

## SOFTBALL MANITOBA

### 2024 Slo-Pitch Division Operating Rules

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## **SLO-PITCH DIVISION OPERATING RULES**

### **1. REGISTRATION & MEMBERSHIP**

#### **A. Classification**

The Slo-Pitch Division will accept application for membership from leagues, teams or associations who are willing to comply with and abide by all rules and regulations as adopted by the Association.

Categories, ages and classifications are recognized by the Division as listed below:

CATEGORY	CLASS	REGISTRATION Deadline	ADD-DELETE Deadline	COMPETITIONS
ADULT MENS	'AAA'	June 1	July 30	Softball Canada
ADULT WOMENS	'AAA'	June 1	July 30	Softball Canada
ADULT MENS	'AA'	June 15	July 30	Western Canada
ADULT WOMENS	'AA'	June 15	July 30	Western Canada
ADULT MENS	'A'	July 15	July 30	Manitoba
ADULT WOMENS	'A'	July 15	July 30	Manitoba
ADULT COED	'A'	July 15	July 30	Manitoba
55+	'A'	July 15	July 30	Manitoba

Once a team or player has been classified, they remain at that classification until the completion of the softball year (including provincials).

#### **B. Registration of Teams**

Softball leagues must register their teams annually for membership with Softball Manitoba.

Teams/Players must be fully registered through RAMP with fees paid to the Softball Manitoba office no later than listed above. Any deadline day will be the first working day following the deadline if it falls on a Saturday, Sunday or Holiday. The onus is on the individual team and the league to ensure that all registration procedures are performed correctly with Softball Manitoba. Softball Manitoba Registration Package.

Leagues registering teams must complete and submit the Softball Manitoba Registration Package as instructed and include the following:

1. League Executive List - Provide the names, e-mails, mailing addresses and telephone numbers for the League Executive.
2. Team Contact List - Provide a list of all league participants and the names, e-mails, mailing addresses and telephone numbers (home and work) of one contact for each team in the league.
3. Softball Manitoba online RAMP Registration link.

#### **Online Registration Notes:**

1. A coach or manager not registered as a player will not be allowed to participate as a player in any Softball Manitoba sanctioned competition.
2. A player not registered as a coach or manager will not be allowed to participate as a coach or manager in any Softball Manitoba sanctioned competition.
3. Any individual wishing to register as a player/coach must be registered and signed sections as BOTH a player and coach on both the current registration form.
4. Each team shall have no less than ten (10) no more than twenty (20) players registered with Softball Manitoba at any one time.
5. Online RAMP Registration must be channeled through the League. Softball MB will not accept a registration form directly from any team that is registered with an affiliated league.

#### **C. Additions/Deletions**

1. A team has until the late registration deadline of July 30<sup>th</sup>, to make any changes to its playing roster for the current season.

2. Late Non-registered Player Additions (for Softball Manitoba/Softball Canada sanctioned tournament events only) that are accepted between August 1<sup>st</sup> - August 15<sup>th</sup> will be assessed a \$100.00 fine per team.
3. Additions (players, coaches or managers) will need to register on the respective Leagues RAMP website prior to July 30.
4. When a player or coach is being added to a team roster, the respective League must inform Softball Manitoba in order to get approval.
5. The onus is on the individual team and the league in which the team plays to ensure that all registration procedures are performed correctly with Softball Manitoba by the late registration deadline.

#### **D. Late Registration**

1. Late registration of teams will be accepted until August 15<sup>th</sup>. Any late registration forms will be subject to a fine of \$100.00 per roster.
2. The late registration fee must be received by Softball Manitoba before the team is considered registered with Softball Manitoba.
3. No team will be eligible to participate in any Softball Manitoba sanctioned competition during the current year if its registration form is not in the hands of Softball Manitoba by the late registration deadline.
4. All late registration must be submitted by the League.

#### **E. Residence Rule**

1. A player registering with Softball Manitoba must be a resident of the Province by July 15<sup>th</sup> (July 30<sup>th</sup> north of the 53<sup>rd</sup> parallel).
2. Any request for membership by non-residents after July 15<sup>th</sup> (July 30<sup>th</sup> north of the 53<sup>rd</sup> parallel) must be presented by the league and/or team in writing to the Division for approval.

