

2019 MCSSA Evening Leagues (MCRD) Softball Rules

Clarifications/Changes for 2019

2019 Rules at a Glance

2019 MCSSA Softball Rules

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Clarifications/Changes for 2019 (highlighted in yellow)

2019 Rules Comparison at a Glance (ASA Umpires)

Rule	Mon. Evening Women	Tue. Evening Men 50+	Wed. Evening Men 60+	Thur. Evening Men 55+
Illegal Bats. (Rule 2.3)	MCRD List	MCRD List	MCRD List	MCRD List
Home Run Limit (Rule 3.5)	Unlimited	See appx F	3 (1+ after 3, then out)	See appx G
Minimum to avoid forfeit (Rule 5.2)	9 ¹	8	8	8
Lineup Substitutions (Rule 5.3)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Number of Defensive Players (Rule 5.6)	11	10 or 11	11	10 or 11*
Continuous Batting (Rule 5.7)	No	No	No	No
Time Limits	55	55	55	55
Tie Game After 7 th	Yes	YES	Yes	Yes
Mercy Rule After 5 (Rule 6.5)	15	15	15	15
Thrown Out at 1B from OF	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Courtesy Runner from Home	Yes	No	Yes	No
Distance Between Bases (Feet)	65	70	70	70

*only for games where there is a handicap.

¹See Appendix E, Rule 3.

2019 MCSSA Softball Rules

The Montgomery County Recreation Department (MCRD), through the league director, reserves the right to amend schedules. MCRD also has the right to amend their playing rules.

However, the rules as enforced in any of the leagues administered by MCSSA, are a “pyramid” where rules at a higher level of the pyramid override those at a lower level. The pyramid levels, from higher to lower, are as follows.: (1) Any but the most basic rules of softball agreed upon by the two opposing managers; (2) League-specific rules attached herein as Appendices E to J; (3) These MCSSA “base” rules; (4) the MCRD rules; (5) The current umpires Association’s rules as identified in Rule 1.1. For example, any MCSSA rule (Level 3) will override an MCRD rule (Level 4) or an Association rule (Level 5).

1. Playing Rules.

1.1. Unless modified herein, all games shall be played in accordance with current MCRD rules and those of the Amateur Softball Association or the National Softball Association (hereinafter, “the Association”), whichever association’s services MCRD has retained for MCSSA the current year. Individual leagues may further modify these rules by agreement among team managers/ coaches (hereinafter, “managers”) and the Montgomery County Senior Sports Association (MCSSA) league commissioner.

2. Equipment.

2.1. SHOES. Metal and screw-on cleats shall be illegal in all league games.

2.2. BALLS. The home team shall provide league-approved balls for each game. Additional balls, if needed, shall be provided by the team causing the previous ball to go out of play.

2.3. BATS. Titanium bats and Senior Association bats shall be illegal. For evening league team games, MCRD shall provide managers with a description and list of illegal bats as shown in Appendix J, and the list is also available on the MCRD web site. League commissioners may, with consent of a majority of managers, add bats to, but not remove bats from, the illegal bat list. **Players that use an illegal bat, banned bat list or senior bat (see Appendix J) will be suspended. Suspension will be determined by the League Coordinator from the Recreation Department. If the batter is caught with the illegal bat when he/she is in the batter's box, the batter will be called out, ejected from the game, and will receive a suspension letter. A player could receive up to a year in suspension. Managers will be held responsible for informing all players of this rule.**

2.4 PITCHING HELMETS. Pitching Helmets Are Strongly Recommended!!!

3. Playing Field.

3.1. A COMMITMENT LINE, three-feet long, shall be marked, halfway between third base and home plate and perpendicular to the foul line. A base runner, advancing beyond this line, who re-crosses to return to third is automatically declared out—this includes re-crossing on a caught fly ball. If a runner re-crosses the line, he/she shall be declared out and the ball will remain alive.

3.2. A SCORING PLATE shall be placed eight feet from the rear point of home plate on an extended line from first base. If a scoring plate is not available or if weather or field conditions would make its use unsafe, a scoring line extended from the first base line shall be marked.

3.3. A STRIKE ZONE MAT shall be placed over or behind home plate to demarcate the strike zone. At the league's discretion, FULL or PARTIAL mats may be used.

3.3.1. The FULL mat shall be placed longitudinally with its front edge aligned with the front edge of home plate, and overlapping home plate equally on either side. Legal pitches striking any portion of the FULL mat shall be called strikes. A defensive player may use any part of the FULL mat for a play on a runner attempting to score..

