

Umpires,

Uniform of choice is ASA. All teams are registered ASA.

Games are scheduled and pay rate is figured on 60 minute games. If your game goes longer, let us know.

## Official Rules

(As Approved May 13, 2005)

(Amended March 20, 2006)

(Amended August 4, 2006)

(Amended March 27, 2007)

(Amended August 7, 2008)

(Amended August 6, 2009)

(Amended April 8, 2010)

## PLAYING RULES

The Potomac Wiffleball League will utilize the same rules used in Major League Baseball with the following exceptions:

1. The Field – The field shall be a level playing surface of grass or dirt to the extent possible. Fair territory shall be the area no less than 15 feet in front of home plate, between lines that could be drawn from the back point of the plate, through the top left and top right corner of the plate extending to the home run fence or area. This will make an angle at home plate of approximately 53 degrees (53.130102354156). First and third base shall be 40 feet from home plate, on their respective foul lines. Second base shall be 65 feet from home plate, on a line drawn directly through the center of the two foul lines. The pitchers rubber shall be placed at 30 feet on the same line as second base. The home run area or fence shall at no point be less than 70 feet from home plate, and the sum of the length from home plate and the height of the fence shall at no point be less than 74 feet. A strike board, which shall be 20 inches wide by 30 inches tall, shall be erected so that it is positioned two feet behind home plate, and shall be 10 inches above the ground level of home plate. A radar speed detector shall be installed as part of the strike board, though not to increase its height or width, and shall be considered part of the board.

### Playing Field Dimensions

Home to First & Third – 40'

Home to Second – 65'

Second to First & Third – 34' 3"

Home to Pitchers Rubber – 30'

Width of Field Between First & Third – 35' 9"

Width of Field at 85' Foul Poles – 76'

Width of Field at 90' Foul Poles – 80' 6"

2. Umpiring – In the absence of an umpire, teams will umpire their own games. Consensus among players will settle all disputes. On close plays, the benefit goes to the fielder.
3. Equipment – All bats used in league play must be regulation, yellow WIFFLE bats. They may not be altered in any way, however they may have plastic tape on the handle. Balls must be WIFFLE, baseball size. No metal spikes shall be worn at any time. No player shall wear a glove while playing a defensive position.
4. Pitching – All pitches must be slow to medium speed. There are no balks. The pitcher must have one foot on, and one foot in front of the rubber when the ball is released. Pitchers must not delay the game and any pitcher who throws four consecutive pitches that do not hit the strike board and are not swung at by the batter shall be issued a warning. Any subsequent violations of this rule in the same game, and the pitcher shall be immediately removed from the pitcher's position. In the event of removal under this rule, should no eligible players be available to pitch for the team, the team shall forfeit the game.
5. At bats – Batters will be charged with a called strike when 1) a legally delivered pitch hits the strike board without first touching any other object, including the ground, the speed of the pitch is recorded by radar, and that speed is no more than 27 MPH, or 2) a batter, intentionally or unintentionally, extends any part of his body outside of the batter's box and interferes with a pitched ball before it has passed the strike board, or 3) the batter, at their sole discretion, believes a pitch that was not otherwise a called strike was a strike and they should have swung, calls a strike on themselves. There will be no walks. Hit batters will not advance. One-handed batting is not allowed, unless a player only has the use of one hand due to incapacitation or disability.
6. Pitcher's Hand – In addition to any other method of putting out runners, any force out may be made if the pitcher obtains control of the live, batted or thrown ball before the runner reaches a base, or returns to a base in the event of a caught fly ball. Should there be more than one force out in play, only one force out shall be made on a single play. The lead force shall be the first one affected, but should it not have been in time, subsequent forces will be enforced in continuing lead order.
7. Infield Fly – No infield fly rule will be in effect.
8. Stealing first – Batters may not steal 1st base after the catcher drops strike three.
9. Stealing and leading off – Base runners may not lead off; nor may they steal. Runners may leave their base after the batter makes contact with the ball. If a runner leaves a base before the batter makes contact with a fair ball, and doesn't return to that base, the runner will be called out if the defensive team appeals to that base before the next play occurs. If a runner leaves a base and contact is not made with a ball, even if the runner returns, on appeal from the defensive team, the umpire will issue a warning to each team, and on the next and subsequent appeal(s) from either team, the runner leaving base without contact being made shall be called out.
10. Pegging – Fielders may throw the ball at runners. Runners struck will be out. Runners struck with a thrown ball which first hits any player, a base, or the ground first, will be out. If a fielder

misses a runner in a pegging attempt, the maximum amount of bases that any runner may advance is the base they were heading to, plus one. The base they are heading to is defined as the base they are physically moving toward at the time the ball leaves the fielder's hand, and not necessarily the next base in numerical order if they are between bases. Runners must advance at their own risk, and should more than one pegging attempt be made, the rule will be applied at the time the last pegging attempt is made.

11. Game – A complete game will consist of 6 innings, with 2 outs per team, per inning. In the event of weather or other factors as agreed upon by both teams, the completion of 4 innings, or of 3 and a half innings if the home team is leading, shall constitute a complete game.

12. Mercy rule – **REGULAR SEASON ONLY** – If at the end of three innings a team leads by 10 runs or more, the game will be over. If the home team leads by 10 or more runs at any time during the bottom half of any inning, the game will be over. After 45 minutes of play, if at the end of any inning a team leads by 5 runs or more, the game will be over. After 45 minutes of play, if the home team leads by 5 or more runs at any time during the bottom half of any inning, the game will be over.