### **2. MEETINGS**

1. The Divisional Directors will meet throughout the year as required.
2. All meetings shall be open to all members in good standing of the division.

### **3. DUTIES OF DIRECTORS**

1. To communicate the duties of the Division.
2. To ensure adequate Divisional Representation on all Softball Manitoba Slo-Pitch Business.

### **4. REPRESENTATION AT CANADIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS AND/OR PROVINCIALS**

#### **AAA**

Any registered Men's or Women's team that meets all Softball Manitoba requirements will be eligible to enter the AAA Provincial Championship. The winners of each Provincial will be declared Competitive champion and will be awarded the 1<sup>st</sup> opportunity to represent the Province in the SP Canadian Championship the following year. The top four (4) teams will be awarded the first opportunity to represent the province.

#### **AA**

Any registered Men's or Women's team that meets all Softball Manitoba requirements will be eligible to enter the AA Provincial Championship. The winners of each Provincial will be declared Competitive champion and will be awarded the 1<sup>st</sup> opportunity to represent the Province in the SP Western Canadian Championship the following year. The top four (4) teams will be awarded the first opportunity to represent the province.

#### **A**

With the exception of teams/players classified 'AAA' and 'AA' by Softball Manitoba, any registered Men's, Women's, or Co-Ed team that meets all Association requirements will be eligible to enter the 'A' Provincial Championships. Separate Provincial Championships will be held in 'A' for the 55+ Category.

1. It is the responsibility of the winning team's coach or manager to ensure Provincial representation at the Canadian Championships. Failure to comply could lead to disciplinary action being taken by Softball Manitoba toward the team manager and his/her team Coach.

Teams entering Provincials leading to a Canadian Championship must confirm their intent to represent the Province at the time of entry. If the championship team forgoes the opportunity to represent the Province, the Provincial representative will be determined as per the format outlined by the Division.

2. In order to host a Canadian Championships a team must submit a bid in accordance to Softball Manitoba and Softball Canada policies and guidelines to the Slo-Pitch Division. The bid must be approved by the Softball Manitoba Board of Directors.
3. A registered team representing Manitoba must have any and all changes to its Championship Team Roster approved by the Office and/or its Division and must abide by the following:
4. The team may add as many players as the rules of the Championship permits. Canadian Championship playing rosters may not exceed seventeen (17) men / twenty (20) women. Provincial Championship playing rosters may not exceed seventeen (17) men / twenty (20) women.
5. A registered team representing Manitoba at a CANADIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS
  - a. Teams representing the Province at Canadian Championships must prepare to finance their trip.
  - b. Teams indicating their intention to travel are eligible for funding.
  - c. All traveling teams must be properly registered by June 1 (AAA) / June 15 (AA) in order to be eligible to receive funding
  - d. Funds allocated will be based on the number of teams travelling; the distance travelled, number of event days and participation in Association fundraising events.

#### **5. PROVINCIAL COMPETITION - HOSTING**

1. Bids to host Provincial Championship must be submitted to the Annual General Meeting in the year prior to the actual competition.

#### **6. PROVINCIAL COMPETITION - ENTRY**

1. In order to be eligible to participate in Provincial Championship competition, each team must register online for the category it wishes to enter and pay the Provincial Entry Fee by the deadline date determined by Softball Manitoba.
2. Any team entering late will be assessed an additional late entry fee of \$100.00. Late entries will be accepted up until the time the draw has been made.
3. Softball Manitoba will not host a Championship that has less than 3 registered teams by the entry deadline.

#### **7. PROVINCIAL COMPETITION – UNIFORMS & EQUIPMENT**

1. In order to participate in Provincial play all categories/classifications require matching tops with uniform numbers as per Softball Canada rulebook.
2. All team participants must be dressed appropriately. This includes managers, coaches, etc. Only participants in uniform will be allowed to participate as player on the playing field. Coaches/Managers must be in coordinating team colors.
3. Helmets - Softball Manitoba recommends that approved Helmets be worn for Hitting and Base running.
4. Facial Protection - Softball Manitoba recommends that face masks and head protection be worn by all Pitchers.

