Department of Recreational Sports | Intramural Sports
2017-18 Softball Information Sheet

Thank you for being a part of one of the best intramural programs in the nation. We are proud to offer a variety of quality intramural activities. Good luck and we hope you have a fun and exciting season!

If you have questions throughout the season, please feel free to contact us by calling our office (540-231-8297), emailing imsports@vt.edu, stopping by our office in 135 War Memorial Hall or consulting our Participant Policy and Procedure Manual.

Key Dates (tentative and subject to change)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>Regular Season Starts</td>
<td>Monday, March 19th</td>
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<td>Playoff Conflict Sheets Due</td>
<td>Wednesday, April 4th (by 5pm online)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regular Season Ends</td>
<td>Thursday, April 5th</td>
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<td>Playoff Brackets Posted</td>
<td>Saturday, April 7th</td>
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<td>Playoffs Begin</td>
<td>Monday, April 9th</td>
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<td>Champ Night</td>
<td>Thursday, April 26th</td>
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Rules of the Game

1. Players and Substitutes
   a. Games are played between teams of 10 players.
   b. Each team must have 8 players to begin a game.
      i. During the game, a team may play with fewer than 8 if the game remains competitive.
   c. The team appearing first on the daily schedule is the home team.

2. Warm-Up Rules
   a. A pitcher may have 5 warm-up pitches prior to the start of the game.
   b. New pitchers are allowed a maximum of 5 warm-up pitches or 1 minute upon entering the game.
   c. No infield practice is permitted after the first inning.
   d. Only 1 warm-up pitch is allowed between innings.

3. “No New Innings” Rule
   a. An Intramural Staff member will announce “No new innings” 45 minutes past the scheduled start time.
      i. If already started, the inning will continue until completed if the visitors are ahead or until the home team is ahead in the bottom half of the inning.
      ii. If time is to be added for any reason, an Intramural Staff member will announce this separately.
   b. Once 3 innings have been completed (2½ if home team is ahead), it is considered an official game.
      i. In this case, the game will not be rescheduled if suspended/cancelled due to inclement weather.
      ii. If a game is suspended midway at any point after 3 innings have been completed, the score will be recorded as it was at the end of the last full inning and the game considered official.
      iii. Note: due to time constraints and field availability, regular season games suspended/cancelled due to inclement weather may not be rescheduled.

4. Pitching Rules
   a. The pitcher
      i. Must have both feet on the ground and at least one foot touching the pitcher’s plate.
      ii. May step in any direction but a foot must remain in contact with the pitcher’s plate and the step must be simultaneous with the release of the ball.
      iii. Must come to a complete stop (~1 second) with the ball in front of the body while facing the batter prior to pitching.
iv. Is not considered in pitching position unless a catcher is in position to receive the pitch.

b. A legal pitch
   i. Must be delivered underhand with an arc 6-12 feet off the ground.
   ii. Must be released at a moderate speed.
   iii. Must not be a “quick return” pitch.
   iv. Must not cause unnecessary delay after the batter is ready.
   v. Must be delivered in accordance with the rules. All other pitches are illegal. The legality of any pitch is subject to the judgment of the umpire.
   vi. **Penalty:** Illegal pitch, which will be declared a ball unless the batter strikes the pitch. If the batter strikes at the pitch, it is considered legal and all resulting action stands. A “delayed dead ball” signal is given (left arm extended horizontally) with a verbal announcement that the pitch is illegal.

c. **No pitch** – The ball will be declared dead and the action following will be ignored when:
   i. A base runner is called out for leaving base too soon.
   ii. A pitch is thrown during the suspension of play.
   iii. A pitch is thrown before a base runner is able to return to their base following a foul ball.
   iv. The ball slips from the pitcher’s hand during the windup or during the backswing.
   v. A pitcher throws to a base other than home while a foot is on the plate.