13. Outfield Fence – Fair balls that go under or through the outfield fence shall be ground rule doubles. Balls that are fair, but roll past the foul side of the foul pole and fence shall be live and in play and there will be no limit to the amount of bases that the runner may advance.

14. Speed-up Rules – Runners are not required to run out all of the bases on an over the fence home run. The on-deck batter shall have a bat, and be ready to go as soon as the proceeding at-bat has been completed.

15. Foul Tip – A foul tip shall only be balls which are fouled off the bat and then hit the strike board without first touching any other object, including the ground. A foul tip is dead the moment it touches the strike board, and may not be caught or put into play.

16. Pitcher Defensive Substitutions – Once a player has been in the pitchers position, and has been removed from that position, the player may not return as the pitcher in that same game.

17. Ball is Dead / Runners Must Return and Remain in Contact with Bases – Once all active offensive and defensive play is over, and no base runners are actively advancing, and the pitcher has control of the ball in fair territory, the umpire shall call time. Once time is called, the ball is dead, and all runners must return to their base until the ball is put back in play by the batter making contact with the ball.

Forfeits: A team that cannot field 3 players within five (5) minutes of the scheduled game start time shall forfeit the game.

- Trees and Other Immovable Objects: Any ball in the air which has not hit the ground and then hits a tree, light pole, wire, or other immovable object is immediately a dead ball and cannot be played or caught. If the ball is in foul territory when it hits the tree or object is it foul. If a ball is in fair territory past the home run fence and hits a tree or object it is a home run.
- Other Playing Field: A fair ball that rolls into the fair territory of the playing field not being used for the game in which the ball is hit, shall be dead and treated as a ground rule double.
- Airplanes: Any ball that hits an airplane shall be dead. If it was in fair territory when it struck the airplane, it shall be a ground rule double. If it was in foul territory, it shall be a foul ball.

PWL Umpire Notes:

\* Remember the arc line in front of home plate is a foul line too, the ball must move 15 feet to be fair. This line is played exactly like the other lines before first and third base.

\* Pitchers' hand applies to the lead force out, but if that runner is safe, it then applies to the next force. So, literally the same act of a pitcher getting control of the ball requires the umpires to make calls at multiple bases. Most common issue, runner on first, ground ball thrown to the pitcher, if the runner from first gets to second before the pitcher gets the ball, runner is safe, but the batter/runner going to first could still be out. With multiple umpires, one should call second and the other should call first as there is no likely angle allowing one to call both.

\* Pegging - hitting a runner with a ball puts them out, even if it's not on the fly. There are usually only 1-2 pegging attempts per game, but they often create confusion. 1st, it's often hard to see if a runner is hit with the ball, and often hard to predict that play as it could go to any runner. The other issue is the umpires judgment on whether a throw is a PEG or a thrown ball to another fielder. On a PEG, if it misses, the maximum amount of bases any runner can advance is the one they were moving toward when the ball left the fielders hand, plus one more. If the umpire believes the fielder was throwing to another fielder, there is no such limit.

\* Ball Count - we don't have walks, but if a pitcher throws 4 "consecutive" balls that miss the strike board and are not swung out, they get a warning. If that happens again, they are removed from the pitching spot. This happens often in the league, about every 2 games. So, the umpire in addition to an overall strike count, need to keep a consecutive ball count. Any pitch that is swung at, or hits the board, resets the count of balls to 0.

\* Umpire position - the Strike Board/Radar Gun makes umpire position usually non-traditional. In the past we had a plate umpire and a base umpire. However, the strike board is in the way of the plate umpire, and even if they stay there to call fair/foul, and watch for the ball hitting the board, they cannot see the radar detector. It might make more sense for umpires to position at first and third, thus able to see the radar gun, and both foul lines. But, we don't have a good system for this, so whatever the judgment of the umpires is should be used. The only problem with 1st and 3rd is that it's hard to see the fair/foul call on the 15' arc. The benefit to a plate umpire is that in a likely play at home plate situation they could pull the strike board out of the way similar to a bat.

\* Ball replacement to the pitcher - to speed up the game we used 5-6 new balls per game and anytime a ball is fouled or the catcher misses it, the umpire should just provide the pitcher with a new ball to keep play moving. It's generally easier for a base umpire to feed the balls to the pitcher, but, both umpires should probably have plenty of balls as we go through them quickly.

The Park is located directly north of National Airport on the George Washington Memorial Parkway, as well as accessible along the Mt. Vernon Trail for biking and walking. (Our fields are 50 feet from the trail.)

The metro is a 15 minute walk along the Mt. Vernon Trail from the National Airport metro stop. Limited parking is available and everyone is encouraged to car pool.

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#### Driving Directions

The parking area is ONLY accessible from the northbound lanes of the George Washington Parkway. (This helps keep the yankees out.)

If you are coming from the south...the parking area is on the right side of the road, about a quarter mile past the end of the airport.

If you are coming from the north...the best option is to turn around using the airport. Simply take the National Airport exit and follow the sign toward terminal B & C. Drive right past the terminal and follow the signs to Washington and Airport Exit. Once you get back on the parkway, you will be heading north. The parking area is about a quarter mile ahead on the right.