo, Bob, **Girl**, Lou, Drew, **Girl**.

Jane Doe Line-Up Example (only two women in line-up):

Joe, Jim, Girl1, Jay, Gus, Girl2, Bo, Bob, **Jane Doe Out**, Lou, Drew, Girl1

8. Self-Umpiring:

- All games are self-umpired. The hitting team's pitcher will be the closest to all plays on the diamond and is responsible for safe/out calls. They can defer to their first and third base coaches for fair/foul calls and close plays at the bases. The hitting team makes the calls. Please have these players be as knowledgeable about the rules as possible.
- If an umpire makes a clearly incorrect call on the play because they didn't see it or know the rules, the two captains should quickly agree on the call (please have no other players get involved). And remember, this league is about having fun and both players and umpires make mistakes at the professional levels – let alone recreational slo-pitch!
- If teams and captains cannot agree on a call and play is stalled, just replay it and have some fun!

9. Rough Play: This is a non-contact league and physical play will not be tolerated. Anyone reported as being overly aggressive, physically or verbally, can be suspended from the league at the CVSSC's discretion.

10. Alcohol: The CVSSC rents public facilities for all its leagues and tournaments. These facilities, unless otherwise stated, are unlicensed. As such, the consumption of alcohol during CVSSC league games and tournaments (unless in a licensed area) is not allowed and done so at your own risk.

11. Scores, Standings, Schedules and Playoffs:

1. Schedules will be posted with 48 hours before the first game, though they can change due to weather, field cancellations, compete levels, etc. It is up to team captains and players to double-check their sked online before each game.
2. Scores and "spirit points ratings" should be submitted to the CVSSC rep by both teams at the end of the game. If a CVSSC rep is not at the game, both teams should email the final score to info@comoxvalleysports.ca by the next afternoon. If only one team submits a score by then, that score will be used in updating the standings.
3. The standings will be determined by number of points (two points for a win; one point for a tie). The first tie-breaker will be spirit points, then point differential.
4. The playoffs will be scheduled to take up as many as three weeks of the season, or as little as one. All teams make the playoffs, but typically only the top four finishers have a shot at the championship. This allows for closer, "funner" games.
5. Playoff matches will be set by the CVSSC based on the standings at that point.

*Got questions or suggestions? Please contact us at info@comoxvalleysports.ca.