

# ***TRI SPORTS Kickball Rules***

*Revised January 2021*

**Amateur Softball Association (ASA) Rules will be used with the following modifications and clarifications:**

## **THE PLAYERS, FIELD, and GAME**

### **A. Players**

1. The game shall be played between two teams of a maximum of 10 and a minimum of 9 fielders each (min. 4 of each gender) If only 3 females are present, only 3 outfielders may be used. One fielder must act as catcher. The Official will rule a forfeit if either team fails to field the minimums (9 players/3 females) within 10 minutes of the game's scheduled start time. At that time, the (full team's) captain is encouraged to accept the forfeit, but may choose to officially play the shorthanded team. If so, the game counts.
2. All players must be included in the kicking order. Late players are added to the bottom, while maintaining the M/M/F max. ratio.

### **B. Field**

1. All fields will be set up with the same standard placement of bases (60 feet apart) and pitching rubber.
2. The "Strike zone" extends 12" on each side of home plate.
3. Safety bases are next to 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup>. On close plays, fielder should try to use 1<sup>st</sup> to force the out & runner should use safety base. If not a close play the runner may use 1<sup>st</sup>. At 2<sup>nd</sup> runner/fielder may use either base but fielder must not inhibit runner from turning the corner to go to 3<sup>rd</sup> (obstruction). It is recommended that fielders use the outside (outfield side) base & runners use the inside (infield) base.

### **C. Game**

1. Games are 7 innings or 45 mins. max. in length. Games are official after 5 innings (4½ if the home team leads). After 41 minutes of play, a new inning will not be started but an inning in progress will be completed. Losing team always kicks in the top of the last inning. Game clock starts at scheduled game time or 3 mins. after final play of the previous game (whichever is earlier). In playoffs, the team that kicks first in the 7<sup>th</sup> inning, kicks first in the extra innings. Semi-Final & Championship games have no time limit.
2. If a game is tied at the end of 7 innings (or the last inning before the 41-minute limit is reached), it is ruled a tie, except in playoffs. In playoffs, the final kicker from the previous inning starts on 2<sup>nd</sup> base for each team each inning until the game is decided.
3. All games are officiated by a TRI SPORTS official who has the final say on all fair/foul, out/safe, strike/ball calls. An official's judgment call is final. **Arguing with or disrespecting an official is not allowed and may result in disciplinary action up to and including ejection, suspension, game forfeit or removal from the league.** See SPORTSMANSHIP section.
4. Forfeits should be reported 24 hours in advance of game time. In the case of a rainout of a previously reported forfeit, the game will be re-scheduled, so there is no reason to wait to see if games are cancelled that night due to weather. Please report ASAP.
5. An out is recorded when: 1) A player strikes out, 2) A runner is hit by a thrown or kicked ball striking the shoulders or below while not on base, 3) A kicked ball is caught before touching the ground, 4) A runner leads off and the ball is kicked fair, 5) A player on the kicking team intentionally interferes (verbally or physically) with a fielder attempting to make an out (including "Drop It"-type calls).
6. **MERCY RULE:** A team can score a maximum of 8 runs in one inning during the regular season. **EXCEPTIONS:** 1) If a team is behind by more than 8 runs, it may score until the game is tied. 2) The final inning has no run limit. **PLAYOFFS-**There is no 8 run limit per inning, and a team ahead by 15 runs after 5 innings (or 4½ if the home team) is the winner.
7. All teams make the playoffs. League standing tiebreakers are determined by # of forfeits, then head-to-head, and then opponents' records, not runs scored. There is no incentive to beat an opponent by the maximum runs possible.

## **KICKING AND BASERUNNING**

### **A. Kicking**

1. Teams must write down their order and kick any combo of M/F or M/M/F, so long as 3M NEVER bat in a row. Sportsmanship requires use of M/M/F combo be kept to the absolute minimum necessary. A team must use its full roster for batting (players cannot only play the field). The batting order cannot be altered during the game, except late additions, which can be added at bottom of order. If adding player to the bottom of the order violates the M/M/F rule, they may be inserted in the last spot of the order that complies.
2. Count begins @ 1 ball/1 strike. Fouled 3<sup>rd</sup> strike is an out.
3. A "strike" must roll between (or over) the strike zone strips. If the kicker deems the pitch unkickable, the kicker must appeal/declare clearly (so official can hear it) that the pitch was too slow/fast/bouncy etc. and it will not count against them in the strike count. However, the official must agree, or it will count as a strike or ball. For general reference, a ball 3-4"+ off the ground is considered too bouncy. Speed & bounce are judged at the time ball reaches the kicker (not when pitched or crossing home plate).
4. A foul is: 1) A kick never touching inbounds, or 2) A kick landing inbounds, but traveling out of bounds before touching 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base or further inbounds (includes balls flying over 1<sup>st</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> without touching). Balls touching 1<sup>st</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> or further & rolling foul are fair. A fly ball touched by a fielder and landing foul/fair is judged by the territory (fair? or foul?) directly below the ball when first touched.
4. All kicks must be taken with plant foot no further than the front edge of home plate (and that line extending both directions) or a foot fault/strike will be called; if a foot fault occurs and the ball is caught in mid-air, the kicker is out. Runners may not advance on a foot fault. In playoffs, foot faults are an automatic out.
5. Only females may bunt. Bunting is an automatic out for males. All male kicks should have a plant foot, a backswing AND a full-strength follow-through. Directional kicks are allowed. Full-kick attempts with short-distanced results are not considered to be bunts.
6. During any play where a ball is popped, that play shall be replayed with a properly inflated ball.