5. Batting
   a. All at-bats start with a “1 & 1” count.
   b. If the ball hits in front of or on home plate, a ball will be called unless the batter strikes at the pitch.
   c. The batter shall not:
      i. Have a foot entirely outside the limits of the batter’s box when the ball is hit.
      ii. Touch any part of home plate when the ball is hit.
      iii. Step into the batter’s box with an illegal bat or altered bat. **Penalty:** the ball is dead, the batter is out, and if it is a second offense, the player is ejected from the game. All runners must return to their original base.
      iv. Delay play by not stepping into the batter’s box after being beckoned by the umpire. **Penalty:** a strike is called on the batter.
      v. Step out of the batter’s box without first asking the umpire for “time”. **Penalty:** if the batter steps out without “time” being granted, a strike will be called.
      vi. Hit a second foul ball following the first strike. **Penalty:** the batter is out (i.e., 3 foul balls = out, one swing and miss then 2 foul balls = out, one foul ball then one swing and miss = out)
   d. **Strike zone** – balls and strikes will be called at the umpire’s discretion.
      i. If a legal pitch crosses the plate at a level between the batter’s shoulders and knees, it is a strike.
      ii. All other legal pitches shall be called balls.
   e. *CoRec* – the batting order must alternate between males and females.
   f. *CoRec* – if a team plays with 9 players, an out will replace the 10th batter.
   g. *CoRec* – there cannot be more than a +/−1 ratio between male to female in either the infield/outfield.
   h. *CoRec* – the 180’ arc is in effect. **All outfielders must remain behind the arc until the batter makes contact.** If an illegal outfielder makes an attempt on the ball, the ball will be ruled dead and the batter and all base runners will be awarded 1 base.
      i. In a game where the fielding team has less than 10 players, the team must align themselves in the field prior to the first pitch being thrown to a batter. It is not required to have a full infield but if playing CoRec, all outfielders must abide by the 180’ arc.

6. Base Running
   a. Base runners may leave the base as soon as a ball is hit or when the pitch crosses home plate.
      i. There is no stealing in slow-pitch softball.
   b. When the base slides away from its proper position (when a runner goes into it) the runner is assumed to be on the base and not in jeopardy to being called out unless he/she tries to advance.
   c. **Fake Tag** – a fake tag or simulating the motion of catching a throw is a form of obstruction. The fake tag is a potential safety hazard and is also considered unsportsmanlike conduct.
i. **Penalty:** first offense – the team shall be warned; subsequent offenses by any player on that team results in an ejection.

d. **Intentional Walk** – there is no automatic walk rule. In a CoRec game, if any player is walked on only 3 pitches (i.e., 3 balls and no strikes), the next batter can take an automatic walk and advance to 1st base. If the next batter steps in the box, he/she must hit.

e. **Out of Base path** – if a base runner goes out of the base path to avoid being tagged, he/she is out. A player is not required to slide into a base, however, a player may not deliberately crash into a fielder who is attempting to make a tag.

   i. The base path is consider 3 feet on either side of a straight line in-between the base and the runner when a play is being made on the runner.

   ii. **Penalty:** the runner is out and the ball is dead; flagrant action will result in an ejection.

7. **Ball out of Play**
   a. The turf field perimeter fence and/or painted lines (between Field 2 and Field 3) designate out-of-play areas. A ball that hits a light pole in live-ball territory can be played but cannot be caught for an out.
   b. **Overthrows** – all runners are awarded 2 bases from the last base gained. Determination of bases awarded is governed by the position of the runner(s) when the ball left the thrower’s hand.
   c. **Catch and Carry** – if a player catches a fly ball in playable territory and carries it into an out-of-play area, the runner(s) advance 1 base (if intentional, runner(s) advance 2 bases).

8. **Mercy Rule**
   a. The game will be declared over due to mercy rule if either team is winning by:

      i. 20 or more runs after 4 complete innings of play (3½ if home team is ahead)
      ii. 15 or more runs after 5 complete innings of play (4½ if home team is ahead)
      iii. 10 or more runs after 6 complete innings of play (5½ if home team is ahead)

9. **Extra Innings (Playoffs only)**
   a. Regular season games may end in a tie.
   b. If there is no winner at the end of regulation (45 minutes OR 7 innings), there will be extra innings.
   c. Beginning with the first inning following the end of regulation, all subsequent innings will implement the international tie breaker rule.

      i. Each inning will begin with a runner on second base.
      ii. The player who would be batting last at the start of the extra inning shall be the runner at second base.

   d. Each team will have an opportunity to bat.
   e. Play will continue in this fashion until a winner has been determined.

