

Oakdale Church Softball League

2023 Rules & Responsibilities

League Rules

1. All participants must be high school age or above and “regular” attenders (approximately twice a month – or more) at the church for which they are playing. Player eligibility will be at the discretion of each team’s coach.
2. All games will be played at Kerr Park in Oakdale on Friday nights between the times of 6:00-8:15pm. General start time is 6:30pm, unless two games are scheduled on one particular field.
3. Practices (if desired) can be held at any time prior to the season beginning or during the season.
4. Two churches with less than 100 members each may combine to form one team.
5. A time of prayer will take place around the pitching mound before and after each game. The designated home team will open with prayer and the visiting team will close the game in prayer.
6. Because this is a coed softball league, a minimum of 2 women per team must participate in each game. At least two women must remain on the field of play at all times. If a team has only 1 woman participate at any given time, that team will only be allowed to play with a maximum of 8 players on the field (7 men and 1 woman). If a team has no women participants, a forfeit will be required of that team.
7. A minimum of eight players must participate in each game from each team. A forfeit will be awarded if a team cannot field at least eight players within 10 minutes to the start time of the game. A maximum of ten players can be on the field for each team.
8. Each softball game will consist of 7 innings or 1.5-hour time limit or darkness – whichever comes first. In case of a double-header, games will be limited to a 1-hour time limit.
9. A **five run rule** will be in effect for each inning. A twelve-run mercy rule will conclude a game after four innings (unless over-ruled by the losing team).
10. The last inning of the game (which will be agreed upon by both teams based on the 1.5-hour time limit / darkness) will be an “open inning.” There will be no “run rule” enforcement during this inning.
11. No bunting, stealing or leading off bases is allowed from any team or player.
12. In the case of an overthrow, any ball inside the fence is a live ball. Any ball thrown outside the fence or field of play – the runner is awarded one base only, automatically.
13. No metal cleats are allowed. Molded baseball cleats or athletic shoes are acceptable. Sandals or flip-flop style shoes are also prohibited.
14. There will be no contact at home plate. All runners must run across the line adjacent to home plate (never touching home plate). 1st base and home base are force out bases. No sliding is allowed at 1st base and home plate. Sliding is legal at 2nd and 3rd base.
15. A “commitment line” will be drawn halfway down the 3rd base line. If a runner going from 3rd base to home plate goes beyond that line, that runner is forced to go home and cannot return to 3rd base.
16. After two strikes on a batter, the second foul ball results in the batter being called out.
17. This is slow-pitch softball and all pitches are to be between 6-12 feet in height. Any pitch outside of this measurement will be considered a ball. Pitchers are allowed to pitch from either softball pitching plate – or anywhere in between. The second plate (furthest away from home plate) is recommended for safety reasons.
18. All players will remain in the batting line-up throughout the game, whether they are on the field or not. Line-ups must remain the same throughout the game. Late arrivals may be added to the bottom of the line-up.
19. Games will be umpired by team representatives. The team batting will provide one umpire to stand behind home plate. Base coaches at 1st and 3rd base will also act as umpires. Home plate umpire makes the final call, if needed.
20. The infield fly rule is in effect. The rule states, “An INFIELD FLY is a fair fly ball (not including a line drive) which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort, when first and second, or first,

second and third bases are occupied, before two are out. Infield fly should be declared by the umpire for the benefit of the runners.”

21. NO alcohol, smoking or foul language will be allowed at any of the games. This applies to players and fans. Team penalties may be enforced after an initial warning. After an initial warning, penalties may include team outs, a shortened game, a team forfeit, or a team removal from the league (depending on the severity of the situation).

22. One courtesy runner may be used per team, per inning. The batter must make it to first base before the courtesy runner steps in for him/her. The courtesy runner must be the last person to make an out from that team. If a courtesy runner is needed in the first inning of the game and no outs have been made, any player from that team can be used as the courtesy runner for that inning. *If a player gets injured and cannot return to the game, there is no penalty to that team. That player's name is simply taken out of the batting lineup.*

23. If a batted ball hits a tree in foul territory, the ball is considered a dead ball and counts as a foul ball for the batter. The ball cannot be caught by the fielding team for an out.

Additions for the 2022 and 2023 seasons:

- No intentional walks. If it is determined by both coaches that a pitcher is intentionally walking a batter, the next batter in line will automatically be awarded 1st base.
- Addition of a “coed line” in the outfield. A colored ribbon, painted line or other outfield marking cannot be crossed until the ball is hit. Infielders must remain beyond the base path until the ball is hit.
- In the case of season playoffs, players are eligible to participate only if they have played in half of the season games. Player eligibility will be at the discretion of the team's coach.

Team Responsibilities

1. Clean up the dugouts after each game. They should look better than before each team arrived.
2. The home team is responsible for providing two game balls (in good condition) each game – provided by the league.
3. Uniforms are not necessary, but if desired are at the discretion and budget of each team.
4. Provide a home plate umpire if your team is batting. The coaches at 1st and 3rd base will also act as umpires for that inning. The home plate umpire makes the final call.
5. Promote an atmosphere that is encouraging, both from the players and the fans. Foul language, degrading comments, inappropriate gestures and the like will not be tolerated.
6. Bats and gloves must be provided by the team. The league will not supply any player equipment.
7. The game score should be kept by both teams. A fan or coach from each team is responsible to complete a score book (provided by the league) for each game. The home team is responsible for getting the game score to **Scott Hicks** by the following Monday. His email address is **scotthicks1957@gmail.com**, or you can text him at **(209) 613-8363**.