



8/27/09

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Information Packet for Onondaga County Parks Softball Program at Hopkins Road Park for the Fall Season

General Information

The Onondaga County Parks Softball Program based at Hopkins Road Park is a recreational program, which caters to all skill levels and styles of play. The Fall Softball program offers Men's, Women's, Seniors and Co-Ed leagues Monday through Friday and Sunday afternoons. The **Fall Softball Program must be completed in 10 weeks**. Play will begin immediately following Labor Day. All league play will take place at Hopkins Road Park. Hopkins Road Park offers 5 premier Softball Fields of which two are lighted, a concession stand, ample parking, and an onsite Softball Staff to accommodate any questions or concerns you might have during league play. Please read the following guidelines closely and be sure that all team participants are fully informed of the rules of the program. We look forward to your participation in the Softball Program at Hopkins Road Park.

Updates, Questions, Concerns

All questions or concerns in regard to the Softball Program should be directed to the Onondaga County Parks Softball Coordinator. Please note: **only team captains should be contacting the League Coordinator in regard to rules and issues pertaining to the Softball Program**. In addition to the Softball Coordinator you will be able to visit the Hopkins Road Park office each evening during program hours with any questions or concerns. The Onondaga County Parks Softball Coordinator can be reached at (315) 676-7366, Monday-Friday, 8:30am-4:30pm or at 453-6720, Monday-Thursday, 4pm-10pm. **Also, for updates, standings, rainout information, and additional information visit www.softballathopkins.com.**

Participant Conduct

Unsportsmanlike actions by a team, player, spectator, coach, or manager will result in disciplinary action by Onondaga County Parks. Depending on the severity of the player's conduct, a penalty will be issued based on the following guidelines: (next page)

- Level 1:** General unsportsmanlike conduct or inappropriate behavior. The penalty for a Level 1 ejection will be immediate removal from the remainder of the game in which the infraction occurred and a minimum one game suspension from the player's next scheduled contest.
- Level 2:** Any type of threat against a player, spectator, umpire, or park employee. A Level 2 ejection can also be imposed if a player gets ejected from a game more than once in a season for unsportsmanlike conduct or fails to leave the playing facility after a Level 1 ejection. The penalty for a level 2 infraction will be determined based on the severity of the infraction.
- Level 3:** Any type of intentional physical contact with the intent of causing harm. This includes but is not limited to shoving or bumping an umpire or fighting with other players or fans. A Level 3 ejection can also be imposed if a player has already received a Level 2 ejection within the season. The penalty for a Level 3 infraction will be determined by the program supervisor, parks administration and the designated umpire group within 48 hours of the incident. This penalty may be as severe as a minimum one-year suspension from **all** games and softball facilities operated by Onondaga County Parks. A Level 3 ejection may also result in a lifetime suspension from all softball facilities and leagues.

Once ejected from a game, that player or coach must immediately leave the softball field area. Failure to do so will be considered a more severe infraction. The park staff and designated umpire association will review all ejections and appropriate actions or suspensions will be issued based on the severity of the incident.

Altered Equipment:

Any player using or having in their possession-altered equipment at any County Facility will be subject to a lifetime suspension from all county sponsored athletic programs. As the team representative, please make sure each member of your team is aware of this policy.

If a player is issued any of the above sanctions, that player will have the opportunity to appeal the suspension. All appeals must be put in writing to the Onondaga County Parks Softball Coordinator within 48 hours of the violation. After reviewing the appeal, a final ruling on the infraction will be issued.

Team Rosters

All teams participating in the Softball Program at Hopkins Road Park are required to fill out a complete team roster. Roster forms have been provided for you in your registration packets and must be completed with all participants full name and phone number provided for your team to be entered into a league. In addition, all team Captains and managers must supply a valid e-mail address. All teams must submit a final roster before the start of their first regular season game. **Please note that a player is not permitted to play on more than one roster**

per night at Hopkins Road Park. If a player is caught playing on more than one roster that player will be subject to suspension.

All illegal player protests must be done in accordance with our protest policy. If a player protest situation does arise, all games will be played under protest and the Onondaga County Parks softball coordinator will review the situation and make a decision within 48 hours of the infraction or will be handled on-site at the time of the protest.

Protest Information

- 1) A protested game can result when there is a difference of opinion on the field between the protesting team and the umpire regarding the application or interpretation of either official printed playing rules or specially adopted ground rules.
- 2) Protests will be based on alleged misinterpretation or application of the playing rules. **There will be a \$25.00 protest bond**, which must accompany the written protest details. **This bond is non-refundable should the protest be lost.**
- 3) The intention to protest a ruling must be made known by the manager or captain of the protesting team to the umpire and the opponent, **immediately and before the next pitch or playing action takes place.** This is to enable all concerned parties to take notice of the exact conditions prevailing on the field at the time of the protest. The umpires on the field and the on-site Hopkins Road Softball Coordinator must acknowledge all protests.