**Rules not outlined in this sheet will follow the National Federation of State High School Association (NFHS) Rules**
Sportsmanship

1. After each game, teams are given a sportsmanship rating by the officials, the scorekeeper, and the supervisor. The following rating system is used as a guideline for all sportsmanship ratings:

   “5” Excellent Conduct and Sportsmanship – Players cooperate fully with opponents and officials. The captain calmly converses with officials and has full control of his/her teammates.

   “4” Good Conduct and Sportsmanship – Team members display minor disagreement or unsporting behavior. Teams receiving an unsportsmanlike penalty/foul are not eligible to receive a rating higher than a “4” for that game. A team wins by forfeit.

   “3” Average Conduct and Sportsmanship – Team members display disagreement and unsporting behavior toward officials and/or opponents. Teams receiving more than one unsportsmanlike penalty/foul are not eligible to receive a rating higher than a “3” for that game.

   “2” Below Average Conduct and Sportsmanship – Team members display a serious lack of control and continuously show unsporting behavior to officials and/or opponents from the field/sidelines. The captain has little or no control of team. Must have received at least one unsportsmanlike penalty/foul to receive a “2” rating. Teams with an unsporting ejection cannot receive higher than a “2” rating.

   “1” Poor Conduct and Sportsmanship – Captain has no control over team, resulting in an ejection. Team is completely uncooperative. Any team causing a game to be forfeited – other than by not showing up – may receive a “1” rating.

   “0” Team Disqualification – Player(s) or coach(s) ejected for abuse against a staff member or opponents. Team is disqualified for unsportsmanlike acts before, during, or after the game.

2. Each week, all teams that maintain a 5.0 sportsmanship average are entered into a drawing for a sportsmanship award. The team receiving these awards will also have their picture posted on the Intramural Sports website.

3. Regular Season Situations:
   a. Teams must maintain a 3.0 average throughout regular season play to be eligible for playoffs.
   b. Teams that receive below a 3.0 average for any game will be contacted by the Intramural Sports Office.

4. Playoff situations
   a. If a team receives below a 3.0 average in a playoff contest, that team will be eliminated from playoffs.
   b. If neither team receives at least a 3.0 average, a double forfeit is declared and both teams are eliminated.

5. If a game is not finished due to any circumstances, the sportsmanship rating earned will stand.

6. The Department of Recreational Sports may impose additional penalties on players that are unsportsmanlike during regular season or playoff contests.
League Structure
1. All recreational division teams are eligible to play the full season in a round robin schedule.
2. Competitive division teams play the regular season in a round robin schedule. Following the regular season, these teams are placed into a single-elimination bracket.
3. All round robin results are posted on the website for teams to review.

Playoff Structure
1. All competitive division teams are eligible to advance to a single-elimination playoff if:
   a. The team maintains a 3.0 sportsmanship average during regular season games.
   b. The team does not forfeit a game without paying the Forfeit Reinstatement Fee ($20).
2. Recreational divisions are rescheduled into another round robin schedule.
3. Teams should check the brackets after 1:00pm the day following a playoff game.
4. Intramural Champion Shirts are awarded to the champions of the competitive bracket.

