

**NEW FOR 2023-League will NOT play on**  
**Mother's Day Or July 2<sup>nd</sup>**  
**LOOK FOR 2 OTHER 2023 CHANGES IN BROWN**

Upper JoHo Softball League  
[www.questionableitch.com](http://www.questionableitch.com)  
917-685-9226

**IMPORTANT-On Game Days, CALL OR TEXT ME, DO NOT email.**

Rules for the 2023 Season (a/o 4-15-2023)

**Orange type is new for 2018**

**IMPORTANT!!-NO "CC's" or "BCC's" ON ANY LEAGUE RELATED EMAILS**

Yes, it appears silly to have to codify this, but the league has had SO much trouble with this issue. So if you have any league related issues, questions, opinions or grievances please contact ONLY the Commissioner for discussion, clarification or redress. If you must contact other managers, do it on an individual basis. Any violation of this rule will earn the perpetrator a penalty in direct proportion to the amount of trouble they caused with the offense; and email blasts invariably cause a large amount of trouble. NOTE: For clarity's sake, this rule applies only to emails composed by managers or team members. Teams are of course free to forward league emails to players at their discretion.

**NEW 2023 RULE AND POINTS OF EMPHASIS**

**New Rule Modification**

**For Rule 4.H (no leading)- Each team will be entitled to ONE warning per team sometime in the first four innings ONLY before the automatic out will apply. This is for the Regular Season ONLY.**

**Points of Emphasis-As texted to all managers, in 2023 the Parks Department will have its own squad of roaming inspectors, whose job it will be to find vioations of the terms of all permits. In addition to reporting on permitted fields being unused, they will be inspecting for the presence of the actual permit (it is on our website) AND...MOST IMPORTANTLY...for violations like open fires, use of metal cleats, AND...wait for it... smoking and drinking by participants during the games. Now, these are already league rules, but moving forward we unfortunately have to adopt a ZERO TOLERANCE policy here. Umpires are instructed to immediately eject from the field any participant (or guest) who is in violation.**

**This sucks, but we can not risk losing the permit, and that is the stated punishment from Parks.**

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.**

## **1-ASA RULES APPLY UNLESS OTHERWISE LISTED HERE**

One of the few remaining bones of contention rule-wise for the league continues to be this one. In spite of the fact that in 2011 Rule 1 was expanded to include the phrase “Don’t even try it”, frequent violations continue to occur, as managers persist in disregarding this rule. Therefore, effective immediately, managers may **no longer** jointly waive ANY rule. This means ANY manager, and ANY rule, including but not limited to start times, forfeit times, penalties for being short a woman (even if both teams are), roster waivers, et al. No exceptions. This rule **MAY NOT** be changed, **EVEN IF** both managers agree, regardless of how minor any change may seem. If circumstances create a situation where a team cannot proceed due to any rule or situation, the **ONLY RECOURSE** is to make your case **DIRECTLY** to the Commissioner, and **ONLY** the commissioner...NOT the umpire, and **NOT** any other player or manager. **VIOLATION OF THIS RULE WILL RESULT IN SIGNIFICANT PENALTIES**, (both teams forfeiting the same game in all likelihood). Continued violations could result in ejection from the league.

1a-Clarified 2013

**Game time means game time! NO COURTESY PERIOD** is allowed. Just like all other rules (see above), this rule **CANNOT** be waived, even if both managers agree. If a team (or both teams) are unable to field a legal team (minimum **8** players including auto-outs for missing women) to start at game time, that team (or teams) will forfeit that game. If it is the first game of a doubleheader, the offending team(s) must be prepared to start the second game no later than 30 minutes after the scheduled start of the first game, or they will also forfeit the second game.