Uniforms

Team uniforms are required for participation in the Softball Program at Hopkins Road Park. All teams must have matching colored shirts for all league play contests. If a uniform rule protest is filed, the game will be played under protest and the Onondaga County Parks Softball Coordinator will make a decision within 48 hours of the infraction.

Softballs

Softballs will be supplied for all league and playoff games at Hopkins Road Park. Umpires will have and will use one new and one used softball for each assigned game. A plan to keep the best used game balls for use during subsequent league play will be employed. **Please note: it is the responsibility of teams to return any balls hit foul or over the fence to the umpires, failure to return balls may result in stopping of play and ending of the game.** Umpires or Onondaga County Softball staff members will not be responsible for retrieving stray softballs.

League Registration Pricing

The pricing for all teams participating in the Fall Softball Program is as follows:

Team Entry Price	\$325
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The league entry fee covers all league expenses with the exception of umpire fees. **Teams that do forfeit will be required to pay the umpire cost of \$50 prior to their next scheduled game.** If this fee is not paid prior to that specific team's next game, that team will be **suspended** from all athletic fields operated by Onondaga County Parks until payment is received.

Liability

Onondaga County provides no accident or injury insurance through the participating leagues. It is up to the teams or individual participants to provide their own medical and property insurance.

Player Eligibility

- 1) **A complete batting order with first and last names, field position and the full umpires fee** must be ready to be turned in to the umpire **five minutes prior to the scheduled game time.** Substitutes do not have to be listed on this original line-up.
- 2) Ten (10) or eleven (11) person batting orders may be used. Teams can begin or continue a game with nine (9) players. If a tenth player comes after the game has started, that player can enter the game, but must bat last in the line-up. The 'AH' position cannot be added after the game starts. (refer to coed rules for details)
- 3) Courtesy runners will not be permitted at any time.

Incomplete Games

- 1) All games will be 7 innings. In case of inclement weather, darkness, light failure or any other unforeseen circumstances, 4 innings will constitute a completed game (3.5 innings if the home team is ahead). In playoff games all 7 innings must be finished in order for the game to be complete (unless the 12 run mercy rule is invoked).
- 2) Any regular season game called with the score tied (**at the last completed inning**) will be replayed from that point. If the home team is ahead in an inning and a game is stopped for any reason, after 4 innings are completed, the final score stands and the home team wins.
- 3) All playoff games must consist of 7 full innings unless the 12 run 'mercy' rule is invoked. Any playoff game that is called because of darkness, light failure, or any other unforeseen circumstance before 4 innings are completed, will replay that game from the beginning. After 4 completed innings, the game will be continued from the point that play was suspended.

Rainouts

- 1) The fitness of the grounds prior to the beginning of league play shall be decided by the Onondaga County Parks Hopkins Road Softball Staff. After a game has started, the umpire shall be the sole judge as to the fitness of the grounds or the impact of the weather on continuing play. When in doubt of field or weather conditions **teams may call the Hopkins Road Park Office at 453-6711 after 3pm or visit our website at www.softballathopkins.com**. All information on game status will be given at both places. Please do not notify any other teams of any decision regarding the cancellation of games for any reason. All teams are responsible for obtaining their own information on playing status.
- 2) In case of last minute rain as game is about to commence, both the home team and the visiting team must have at least nine players present on the field to cancel a game because of inclement weather. The umpires will be responsible for enforcing this rule. Failure to have at least nine players present at the beginning of the game will result in a forfeit, regardless of playing conditions.

Cancellations and Make-up Games

As a reminder the Fall Softball Program is 10 weeks. In most cases, leagues will make up rain outs on there given night by extending the season. If a make up is not possible within that 10 week time frame, games may be eliminated. If it is determined that a game is necessary to be played for playoff rankings, it may be played prior to the start of those playoffs.

Grace Period & Time Limits

There will be a **five**-minute grace period for the first scheduled game of the day only. All other games must begin by the subsequent start time on your schedule.

Equipment

- 1) The Hopkins Road Softball program will be using a .40 core, mid compression ball for all leagues.
- 2) At this point all Bats are legal in the Hopkins Road Softball Program with the exception of the original Easton Synergy, the Miken Ultra, and the Miken Ultra-2. However, any bat can be deemed as unsafe at any point in the season and be removed from all play at Hopkins Road Park.

