

# BUCS SOFTBALL REGULATIONS

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**SOF i** The BUCS Softball Championships shall be conducted in accordance with the following BUCS sport specific regulations, the BUCS general regulations, and the WBSC (World Baseball Softball Confederation) Slow Pitch Softball Playing Rules.

**SOF ii** In the event that these regulations contradict the BUCS general regulations, these BUCS sport specific regulations will supersede, unless specifically stated otherwise.

**SOF iii** In the event that these regulations contradict the WBSC (World Baseball Softball Confederation) Slow Pitch Softball Playing Rules, these BUCS sport specific regulations will supersede, unless specifically stated otherwise.

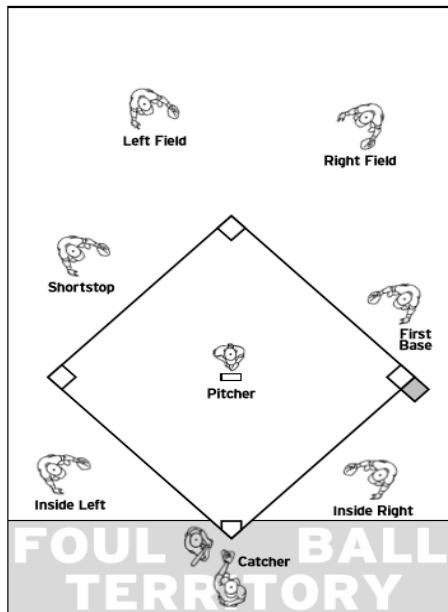
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**SOF 1 Championships** There shall be a Mixed Team Championships. The programme shall include leagues and knockout competitions as per BUCS general regulations, Appendix 1 ('BUCS Competition Offer and Associated BUCS Points') and Appendix 10 ('BUCS Promotion, Relegation and Knockout Information').

**SOF 2 Equipment** Helmets are recommended for all batters and base runners. To ensure quality of competition, all games should be played with equipment that adheres to World Baseball & Softball Confederation standards. All outdoor games should be played with regulation synthetic or leather softballs and all indoor games should be played with safety (soft core) softballs. Metal cleats are not allowed.

## **SOF 3 Indoor league specific regulations**

**SOF 3.1 Playing area** The area is defined by its venue. Indoor softball can be played in gyms, sports halls or similar. The playing area should be contained by four sides and a ceiling. A Softball diamond should be laid out within the parameters of the venue with Home Plate, First Base, Second Base and Third Base as usual. Bases should be a 'reasonable' distance apart – 12 metres is fairly standard – although there doesn't have to be much space left for the outfield. From the front of Home Plate, a straight line is drawn across the court (see diagram) and the area behind the line is the only foul ball territory. The foul ball territory is where batters line up preceding their turn at bat. The standard equipment for Slowpitch softball is used, i.e., a set of throw-down bases (including the safety First Base). Often, bases may be substituted with brightly coloured masking tape depending on the playing surface. The Home Run Zone shall be determined by the umpire.



**SOF 3.2 Squad size** For each match, the maximum squad size shall be 20 players and the minimum squad size shall be 8 players, but attention should be paid to any number and/or gender-based restrictions for fielding and batting.

**SOF 3.2.1 Gender** There shall be three recognised defined genders of female, male and non-binary. For the avoidance of doubt, BUCS and BSUK shall recognise an individual's gender as an individual's identified gender, which may not be the same as the gender they were assigned at birth.

**SOF 3.3 Fielding** The number of fielders in play at any one time shall be 8, with a maximum of 4 players of one gender as standard. For guidance, the 8 fielding positions would typically be Pitcher, Catcher, First Base, Second Base/Inside Right, Short Stop, Third Base/Inside Left, Left Field, Right Field. Teams shall be allowed to field a maximum of 5 players of one gender if short-handed but if doing so the fifth player must play in the Inside Right position.

#### **SOF 3.4 Batting**

**SOF 3.4.1** The minimum number of batters for an inning shall be 8. Teams shall follow a gender alternate batting order: the only time a team may bat two or more people of the same gender consecutively will be if all available players of a different gender are on base. Teams may bat more than 8 players if all players are part of their squad, and they obey the rule regarding alternating batter genders. If a team does not have a balanced gender split, then at a minimum the team must have at least 3 players of a gender different to the majority gender, e.g., 5+/3 or 5+/2/1.

