

**WARREN ASSOCIATION OF BAPTISTS  
SOFTBALL INFORMATION & LEAGUE RULES  
SPRING 2020**

**Registration**

1. Registration form, fee, and proof of liability insurance must be received in the WAB office by **Friday, April 3rd at 3:30pm**. Conflict dates must be submitted with your registration form to be accepted. Additional conflict dates may be submitted for make-up games and the first round of the tournament; coaches will be informed of the deadline for accepting additional conflict dates. The season will start on Monday, April 20<sup>th</sup>.
  - a. The fee for adult teams (Men's League and Co-Ed) is \$425 for WAB-member churches and \$450 for non-member churches. Adult leagues will play a ten (10) game season followed by a double-elimination tournament.
2. Churches may join together to form a combined church team. Each church must be identified on the combined churches registration form and each church must submit proof of liability insurance.
3. If a church does not have liability insurance, they must contact a league administrator and request a waiver. Each player will be required to sign a waiver. No team may practice or play on WAB property without submitting proper proof of insurance or a properly executed waiver.
4. Registration forms must formally identify a team's coaches and must include the required pastor's authorization(s). It is the expectation that all coaches manage their team as an extension of their church's ministries, in accordance with all WAB rules. Coaches found in violation of the WAB rules, including roster eligibility may be suspended for part or all of the current and following season, at the discretion of the Recreation Team.

**Roster & Lineup**

5. Each team must provide a roster of players, signed by the coach, prior to playing their first scheduled league game. All games will be forfeited until the roster is submitted. Rosters may be submitted to the league administrators or scorekeeper. **Do not submit rosters to WAB office.**
  - a. Players may be added to the roster until a team's final game of the regular season. The Roster Addition Form (available on our website) must be signed by the coach and may be submitted to the league administrators or scorekeeper. If this signed form is not available, the opposing team may give permission for use of a player not on the team roster. A player may only play one (1) game before they must be officially added to a team's roster. The use of a player for additional games without officially adding them to the roster may result in the forfeit of applicable games.

6. All team members must be a member or prospective member who regularly attends the church on whose team they are playing. Regular attendance is defined as attending Sunday or Wednesday service at least twice per month.
  - a. Any church allowing a person who does not regularly attend to play in a league game may forfeit that game.
  - b. No player may play for more than one church, even if they meet the eligibility requirements for multiple churches.
  - c. Potential violations of this rule should be reported to the WAB Recreation Team who will fully investigate the matter. At the Recreation Team's discretion, the offending team may be required to forfeit that game. At a minimum, an offending team will be given a warning with subsequent offenses leading to potential forfeiture of all games (past and current) in which an ineligible player was allowed to play.
  - d. All players must be 14 years of age by opening day of the season to be eligible to play.
7. A team can play with eight (8) players (four (4) men and four (4) women) with no penalty. A game must start on time with no grace period, except for the first game of the night, which has a ten (10) minute grace period. These ten (10) minutes are included in the one (1) hour time limit.
  - a. A team playing with nine (9) players will have an automatic out applied each time the tenth batting position comes up in the batting order.
  - b. Co-Ed teams may bat twelve (12) people (six (6) men and six (6) ladies) and play any five (5) of the six (6) men/ladies in the field. Men's League teams can bat up to twelve (12) men and play any ten (10) men in the field.
  - c. Co-Ed teams must play at least one (1) female in the outfield.
8. Lineups must be submitted to the scorekeeper ten (10) minutes prior to the scheduled start of the game. **Each game's lineup must include the player's first and last name, written legibly.**

### **Game Play**

9. All games will be played by ASA rules with the exception of special league rules.
10. All games will be subject to a one-hour time limit and the following run rules:
  - a. a twenty (20) run rule after three (3) innings of play;
  - b. a fifteen (15) run rule after four (4) innings of play; and
  - c. a ten (10) run rule after five (5) innings of play.
11. Each team will furnish a ball to the pitcher of the opposing team before the start of the game. All batters will hit an optic yellow, ASA-certified 52/300 12-inch ball. No ball on the "ASA Non-Approved Ball List with ASA Certification Mark" (will be available on our website) shall be used. Lettering on balls must be legible. Each team will hit its own ball.
12. Only currently approved ASA bats are allowed. Lettering on bats must be legible. No bat on the "ASA Non-Approved Bat List with ASA Certification Marks" (available on our website) shall be used. If any illegal bat is found to be in the dugout, the bat will be moved to the scorer's booth until after the game and the team will be issued a warning, which will be noted on the scoresheet for that game. If an illegal bat is used to hit a ball and the opposing team protests the use of the bat before

a pitch is thrown to the next batter, the batter who used the illegal bat will be out and all runners will return to their bases. In addition the bat will be removed the scorer's booth until the game is over. Subsequent offenses during the season may result in the forfeiture of games.