#### **8. PROVINCIAL COMPETITION - CHAMPIONSHIP TEAM ROSTERS**

1. Co-Ed teams must have no less than seven (6) male players and seven (6) female players registered with Softball Manitoba at any one time. Five (5) male and five (5) female players must be in the game at all times.
2. The Slo-Pitch Division will classify players and/or teams according to the highest classification for which they are registered.
3. A team must also register at least one (1) coach or manager and may register as many as five (5).
4. A coach or manager not registered as a player will not be allowed to participate as a player in any Softball Manitoba sanctioned competition.

5. All players, coaches and managers must be entered on a Softball Manitoba online RAMP Registration.
  - a. Any player, coach or manager or other person who falsifies the online registration in any manner will be automatically suspended from the current season and further action may be taken against the individuals and teams concerned.
  - b. If any player, coach or manager does not officially sign the Championship Team Roster, the individual will not be allowed to participate in any Softball Manitoba sanctioned competition with that team.
  - c. A coach or manager may be registered as the coach or manager of more than one registered team, provided the teams are not of the same classification within that category.
6. Teams entering the 'AAA' Provincial Championships may add players from other registered teams as long as a signed release is obtained from the coach/manager of the pickup team. If an eligible player is unable to obtain a release from their team, they may appeal to the Slo-Pitch Committee for their ruling. Teams are not to exceed the maximum number of seventeen (17) men / twenty (20) women players on their roster.
7. Final player lists must be submitted ten (10) days prior to championship.

**9. PROVINCIAL COMPETITION - AGE RESTRICTIONS**

1. Apply to Seniors 55+ category only - All players on a team must have reached their respective birth dates during the calendar year of registration.

**10. PROVINCIAL COMPETITION - PRE TOURNAMENT MEETING**

1. At all Provincial Championships, all teams must have a team representative at the pre-tournament meeting.
2. Each team coach/manager shall complete the Championship Team Roster provided by the Supervisor. All team participants, including coaches/managers are to be listed. This form must be completed and returned to the delegate as soon as possible (prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> game if possible).
  - a. Include any authorized pickup players with their club team affiliation shown.
  - b. Players' names shall be printed in full, both first and last names.
  - c. Each player, coach/manager must sign the Provincial Championship Team Roster.
  - d. Ensure all team participants arriving late, sign the form before playing - this is the team's responsibility.
  - e. No players or coaches may be added at this meeting. All Championship Team Roster's must be finalized ten days prior - No exceptions.
3. Bats – Machine Inspection of bats as per Softball Canada rulebook (if machine testing available) or per Softball Canada's approved list (listed on Softball Canada and Softball Manitoba websites).

**11. PROVINCIAL COMPETITION - ELIGIBILITY CHECK**

1. Player's names will be checked against the TRF's filed with Softball Manitoba to ensure eligibility.
2. Only players listed on the Championship Team Roster and who have signed the form at the Championship will be eligible to participate in the play-off. Time may not permit the delegate to check all forms before the beginning of the tournament or before a team's first game, so teams are urged to check the eligibility of all players and pickups before play begins.
3. If a player has not signed the Championship Team Roster before it is turned in to the Delegate and cannot find the Delegate in order to sign before a game, the team manager should request the plate umpire to allow the player to sign the game card as proof of eligibility. The umpire should then turn in the game card to the delegate following the game in order that the signature can be checked. The team manager should also inform the delegate that the player had signed the game card as proof of eligibility.

**12. PROVINCIAL COMPETITION - PENALTIES IMPOSED FOR ELIGIBILITY VIOLATIONS**

1. Use of an ineligible player in any game(s) will result in:
  - a. The offending team automatically losing the game(s)
  - b. The ineligible player(s) will be suspended until end of the competition.
  - c. The automatic suspension for the balance of the competition of any coach/manager.
  - d. The Association taking possible further action against a coach or manager.

- e. Possible additional action against the offending team may also be taken at a later date.