3.3.2. The PARTIAL mat, 17 inches wide and 24 inches long (measured from either side point of home plate to the end of the mat), shall be placed behind and touching home plate. Legal pitches striking any portion of home plate, including the black edge and the PARTIAL mat, shall be called strikes. A defensive player may use any part of home plate or the partial mat for a play on a runner attempting to score (See Rules 8.4.1 and 8.4.2).

3.4. A DOUBLE BAG or mat of equal size shall be used at first base in addition to the normal bag. The double bag/mat shall be placed in foul territory abutting the normal first base bag.

3.5. HOME RUN LIMITS. For the purpose of this section, a home run is defined as an unassisted fair ball hit over the fence. If a batter hitting such a ball does not score due to the 5-RUN LIMIT, the hit shall not count against the home run limit.

3.5.1. In all men's team evening leagues, the home run limit shall be 3 per team with a "one plus" provision. Specifically, a team may hit more than 3 home runs, as long as the total number of home runs hit by the team is the same or just one more than the total hit by the opposing team. Beyond this limit, any fair ball hit over the fence will count as an out.

3.6. BATTING PRACTICE. Any pre-game batting practice shall occur with the batter standing at least six (6) feet behind the established batter's box and the pitcher releasing from at least 6 feet in front of the pitcher's plate.

4. Rosters and Eligibility.

4.1. MCSSA leagues include both team leagues and draft leagues. Team leagues are those composed of teams that enter by MCRD rules and regulations. Draft leagues are those for which individuals sign up to be constituted into teams by the individual league's processes and procedures.

4.2. For all evening team leagues, each manager shall submit a preliminary roster to the MCRD league director and to the relevant MCSSA league commissioner prior to the first scheduled game. Changes to the preliminary rosters must be made in writing prior to any added player's participation. Final rosters are due the first Monday in June; if not submitted by that date, the preliminary roster shall become the final roster, and subsequent changes can be made only with the approval of the MCRD league director. Players not on final or later amendments will not be eligible for playoffs.

4.2.1. Team rosters shall be submitted on the official MCRD form or electronic equivalent and include each player's full name, address, phone number, date of birth and, if provided by the player, e-mail address. Player signatures are required.

4.3. For all draft leagues, commissioners and managers shall compose teams that are balanced and aim at achieving parity in team capability.

4.4. Team rosters shall not exceed 24 players at any time.

4.5. Each player shall, to be eligible, meet the league age requirement and be listed on the team roster.

4.6. Any team using an ineligible player shall forfeit each game in which the player participated. The ineligible player should be reported to the umpire anytime prior to the umpire's departure following the game.

5. Players and Substitutes.

5.1. Playing age is the age a player will have reached by December 31st of the current calendar year.

5.2. A team may start and continue with at least eight (8) eligible players. A team with fewer than 8 eligible players to start or continue forfeits the game. Players arriving any time after the game begins may be inserted at the end of the lineup in order of arrival. The batting order for a game, once established, shall not be otherwise altered. There shall be no limit on lineup size.

5.3. In the evening team leagues, all players present at the start of the game are not required to be in the batting lineup. A manager may insert any player not in the starting lineup at any time during the game. Any starting or substitute player who has been removed from the game may re-enter the game once, but must re-enter in the same batting position. A player not in the batting order may not play a defensive position unless they are either entered (or re-entered as above) into the batting order at the same time. At no time may a defensive player be on the field without being in the batting order. A player not in the batting order may serve as a courtesy runner.

5.3.1. As an exception to the re-entry conditions (in Rule 5.3), a team unable to field the maximum number of players permitted, (10 or 11), because of an injury, may replace the injured player with a player not in the lineup at the time of the injury. This means that if the player that replaces the injured player has already re-entered the game once, he may do so again in this situation.

5.4. No out shall occur for any lineup vacancy unless due to ejection for unsportsmanlike conduct, in which case an out shall occur for the ejected player's lineup spot regardless of additional players being available. However, an ejected player may be replaced on defense.

5.5. BORROWED PLAYERS

5.5.1. In men's evening leagues, when a team begins the game with only 8 or 9 players available, the opposing team shall provide a player positioned behind home plate to retrieve pitched balls. This retriever shall not otherwise be involved in defensive plays, and must leave the vicinity of home plate when the ball is live or be subject to an interference call. The team with 8 players may, for tactical reasons, waive the use of a retriever at any time, but shall also retain the right to reinstate the retriever at any time. The retriever rule shall be canceled when the 10th player arrives.

