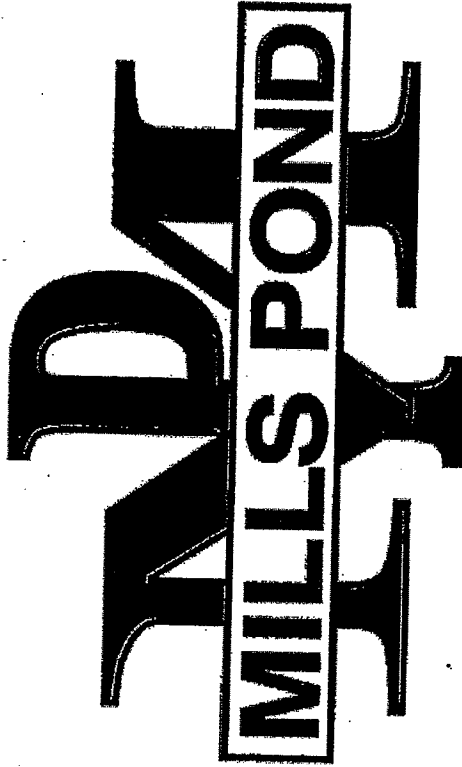


City of Fort Lauderdale  
Parks and Recreation Department

# MILLS POND PARK

## Softball League Rules

2008



2201 NW 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33311

(954) 828-8943 – League Office  
(954) 828-5977 – Field Conditions  
(954) 468-1568 - Fax

### Section 1 – League Organization

#### (1.1) Format

A. All leagues consist of a 10 game season, plus playoffs for the top 4 (four) teams within the league

B. League officials reserve the right to amend the format of the league and/or playoffs due to weather or any unforeseen circumstances.

#### (1.2) Schedules

A. Managers will be called with their first game time prior to the start of the league. Managers must pick up their team's schedule in the office on their first night of play.

B. Schedules will be posted nightly on the league information board located behind the softball office as well as on the league website ([www.fortlauderdale.gov/cityparks/mills\\_pond](http://www.fortlauderdale.gov/cityparks/mills_pond)).

C. Make-up schedules will be posted on the league information board as need arises. Managers will be called or given a revised schedule with their team's makeup game time. Managers must provide league office with day and evening contact numbers.

#### (1.3) Scoring

A. The home team (team listed first on the schedules) will be the official scorekeeper.

B. League office will provide all teams with a team scorebook, to be picked up on the first night of play.

C. It is recommended that both teams keep a scorebook.

D. If the home team does not have an official scorekeeper the visiting team may become home team by keeping the official scorebook.

E. If neither team keeps the book, the umpire is the official scorer and no protests regarding scoring will be accepted. The umpire's decision will be final.

F. Scores are reported to the league official via umpires' scorecard. *The winning team must initial the umpires scorecard.* Standings are updated and posted each night on the league information board located behind the softball office as well as on the league website

([www.forlauderdale.gov/cityparks/mills\\_pond](http://www.forlauderdale.gov/cityparks/mills_pond)). Please check your standings to make sure they are accurate.

**(1.4) Managers Responsibility**

The Manager is the primary link between their team and league management. It is the manager's responsibility to obtain all information regarding league play at Mills Pond Park. This responsibility includes:

- A. Register team into appropriate league.
- B. Obtain pertinent league information: rulebook, schedules, and scorebook.
- C. Assume all financial responsibility for league fees. Submit fees and league roster on time.
- D. Inform league office of changes in manager's address and/or contact number(s).
- E. Have all players completely fill out and sign team roster before and have it submitted to league office before the first game.

F. Explain Mills Pond rules to team members.

G. Maintain control over team members in all circumstances including disputes on the field. Umpires will discuss disputes on the field with the manager only. Players are not to question an umpire's call or ruling.

**(1.5) Make-up Games**

All games cancelled (by league office or due to weather) will be made up on the same night of league play when possible. Managers will be called with makeup time and date or will be given a revised schedule. Makeup games will be posted.

**(1.6) Rescheduling Games**

If at any time, a team is unable to play a scheduled game (due to an unforeseen circumstance), it is our policy to reschedule the game with approval from the opposing team if the time permits within the league's schedule. Rescheduling must be done at least one (1) week in advance or game may not be rescheduled. The team needing to reschedule must:

1. Contact league office (954-828-8942) about possible rescheduling.
2. Call opposing team regarding game rescheduling.
3. Inform the office of opposing team's decision.

