## An intro to the rules of CCSA softball

## The CCSA pre-game

- Arrive at the field ~30 minutes before the scheduled game to get changed and warm up
- Find a partner to toss with
- Ask if leaders need help with setting up bases, etc.


## CCSA conduct

- The following result in automatic ejections:
- Dangerous play, fighting or any actions that provoke fighting.
- Smoking/vaping, alcoholic beverages, or drugs at CCSA games or events.
- Swearing, anything said in spite, excessive anger, threats, or clearly unsportsmanlike behaviour
- The following behaviour receive one warning, followed by ejection:
- Heckling of other players
- Making verbal calls on plays before the umpires


## The softball diamond and game format

## The playing field




## The playing field




## The playing field

- Anybody entering the playing field must have a signed waiver
- Bounded the backstop fence, extending to the outfield fence
- Outside of this boundary, the ball is dead



## The playing field

- The area within the foul lines covered by the infielders:
- 1st, 2nd, 3rd base fielders
- shortstop
- catcher
- Approximately the gravelled area (but not necessarily)



## The playing field

- The area within the foul lines and the outfield fence not covered by infielders.
- Approximately the grassy area



## Game format

- A full CCSA game consists of 8 innings
- Minimum 5 innings in case of weather, etc..
- Each inning has two halves: "top" and "bottom"
- Home team fields first in an inning, away team bats first
- Switch in "bottom" half
- Each inning ends when either:
- 3 outs OR
- 5 runs scored ("mercy rule")
- The mercy rule does not apply during the last inning


## Softball offence

## A turn-at-bat: the offensive team

1. The batter goes up to the plate
2. Fielders return to their positions
3. The umpire declares the ball is live by calling "play ball!"
4. The pitcher will deliver up to 3 pitches
5. If the ball is successfully hit and in-play, the batter (and any existing runners) will run around the bases in order
a. Goal: run around the diamond through as many bases as possible
6. Once play is stopped, the ball is returned to the pitcher
7. The umpire declares the turn-at-bat is over by calling TIME

## Batting

- All players get 3 pitches (not strikes)
- The batter becomes a batter-runner if they legally hit a fair ball
- The batter is out:
- If there is no fair batted ball after 3 pitches
- On a chopped ball, bunt, or half swing
- Judged by the umpire based on the swing, not the ball trajectory
- If the batter steps out of the batter's box when the batter is hit (ie. stepping on, or in front of home plate)
- If the batter loses control of the bat

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## Hitting a ball out of the park

- Back fence: foul ball, bat better next time -
- Parks with no home run fence: Ground rule double
- Parks with a home run fence: The CCSA "match + 1" rule
- Each team may hit one home run more than the other
- Hits over the fence exceeding this limit are called out
- Example: Team A has 1 home run. Team B has 0.
- If Team A hits another ball over the fence, that batter is out.
- If Team B hits 1 HR, then team A hits another HR, it counts as a HR.
- If Team B hits 3 HR, 2 will count, and the 3rd will be an out.


## Foul vs fair

## A ball is foul if:

- It touches anything not part of the field in foul territory

The batter \& bat are in considered foul territory
Otherwise, a ball is fair if:

- It touches a fielder in fair territory
- The last place the ball touches in the infield is fair
- settles in the infield
- touches the ground, and leaves the infield in fair territory
- The first place the ball touches in the outfield is fair


## Pitching

- The pitcher is from the batter's team
- Can be anybody in the batting lineup
- Can be switched out anytime, within reason
- Must throw the ball underhand
- The pitcher must throw the ball with at least one foot behind the pitcher's line



## The batter-runner

- The batter becomes a batter-runner if they legally hit a fair ball
- Goal: run to first base (or further) before the ball gets to first base, without getting out
- Drop the bat before stepping on 1st base
- Must step on orange if infield hit or 1 B is at the base
- There will be a base coach at 1st base who will tell you

- Stop at 1st: turn towards the foul line
- Continue to 2nd: turn towards 2nd base


## Runners

Goal: Run as many bases (eventually home) without getting out

## CISTEN TO YOUR BASE COACH

- Runners may run as soon as the ball is hit
- A runner is out if they lose contact with the base before the ball is hit
- If it is a fly ball, you must touch the base at least
 once after the ball is caught before proceeding ("tagging up")


## Runners: Outs

- Tag out: a fielder touches a runner with the ball in hand when the runner is not on a base
- Force out: a fielder steps on a base a runner must run to
- If a fielder steps on a base that a runner is headed to, but it is not a forced run, the runner isn't automatically out. The runner must still be tagged out.


