

# **SPORTSPLEX USA – SANTEE**

## **Park Policies & League Rules**

Revised 11/8/2010

### **Section One: Park Policies**

In an effort to ensure public awareness and safety, the following park policies and information have been compiled.

1. SPORTSPLEX USA's staff will determine the fitness of all fields in inclement weather and make decisions whether to play or not. SPORTSPLEX has a link on our web site in the SOFTBALL dropdown menu called "Softball Field Playing Conditions" that brings you to our Twitter updates. You may follow our Twitter account to receive updates when the weather changes. There is also a phone extension for updates. Field updates are made at 3 p.m. Monday through Friday and at 1 p.m. on Sundays.
2. No alcoholic beverages or cigarettes are allowed on the fields or in the dugouts at any time. Smoking at Sportsplex USA – Santee is limited to three designated outdoor smoking areas. Alcoholic beverages must remain in the restaurant or on the restaurant patio.
3. Any person(s) being under the influence of alcohol or any other substance that could cause the person(s) to be at risk to themselves and others will be removed from the park and could result in further suspension from the park.
4. No food, beverages, pets, bikes, roller skates or skateboards are allowed in the park. Please read and follow all park policies posted at the park entrance.
5. There is a \$2.50 entrance charge to enter SPORTSPLEX USA for everyone 16 years and older. In return, you will receive a token worth \$2.50 towards a purchase of any beverage at our restaurant.
6. SPORTSPLEX USA reserves the right to make any amendments or adjustments deemed necessary to promote fairness (i.e., equalizers, run spots, etc.).
7. SPORTSPLEX USA will not be responsible for injuries sustained by team managers, players or spectators during league or tournament play. SPORTSPLEX USA does not provide insurance coverage for managers, players or spectators.

8. SPORTSPLEX USA aims to provide a professional, knowledgeable and courteous staff. This includes our umpires. Please contact the manager on duty or call our office if any of our staff does not meet these standards. Umpire evaluation forms are available at the office.

9. Any person(s) that does not conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent with SPORTSPLEX USA's policies or rules can be removed, ejected or suspended from the facility for any length of time to be determined by SPORTSPLEX USA management.

10. Any person striking or attempting to strike any umpire, park management, staff, player, manager or spectator can and will be suspended from the facility and could face legal repercussions for their actions.

11. SPORTSPLEX USA reserves the right to refuse service to anyone..

### **Section Two: Manager's Responsibility**

The team manager is the principal link between SPORTSPLEX USA and their team. It is the manager's responsibility to obtain all information regarding league play at SPORTSPLEX USA. The team manager should:

1. Attend any and all team orientation meetings scheduled during the year.
2. Know all rules and policies and inform his or her players of them.
3. Make sure that all team fees are paid in full before the team receives their first game time.
4. Make sure that each player is on his or her roster and that each player has completed a player waiver that is kept on file in the office.
5. Help avoid any forfeits by having your team members arrive at least 30 minutes prior to the game time.
6. Be responsible for the conduct of his or her players. Good sportsmanship is expected by all managers, players and spectators.
7. Receive the ground rules prior to the start of the game from the umpire.
8. Obtain all league paperwork pertaining to schedules, tournaments, make-up games and any other pertinent information.
9. Inform the office of any change in address, e-mail address or phone number.

### Section Three: Player Eligibility

1. **Minimum Requirements:** Men and women must be at least 17 years of age and must be legally registered on your roster in order to participate in Sportsplex USA leagues. Players also must sign a player waiver of liability that is to be kept on file in the league office. Each player must be registered to the team(s) that he or she plays on. Teams must have at least 12 players registered on their roster.

2. **Number of Teams:** Players may be on as many teams as they wish in one season. Exception: No player will be allowed to play on two teams in the same division on the same night.