NOTE: Under extraordinary circumstances, a five minute allowance may be granted by the umpire or the commissioner (if present), but it is **NOT** guaranteed. A final note on this; a player arriving late is being incredibly discourteous to the umps, to the opposition, and especially to their teammates. Have your teams on hand early enough to be dressed up, warmed-up, line-upped, and ready to be up when game time comes. Strict adherence to this rule makes the league more enjoyable for everyone involved, and minimizes stress on any non-softball related commitments we all have to deal with from time to time.

## **2-ROSTERS**

***Roster size is unlimited throughout the regular season (even after 6/25). HOWEVER, only 25 players on each team are eligible for the playoffs, and those 25 person rosters are due to the Commissioner by 6/25. Also, prior to 6/25, players can play for multiple teams (allowing early season on-site scrambling). After 6/25, one team per player but new players can be added (although only for the regular season, as playoff rosters are closed). NO legacies or injury allowances. NO EXCEPTIONS.***

NEW FOR 2015 For position week games post 6/25 ONLY—Only rostered players (playoff qualified or not) will be allowed to play in any post 6/25 position week games.

***Players who are present for games will receive credit the same as if they played, so even injured players can qualify.*** Playoff eligibility is determined by appearing in **40% for men and 17.5% for women** of a team’s games. *This translates to 9 games for men and 4 for women for a 21 game sked; 8 and 4 for an 18 game sked, etc..* [NOTE: The example shows that the number of games is always rounded up to the next whole number, never down.] In the case of a rainout that is NOT made up later, OR a forfeit announced prior to teams heading to the field, ALL players on both rosters (or in the case of forfeit only the winning team's roster) by the date of the game receive eligibility credit for that game. In the case of a game-time forfeit, only players on both teams PRESENT at the field by game time will get appearance credit.

New for 2015-In the event of an advance forfeit (meaning when the non-forfeiting is team notified of the forfeit prior to their departure for the field) on opening day, only players present for the non-forfeiting team’s NEXT game will receive the additional roster credit(s) due from the forfeit.

**NEW FOR 2011-Before each game, each manager will present a lineup card *and a roster list (all players present for playoff credit)* to the Umpire and a lineup card to the opposing manager (NEW FOR 2013). All substitutions must be announced and verified to the ump as well. Those names also**

go on the lineup card. **Lineup Roster Lists** and scores will be given to the commissioner every Sunday night.

~~NEW FOR 2017-In order to further clarify playoff eligibility... before every game umpire shall take a picture of each team as backup verification of the lineup cards. If a player arrives late, it is the manager's responsibility to call the umpire's attention to that situation, so the ump can take a photo of the late arrival and indicate the proper number of game credits due that player. Those pictures, as well as the lineups themselves, shall be forwarded to commissioner by the umpires immediately after the game. These fotos will be used by the commissioner SOLELY to support eligibility of the playoff rosters, and will provide significant evidence in the event of any eligibility rulings.~~

*Deleted for 2018*

(Clarification in 2014) As a reminder, any failure to follow the ASA rules regarding lineup card exchanges will result in a team waiving any claim to being misled about the location of their opponent's women in the lineup. In other words, it is each manager's job to know where the other team's women are batting in the order, and play accordingly. Inaccuracy in the on-deck circle is now immaterial.

### **3-GROUND RULES**

**A-TREES** whether fair of foul (including the ones overhanging and immediately behind any walls or fences, other than specifically mentioned in RULE 3E below), are IN PLAY, and considered “heavy air”. [Guideline-Play any tree contact the same as you would play a ball being blown by a strong wind].

**B-BUSHES/SOCCER NETS** are also IN PLAY. Umpire will call time and decide any base awards only if in his/her opinion the result was impacted by the bush/net. Keep playing until the ump calls time. **NEW FOR 2013-If a defensive player gives up on a ball in the shrubbery on 105<sup>th</sup> Street by throwing up their hands, the batter will be awarded a triple. On a live ball in the same shrubbery, the maximum the batter can earn when the defenders play or attempt to play the ball is three bases, but it is not guaranteed (so you might as well play the damn ball). FOR CLARITY ON THIS, if a ball is played and there is a defensive misplay which ordinarily would allow the batter to score on that same at-bat, they do NOT score. The maximum a batter can get in this situation is three bases, period.**

**C-BASE LENGTH-65'** (5' past the painted-on bases at 105th).

**D-INTERFERENCE FROM ANY OTHER FIELD/INCIDENT/EQUIPMENT/PASSERS-BY** will be adjudicated by the sole judgement of umpire.