5.5.2 In women's evening league, team with less than 9 players may borrow players from opposing team to prevent forfeits. When borrowing team's players arrive, borrowed players return to their team.

5.6. In all leagues, any player in the batting order may play any defensive position at anytime.

6. The Game.

6.1. STARTING TIME. A team with fewer than 8 players, at the scheduled time of the start of the first game on a given field shall be permitted a 10-minute grace period. The game shall begin as soon as an 8th player arrives. The game time limit shall be calculated from the scheduled starting time. Managers and the umpire may agree to start prior to the scheduled time.

6.2. TIME LIMITS. For evening league games, Game is played to 55 minutes. The full inning that starts after 55 minutes is the unlimited and last inning. (all games must have an unlimited inning)

In the last game on a lighted field, because of the 10:45 PM curfew the final and unlimited inning shall be declared for a full inning started at 10:30 PM or later, if the 55-minute threshold has not been reached.

Clarification:

The time kept by the umpire is the absolute standard for this rule with no exceptions. It is suggested that all umpires have a watch or cell phone alarm that would be set to go off exactly 55 minutes after the start of the game. Also, the next full inning starts at the 3rd out.

6.3 TIE GAME. In evening league games, if the score is tied when the inning declared to be the last has been played, the game shall be recorded as a tie. Tie games shall not continue beyond the inning declared to be the last, nor shall a tie game be replayed.

6.4. FIVE-RUN LIMIT. In all leagues, three outs or five (5) runs, whichever occurs first, shall end an inning.

6.4.1. The 7th inning will be declared the unlimited run inning. An exception occurs when the 55-minute warning is given and the umpire states that the NEXT inning will be the LAST (and unlimited) inning.

6.5. MERCY RULE. If a team leads by 15 or more runs, after the opposing team has batted in the 5th or 6th inning, the game shall end.

6.6. RUNNER RULE. If a player at bat walks and he is going to have a runner, the batter may return to the dugout without touching first and the runner can go to first. Similarly, when a home run is hit over the fence, the batter and any runners on base shall score without having to advance to the next base.

7. Pitching Regulations.

7.1. The pitching arc shall be between 6 feet and 12 feet. Umpires shall verbally call an illegal pitch while it is in the air.

7.2. In all leagues, the batter shall start with a 1-1 ball-strike count and be allowed one courtesy foul after 2 strikes.

7.3. An intentional walk may be issued at any time by pitcher's declaration.

7.4. A foul tip is a batted ball that goes directly from the bat, not higher than the batter's head, to the catcher's hands or glove/mitt, and is legally caught by the catcher. A foul tip is a strike; a batter with two strikes who hits a foul tip shall be called out. Any foul ball reaching higher than the batter's head and then caught shall be called an out. A foul ball that is not caught is a dead ball, but shall also count as a strike, except in the case of leagues using the 1-1 starting count, when a batter with two strikes is allowed one courtesy foul without consequence.

8. Base Running.

8.1. REACHING FIRST BASE. The defensive player shall use the normal (inside) bag. The batter-runner shall use the double (outside) bag or mat if there is a play at first base and may use the inside bag only if the ball is not playable at first base or to avoid colliding with a defensive player moving into the base path. A batter-runner otherwise touching the inside bag shall be called out. A defensive player may use the outside bag only if drawn by the throw to the foul side of first base.

8.2. SLIDING AND DIVING. Advancing runners sliding or diving into first base or the scoring plate shall be called out. Runners advancing to second or third base and runners returning to any base may legally slide or dive. Runners overrunning any base (except for a batter-runner who overruns first base and attempts or feigns an attempt to advance toward second base) shall be in jeopardy of being tagged out. A runner who overruns a base need not re-touch that base to advance to the next base.

8.3. OUT BY TAG. A runner may be tagged out at any base other than home plate.

8.4. ADVANCING TO HOME. A runner advancing from third base and crossing the commitment line is:

8.4.1. awarded home if he/she is tagged by a defensive player, or touches the scoring plate (or, if none, crosses the scoring line) before a defensive player in possession of the ball touches home plate.

8.4.2. out if a defensive player in possession of the ball touches home plate before the runner touches the scoring plate or crosses the scoring line.

8.4.3. out if he/she re-crosses the commitment line or touches or crosses over home plate or the strike zone mat. No defensive appeal is required.