## Example of a force out:

R1 must run to 2nd base because BR will need to occupy 1st base.

2B can step on the 2nd base bag to get R1 out

## Runners: Outs

- Tag out: a fielder touches a runner with the ball in hand when the runner is not on a base
- Force out: a fielder steps on a base a runner must run to
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## Example of a NON-forced runner

If the ball is thrown to 3rd base, neither R2 nor R3 are out.

R2/R3 must be tagged with the ball first.

## Running home

To prevent collisions at home plate between fielders and runners, the CCSA uses the commitment line rule.

- Runners must not step on the home plate when running home
- Fielders may not tag runners out at home


## Instead:

- Runners score by stepping on or past the safe line

- Runners are out if a fielder steps on home plate while in control of the ball, if the runner has stepped past the commitment line (ie. has committed to running home)


## Running home

## The commitment line:

- A runner is committed if they step completely past the line
- Committed runners are out if a fielder steps on home plate with the ball
- You may go back to tag up if needed

The safe line:

- A runner is safe if they touch or pass the line


Runners who step on home are out for interference

## Runners: Tagging up

Special case for runners on a fly ball.

- A fly ball is a batted ball caught directly by a fielder before it touches the field


## Effect:

- Runners are forced to return to their original bases (before proceeding)
- Will be out if a fielder steps on the base before
 the runner returns


## Base running, other notes

- Sliding into any base is allowed except for home
- Interference, if the slide was obviously intended to injure or disrupt a fielder
- Except for 1st base, if you overrun a base, you are liable to be tagged out
- If a base is dislodged, the ball is still live
- Run to approximate base location if the bag is "unreasonably out of position"
- Otherwise, or when in doubt, run to the dislodged base bag


## Advanced concepts

## Interference

tldr: Runners should stay clear of fielders and the ball
"An offensive player or team member that impedes, hinders, or confuses a defensive player attempting to execute a play."

- Effect: Automatic out, ball is dead


## Examples:

- Pretending to be a fielder (verbally or by your movement)
- Blocking a fielder
- Pushing a fielder
- Kicking the ball


## Advanced concepts

## The base path

tldr: Run straight from one base to another

The established base path is an imaginary line 1.0 m directly connecting the runner and the next base bag.

- The base path is established when a fielder is attempting to tag a runner

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## Advanced concepts

## The batting order

- Players bat in a defined order for the entire game, determined by the coach at the beginning. (the batting order)
- The position in the batting order does not reset between innings
- After the last batter, we start again with the first batter
- CCSA rule: No more than 3 male players may bat consecutively.
- May alternate male batters in order to meet this requirement


## Advanced concepts

## Injured players and batting order

- Injured players are skipped in the batting lineup and will not be called out
- If an injury causes the 3M:1F batting order to be violated:
- The F batter slot is not skipped
- The remaining F batters will rotate, in reverse order to cover that batting slot


## Advanced concepts

## Substitute runners

Each team is limited to 3 substitutions, for injuries only.

- 3 substitution instances, not unlimited substitutions for 3 players
- The substitute may be any player of the same sex who is registered on the team
- If a player is on base as a substitute runner when it is their turn at bat, the batter is called out
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## Softball defense

## Fielder positions

## CT: Catcher

1B/2B/3B: Base fielders
SS: Short stop (typically controls infield)

L/C/RF: Left, center, right fielders
L/RR: Left, right rovers
(Center fielder typically controls outfield)


## The turn-at-bat: defensive team

1. The offence will bat the ball somewhere
2. The defense aims to catch or control the ball as quickly as possible and move it infield
3. Goal: Use the ball to force or tag out offensive runners and stop runners from leaving their bases and running further
4. Once all runners have stopped, the infielder calls "PITCHER" and returns the ball to the pitcher
5. The umpire calls "TIME" to end the play

## Fielding the batted ball

- Fly ball: If a batted ball is caught before it touches anything or object other than an offensive player
- Usually refers to catching a batted ball in mid-air before it hits the ground
- Back-catchers can also catch fly balls
- Effect: the batter is out, but the ball is live.
- The ball cannot be caught with your hat or a thrown glove.