**E-RAILING ON TOP OF WALL** is **IN PLAY** as part of the wall, as are the lampposts and benches **and trees/branches beyond the wall (clarification-2020)** immediately behind, over or in front of the railing. If a ball appears to go over the wall but immediately comes back, it is live. Any ball in this situation is to be played like the tree rule (RULE 3A) **except it is not an out if caught on the fly after contact with the abovementioned items. It is the same as a bouncing off the wall.**

**F-DUGOUT AREAS (105<sup>th</sup>)** are defined from the outside edge of the gate until 3 poles out from the gate (4 on the short-gapped side. If a live ball enters that area, it is considered to be in the dugout. If a live ball is affected by any gear or non-coaching players **OUTSIDE** that area, the ball is dead and the ruling (base awards, etc.) will be to the maximum benefit of the non-offending team. For example, if batting team is at fault, the interference would negate any otherwise legal dead ball advance. If the defenders are at fault, a base may be **ADDED** to any dead ball awards.

**G-OUTFIELD CONES** (real or imagined) are to be set on the foul lines **33 YARDS** past first and third base. When females are at bat, all outfielders (including any 10<sup>th</sup> fielder) **MUST** remain behind the this marker (as well as behind an imaginary line from the marker towards centerfield running parallel to the nearest second base basepath) until the ball is **STRUCK** (in other words, in the shape of a 164 foot diamond). Umpire will try to spot any violation and correct it prior to the at bat if possible, and the batting

team should attempt to aid the umpire; but if a violation is not spotted in advance (or in the case of a “running start” being used), if umpire clearly sees the violation during the play, the penalty is a walk to the batter (or the result of the play, whichever favors the batter more). Continued pre-pitch infractions (including during pitches not put in play) shall also constitute a violation.

**H-105<sup>th</sup> Street Fields-HOME RUN LINE** is the inside (i.e. the centerfield side) edge/crease of the arch on the wall that is the second arch from the nearest foul line. [[Umpire will make this judgment while standing on home plate](#)]. Any fair, non-rejected, and legal over-the-wall hit to the centerfield side of the line ([as it crosses the fence](#)) is a home run. Otherwise it is a single. OVER-THE-WALL HIT LIMIT IS 4 PER TEAM PER GAME. After a team has hit four otherwise legal, non-rejected hits (singles or home runs) over the wall in the same game, ALL further over the wall hits are automatic dead ball outs. **NEW FOR 2011-Any fair ball over any part of the wall by a female is a Home Run and does NOT count against the 4 per team limit.**

#### **4-PLAYING RULES**

A-COUNTS start at 1-1 throughout the season and playoffs. [After 2 strikes, batter gets ONE FOUL BALL. A SECOND FOUL IS A STRIKEOUT.](#) Third strike foul is live **only** regarding runners tagging up on a foul fly ball.

**B-EQUIPMENT-** All managers must be ready to take the field with the requisite number of appropriately gendered players AT THE SCHEDULED GAME TIME. They should be armed with:

- **a new F-12 Clincher (NOT a Clincher Gold) or Dudley City BALL for each game.** Always have a few good used balls as well in case of non-returned over the wall shots.
- a dedicated single season’s SCOREBOOK which should be used for every game (to help verify playoff eligibility)
- 2 scorecards/lineup cards for use by the umpire and other team.
- **4 BASES** (3 if a double base is one of them). Home team is to supply the bases. If visitors have to supply bases, they gain the home field advantage for the game. NOTE: 1” high honeycombed rubber bases are **MUCH** preferred for 105<sup>th</sup> Street fields. ~~Minimum base height is ½”.~~ In the case of a home-and-home doubleheader, the home team for the SECOND game is responsible for the bases for both games.
- BATS must be labeled Official Softball. Any bat used by one team is available for the other team to use.
- No metal spikes.
- The manager’s copy of the FIELD PERMIT, SCHEDULE and RULES (or smartphone to access them on [questionableitch.com](#)).