8.5. COURTESY RUNNERS. A courtesy runner is a runner who replaces a batter who has already reached base safely or runs for a batter from home plate.

8.5.1. A courtesy runner shall replace a base runner only when the ball is dead. A courtesy runner becomes official when he/she touches the appropriate base. A runner reaching first base cannot be run for if a pitch has been thrown to the next batter until that batter's at bat is finished.

8.5.2. A player may not be used as a courtesy runner more than once per inning. A player shall be called out if he/she becomes a courtesy runner more than once in an inning.

8.5.3. A courtesy runner shall not replace another courtesy runner except in case of injury, in which case the original courtesy runner shall be removed from, and may not reenter, the game.

8.5.4. A courtesy runner on base when it is his/her turn to bat shall be called out as the base runner, but shall take his/her turn at bat.

8.5.5. Courtesy runners who run for batters shall leave from a point behind a line parallel to the third base line that is extended from the scoring plate to the backstop.

8.5.5.1. If a courtesy runner from home plate leaves before the ball is hit, or the batter advances toward first base by more than halfway, the batter shall be called out. The ball shall be dead, and runners shall return to their bases previously held.

8.5.5.2. A batter who has a courtesy runner from home plate shall be called out if he/she interferes with a defensive player trying to make a play near home plate.

9. Umpires.

9.1. MCRD shall provide umpires for evening team leagues. MCSSA shall provide umpires for all other leagues.

9.2. If the assigned umpire has not arrived by 10 minutes after the scheduled start time, the game shall begin without an official umpire and shall be completed. An assigned umpire arriving after the game has begun shall complete it. The time limit shall be reckoned from the scheduled start time. In the case of the evening team leagues, MCRD shall not be responsible for payment to volunteer or unauthorized umpires.

9.3. If the umpire does not arrive or arrives late, teams shall notify MCRD immediately by phone.

10. Protests.

10.1. Protests pertaining to the playing of the game shall be submitted in accordance with the umpires Association rules within 48 hours.

10.2. Failure to present a specific league rule to an umpire allegedly misapplying that rule at that moment shall invalidate the protest.

10.3. Protests for evening team leagues may be submitted to MCRD and must include a protest fee of \$25.00. Protests for all other leagues may be submitted to the MCSSA President who will appoint a committee to adjudicate the protest.

11. Score Reporting and League Standings.

11.1. Both managers shall report the game score(s), by email on the same day as games played, but not later than 24 hours later, in the manner prescribed by the MCSSA league commissioner.

11.2. League standings shall be determined, at the league's discretion, by won-lost percentage or standings points. Standings points, if used, shall be awarded as follows: win, 2 points; tie, 1 point; forfeit, -1 point. For pre-announced forfeits, there will be no subtraction of points. If weather cancels a forfeit, the forfeit is nullified.

11.3. A tie in league standings shall be broken using the following criteria: a. Head-to-head record. b. Division record. c. Head-to-head run differential. d. Fewer runs allowed in division games. e. Fewer runs allowed in all games.

12. Disciplinary Action.

12.1. RESPONSIBILITY. Team managers shall bear responsibility for the conduct of their team and spectators.

12.2. EJECTION. A player, manager or coach ejected from a game shall be suspended for the remainder of that game and the team's next game. MCRD shall have the power to discipline further any individual ejected more than once during a season.

12.3. TECHNICAL OUT. As a sanction against those teams or individuals whose behavior is unacceptable, but the umpire judges that ejection is too severe a penalty, the umpire may invoke a technical out against the offending team.

12.3.1. Offense: If the team at bat is guilty of unsportsmanlike conduct, the umpire may enforce an out against them. If this is the first or second out of the inning, the game continues with the batter and base runners being unaffected; an additional out is simply added to the team's total. If the technical out is the third of the inning, the next inning will resume with the batter who would have batted had the out not been called. In this case the batter will begin with a fresh count.

12.3.2. Defense: If the team in the field is guilty of unsportsmanlike conduct, the umpire may invoke the technical out rule by reducing by one the number of outs that the defense will have when they come to bat.

12.3.3. Two consecutive technical outs may not be assessed against the same team. At least one pitch (legal or illegal) must intervene. An ejection for any unsportsmanlike behavior must be accompanied by the charging of an out against the offending team.