## The outfield

- 150 line: Outfielders must not be closer than 150 ft to home plate at the time the ball is hit
- Outfielders must not throw to 1st base
- Outfielders may enter the infield, but it might get crowded
- Generally, return the ball to the shortstop.
- Even if you catch a fly ball, the ball is not dead, return it ASAP.
- Save the celebration for after the umpire calls TIME
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## The infield

- Tag out: a fielder touches a runner with the ball in hand when the runner is not on a base
- Force out: a fielder steps on a base a runner must run to
- Stay off the base bag and out of the runner's way unless you are actively making a play
- ie. catching a batted or thrown ball; or making a tag or forced out with the ball
- Phantom tag: Pretending to tag a player without the ball
- Only tag with the hand holding the ball


## The infield

- Player's line: imaginary line from 1st to 3rd base that all infielders must start behind when the ball is hit.


## Ending the inning

- All play must stop (cannot throw to the pitcher if runners are still moving)
- Only someone standing in the infield can throw to the pitcher
- Call PITCHER first

Advanced concepts

## Intentionally dropped ball

- Prevents defense from "unfair" double/triple play

Advanced concepts

## Intentionally dropped ball



## Advanced concepts

## Intentionally dropped ball

- Prevents defense from "unfair" double/triple play
- IDB is called when:
- There are less than 2 outs
- There is a runner on 1st base
- A ball is controlled by a fielder, THEN
- The ball is intentionally dropped in a way that it can be easily controlled again
- Outcome: Ball is dead, batter is out, runners return to their bases



## Advanced concepts

## Infield fly

- Similar reasoning to IDB
- If runners on 1 and 2 , less than 2 outs
- In the umpire's opinion: if the ball is batted high and looks easily catchable with ordinary effort by an infielder
- Umpire calls "INFIELD FLY!"
- Batter is out
- The ball is live
- Runners may advance
- Runners must tag up when the ball hits the ground
- Infield fly takes precedence over IDB


## Advanced concepts

## Obstruction

tldr: if not catching the ball or making a play, stay out of the way of runners.

- If a defensive player impedes the progress of a runner while:
- not in possession of the ball
- not attempting to field the ball
- not making a play on the runner
- Includes:
- attempts to tag a runner after the commitment line at home plate
- staying on a base or in the base path when the ball isn't coming to you
- stepping on the orange part of 1st base
- standing in front of the 150 " line before the ball is hit
- throwing to 1st from outfield


## Advanced concepts

## Obstruction

Outcome: The umpire signals a Delayed Dead Ball or calls "OBSTRUCTION"
"The obstructed runner and each other runner affected by the obstruction will be awarded the base, or bases, they would have reached, in the umpire's judgment, had obstruction not occurred." (Rule 8.7.4a)

- Umpire estimates which base each runner would have reached if there was no obstruction
- If the obstructed runner is called out before reaching that theoretically-obtainable base, the ball is dead
- Runners are awarded their estimated bases


## Additional information for team leaders

(but still good to know for everybody)

## Uniform rule

- By the uniform deadline, all teams must have:
- A jersey which is the same for all players. The jersey must include sleeves, the team name, a different whole 1-2 digit Arabic number, the church name, and the CCSA patch.
- Penalty: -1 run per infraction
- All persons entering the field must remove or tape down all jewelry:
- rings, watches, necklaces, earrings, pins, bracelets, hair accessories
- medic-alert bracelets or other medical devices are allowed, but risks should be reduced where possible
- Offence penalty: One out
- Defence penalty: Obstruction, all runners awarded 1 base