Each team should also have one player available to serve as umpire when their team is batting in the event that the league ump is not available.

C-One hour is allotted for each game. If game starts LATE, UMPIRES can shorten it (2-1 counts, 5 inns. etc.) to stay within this limit, but regardless of if that is implemented, [seven innings or one hour \(whichever comes first...although allowing reasonable umpire discretion to finish an in-progress inning\)](#) is the maximum length of a game unless extraordinary circumstances approved by the commissioner allow otherwise. In other words, tie games can and will happen. Extra innings over 1 hour must be approved by the commissioner contemporaneously.

D-RAINOUTS are highly unlikely at the 105<sup>th</sup> Street fields, which EAT WATER and remain playable at all times. Don’t assume postponements just because it is raining or has rained heavily. Make sure your teams show up. ASA lightning rules apply.

D-COURTESY RUNNERS (for 1 man and 1 woman per team per game) should be designated where

needed before the game. The rule is to use as a runner the prior person in the lineup; male for male, female for female. If that person is on base, keep moving up the lineup until a correctly-gendered person is not on base, and that person is the courtesy runner. If a person is injured DURING the game, an additional courtesy runner will be allowed for the rest of that game, providing no available substitute is on the bench and has yet to go into the game. For a second game that day, the injured player must be designated as the player requiring a courtesy runner or run for themselves.

#### **NEW FOR 2020-**

**Any abuse of the injury exemption if discovered will result in the FORFEIT of the game in question by the abusing team.**

E-PITCHING-ASA High Arc rules but with **NEW FOR 2016** **7'-15'** LIMITS. Strike/Ball is determined by where the ball lands.

#### **NEW FOR 2020-**

**ANY PART OF THE BALL HITTING ANY PART OF THE MAT OR PLATE IS A STRIKE.**

Umpire should call "HIGH" or "FLAT" while the pitch is still in the air, but lack of a timely call on this is not cause for appeal. **If batter swings at a High or Flat or otherwise illegal pitch, the result of the swing is binding.**

F-WOMEN-Must be at least 3 women in the field and batting order at all times. At least three women must actually bat each time through the line-up.

**Regular season only-If a team has only 2 women, then they can field only 9 players and the tenth spot (ninth spot if there are only 6 men) in the lineup is an automatic out.**

In the case of a man batting ahead of a woman, man must be thrown at least one strike, or the woman batting behind him has the option to walk as well. **NEW FOR 2020. Penalty for a 3 pitch walk to a man batting in front of a woman is now just a 2 base walk for the man. Woman must still bat.**

**NEW FOR 2011-For REGULAR SEASON GAMES ONLY, a team with only one female can avoid a forfeit by playing only 8 or 9 fielders, AND taking an automatic out in the 10 spot in the lineup, AND playing the lone female somewhere other than catcher, AND taking an automatic out at the start of every inning (raising the possibility of a team having only one real out in some innings).** This one woman option is NOT available during the playoffs.