Appendix E: Monday Evening Women's League

1. In the women's league there shall be no home run limit.
2. Team rosters shall be limited to 24 players at any time.
3. A team with more than 11 players available shall lend, to an opponent with fewer than 9 players available, enough players to prevent a forfeit. As players from the short-handed team arrive, borrowed players shall return to their original team. Because of liability issues, the borrowing team may not borrow players from any team other than the opposing team.
4. STARTING TIME. A team with fewer than 9 players, at the scheduled time of the start of the first game on a given field shall be permitted a 10-minute grace period. The game shall begin as soon as a 9th player arrives. The game time limit shall be calculated from the scheduled starting time. Managers and the umpire may agree to start prior to the scheduled time.
5. NEW INNING. New inning starts after the 3rd out.
6. Umpires will start the game time clock no later than five minutes after the end of the first game.
7. Courtesy runners from home plate may be used, by agreement of the managers prior to the start of the game, only for specific batters who have injuries.

Appendix F: 50+ Tuesday Night Softball

1. New Inning –. “the new inning begins when the third out occurs”
2. The first inning started AFTER the 55-minute time point will be last and unlimited run inning.
3. Mercy rule remains 15 runs after 5 innings. If the visiting team is up by 10 runs or more going into the unlimited inning, that last at-bat is waived and the home team bats again. If, and only if, the home team catches up or goes ahead in runs would the visiting team then get their last three outs.
4. Equalizer Rule: A vs B or B vs C: the lower division team has a choice of 5 runs or an extra defensive player. A vs C the lower division team gets BOTH 5 runs and an extra defensive Player. In all situations if the lower division team wins with the equalizer in the first game, they forfeit it in the second game. In A vs C only one of the handicaps is lost. Team must announce which to opposing manager.
5. Retriever Rule –If one team only has 8 players, they may require the other team to supply a retriever. This is a person who only catches the pitched balls, but does not participate in any of the fielding plays (he must move away from the plate after the ball is hit). When a team has 9 players, a retriever will no longer be supplied.
6. Home Run Rule – 3 maximum per team. A vs A league match-up will be 5 per team. No “one +” provision. Over the fence home runs beyond the maximum will be an out.
7. Use of courtesy runners is restricted to replacing runners who have reached base safely and shall be at the manager's discretion. Courtesy runners can only be changed before the first pitch to the next batter.
8. For 6:00 PM games, the clock starts at 6:00 PM, even with the 10-minute grace period.
9. Games can end in a tie after 7 innings.

Appendix G: 55+ Thursday

1. HANDICAPS. When a lower division plays a higher division team, they receive a handicap in the first game. If the lower division team wins the game, they lose the handicap for the second game. If the lower division team loses the first game, they maintain the handicap. The handicap is the choice of 5 runs (1 per inning), OR an extra fielder. , or both when an A team plays a C team. (Only 1 of the handicaps is lost.

2. The distance between bases shall be 70 feet, except for games played at Olney Manor, where currently the bases are 65 feet apart.

3. RUNNERS shall only replace runners who have reached base safely.

3.1. A runner reaching first base cannot be run for if a pitch has been thrown to the next batter until that batter's at bat is finished.

3.2. If a batter walks and is going to have a runner, the batter does not have to touch first base.

4. MERCY RULE. The game shall end if a team leads by 15 or more runs after the 5th or 6th inning.

4.1. In handicapped games, all HANDICAP runs (see rule 1.2) shall be counted in the run differential.

5. A team trailing by 10 or more runs entering the final inning (whether or not the 7th inning) shall bat first in the final inning.

6. TIME LIMIT Last and unlimited inning is the one that starts after 55 minutes. For 6:00 PM games, the game clock shall start at 6:00 PM, irrespective of the 10-minute grace period. NO MATTER IF THERE IS NO UMPIRE OR ANYTHING that delays the start.

7. HOME RUN RULES When a home run is hit over the fence, the batter and any runners on base shall score without having to advance to the next base.

7.1 5 home runs then out.

7.2. When a higher division team plays a lower division team, the lower division team has Home Runs and the higher division team has 3. When the limit is reached, balls over the fence are outs. No one up!!

8. Division standings shall be determined by (a) division points, (b) head-to-head record, and (3) overall points.

8.1 Two standings points shall be awarded to the winner of each game. Games ending in a tie score shall be recorded as tied games, with one standings point awarded to each team.

8.2. Standings and points shall be recorded separately for overall and division-only games.

9. PLAYOFFS. Higher-seeded team shall be home team in each game, except for the “if” game, when home team will be decided by coin toss. For two-team divisions, higher seed shall be home team first game, lower seed shall be home team second game, coin toss shall determine home team for “if” game.