## Equipment

- Home team supplies 3 bases, the required spikes, two pylons, and a new, wrapped CCSA-provided game ball
- Both teams must supply at least 4 helmets (batter, 3 runners) and one pitching helmet with pitcher's mask
- On-deck batters also need a helmet
- Failure to provide required equipment:
- -1 equipment point
- Loss of home team status
- If the other team can supply the required equipment, the team gains +1 bonus equipment point


## Bats

- Teams supply their own bats. All bats must conform to ASA 2000/2004 or USSSA BPF 1.20

OK



## Appeal plays

- Even if the umpire catches one of these infractions, they cannot call it until appealed by a leader or in-fielder on the opposing team
- Must be made before the next pitch or end of inning

1. Missing a base
2. Leaving a base before a caught fly ball (tag up)
3. Batting out of order
4. A player attempting to advance to $2 n d$
5. Illegal pitcher
6. Illegal substitution
7. Illegal re-entry
8. Illegal glove
9. Returning to 3 rd after crossing commitment line
10. Runners switching positions while running

## Mercy rules

- All innings (except the last) end after 5 runs scored
- Even if a home run / ground rule double is scored, only up to 5 runs will count
- If a team is leading by $\geq 14$ runs after 5 complete innings (the minimum number of innings for an official game):
- the losing team has the option to end the game
- the option can be exercised after any complete inning


## Devotions

- All players must attend the pre-game prayer and devotions.
- Any players missing these for any reason should be reported to CASE by umpires and the team leaders for follow up
- Devotions are a chance for teams and players to get to know each other
- Home team is responsible for devotions
- The devotional can be led by any designated person, typically one of the governors


## Scoresheets

- Scoresheets must be completely filled out (header and game score)
- Game code, start time, teams
- Umpire signatures
- Scores must be reported online on the CCSA Dashboard by the home plate umpire, and by a leader on each team within 48 hours of the game


## Age requirements

- A player's CCSA age is determined as of December 31st of the current year
- Junior division is open to ages 14 to 18 inclusive
- Senior divisions open to ages 18 and up


## Co-ed balancing rules

- Each team needs 9 players to start the game, at least 3 of which are females
- No more than 3 males can bat consecutively
- Can alternate male batters if needed
- Defensive team can have 9 or 10 fielders
- 9 fielders -1 rover, at least 3 females
- 10 fielders -2 rovers, at least 4 females
- Rovers can be M or F
- Positioned anywhere in the outfield
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## Attaching bases

- 2nd and 3rd base must be spiked opposite the expected sliding direction
- 1st base should be spiked according to the base design




## Pro-tips for measuring bases



## Reference \#1: From home plate

1. Mark 60 ft down the 1 st base foul line
2. Draw an arc at 84 ft 10 in . down center
3. Mark 40 ft down center
4. Mark 60 ft down the 3rd base foul line

## Pro-tips for measuring bases

1. Draw an arc 60 ft from 1st base towards 2nd base
a. Place 2nd base at the intersection of the two arcs
2. Measure 90 ft from 1st base along the foul line, place pylon for 150 line


## Weather

- Check announcements on ccsa.to or @ccsa_softball on Twitter
- League-wide or diamond closures mean fields are closed.
- No scrimming
- Game delays / cancellations are otherwise at the discretion of the umpires
- Safety is paramount
- Seek shelter immediately if there is any lightning within 30 minutes
- Decisions are otherwise made in consultation with team leaders
- Large puddles on the diamond, excessive rainfall causing slippery conditions should prompt a weather delay


## Advanced concepts for umpires

(but still good to know for everybody)

## Umpiring requirements

- The head umpire-leader is responsible for ensuring:
- Enough players are certified to umpire
- Umpires are available for every game your team is scheduled to ump
- For your scheduled ump responsibilities:
- Provide at least:

2 certified umpires OR 1 certified umpire and 2 knowledgeable players

- Recommended to provide 3 certified umpires


## Game timing

- Games start on the hour (ie. 2:00, 4:00, and 6:00 pm)
- There is a 15 minute grace period if teams are not ready
- Games should end 15 minutes before the next game (ie. 3:45 pm)