### **B. Baserunning**

1. Runners always have the right of way. Runners must always try to stay within the base path.
2. No lead offs. Runners leaving base before the ball is kicked fair are automatically out; result is dead ball out & replay pitch. If fouled, or if official stops game prior to pitch, the runner may receive a warning & return to the base.
3. There is no sliding and no stealing. Runners may safely run through first base only. Diving back to the base (not sliding) is allowed.
4. Runners must make a reasonable attempt to avoid colliding with a player that is playing the other side of the base in anticipation of a play (including but not limited to slowing up to stop on, and not overrun 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base).
5. Any time a runner is hit with the ball and is not on base, that runner is out (exception: head). If a runner is on base and hit by their teammate's kicked ball, that is a dead ball, play stops, and replay pitch.
6. Runners advance an extra base on balls thrown out-of-play. Extra base is defined as 1 base in addition to the base the runner is closest to at the time the ball goes out of play. Runners advance at their own risk on overthrows that remain in play. "Out of play" is determined by official's discretion. All players should continue to play until they hear the official declare the ball out of play. Thrown balls striking runner are still "live"; play doesn't stop. Thrown balls hitting base coach are "dead"; runners get closest base.
7. If a runner intentionally bats/kicks a ball away (official's discretion), play stops and the runner is out.
8. Pitcher must have possession of ball and have 1 foot on the pitcher's rubber for official to call time out. At that time, runners not half-way (or more) to the next base must return to previous base. It must be the pitcher that triggers the timeout.
9. Runners must tag up on fly balls. Runner may advance on caught foul balls. On juggling catches, runner has to tag up from the time the fielder first makes contact with ball, not from the time of the catch.
10. Pinch Runners are allowed from 1<sup>st</sup> base only and must be the person of the same sex who made the last out. Player must be injured during the game or at risk of further injury to receive a pinch runner. If a player is too injured to run prior to the game or run safely to 1<sup>st</sup> base, they should not be playing in the game.

## **FIELDING & PITCHING**

### **Fielding**

1. Catchers must be standing still at least 6ft. behind home plate at time of ball contact. Aggressive defensive catching is discouraged.
2. Bunting Defense [female kickers only] Infielders must be beyond the base path until ball is released from pitcher's hand. At that time, only one established infielder may charge in front of the base path, but no closer than a line 90° from pitcher's rubber to the base path, until the ball is kicked. Infringement on the kicker results in kicker's choice of re-kick or result of play.
3. Catchers should never stand on top of home plate; stand in front (with a toe on the corner of home plate) to prevent collisions with runners. If a runner is obstructed from touching home, the runner will be ruled safe & the catcher receives a sportsmanship warning.
4. There is no infield fly rule. But double/triple plays directly resulting from un/intentionally dropped balls [be it thru trickery, general confusion and/or inability to communicate catch/no catch clearly to both teams, or similar] will only count for the first out of the double/triple play & play is stopped. A second out may be gotten on the play if it is in no way a result of the dropped ball.
5. Fielders may not switch positions during an inning for specific kickers or strategic defensive purposes.
6. Fielders must not stand on top of base or in base path without a ball. They may touch base with a portion of 1 foot to await throw.
7. Fielders must avoid contact with runners. Any obstruction/hindering runner's ability to reach base results in automatic "safe" call.
8. Hitting the base with the ball does NOT count as tagging the base. Fielder must maintain control of the ball while tagging the base.
9. Pegging a runner in the head is not allowed - runner advances to next base. Play is stopped (dead ball) and all other runners get closest base. Exceptions: if a runner lowers self or ducks to dodge a thrown ball, falls, or intentionally heads the ball (runner is out).
10. Any rough contact or overly aggressive throws that are deemed unnecessarily rough will result in a warning and/or automatic ejection or other disciplinary action at the discretion of the official.
11. Fielder may enter the runner's path to receive a thrown ball that safely beats the runner to that point. On a thrown ball arriving at the same time/after the runner, fielder must stay clear of the runner's path. If the runner slows up to avoid colliding, they are safe.

### **Pitching**

1. Pitching MUST be underhand. No curveballs or fireballs. The kicker is allowed to request slower/faster/less bouncy pitches. This is a social league, so every pitch should be an attempt to deliver the ball in the strike zone, not bouncing, and at a moderate speed.
2. Pitchers must begin their pitching motion on, or up to 1 yard behind, the rubber and may not move closer to the plate than a normal follow-through until the ball is kicked.

## **ATTIRE**

**No metal cleats allowed.** Metal-tipped plastic cleats are acceptable. Please wear appropriate matching team shirts.

## **SPORTSMANSHIP**

We have a Zero Tolerance Policy in regard to unsportsmanlike behavior. All participants (and spectators) are, at all times, required to act in a sportsmanlike manner towards teammates, opponents and our officials. Every professional sporting event these days, despite numerous referees at the top of their profession and instant replay (in many), has controversial and/or blown calls, and you should expect them in your rec games as well. We strive for quality & consistency by our referees, but ultimately, calls will go against your team, correctly called or not, and it is your responsibility to accept the call and make the next play. Arguing with, swearing at, questioning the competency of, and overall disrespecting our referees may result in ejection (likely), suspension (mandatory with ejection), league expulsion, fines, and forfeiture of all monies paid.