**(1.7) Rainouts**

A. Mills Pond does not predict the weather. In the event that rain occurs between the time you call and the time you arrive, please be understanding, our primary goal is to SAFELY play softball. If in doubt, come out!

B. Decisions regarding rainouts are made at 5:30 p.m. on the day of the game. At this time, if the game is rained out, the message on the rain out line will be updated with the necessary information. If games get rained out at any time during the evening, the message will then be updated accordingly. For rainout information please call (954) 828-5977 (after 5:30 p.m.). Please do not call the league office for rain out information, thank you!

C. In the event of rain of inclement weather during a game, the game may be considered official after five innings of play (4 ½ if the home team leads).

D. If a rainout occurs during playoff games, the game will be replayed from the start unless it is a complete game (4 ½ or 5 innings).

**(1.8) Forfeits**

A. Any team forfeiting more than two games (as a no show or without calling the office) will be dropped from the league.

B. A forfeit game will be scored as 7-0.

**(1.9) Team Classification**

A. All Men's teams will be classified as Division 1, 2 and 3. Coed Teams will be classified as Division 1 (Advanced), Division 2 (Intermediate), Division 3 (Recreational) and Corporate Coed 1 and 2.

In the interest of fair play any team registered in Division 3 will not be allowed to have any tournament players or players deemed to be a detriment to the league (to be determined by league officials). If a team is in violation of this rule, appropriate penalties will be exercised.

Please note no Division 1 players will be allowed in Division 3.

B. All teams are required to remain in the division that they last participated in while part of the previous softball league with the following exceptions:

1. Any team will be allowed to move up a division upon registration.
2. Any team finishing first in the league will be required to move up to the next highest division. NO EXCEPTIONS!
3. With league approval only, will a team be permitted to drop down a division.
4. The league reserves the right to move any team up, down, or allow them to stay in the same division at our discretion.

C. Any team comprised of 5 or more of the same players as the previous season will be considered a returning team (Team may be asked to provide complete roster prior to registration.)

D. New teams are asked, in the spirit of fair play, to place themselves in a division they feel best suited to compete in.

#### (1.10) Team Roster

- A. Team rosters are limited to 20 players.
- B. *Rosters are due before the first game.* It is the manager's responsibility to submit a complete roster (name, signature, and address). If a team has turned in a roster before the start of the first game, the team must submit a complete roster to the league official before the start of their first game. (The time used to complete the roster will be taken off the game time.)

C. An add/drop period will be offered until the seventh played game. After this point NO roster changes can be made – NO EXCEPTIONS!

D. As stated previously, any team playing in Division 3 may not have any tournament or Division 1 players (which are deemed to be a detriment to the league) on their roster.

E. Rosters must be filled out in complete form: print name, signature, address and telephone number. No signature makes for an ineligible player. Once the team's roster is submitted and signed by a league official, the roster is considered an official roster.

F. The submission of the original roster and any drop/add changes must be made in person at Mills Pond Park.

G. Original rosters (office copies) will be used for any protest involving player eligibility and also during playoffs. Players must be on the team's original roster and have matching I.D. to be an eligible player.

H. Team rosters (office copy) will be checked during all playoff games.

#### (1.11) Player Eligibility

- A. Players may not compete on more than one team in the same division on the same night. (i.e. Joe's Bar and Bob's Bar in the Men's Division 1 on Tuesday night)
- B. Players may compete on more than one team in different divisions on the same night. (i.e. Joe's Bar in the Men's division 1A and Bob's Bar in the Men's Division 1B on Wednesday Night.)

C. The opposing team only may protest player eligibility until the completion of the 5<sup>th</sup> inning. After this time, no protests involving player eligibility will be accepted unless a new player enters the game at which time, it must be protested and solved as the new player enters the game either offensively or defensively.

1. If a team files a player protest, the protesting team must also have a roster on file. Otherwise the protest will not be accepted.
2. A league official will be made aware of the protest. The team's roster (office copy) will be used. If no roster exists, the game will be declared a forfeit in the favor of the protesting team.
3. Players are required to carry a driver's license or other official I.D. to each game and produce it upon request by an umpire or league official.