## Pre-game

- Verify base and pylon positions, spike placement
- Introduce yourself to team leaders and scorekeepers
- Verify batting lineups and bats
- Both are technically appeal calls, but you should probably remind leaders if you notice something before the game


## Positioning: home plate ump




## Positioning: Base umps



## Fair vs foul

## A ball is foul if:

- It touches anything not part of the field in foul territory

The batter \& bat are in considered foul territory
Otherwise, a ball is fair if:

- The last place the ball touches in the infield is fair
- settles in the infield
- touches the ground, and leaves the infield in fair territory
- The first place the ball touches in the outfield is fair


## Wait until the call is firm before making the call.

## Fair or foul or dead ball

- A fair fly shall be judged according to the relative position of the ball and the foul line, including the foul pole, and not as to whether the fielder is on fair or foul territory at the time of touching the ball.
- If touched and dropped over foul: ball is dead
- If touched and dropped over fair: ball is live
- A ball is dead (even if caught), if it is caught while the player is touching dead ball territory


## Fair-foul examples



A grounder is hit infield, and bounces into foul territory. It is picked up off the ground by 3B.

## Foul.



A batted ball bounces off the ground in foul territory and bounds into outfield between 3rd base and 2nd base.


A batted ball ricochets off the fence in the outfield and lands in the infield.

Foul.

Fair.


## Dead ball

- If the ball:
- Touches anything not part of the official playing area or equipment
- Dead ball territory is considered outside of the playing area
- Touches a non-player
- Gets stuck in umpire / offensive player's clothing
- If the umpire calls TIME


## Dead ball awarded bases

## Dead ball due to a defensive player's actions

1 base from last base touched at time ball leaves play:

- A fielder carries a ball into dead ball territory
- A fielder loses control of the ball and it rolls into dead ball territory

2 bases from last base touched at time of throw or contact:

- A fielder pushed, threw, kicked the ball into dead ball territory
- A fielder catches a throw with cap, helmet, thrown glove, etc.

3 bases from last base touched

- A fielder catches a batted ball with cap, helmet, thrown glove, etc.


## Dead ball awarded bases

Dead ball due unrelated to the defense
2 bases from the time of the pitch

- The ball rolls into dead ball territory
- The ball is deflects off an umpire or fielder
- The ball deflects off a runner after it passes a fielder
- BUT only if an out was not yet made

Award outs / bases that would have happened according to umpire's judgement

- Interference by a non-player


## Infield fly \& Intentionally dropped ball

Infield fly (* takes precedence)

- < 2 outs
- Runners on (at least 1st and 2nd
- Obvious fly over infield
- No touch/catch needed
- Runners may advance
- Batter is out if fair
- Ball is live


## IDB

- < 2 outs
- Runners on (at least) 1st
- Fly or line drive in infield
- Fielder must touch ball, then drop
- Runners return to last base
- Batter is out
- Ball is dead


# Batting out of order 

Order

A just got on base, B is skipped,
$C$ is at-bat

| When is appeal made? | Before improper batter (C) completes at bat | After improper batter completes at bat, but before next pitch | After first pitch to next batter, D |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Ruling | - Proper batter (B) take place in batter's box <br> - B assumes pitch count | - Proper batter (B) out <br> - Runners advanced due to actions of improper batter nullified <br> - Next batter is the one who follows the proper batter (ie. C bats again) | - All runs scored and bases run are legal <br> - Next batter is the one who follows improper batter (D) <br> - B skipped, not out |

## Runner hit by batted ball

|  | Runner is touching a base | Runner is OFF base |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Ball passed a fielder | Live ball |  |
| Runner is not out | Live ball |  |
| Runner is not out |  |  |
| Ball hit runner BEFORE | Dead ball |  |
| passing a fielder | Runner is not out <br> Batter is awarded 1st | Dead ball <br> Runner is out on <br> interference <br> BR is awarded 1st |

## Sample opening script

1. Welcome, Cup and Sack of Rice to Wigmore Park.
2. Could we please have the home and away teams introduce themselves.
3. We are your umpires from GCGCNY. My name is (your name), I will be your home ump. (base umps introduce themselves)
4. I'd like to ask the home team to start us off with a word of prayer.
5. Please take note of the following ground rules:
a. Field conditions: puddles, bumps, weather
b. I will call fouls, not fair balls. The dead ball boundaries are extension of the fences. (include other park-dependent terrain)
c. This park has / does not have a home run fence. Ground-rule double if...
d. This is your last warning for swearing, unsportsman behaviour, jewellery.
6. Let's shake it up and play ball.