Umpire Fees (each team must pay the following amount before games begin)

- 1)

A) Umpire fees if the game is completed (play at least 4 innings)	\$25.00/ a team
B) Umpire fees if the game started and did not finish	\$12.50/ a team
C) Umpire fees for a rainout show up fee	\$5.00/ a team
D) Suspended Game Fee (for resuming game)	No Charge

- 2) If a team forfeits a game, without 24 hours notice, the forfeiting team will be responsible for the \$50 forfeit fee. This fee will be paid to the umpires association through the Onondaga County Parks Hopkins Road Softball Office, not by teams at the time of the forfeit.

Safety Base

For your convenience and safety, a safety base will be used at all Hopkins Road Softball Games. The safety base is used to avoid contact between the offensive and the defensive players. In using the safety base the following rules apply:

- 1) On the initial play at first base, the batter-base runner should touch the colored portion of the base. The defensive player must always touch the white portion of first base. This rule is in effect only on the initial play at first base.
- 2) The safety base is non-applicable in the following situations:
 - a) Returning to the base after overrunning it.
 - b) Re-tagging to advance on a fly ball.

The 12 Run Mercy Rule

If a team is ahead by 12 runs or more after 5 innings (4 ½ innings if the home team is ahead) the game will be declared over.

Recording Scores

Umpires will be given an official scorecard for each game they are officiating. Scorecards must be signed and approved by both team captains and both umpires before being submitted to softball league coordinator each evening. Umpires will then return all cards to the Softball Program Coordinator at the conclusion of their designated games that evening. Team captains failure to sign the designated scorecard will forfeit their ability to question the games status on there team record. **Team Captains should not sign the scorecard until the score has been verified.**

Alcohol use and Intoxicants

Any team allowing players to drink alcoholic beverages or to use other intoxicants on the field or in the bench area (bleachers included for players) during a game will be subject to suspensions and/or forfeiture of the game or ejection from the league. In addition, any spectator deemed intoxicated by park staff or umpires may be subject to arrest.

Alcohol is allowed to be consumed at Hopkins Road Park and should be purchased from the parks concession stand. For customer service purposes the carry-in of alcoholic beverages is not allowed.

General Playing Rules

- 1) All pitches must be released once pitching motion has begun. Any “fake or pump” will be deemed an illegal pitch and therefore called a ball.
- 2) **The 3 ball (walk)/ 2 strike (out) program** will be in effect for all leagues.
- 3) The second foul ball rule will be in effect for all leagues. Any batter who hits a 2nd foul after one strike will be called out.
- 4) Batting order- once a player is listed on the original line-up in the original batting order, that player cannot change his/her batting position at any time during that game.
- 5) Additional Hitter (AH) can be used (optional). The AH is the 11th batter who can be placed anywhere in the original batting order. The AH if used must be listed in the original batting order and can substitute on defense any time during the game. The defensive player replaced then becomes the AH. Batting order does not change. If you use the AH position, you must have 11 players in the game for the entire game or take an “out” every time that removed player is supposed to bat.
- 6) There will be a **live plate** for all leagues at Hopkins Road Park.
- 7) Base stealing is not permitted in any situation. However, a “Relaxed Step” rule will be in effect and a base runner will not be called out if they leave the base in the following situations:
 - A. A pitched ball touches the ground in front of home plate.
 - B. A pitched ball completely crosses the home plate area
 - C. A batter swings at a pitched ball and misses.
- 8) In most cases, only the top 4 teams will make the playoffs for the Fall Softball Season.
- 9) The 2up-homerun rule will be in effect for all leagues. This rule states: you cannot be more than two homeruns **hit over the fence** ahead of the team you are playing at anytime. Any homerun hit after you are two ahead of the team you are playing will be ruled as an out. This rule does not apply to homeruns hit inside the fence.

Co-ed Team Rules

- 1) Five male players and five female players constitute a legal line-up (6 and 6 if the AH is used). A game may begin with 9 players; however, a minimum of **five female players must participate at all times**.
- 2) Male and Female players must alternate in the batting order.
- 3) All male batter must bat opposite his natural batting side. Should adherence to this rule be questioned, the opponent can require the male batter to switch to the opposite side of

the plate once per game. Once switched, the male batter must remain at the plate position after the requested switch for the remainder of the game.

- 4) Teams may start the game with 4 male batters, but must take an out when it is the turn of the 5th male batter to hit in the lineup.

Player Participation

- 1) Any player who has on file with U.S.S.S.A. or A.S.A. National Headquarters a 'Personal Services Contract' will not be eligible to play in the Hopkins Road Park Softball Program.
- 2) Onondaga County Parks and the CNY Umpires Association (USSSA) in conjunction with a selected players committee have established a restricted players list. This list will serve as a guideline for upper level men's play. The restricted player list is available on-line at www.softballathopkins.com.