E. If in violation, protests will result in forfeiture of the game against the team in violation of the rule.

#### (1.12) League Playoffs

- A. League playoffs will be played amongst the top 4 teams within the league. The format will be as follows:
1. 2<sup>nd</sup> place vs. 3<sup>rd</sup> place
  - 1<sup>st</sup> place vs. 4<sup>th</sup> place
  2. The winners of the above will play for the championship.
- B. If two divisions of a league exist (i.e. Men's division 1A and 1B on Monday nights) the top 4 teams from each division will be admitted to the play offs, forming an 8 team playoff. The first playoff game will be versus a team from the opposing division using the same format as above.
- C. Playoffs will be held on the same night of league play following the conclusion of the regular season (time and weather permitting).
- D. All playoffs are single elimination. Playoff games are scheduled for one hour and five minutes after roster check is completed.
- E. Players may play for any team during divisional playoffs provided that they are on the team's original roster. Only one team per division. (1.11 A)
- F. Rosters will be checked during all playoff games. Players must produce official identification to match their name and signature on the roster.
- G. *Highest seed will be made home team (or visitor if they chose). Of teams have the same seed, home team will be determined by coin flip. Home teams for all championship will be determined by coin flip.*

## Section 2 – Game Rules

### (2.1) Governing Rules

All games will be played under Mills Pond Park rules with reference to the USSSA rulebook for game rules not covered in the Mills Pond Park rulebook.

### (2.2) Required Number of Players

(Coed division has an exception to this rule see Coed Rule (2.11a))

- A. Nine (9) players must be present at game time or a forfeit will be declared.
- B. A tenth player may be added anytime before the start of the fifth inning.
- C. If a team starts with ten (10) players and one (1) player is ejected or leaves the game for any reason (except injury rule 2.4) the team may continue the game with nine (9) players but will receive an out in the position of the ejected or vacated player. If no substitute is available.
- D. If a team starts with eleven (11) players and one or two (2 or 1) players are ejected or leave the game for any reason, except injury (see rule 2.4) the team may continue the game with ten (10) players or nine (9) players, but will receive an out in the position of the ejected or vacated player(s), if no substitute is available.

### (2.3) Extra Player

(Coed division has an exception to this rule see Coed Rules 2.11a)

- A. The extra player (EP) is the eleventh player and may only be inserted at the start of the game. This person is an extra hitter and is not in the game defensively.
- B. If a team deigns the game with the EP and a player is ejected and no other substitutes are available, the EP may be an eligible substitute to play defensively. However, the vacancy in the batting order resulting from the ejected player will be considered an automatic out if a substitute is not available.
- C. At any time during the game, the EP may enter and play defensively switching the defensive player to the EP. The original EP must remain in the same place in the batting order for the entire game.

### (2.4) Injured Player

(Coed division has an exception to this rule see Coed Rules 2.11a)

If a player is injured during a game, the team will not be penalized with an out in the spot of the injured player.

H. There will be a run rule during all playoff games. (2.11)

I. There will be a tie-breaker (Kansas City tie-breaker (2.6)) and a time limit during all play off games.

J. There will be no limit during the championship game of playoffs. There will be a run rule in effect (2.11)

K. If rainout occurs during a playoff game, the game will be replayed from the start of the game unless 4.5/5 innings have been completed.

L. During playoffs all protests must be made

#### (1.13) League Standings

A. Current league standings will be posted at the softball trailer on the night of play as well as on the league website ([www.fortlauderdale.gov/cityparks/mills\\_pond](http://www.fortlauderdale.gov/cityparks/mills_pond)). It is the manager's responsibility to check them for correctness and notify league administration of any errors.

B. Final league standings will be determined at the conclusion of each leagues regular season.

C. All end of regular season ties will be settled by the following tie-breaking system:

1. Head to head won - loss record, if still tied...
2. Head to head point differential, if still tied...
3. Won-loss record versus best common opponent, if still tied...
4. Point differential versus best common opponent, is still tied...
5. Won-loss record versus 2<sup>nd</sup> best common opponent, if still tied...

#### (1.14) Insurance

Players, managers, and spectators are not protected by medical or liability insurance while on Mills Pond property (City of Fort Lauderdale).

#### (1.15) League/Playoff Awards

A. Team awards are given for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place teams for both league and playoff winners.

B. Individual awards (12) are given for 1<sup>st</sup> place teams for both league and playoff winners.

**(2.5) Regulation – Official Game**

- A. Game length is seven innings or when the one hour, five minute time limit has expired.
- B. In the event of rain or any other unforeseen circumstance, a game may be considered official after 5 innings of play, 4 ½ if home team leads. Rule applies for Playoffs as well.
- C. Each batter will start with a one-one count with an extra foul.
- D. All games tied at the end of the regulation game will be played to completion using the Kansas City tie breaker (2.6)

**(2.6) Kansas City Tie Breaker**

If the score is tied after seven innings or the time limit expires the offensive team will place the last official out on second base. The next batter in the lineup will start with a full count (one pitch). This procedure is repeated until a winner is declared.