**SOF 3.4.2** One pitch per player at bat [strike, walk or hit].

**SOF 3.4.3** Bunting is allowed. For safety, batters CANNOT show intention to bunt then go back and swing; penalty – batter is OUT. They can have their normal batting stance then 'surprise' bunt. NO 'chopping' allowed.

**SOF 3.4.5** A walk is to 1st base, regardless of gender.

**SOF 3.4.6** Balls caught off walls are OUT. The exception to this is a ball that hits the Home Run zone; a direct hit to Home Run Zone is a Home Run. All runners head straight back to batting line rather than running the bases.

**SOF 3.4.7** Batter is OUT, ball is DEAD if the ball hits the ceiling or roof fixtures.

**SOF 3.4.8** Batter is OUT, ball is DEAD if it lands or rolls behind the DEAD BALL LINE from the hit.

**SOF 3.4.9** Runs score only at HOME PLATE.

**SOF 3.4.10** The last at bat cannot end with a walk. If a ball is thrown, after last batter is called, the batter walks and the batting teams captain decides the next batter [any gender] to bat; this will continue until a strike or hit.

**SOF 3.4.11** During the last at bat, TIME will be called either when the lead runner is out, or if the catcher has the ball with their foot on home plate before the lead runner has passed third base. This is to avoid dangerous collisions.

**SOF 3.4.12** If the last batter is caught out the ball is DEAD, runners cannot advance.

**SOF 3.4.13** Standard softball rules apply in all other areas including tag/force outs.

**SOF 3.5** Each match will be 24 minutes long and consist of two innings – each team will bat for two six minute long half-innings. Innings are not defined by the number of outs, but by time.

**SOF 3.6** Teams are reminded that indoor is fast paced and fun; innings are timed and as such there should be no unnecessary delays between pitches. Umpires have discretion in applying penalties e.g., walking a batter or adding extra time to an inning, if they feel teams are deliberately wasting time.

**SOF 3.7** All innings will be played regardless of the score going into the final inning e.g., the game continues even if a team has already won before their final at bat.

**SOF 3.8 Scoring** Only players reaching all bases will score a single run.

**SOF 3.9 Scorecards** Both teams should keep a scoresheet during the game, agreeing the running score at the end of each half-inning and the final score at the end of the match. Teams should keep copies of all scoresheets until the end of the season.

**SOF 3.10** Any players exhibiting dangerous or unsporting conduct will be removed from the game at the umpire's discretion.

**SOF 3.11 Match officials** Match officials should be appointed as per Appendix 5 ('BUCS Match Officials Requirements').

**SOF 3.11.1** BSUK will arrange umpires for all game days.

**SOF 3.12** The 'home' team for each fixture shall be the first named team.

#### **SOF 4 Outdoor league specific regulations**

**SOF 4.1 Squad size** The maximum squad size for each match shall be 20 players. Each team may begin a game with a starting line-up of a maximum of 10 players (with a maximum of 5 players of one gender), or 12 players (with a maximum of 6 players of one gender) if using Extra Hitters. The minimum squad size for each match shall be eight players (with a maximum of 5 players of one gender), however teams with only eight or nine players shall have an automatic out enforced for each missing player at the point at which they would be due up to bat. Teams with only 9 players may only have a maximum of 5 players of one gender.

**SOF 4.1.1 Gender** The [BSUK LGBTQ+ Committee Inclusive Softball Rules](#) shall apply, including the three defined genders of female, male and non-binary. For the avoidance

of doubt, BUCS and BSUK shall recognise an individual's gender as an individual's identified gender, which may not be the same as the gender they were assigned at birth.

**SOF 4.2 Substitutions** Will be made in line with the WBSC (World Baseball Softball Confederation) Slow Pitch Softball Playing Rules.

**SOF 4.3** The softball diamond must be either grass or artificial grass (3G or 4G) and should comply with the WBSC (World Baseball Softball Confederation) Slow Pitch Softball Playing Rules. BSUK have a diagram of field dimensions available [here](#). It is the responsibility of the host institution/Playing Entity when confirming the fixtures (note REG 9.5) to advise the opposition teams and all match officials of the playing surface and on any footwear restrictions (note REG 9.3.3).