Eligibility
1. Any person who has purchased the Full Intramural Membership is eligible to participate in any team activity. The following persons are eligible to purchase memberships:
   a. Student or employees; individuals associated with Campus Ministry, VCOM, Vet Med; Visiting Scholars; CRC Employees, and Long Term Guests (except Dependents). Such persons are eligible until they withdraw from the University or fail to comply with eligibility guidelines.
   b. Alumni are not eligible to purchase the Intramural Membership unless they fall into one of the previous categories mentioned.
   *All memberships may be purchased online. To complete your purchase of an intramural membership, you will be required to watch an online video presentation covering the basic policies of the program.
2. All players must show their valid VT Hokie Passport in order to play. No ID, No Play!
   a. Cards must be readable – unrecognizable pictures, names, or numbers may not be considered valid.
3. Participants may play for only one single-sex team and one CoRec or Open team (when offered).
4. Current varsity athletes may not participate in their sport or allied sport during the academic year. Former varsity athletes must sit out for one semester following their last varsity game before being eligible to play in their sport or allied sport (both summer sessions are considered one semester). No more than three varsity athletes (any combination of current or former athletes) may play on one intramural team.
   a. A varsity athlete is defined as anyone who is on a varsity athletic team roster during the academic year, anyone participating with a varsity squad in an attempt to make a roster, red-shirts, Proposition 48 students, and any scholarship player with eligibility remaining.
   b. Former varsity athletes are defined as anyone who was a varsity athlete (as defined above) at any time within the past five years beginning the semester following their last varsity game.
5. Sport Club members are allowed to participate in their sport or allied sport with a maximum of three total players per team roster (sport specific). For example, an intramural soccer team may only have three club soccer players but may have six members of the field hockey club. **Sport club members are defined as anyone whose name appears on the current year’s roster.**
6. Current or former professional athletes are ineligible to participate in their sport or allied sport.
7. Team captains are responsible for checking player eligibility for his/her teammates and the players of the opposing team. The Intramural Staff is not responsible for checking player eligibility but reserves the right to impose disciplinary action for players/teams discovered to have ineligible players.
8. Teams found to have one or more ineligible players, will forfeit all games in which the player(s) played.
   a. Teams will have until 5:00pm the next business day after discovered to pay the Forfeit Reinstatement Fee ($20) in order to remain in the league. If the fee is not paid by the deadline, the team will be removed from the league.
   b. If the player(s) correct eligibility issues (e.g., purchase the appropriate membership by midnight the 2nd day after participating), the team will be allowed to remain in the league. Ineligible players may be suspended from play in that sport’s gender classification (i.e., Men’s, Women’s, CoRec) for the remainder of the season.
9. As long as a game is ready to begin by game time, any participant who arrives after that time may participate provided they properly check in (see Roster Policy above).

10. Men/Women are required to play in their specific single-sex divisions when offered unless participating on a CoRec or Open team (e.g., no women in men’s division and vice versa).

**Roster Policy**

1. Players must check in for a game with Intramural Staff at their field/court for all games.
2. A player must present his/her valid Virginia Tech ID before participating.
3. Additions to the team roster can be made at any point throughout the season.
   a. If a player does not properly check in, he/she is not allowed to participate.
   b. **Practice games do not influence team rosters** – roster additions begin with regular season contests.
3. Roster Switches – after playing for a team, a player may choose to remove him/herself from a roster and participate on another team within the same league (i.e., Men’s Women’s, CoRec) anytime during the first three weeks of the season. After the third week of the season, rosters for both recreational and competitive division teams are locked. After rosters are locked, teams can still add players who are not currently on the roster of another team in the same league, but no players may be removed.
4. There is no limit to the number of players a team can on the roster, but teams winning a championship in their division will receive a maximum number of shirts.
   a. If the team has fewer players on the roster, the team will only receive shirts for the players on their roster.
   b. Extra shirts are available for purchase ($8.00/shirt) in the Intramural Sports Office.

**Ejection Procedure**

1. Players, coaches, or fans ejected from intramural contests must **immediately** leave the playing area if requested to do so by Intramural Staff.
   a. Failure to leave may result in forfeiture of the game.
2. Individuals ejected from intramurals should receive an email notification from the Intramural Sports Staff as well as a notification form from an Intramural Sports Supervisor on site. Ejected participants must contact the Intramural Sports Graduate Assistant(s) within 14 days of the ejection.
   a. Failure to do so may result in referral to Virginia Tech’s Office of Student Conduct.
   b. Ejected participants are suspended from participating in all intramural programs and from the use of recreational sports facilities until having met with the Intramural Sports Graduate Assistant(s).
   c. An ejected individual found to be playing with an intramural team prior to meeting with the Intramural Staff may result in loss of intramural privileges for the duration of the academic year.
   d. Self-imposed punishment is **not** accepted.
3. Ejection meetings are structured around open dialogue to ensure all points of view are represented before any outcome is decided. Therefore, it is in the ejected individual’s best interest that the meeting is conducted in a timely fashion.