9.1. Blue and Gold shall receive their regular season handicaps until they win a game, whereupon the handicap shall be removed for the duration of the Division C playoff.

10.Retriever Rule – If one team only has 8 players, they may require the other team to supply a retriever. This is a person who only catches the pitched balls, but does not participate in any of the fielding plays (he must move away from the plate after the ball is hit). When a team has 9 players, a retriever will no longer be supplied.

11. MERCY RULE. 15 after 5. Flip Flop when team trails by 10.

12. BAT RULE. Montgomery Country bat list. ABSOLUTELY no senior bats (bpf of 1.21), or bats on the Montgomery County Non-Approved bat list.

Appendix H: Wednesday Evening Men's 60+ League

1. DEFENSIVE PLAYERS. The maximum number of defensive players at any time shall be 11.
2. Each team may identify two players per game who are permitted to use a courtesy runner from home. Except for the case where an injury occurs during the game, both players must be identified before the game starts.
3. The distance between bases shall be 70 feet.
4. Equalizer Rule--The A teams will spot the B teams 5 runs per game. If the B team wins the first game, the second game will be played without the equalizer.

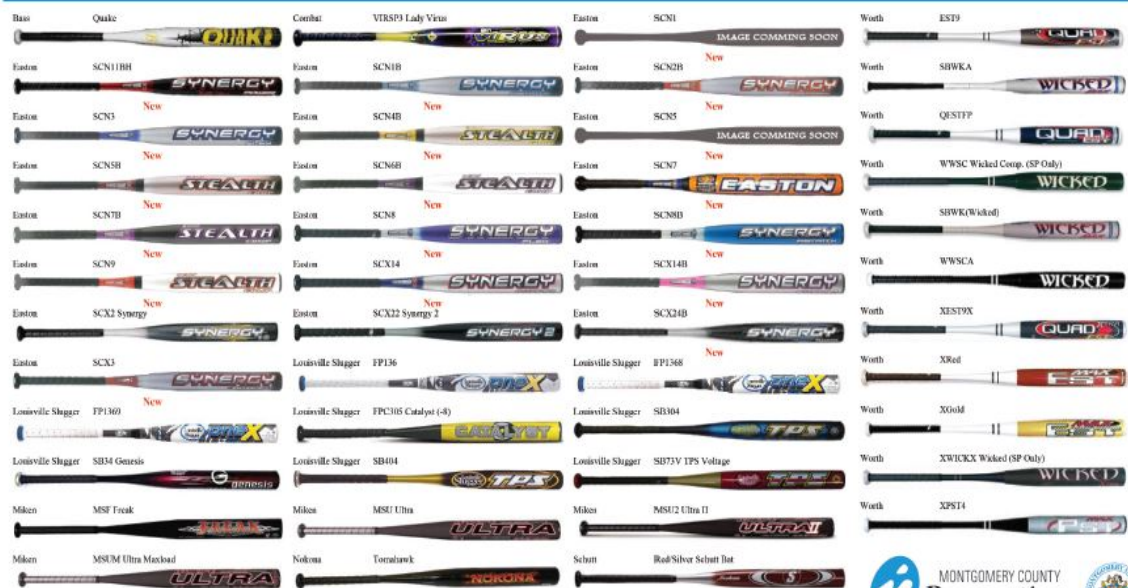
Appendix J: ASA Non-Approved Bats for Evening Team Leagues

2019 Softball Bat Modification

MONTGOMERY COUNTY RECREATION 2019 ASA NON-APPROVED BAT LIST WITH CERTIFICATION MARKS

Revised January 31, 2019

This is to inform all teams that participate in Montgomery County Recreation Department Softball Leagues, the following lists of bats, pictured below will be illegal for the 2019 seasons. All NSA, USSSA, and ASA bats that have official certification (2000, 2004 or 2013) marks/stamps and the bat performance rating of 1.20 will be allowed in all adult softball leagues. All senior bats are considered illegal. Official Approved bats shall be considered altered if they are rolled, shaved, repainted, weighted or modified to change their characteristics from that produced by the manufacturer. Identifying the bat by means of laser marking, engraving, or painting the name or number of the player will not make the bat an altered bat.



240-777-6893 | Hablamos Español



Montgomery County Recreation is committed to compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Please contact a Therapeutic Recreation Specialist at 240-777-6870 or rec.mainstream@montgomerycountymd.gov to request accommodations.