**SOF 4.4** The host institution/Playing Entity should provide field space for up to two softball diamonds to be marked out, booked to allow sufficient time for all the game day fixtures to take place.

**SOF 4.5** Games will last 1 hour with no new innings called at 50 minutes and the game called at 55 minutes. In the event of time elapsing before the final inning is completed, the score at the end of the previous completed inning will become the final score.

**SOF 4.6** There will be a 7-run limit per inning – apart from the last scheduled inning.

**SOF 4.7 Scorecards** Both teams should keep a scoresheet during the game, agreeing the running score at the end of each half-inning and the final score at the end of the match. Teams should keep copies of all scoresheets until the end of the season.

**SOF 4.8 Match officials** Match officials should be appointed as per Appendix 5 ('BUCS Match Officials Requirements').

**SOF 4.8.1** BSUK will arrange umpires for all game days.

**SOF 4.9** The 'home' team for each fixture shall be the first named team.

## **SOF 5 League points**

**SOF 5.1** Three points will be awarded for a win, one point for a draw and no points for a loss.

**SOF 5.2** Where a forfeit has been awarded/conceded (REG 13), three points shall be given to the non-offending team and three points deducted from the offending team.

**SOF 5.3** No points will be awarded to either team in the case of a void fixture.

**SOF 6 Calculating final league positions** Final league positions will be primarily based on league points accumulated. However, should there be any ties on points within a league, they shall be split by the following sequential system:

**SOF 6.1** A team tied on points who has conceded at least one voluntary walkover shall automatically be placed below any other tied teams who have conceded fewer voluntary walkovers. If a tie still exists, then SOF 6.2 or SOF 6.3 shall be followed as applicable.

### **SOF 6.2 Tie between two teams**

**SOF 6.2.1** Where two teams are tied on league points, the result between the teams will be the determining factor in placing one team above the other. Where fixtures are played on a 'home' and 'away' basis, the aggregate score of the two (or more) matches

will determine the higher placed team. If this does not determine the higher placed team;

**SOF 6.2.2** Runs data shall be used as per SOF 6.2.3 – SOF 6.2.4. If the tie on league points has been effected by any walkovers conceded to either of the teams or any void fixtures, all the relevant results against the team(s) which conceded the walkover(s) or the team(s) involved in the void fixtures (i.e. all the results between the teams tied on league points and the team(s) conceding the walkover(s)/void match(es)) will be removed from the results table and the recalculated runs data shall be used.

**SOF 6.2.3** The team with the higher runs difference shall be deemed the higher placed team. If a tie still exists;

**SOF 6.2.4** The team with the higher number of runs scored shall be deemed the higher placed team.

**SOF 6.2.5** If the higher placed team cannot be determined from the system above, then this shall be determined by the toss of a coin by the BUCS Executive.

### **SOF 6.3 Tie between three or more teams**

**SOF 6.3.1** Where three or more teams are tied on league points, a 'mini league' table shall be formed to calculate the higher placed team from the results between the relevant teams using the following sequential system:

**SOF 6.3.2** League points accumulated. If a tie still exists;

**SOF 6.3.3** The team with the higher runs difference shall be deemed the higher placed team. If a tie still exists;

**SOF 6.3.4** The team with the higher number of runs scored shall be deemed the higher placed team.

**SOF 6.3.5** If the higher placed team cannot be determined from the system above, then this shall be determined by the toss of a coin by the BUCS Executive.

### **SOF 7 National Championship knockout competition specific regulations**

**SOF 7.1** BaseballSoftballUK (BSUK) shall organise the National Championship knockout competition on behalf of BUCS.

**SOF 7.2** BUCS/BSUK shall communicate any competition specific requirements, rules and regulations to teams which qualify for the National Championship on an annual basis.

**SOF 7.3 Disputes at events** In line with REG 7.7, should a dispute occur at an event, the event appeal panel for Softball shall comprise of the Tournament Director, Umpire Crew Chief and/or a BUCS Staff Member.