#### **New for 2018**

**Playoffs ONLY. Still a minimum of 2 women required, but if there are just 2, then the team loses its EH. Also, no woman can catch, and only a 3 person outfield, i.e. 9 players in the field, but a 10 (or 9) person line-up. The last batter in the line-up is a third female slot, which is to be filled each time by whichever of the two available women the OPPOSING manager chooses before the game starts. So that chosen woman (DW) bats twice in the line-up. If DW's spot comes up when she is on base, then the other woman may take that at bat. If both woman are on base, and a woman is due up, the batter is automatically out.**

**New for 2014-When a woman is at bat, no fifth infielder (or fifth outfielder) is allowed. Also, cones have been moved back to 33 yards past first and third base. This places the lines 164 feet from home plate at the foul lines, and moving further away until they are 232 feet away from home in dead center.**

G-DH/EH-Teams are allowed ONE EH unless a fourth woman is in the lineup, in which case teams may use up to FOUR EH's of any gender, but 4 women must then bat each time through the lineup. As many gender equal (or lesser, i.e. female DH for a male fielder) DH's as desired are legal at any position. EH's may field any gender equal (or lesser) position at any time. If a team already has met the female minimum

standard elsewhere in the lineup, then mixed gender DH's and EH's are legal as well.

**H-NO LEADING**-Any runner who leaves the base before ACTUAL CONTACT is made will be ruled OUT by the umpire (NOT a dead ball foul; the runner is still out EVEN ON A THIRD STRIKE).\*\*\*  
\*\*\*-NOTE:See modification up top.

**I-RE-ENTRY** is legal. Each player may re-enter multiple times, but must do so in the same spot in the batting order. Co-ed re-entry sharing of a spot is legal, but at no time can it lower a team's minimum female requirements.

**New for 2020-Re-Entry can ONLY take place BETWEEN HALF INNINGS!Any replacement of any playing DURING any half-inning will be considered as a substitution, and the replaced player will no longer be able to participate in that game.**

NOTE: This does NOT apply to DH'S (one player playing offense for another who is playing the field) or EH'S swapping with fielders during an inning, which is still legal.

It only applies to players sharing a spot in the lineup utilizing the Re-Entry rule.

**J**-Please NO CHEWING TOBACCO at 105th. The field is too nice.

**K-MERCY RULE** is 15 runs after trailing team has completed 4 at-bats, or 12 after 5. SUDDEN DEATH.

**L**-Correct on-deck hitter required at all times, please.

## **5-SAFETY/SPORTSMANSHIP**

**A-NO PHANTOM TAGS.** Penalty is ejection of offending player and runner(s) awarded equity plus one base.

**B**-At second, third and especially home, runners MUST SLIDE OR GIVE THEMSELVES UP. Giving oneself up is defined as stopping on or before the base, slowing down **significantly**, severe swerving, etc. so as to severely minimize the chances of collision. NO RUNNING THROUGH THE BASE (except the outside base at first base) AT FULL SPEED. Fielder's and/or ball's location in this instance is of NO IMPORT. In the case of standing up coming home, a runner should NEVER score standing up while running at full speed. If the play isn't close, slow the f\*\*k up!! If it IS close, slide your ass down. Again, it DOESN'T MATTER where the ball and/or the fielders are. We know this rule can sometimes require an action that is counterintuitive to a player's instincts, but safety is of the essence. We don't want anyone hurt. It's a softball game. Which leads to...

**C-NO PHYSICAL ROUGHNESS OR INTIMIDATION OF ANY KIND** at any time. No exceptions. Penalties will be draconian. **Profanity however, in and of itself, is not illegal, except as part of an ad hominem attack, which is verboten as well, with or without profanity.**

**D-DOUBLE BASE RULE**-To be safe, the batter/runner MUST touch the OUTSIDE bag unless turning towards second on a continuous play. To obtain the forceout at first base, the fielder MUST touch the INSIDE bag only. Play will remain live until either the runner or the fielder figures it out.

**E**-If pillow bases are used, runner is allowed to step next to the base when cutting a bag SOLELY to avoid a "spill-out".

**F**-No yelling at the other team. No "I got it". No "Slide!" No A-Rod style grunt while on base. If you want to yell at someone, yell at your own team. Penalty is loss of any gains due to the distraction..