13. The home team during the regular season will be determined by a coin toss prior to the start of each game. The home team during the tournament will be the higher-seeded team. During the tournament higher-seeded teams may waive their home team designation.
14. Each game will start with a devotional led by the winning team of the coin toss. At the end of the game, the losing team of the coin toss will lead in prayer. During the tournament the higher-seeded team will lead the devotional.
15. If a double forfeit occurs during the tournament, the win will be awarded to team with the most players present. If an equal number of players are present for both teams, the win will be awarded to the winner of a coin toss.
16. The pitch count will begin at one (1) ball and one (1) strike for all batters. An extra foul ball will be permitted before a strikeout will be called.
17. In the Adult Co-Ed League, three (3) over-the-fence home runs will be allowed per game. Any in excess of three (3) will count as an out.
18. In the Co-Ed League (male and female batters), any line drive hit within the 4' diameter (**the front of the circle will be extended 1-2 feet to accommodate the stride of the pitcher as they pitch the ball**) of the pitcher's circle that is equal to or less than the height of the pitcher **while the pitcher has at least one foot on the line or inside the circle**, will be considered a dead ball and the batter will be out. The batted ball is dead under these circumstances even if the pitcher attempts to field the line drive. Each base runner shall return to his or her previously occupied base. If the pitcher leaves the pitcher's circle prior to a pitched ball being hit, this rule is inapplicable and any line drive hit into or through the pitcher's circle will be a live ball. For the purposes of this rule, a "line drive" shall mean any batted ball that does not strike the ground prior to reaching the boundary of the pitcher's circle, and includes a batted ball that strikes any portion of the pitcher's circle boundary. This is a judgment call by the umpires.
  - a. If an out is called by the home plate umpire and the batting team believes the pitcher was completely out of the circle when the ball passed through the circle, the coach can make an appeal to the base umpire. If in the judgment of the base umpire, the pitcher was out of the circle the batter will be awarded 1<sup>st</sup> base and all runners will advance one base if forced by the runner behind them.
  - b. If an out is not called by the home plate umpire and the fielding team believes the pitcher was at least partially in or on the circle when the line drive entered the circle, an appeal can be made by the coach to the base umpire. If in the judgment of the base umpire the pitcher was on or in the circle, an out will be called on the batter and all runners will return to their bases.
19. If an illegal pitch is called by the umpire and the batter swings at the illegal pitch, the ball becomes live and the illegal pitch is nullified.
20. Courtesy runners will be allowed for runners injured during the game night currently being played.
21. The umpires assigned to that game will settle all protests and/or problems on the spot. There will be no protest of judgment calls. **If the final result of a game is being protested, the coach of the team making the protest must notify one of the umpires before either the umpires have left the field, or before both teams have emptied their respective dugouts. If the umpires have left the field or both teams have left their respective dugouts no protests shall be allowed.**

22. At the end of the regular season, if there ends up being only one co-ed league, the coed teams will be divided into 2 groups based on records. In the event teams have the same record, head-to-head competition will be the 1<sup>st</sup> tiebreaker followed by runs differential against common opponents. Each group will play a double-elimination tournament within their group.

### **Safety & Conduct**

23. **Foul language will not be accepted.** If a player or coach curses, the team's coach will receive a warning. Any subsequent foul language after the coach has been warned will result in an out called on that team. This out will occur whether the team is playing offense or defense. If on defense, when it is their turn to bat, they will begin the inning with one out. This rule does not replace the umpire's right to eject any participant from the game for unsportsmanlike conduct.
24. **The use of tobacco products is not permitted.** No tobacco products of any kind, including but not limited to chewing tobacco, dip, snuff, cigarettes, or e-cigarettes, shall be used or consumed by any player or coach on the playing field, bench area, or dugout during game play. Violation of this rule will result in ejection from the game.
25. Contact deemed unnecessary by the umpire will not be tolerated. We intend to make this league as safe as humanly possible. Each coach must see to it that his or her players understand this. An ejection for 'malicious contact' is up to the umpire's discretion.
26. **A batter shall not throw a bat at any time.** Should a batter throw a bat, whether intentionally or unintentionally, the umpire shall issue a warning to the offender. Should the offender subsequently throw a bat, the umpire shall immediately eject the player from the game. A warning and ejection under this rule are mandatory and are required whether the bat was thrown intentionally or unintentionally and with or without malicious intent. Should the umpire deem that a bat was thrown with malicious intent, the batter may be ejected immediately, without an initial warning.
27. No steel spikes will be permitted.
28. Each coach is responsible for educating his/her players on these league rules and each coach is responsible for the conduct of his/her team and fans.
29. Ejection of a player or fan from a game for any reason will automatically include a one-game suspension. The ejected player or fan must leave the premises and cannot be present on the property for the suspended game.
  - a. Should further action be needed, it will be determined by the WAB Recreation Team and the WAB Director of Missions.
  - b. Players and fans must refrain from verbally criticizing any umpire, scorekeeper, player or field manager. If it continues after a warning by officials, the person or persons may be ejected from Warren Association of Baptist property.

### **League Operation**

30. Coaches will be notified by automatic call or text message of any rain cancellations. We make every effort to decide rain cancellations by 4:00pm. To help the league reduce costs, we request that coaches opt-in for text notifications. You may opt-in by texting "WAB" to 292-929.

31. The WAB Recreation Team serves as the administrative body of the WAB Softball League. It is their responsibility to ensure that the WAB Softball League serves as an extension of the Warren Association of Baptists' ministries. If anyone has concerns or suggestions regarding the operation of the WAB Softball League, they should be submitted to the WAB office in writing. The WAB Recreation Team will review and take appropriate action as they deem necessary.

### **League Administrators**

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