**(2.7) Game Time**

- A. The game times for the leagues are 6:45 p.m., 7:45 p.m., 8:45 p.m., and 9:45 p.m. The games will be scheduled on the hour with a time limit of one hour and 5 minutes or 7 innings, whichever comes first.
- B. Umpires keep the official time. It is the coach's responsibility to get the start time from the home plate umpire so there is no discrepancy at the end of the game. The game time should be posted.
- C. Playoff games are scheduled for 1 hour and 5 minutes after the roster has been checked.

**(2.8) Grace Period**

- A. A ten (10) minute automatic grace period will be given for the first game of the evening. The game will then be played assuming the original game time.
- B. There will be no grace period for any scheduled game after the first game on each field.

**(2.9) Courtesy Runner**

- A. Each team will be allowed one courtesy runner per inning.
- B. If the courtesy runner is up to bat while on base, it will result in an out in the batters line up.

- C. Time must be called and the umpire must be notified of the use of a courtesy runner.

**(2.10) Home Run Limits**

Per team, per division:

- Men's Division 1 Four (4) home runs per game
- Men's Division 2 One (1) up (maximum three (3) per game)
- Men's Division 3 One (1) home run per game
- Coed Division 1 One (1) up (maximum three (3) per game)
- Coed Division 2 One (1) home run per game
- Coed Division 3 No (0) home runs per game
- Corporate Coed 1 One (1) up (maximum three (3) per game)
- Corporate Coed 2 One (1) per game

Please note that any home run hit after the team limit will be considered an out.

**(2.11) Run Rule**

There is a run rule of 12 after 5 complete innings of play, or 20 after 3 complete innings.

**(2.11a) Coed Rules**

- A. Teams should have an equal number of males and females (total of 10 players). Teams may start the game with a minimum of 9 players (male and/or female breakdown must be 4 to 5 of either sex) and a maximum of 12 players if the EP rule is utilized – both male and female EP must be used.
- B. The batting line up shall consist of alternating sexes with a female leading off.
- C. If a team begins with 9 players, an automatic out is given in the spot of the missing male/female. The missing person's out must be taken at the end of the batting order (9<sup>th</sup> spot if female, 10<sup>th</sup> spot if male). The automatic out is waived when the first of two same-sex batters is walked.
- D. In the event of any injury, the EP – male or female – may be used as in eligible substitute with the EP. If no EP or other eligible substitute is available, an automatic out is given in the spot of the injured player.
- E. When a male batter is walked, the following female batter has the option of accepting a walk to taking her normal at bat. The male is awarded first and second base and must touch bases in order. (Defensive team must appeal before the next pitch.)
- F. If a female touches first base before the male batter that was previously walked, the male batter is out.

G. Defensive positioning shall consist of the following:

- 3 males and 3 females in the infield in any position
- 2 males and 2 females in the outfield in any position

H. At no time may the number of players in the game from either sex exceed five (six on if the EPs are used.)

I. Both males and females will use the 12<sup>th</sup> ball. The 200 foot line will be in effect when females are at bat. Outfielders may not be inside the line; infielders are not allowed to play in the grass until the ball is batted into play. **Penalty – better is automatically award the first and second base and must touch both bases in order. All runners will advance if forced.**

#### **(2.11b) Corporate Coed**

A. A team must have a minimum of three females on the playing field at all times, more than three females may play. If only two females are available, the team may play with 9, no EP can be used and an out must be taken in the spot of the missing female. One female will play in the infield and one in the outfield when this occurs.

B. One female must be in the infield and one in the outfield. The third female may play infield or outfield.

C. Females may be in any position in the batting line up.

D. If a male batter is walked, the female has the option of accepting the walk or the hitting. The male is awarded first and second base and must touch both bases in order.

E. The 200-foot line for females will be in effect. (See 2.11a Coed Rules)

F. The EP may be utilized, but you must have an extra male and female to make the total number of players in the lineup 12. If both male and female are not available, the EP may not be utilized.

G. The courtesy runner must be of the same sex as the original runner.

#### **(2.12) Slide Rule**

Any runner advancing to the next base (where a play may be made at the previous base) must slide or be completely out of the base path when the defensive player is making a play. The defensive play must attempt to make a play. **Penalty – a dead ball is called, the runner not sliding or getting out of the base path is out and the runner at the base behind him/her is also out.**

#### **(2.13) Gate Rule**

Gate must be closed at all times. Penalty – if the ball goes into the dugout of the defensive team, runners advance one base from the last occupied base. If the ball goes in the dugout of the offensive team, it is dead ball, and the runners do not advance.