## Beginning of inning

"TOP OF THE 2ND, NO OUTS, PLAY BALL"

- If pitcher requests practice pitch, and we're ok on time, typically grant up to 2 practice pitches


## Batting checklist: plate umpire

- Helmet?
- Is infield fly in effect? (<2 outs, runner on 1 \& 2)
- Fielders are ready, or have been given enough time to get ready
- 150 line violations?
- Player line violations?
- Pitcher \& base umpires are in position
- You are standing a safe distance besides the plate
"1 OUT, INFIELD FLY IN EFFECT, PLAY BALL."


## Batting checklist: base umpires

- 150 line / player line violations?
- Standing down the foul line for fair/foul calls

At time of pitch:

- Watch for leadoffs

At time of batted ball:

- Fair/foul calls if the ball is coming in your direction


## End of at-bat: plate umpire

- Summarize results
"SAFE AT 2 AND 3, OUT AT 1"
- Update number of outs / runs on scorecard


## End of inning

"THAT'S THREE OUTS / THAT'S 5 RUNS, SWITCH IT UP"

- Signal number of runs to both scorekeepers and ensure numbers match
- Leave the ball at pitcher's mound for next pitcher
- Time check
- No-mercy-rule last inning should begin latest at 25 mins to the hour
- If we need to cut innings, let the coaches know
- Drink water


## Post-game

- Sign Scoresheets
- Equipment points are deducted based on the rules
- Sportsmanship points are the judgement of the umpire, but consult team governors for feedback
- Verify players attended devotions
- Report score online within 48 hours
- Email CASE if needed
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## Gestures



## Using the rulebook

- Check index
- The definitions are your friend


## Example:

A fast grounder is fielded by SS, who deflects, but does not catch the ball. The ball strikes R3 who just passed the commitment line and rolls into the dugout.

## Let's practice

## Example 1

A 4 PM game started at 4:13 PM. After 5 innings, the score is: Away team 4; Home team 6. There was a 26 minute delay due to an injury. The Away team scores 5 runs in the top of the 6th inning. The time is now 5:54 PM. What should the umpire do?
A. The game is stopped. The final score is: Away team 4, Home team 6.
B. The game is stopped. The game will be rescheduled, and played from where is was stopped.
C. The game is stopped. The game will be rescheduled, and played from the beginning.
D. The game is stopped. The final score is: Away team 9, Home team 6.

## Example 2

## Obstruction / interference / no call?

A. A right fielder retrieves a ground ball, and throws directly to 1st base in an attempt to force out the batter-runner
B. A right fielder retrieves a ground ball, and runs in and steps on 1st base
C. A shortstop stands on the infield line prior to when the pitched ball is hit
D. A runner is tagged with the ball between the commitment line and the safe line
E. A fielder who tags a runner anyways after receiving and dropping a thrown ball

## Example 3

There is 1 out with runners on 1st (R1) and 3rd (R3). As the pitch is made, it is obvious that the Center Fielder (CF) is well in front of the 150 line. The batter runner (BR) hits a line drive into centerfield and the runners make their advance. The CF catches the ball on the fly. CF throws the ball to the fielder (2B) standing on 2nd base who then relays it to the fielder (3B) on 3rd base. R1, seeing the ball thrown to 2nd base, turns around and goes back to 1st base. R3 has crossed the safe line, and heads towards the dugout. 3B throws the ball to the pitcher, who catches it.

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## Example 4

In the top of the 1st inning, the Away Team has hit one bases empty Home run over the fence. In the bottom of the 1st inning, the Home team hits a ball over the fence with two runners on base, for a 3 run home run. With runners at 1st and 2nd, and the score now at 3-1, the next batter hits another ball over the fence. What is the call?