*More information on the ejection process can be found in the Participant Policy and Procedure Manual.*

**Forfeits**

1. Teams must have the minimum number of players required to start a game.
   a. If a team does not have the required number to start, a 10-minute grace period will begin. A team must have the required number of players by the end of the grace period or that team will forfeit the game.
   b. If neither team has the necessary number of players, the game will be recorded as a double forfeit.
2. A team that forfeits during regular season play has until 5:00pm the 2nd business day following the game to pay the Forfeit Reinstatement Fee ($20) online. If the fee is not paid by that time, the team will be eliminated from regular season play. The team will be replaced with a team from the waiting list or replaced with another team wishing to play an extra game. If there is not waiting list, open spots will be filled on a first come, first served basis by contacting teams through Twitter/Facebook or e-mail.
3. A forfeit during the playoffs eliminates the forfeiting team from further competition.

**Protests**

1. Eligibility Protests
   a. If a team wishes to protest player eligibility, the captain is responsible for notifying a supervisor.
   b. Following an eligibility protest, the game will be played as normal. The Intramural Staff will rule on the protest the following business day and notify both teams of the outcome.

2. Rule Misapplication or Misinterpretation Protests
   a. **Judgment calls cannot be protested.**
   b. If a team wishes to protest a rule application or interpretation, the captain must notify the Intramural Supervisor immediately, before the continuation of play. **The team captain should refuse to continue play until the supervisor arrives and makes a ruling regarding the protest.**
   c. If the team captain disagrees with the supervisor’s protest ruling, the team captain should immediately inform the Supervisor that the contest is being played under protest. In that situation, the Supervisor will record all necessary information (e.g., score, ruling, date, time, site number, time remaining in the contest) and file a report with the Coordinator of Intramural Sports.

**All protests must be filed in writing by the protesting team captain with the Intramural Sports Office by 12:00 noon the day following the incident and accompanied with the Protest Fee ($10). See the Participant Policy and Procedure Manual to find the Protest Form.**

**Inclement Weather & Cancellations**

1. Decisions concerning game status are made before 4:00pm daily.
2. All decisions made after 4:00pm are made by the supervisor on duty at the activity site.
3. For the most current game status, follow us on Twitter/Facebook (@VTIntramurals)
4. Games cancelled during regular season play will not be rescheduled (unless circumstances permit). The Intramural Sports Office will notify team captains/co-captains if games are rescheduled via email once rescheduling has been completed.

**Responsibilities of the Captain**

1. Know rules, schedules, and program policies... and pass information along to all team members.
2. Have team members properly check in prior to the scheduled start time with their valid VT Hokie Passport.
3. Encourage sportsmanship with all team members.
4. Act as team representative when discussing rule interpretations and player eligibility with Intramural Staff.
5. Select one MVP from the opposing team following each game.

**Equipment**

1. Teams are required to bring a white shirt/jersey and a dark-colored shirt/jersey to all games.
   a. The dark-colored shirt/jersey must be a similar shade of color for all team members.
   b. Opposing teams are not allowed to wear similar colors during the game.
   c. If both teams show up with the same color, the captains must determine which team will wear an alternate color. If an agreement cannot be reached, both teams will forfeit the game.
   d. Teams playing flag football, 9-on-9 soccer, 5-on-5 basketball, and softball are required to have one- or two-digit whole numbers on their shirt/jersey for administrative purposes.
      i. Player numbers must be distinct from other team members.
      ii. Numbers must be clearly visible from a distance of 10 yards.
      iii. Taping numbers is not allowed.

2. Due to safety risks, all jewelry – except medical alert items – must be removed before play.
   a. Taping over jewelry is not an acceptable alternative to removing jewelry.
   b. If a Supervisor suspects a team member has taped over jewelry, the team member may be asked to remove the tape. If a team member does not remove jewelry or tape, he/she is not eligible to play.
3. Casts (above or below the waist) and braces (above the waist) are not allowed.