### 13. PROVINCIAL COMPETITION - SCOREKEEPERS/LINE-UP CARDS

1. An official scorekeeper shall be assigned for each game by the Host Championship Committee. Where the host does not provide a scorekeeper, the home team will be designated as the official scorekeeper. It is up to both teams to check the score with the official scorekeeper at the end of each inning.
  - a. The official score sheet is to be signed by the plate umpire after each game.
  - b. The official score sheet is the only one that will be considered by Softball Manitoba as being a record of the game. All score sheets with the final score clearly marked are to be turned over to the delegate following each game.
2. The team manager or coach must provide the official scorekeeper with a game line up at least fifteen (15) minutes before game time.
  - a. The lineup card must show the first and last names of all possible substitute players.
  - b. After entering the line up on the official score sheet, the official scorekeeper will turn the lineup cards over to the plate umpire before each game.
  - c. If a substitute player is missed from the lineup card, the Softball Canada rule will then apply.
  - d. Because of the re-entry rule, all eligible players must be listed on the individual game cards given to the official scorekeeper before each game. Players not listed on the game card will not be able to participate in that game.

### 14. PROVINCIAL COMPETITION - GAME PLAY

1. The Draw Master shall determine the "home" team for each game and if not done, the toss shall be done at the Pre-tournament meeting.
  - a. The toss(s) shall be made by the Supervisor or designate.
  - b. Home team, as determined, must occupy the third base bench. This playoff regulation may be changed by the delegate to ensure that a team playing another team more than once does not always have the benefit of the final at bat.
2. Games are to be started at the times posted on the official draw.
  - a. A team not ready to play at the posted time will lose that game by default.
  - b. If a team in a Provincial Championship defaults two of its scheduled games, the team will be defaulted out of the tournament.
3. The coaches will be held responsible for the conduct of their teams and players at all times.
  - a. Managers, coaches and team captains are to be identified to the umpires prior to each game and will be the only people authorized to discuss the game or decisions with the umpires or officials once the game is underway.
  - b. The playoff officials and umpires will have the full support of Softball Manitoba in controlling and discouraging displays of poor sportsmanship or unacceptable conduct.
  - c. Player or team suspensions will be considered in enforcing proper participation.
4. A five (5) minute infield practice will be allowed each team before its first game only.
  - a. The "away" team is to take its infield practice first and the "home" team second.
  - b. The plate umpire and/or the delegate will notify each team to take its infield practice, and the five (5) minute allowance starts once notification is given.
5. The length of all playoff games will be determined before the start of the competition.
  - a. Under extenuating circumstances, the delegate has the right to change the length of the game.
6. In all Slo-Pitch categories the following will occur.
  - a. Length of Games: The length of each game is seven (7) innings.
  - b. Run Ahead Rule: In any games where runs for and against have no bearing on the standings, a team losing may concede defeat after two and a half (2 ½ ) innings in a seven (7) inning game. The losing coach/manager must inform the plate umpire of the decision to concede. Games will end after four and a half (4 ½), five (5), five and a half (5 ½), six (6), or six and a half (6 ½) innings of play if there is a difference of fifteen (15) runs.

- c. **Tie Breaking:** – Round –robin or Playoff and Championship Games. Starting with the top of the eighth (8) inning and each half inning thereafter, the offensive team shall begin its turn at bat with the player who is scheduled to bat last in that respective half inning being placed on 2<sup>nd</sup> base. The player who is running can be substituted in accordance with the substitution rules.
    - d. **Home run rule:** (applicable on fields with minimum dimension for classification as per Softball Canada Rule Book) - Maximum seven (7) for men / Maximum five (5) for women and co-ed. Once maximum home runs have been attained (ball hit over the fence) any balls hit fair over fence, the batter will be declared an out.
  7. **Suspended Play:** If for any reason, the game is stopped, it shall resume from the exact point it left off. This applies to all games during the scheduled championship dates. Games suspended to following days or weekend shall be restarted.
  8. **Incomplete games,** which are called for any reason, will be rescheduled from the point where the game is called
    - a. Restart of such games must use the same line-up as existed when the game was called.
    - b. Subsequent play will follow the rules for substitute players as defined in the official rulebook.
    - c. However, if the competition cannot be completed by the scheduled dates, any games in progress at the time of suspension will be considered as no contest and will not be resumed at the point of suspension when the competition is rescheduled.
  9. **If for any reason the competition is not completed on the dates scheduled and is rescheduled at another time.**
    - a. Each team continuing to compete will be required to complete a new list of eligible players and meet all other eligibility requirements of the competition.
    - b. Eligible players who did not participate in the first stage of the competition may participate in the re-scheduled competition providing:
      - i. They sign the new list of eligible players.
      - ii. Any pickup players approved for the original competition will remain eligible.
  10. **A Protest Committee** will be available for all games. Registered protests, as defined in the official rulebook, will be ruled on immediately. The game is to proceed from that point once the decision of the Protest Committee has been given to the participants. The Protest Committee must meet off the diamond once they have the information from the umpires and the team.