**G-ABSOLUTELY NO ALCOHOL AT THE FIELD!!!!** The Parks Department is very strict about

this. There's also a safety issue; in 2012, someone almost cracked their head open because they had been drinking. **THERE WILL BE ZERO TOLERANCE ON THIS ISSUE!!**

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## **6-PLAYOFFS (May be changed based on number of teams)**

- Top Six teams make playoffs. **MAY CHANGE THIS YEAR**
  - All Playoff Rounds are same-day best two of three, higher seed is home for games one and three (if nec.).
  - In the case of a tie for the final playoff spot ONLY, a one game play-in game will immediately precede the same-day first round (allowing for the possibility of a team playing four games in one day).
  - All other standings ties are broken head to head by W/L. The next tie breaker is fewest runs allowed. **After that, records vs. common opponents, with earliest games counting first. Then head-to-head fewest runs allowed. Then run differential vs. common opponents. Then overall run differential.** Then a coin flip.
  - Seeds 1 (and possibly) and 2 get byes in the first round, 3 vs. 6, 4 vs. 5 (or 2v5, 3v4). Round two is 1 vs. lowest remaining seed, 2 vs. other survivor. Higher seeds get field choice for series.
  - (new for 2021 only)-4/5 play-in game. 5 seed must win twice to advance. 1 seed must win only one game vs. 4/5 winner to advance.
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## **Rules for potential position weeks:**

Two games per team each on a full position day. One on a half position day.\*\* (Subject to change for balance purposes)

*In years with an odd number of teams, if half a day is open (single game, end of season), then a bye goes to highest ranking team that is NOT in a position to move either up or down in the standings based on the projected number of remaining games.*

*Then teams would be paired as 1v2, 3v4 etc. after the bye team is removed.*

*If no bye can be determined by the above system, the bye goes to the team LEAST likely to be affected in the standings by position week results.*

*If 'least likely' results in a mathematical tie(s), then bye will be chosen based upon commissioner's opinion of most likely outcome leading to least likely change.*

If a full day is open (two games), OR single game on the first of 2 position weeks, the same procedure as above would be followed for the first game to be played that day; 2 games at 3pm, 2 games at 4pm with different teams, then, for the 5+6pm games...the standings are recalculated, and the same procedure is followed.

*Any potential second/third/fourth position week games are done the same way. HOWEVER NO TEAM WILL HAVE MORE THAN ONE POSITION WEEK 'BYE', unless they request it AND are not in a position where skipping the extra game(s) could affect any potential playoff seedings for THE REQUESTING TEAM'S position in the standings.*

*If more than one team can and does request this, then priority goes to the lower seed first.*

*\*\*If no bye situations or requests in position week, one team may have only a single game rather than two position games that week. Could result in very unbalance sked.*

*\*\* If position weeks result in an uneven number of games played, first tie breaker is winning*

*percentage.*

**ALSO:**

If position week games result in a team dropping from playoff to non-playoff eligible, due to unbalanced and non-head to head position week games, then a play-in game would be held to give that team a chance to correct such unfairness.

Simply put--a team cannot lose their playoff chance due solely to position week results UNLESS it had a head-to-head game vs. the team that passed it.

Here's an example of how this small possibility might play out:

*We get almost no rain, so there are 3 position week games to be played. Team A (6th place) leads B (8th) by 2 games, and holds the tiebreaker. Team B (starting in eighth place) sweeps the 9th, 8th and 7th seeds WHILE Team A loses three games to HIGHER (including the initially 7th place team) seeds.  
In this case A+B would have a "PLAY IN " game for the final seed.*

If one of the games B had won was against A, then no play-in game would be necessary.

**FINALLY:**

The just mentioned scenario ONLY applies to a situation where a team is unfairly (due to an unbalanced schedule) knocked entirely out of the playoffs. If position week games change any other seedings, so be it; the results stand as played.

**HIGHER SEED IS HOME IN POSITION WEEK GAMES!!**