#### **(2.14) Player Conduct**

A. It shall be the responsibility of the manager to control the actions of his/her player and fans. Only team members and scorekeepers are permitted on the team bench.

B. Anyone drinking alcoholic beverages during the course of his/her game will be subjected to being ejected, no questions asked. This includes on the field, on the bench, on the ground surrounding the field, the parking lot, or any other area within the confines of the park!

C. Unsportsmanlike conduct of any type or infractions of the rules could mean ejection from the game with the possibility of forfeiture or suspension.

D. Derogatory remarks, profanity, threats, or physical force directed toward any game official, department employee, other players, coaches, or spectators will not be tolerated. These actions could result in suspension.

#### **(2.15) Player Ejection**

A. A player ejected from a game for misconduct may be subject to suspension, which will be determined by the league official.

B. A player may appeal to the league office. The appeal must be made in writing to the league director. The player suspension will begin at the time of ejection, regardless of the appeal. The appeal will be addressed when the situation arises.

C. In any infraction, the league reserves the right to amend/determine the length of suspension.

D. If a player participates in a game during suspension, he/she will be further penalized; the team for which he/she plays for will but subject forfeit the game.

#### **(2.16) Re-Entry Rule**

Any of the starting players may withdraw and re-enter once, providing such player occupies the same batting position, wherever he/she is in the line up. A substitute, who is withdrawn, may not re-enter. All substitutions must be reported to the home plate umpire.

#### **Section 3 – Equipment and Uniforms**

**(3.1) Balls**

- A. The city will provide all balls.
- B. The City will provide only one new and one back-up ball per game. If the ball goes foul (over the fence), or a home run is hit, it is the team's responsibility to retrieve the ball. **NO EXCEPTIONS!** The game will be stopped if a ball is not available until a ball is retrieved.

**(3.2) Bats**

- A. All bats approved by USSSA are legal for league play at Mills Pond.
- B. All bats must be marked with the words "Official Softball" and should be marked with a Bat Performance Factor (BPF) of 1.20 or less.
- C. No altered bats will be allowed.
- D. No titanium bats will be allowed.
- E. A player in violation (using an illegal bat) will be ejected from the game. An out is called and all action is nullified.

**(3.3) Uniforms**

Teams are encouraged wearing like uniforms. However, there is no mandatory uniform rule. Shorts and Athletic shoes must be worn at all times. Hats are optional.

**(3.4) Metal - Tipped Cleats**

No metal-tipped cleats are to be worn in league play. A player wearing metal-tipped cleats will be asked to remove them.

**Section 4 – Protest Policy**

**(4.1) Valid Protest**

Protests will be accepted in the case of rule interpretation only. No "judgment" call can be protested. Umpires are instructed to accept all protests regardless of their validity and must note it on the scorecard.

**(4.2) Protest Procedure**

- A. The notification of Intent to Protest must be made immediately before the next pitch, if it is the conclusion of the game, it must be done before both teams leave the field of play. Once the game is complete and both teams have left the field, no protest can be filed.
- B. The manager or acting manager of the protesting team shall immediately notify the plate umpire that the game is being played under protest. The plate

umpire shall in turn notify the opposing manager and official scorekeeper. The protest will be noted on the umpire's scorecard.

C. The official protest must be filed in writing 24 hours after the start of the game and submitted to the league direct at Mills Pond Park. The written protest must contain the following:

- 1. Date, time of game, field game played on.
- 2. The rule and section of the USSSA/Mills Pond Rule Book under which the protest is being filed.
- 3. The umpire's ruling and why it was incorrect (cite the rule).

D. During divisional playoffs, all protest must be addressed at the time the protest is introduced.

**Section 5 – Park Policy**

**(5.1) Alcoholic Beverages**

Alcoholic beverages purchased outside of Mills Pond Park will not be permitted to be brought into the softball complex. Alcoholic beverages are not permitted on the playing field or in dugout. **Consumption of alcoholic beverages in the parking lot is strictly prohibited in all City of Fort Lauderdale Parks unless a permit is obtained.**

**(5.2) Coolers**

Coolers are not permitted within the softball complex.

**(5.3) Pets**

No pets are allowed in the park. Only service animals are permitted.

**(5.4) Park Rules**

The park will determine any situation not covered in these rules. In addition, Mills Pond Park reserves the right to interpret any and all rules and situations and further reserves the right to insert, delete, or changes rules at any time and make decisions retroactive should it be deemed necessary for the benefit of the league.