## **15. PROVINCIAL COMPETITIONS - SUSPENSIONS**

1. Any player participating in Slo-Pitch Provincials that are suspended for any reason will remain suspended for the balance of the tournament. Further disciplinary action may be taken on behalf of Softball Manitoba with proper notification being given to the player in question.

## **16. PLAYER TRANSFER/MOVEMENT**

1. A player is considered to be registered with Softball Manitoba once a league has assigned that player to their respective team on RAMP.
  - a. Any request for transfer from one team to another must come from the player concerned and must be accompanied by an online release from the team holding the original registration.
  - b. Under extenuating circumstances, a player has the right to appeal to the Division for transfer without a signed release.
  - c. The onus is on the player to obtain an online release from the team holding his original registration before he signs with another team.  
Note: No player should assume that they have been deleted from the original team's roster before the registration deadline.

## 17. REVIEW OF INFORMATION FOR TEAMS ENTERING PROVINCIAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

### A. Information

1. Special Playing Rules
  - a. All Provincial Championships will be conducted in accordance with the Softball Canada rulebook, Softball Manitoba By-Laws, General Operating Rules and Division Operating Rules and any amendments by Softball Canada during the calendar year unless the Slo-Pitch Division chooses otherwise.

### B. Team Participation

1. Ensure your team meets all necessary requirements for entry into the Provincial competition.
  - a. Make-up of team. Refer to Section 9 Provincial Championship Team Rosters
  - b. Players to sign Championship Team Roster.
  - c. Pick-ups (if applicable).
  - d. Proper equipment. Refer to Softball Canada Rulebook.
  - e. Know and meet appropriate deadlines.

### C. Notification of Game Times/Pre-Tournament Meeting

1. Softball Manitoba will advise the team of the time of their first game at the earliest possible date.
2. A team representative (coach/manager) must attend pre-tournament meeting.

### D. Provincial Competition - Awards

Softball Manitoba will provide appropriate awards for all Provincial Championships:

1. A keeper plaque for the Provincial Champions.
2. Individual awards for participants of the Provincial Championship team.

## 18. SENIOR SLO-PITCH PROVINCIAL CHAMPIONSHIP INFORMATION

### SENIOR MASTER PROVINCIAL COMPETITION

1. Any team registered with the Manitoba Senior Slo-Pitch Tournament League (MSSTL) that wishes to enter the Provincial Championship must complete/pay an online entry form by July 1<sup>st</sup>.
2. Given sufficient entries, three divisions Competitive, Recreational A and Recreational B will be used. Any female reaching 50 and any male reaching 55 by December 31<sup>st</sup> will be eligible, the calendar year will apply at all times in establishing age.
3. Provincial Championship Team Rosters may have up to a maximum of 20 players plus 3 non-playing coaches/managers. MSSTL Winnipeg League teams' rosters will be those submitted to Softball Manitoba (SMB) through online RAMP registration (ADD/DELETE deadline July 1). MSSTL non-Winnipeg League teams' rosters will be those submitted to SMB through the MSSTL (ADD/DELETE deadline July 6) but allow for up to three (3) pickups whose names must be submitted to SMB by July 10. Pickups must be a) registered with SMB, b) from non-Winnipeg League MSSTL teams and c) non-competing teams in this year's SMB Provincial Play downs.

### SPECIAL PLAYING RULES:

Softball Canada Slo-Pitch rules and the Manitoba Senior Slo-Pitch Tournament League (MSSTL) Special Playing rules (see [msstl.coffeecup.com](http://msstl.coffeecup.com)) will apply. The Softball Manitoba (SMB) Provincial Grievance Committee will consist of the, a) Executive Director SMB, b) SMB Umpire-In-Chief and c) MSSTL President.

A partial summary of the rules include:

1. **Standardized Strike Zone:** Any legally pitched ball that touches any part of the mat or home plate shall be a strike. The pitched ball shall have an arc from 6 to 12 feet. The pitcher may pitch from between 50 – 60 feet.
2. **Base Paths:** Distance between the bases shall be 65 feet.
3. **Scoring Line:** A scoring line/2nd home plate will be utilized. Any runner touching the hitter's home plate shall be called out.
4. **Contact:** MSSTL Division I (Competitive Division) and Division II (Rec Division(s)) rules will be followed. For the Rec Division(s) this includes 11 defensive players on the field and overrunning of bases is permitted. Upon overrunning 2nd or 3rd base safely, the runner must retouch that base before advancing to the next base. Failure to retouch will result in the runner being called out.



5. **Courtesy Runners:** A batter reaching 1st base can request a courtesy runner at any time, but the same courtesy runner may not be used more than once per inning. In addition, once a player uses a courtesy runner, the player may not become a courtesy runner during that game.
6. **Courtesy Runner from Home Plate:** Courtesy runners from home plate are allowed. A courtesy runner from home plate must start from a position 9 feet outside the third base line. Any courtesy runner from home plate, who runs before the ball is hit will be declared out by the umpire. When a courtesy runner from home is used, the hitter may not cross the 1st base commitment line (located 21 feet from home plate). In the event that the hitter crosses the 1st base commitment line, the hitter will be called out.
7. **Gender Rule:** Teams must have at least 1 female player in the game at all times. Only women are allowed to bunt. No defensive realignments are allowed when women come to bat. All infielders must be behind the infield baselines until the ball is hit. The catcher must stay in the box prior to contact.

An approved 11 inch ball may be used when women are batting. Four consecutive balls to a male batter that precedes a female batter, will result in the male batter advancing to 2nd base and the subsequent women advancing to 1st base. All on base runners at the time of the 4 ball walk, advance two bases.

8. **Unlimited Batting Order** - All teams may use an unlimited number of players in the batting order. In the event of injury that entails permanent removal from that game and no substitute is available, the batter is out the first time through the order; the second time through the order and thereafter, the spot is skipped with no out recorded.
9. **Game Length:** Games will be 7 innings long.
10. **Tied games after regulation time:** (International Tie Breaker System will be used) If the game is tied at the end of the time limit or the end of the seventh inning, whichever comes first, the international tie breaker rule will be used for ONE EXTRA INNING. The offensive team will begin its turn at bat with the player scheduled to bat LAST in that half inning being placed at 2nd base. For example, if the No. 5 batter is to lead off, the No. 4 batter in the batting order should be placed at 2nd base. A substitute—referring to a player who has NOT already played in the game—may be inserted for the runner. Each team begins their portion of the extra inning in this fashion, with zero outs and regular 3 strike, 4 ball rules to apply. If the score remains tied at the end of one extra inning, the game will be recorded as a tie.
11. **Three Out Ball:** The three out rule will apply. A maximum of five runs per inning shall apply until the final inning when there is no limit (open inning) on runs scored. The umpire will call an end to any game where the run differential is greater than 15 after 5 or 6 innings.
12. **Sliding:** Sliding is not permitted in the Recreational Division(s).
13. **Maximum Runs per Inning:** A maximum of 5 runs per inning shall apply until the final inning when there shall be no limit on the number of runs that may be scored.
14. **Legal Bats** - The Softball Manitoba Slo-Pitch bat protocol will be adhered to and can be found at ([http://msstl.coffeecup.com/slo-pitch\\_bat\\_check\\_protocol\\_2016.pdf](http://msstl.coffeecup.com/slo-pitch_bat_check_protocol_2016.pdf)). A list of non-approved bats can be reviewed at [http://msstl.coffeecup.com/sc\\_non\\_approved\\_bat\\_list\\_june\\_2016.pdf](http://msstl.coffeecup.com/sc_non_approved_bat_list_june_2016.pdf). Bats are subject to inspection prior to each game. Anyone found using an illegal bat will be called out and will be ejected from the game.
15. **Home Team** will be determined by a coin toss at the beginning of each game in the preliminary round of the SMB Provincial play downs.
16. **Division Winners & Runners-Up:** Awards will be made to all Division Winners & Runners-Up, provided sufficient entries.