3. **Roster:** (A) Each manager will be given a roster at the time he or she registers their team. Each manager must list all of their players' names and date of birth (DOB) on their team's roster. All players are required to fill out a player waiver form that will be kept on file in the office. ***Teams may carry up to 20 players on their roster. The team roster must be turned in to the office before the start of the 2nd game-- the 2nd game will not start until the roster is turned in.*** Once every player on that roster has completed their player waiver, the roster will be considered legal. After the 5th game of the season each team's roster will be frozen for the remainder of the season. ***Under no circumstances will a player be allowed to play in any league game without completing their player waiver.***

(B) Players must be able to produce a valid picture ID at any time. Rosters and IDs may be checked throughout the season.

(C) Please check your roster weekly to ensure that all your players have completed their player waiver and your roster is considered legal.

(D) If a team roster is protested for any reason and Sportsplex USA does not have the roster or a player(s) have not completed their player waiver, the protest will be upheld. Roster protests may not be allowed until the 2nd game of league play.

4. **Player Add Eligibility:** If a team has a player(s) or attempts to add a player(s) that, in the management's feelings will make the team too dominant for the division they have been classified for, Sportsplex USA reserves the right to either move the entire team to the next higher division or not allow that player(s) to play for the remainder of that season. This will help in keeping an equal level of competition for each league.

5. **Illegal Player:** The following situations can make a player ineligible:

(A) A player who is not on your team roster.

(B) A player who has not completed their player waiver.

- (C) A player who is not able to produce a valid picture ID.
- (D) A player playing on two teams in the same division.
- (E) A player helping a team from forfeiting by playing for them one time.
- (F) Any circumstances in which Sportsplex USA feels a player is ineligible.

#### **Section Four: League Information**

**1. Registration Fees:** Sportsplex USA's team registration fee is one fee. **The entire team fee must be paid in full before you will receive your first game time.** Registration is on a first come, first served basis. **Priority is given to returning teams provided they register for the upcoming season by the last game of the current season with payment in full.** After that game, teams from the waiting list will be allowed to register.

- (A) The team fee is not refundable or transferable.
- (B) Team managers must submit to the office their roster with all of his/her player's waivers at the end of their 1st game.
- (C) All teams playing in Sportsplex USA's leagues will be registered with USSSA. This fee is included in your team fee.

**2. Format:** Your team will play on the night that you sign up for. Make-up games may be played on different nights if needed. Each team will receive 10 league games and playoffs for the top finishing teams. Specialty league formats may vary, please check the league office for details. Sportsplex USA reserves the right to alter the league format based on the number of teams registered per league and night.

**3. Schedules:** Your first game time will be available 3 days prior to your first night of play. Game times are available on this website and also by calling 858-679-4000 and going through the schedule menu. Team managers **will not** be contacted for game times. It is the team manager's responsibility for calling and obtaining his/her team's game time. If needed, managers can request a paper copy of the schedule at the League Office.

**4. Playoff Format:** The playoffs will be played on your regular night of play. The top 4 teams per division will qualify for playoffs. The teams will then be seeded in the format listed below by their standings after league play is over. If tiebreakers are needed we will refer to Section 9. All teams must use their league roster and all players must be legally registered and have participated in the current league.

**Game 1 - 2nd place vs. 3rd place**

**Game 2 - 1st place vs. 4th place**

**Game 3 - Winner of Game 1 vs. Winner of Game 2** (highest remaining seed is home team)

**5. Start Times:** Games at Sportsplex USA – Santee start Monday thru Thursday at 6:30pm through 9:30pm. On Fridays the games start at 7:30pm through 9:30pm. On Sundays the games start at 4:30pm thru 8:30pm but may start earlier pending the number of teams registered.

**6. Grace Period:** There will be a 15-minute grace period for all rounds of games. This time comes off the game time. At the end of the 15 minutes, if one or both teams do not have the minimum number of players required, the game will be declared a forfeit. If a team is required to use the grace period, they will lose their first at-bat. If both teams are required to use the grace period but neither team forfeits, there is no penalty.

**7. Rain Out Policy:** In case of questionable weather, the team manager can call for field information which will be available only after 3:00 p.m. weekdays and 1:00 p.m. on Sundays. If games are canceled, the manager will not be notified. When games are canceled, the schedule line, field condition line and website Twitter link will be changed stating so. Sportsplex USA does not take responsibility for the weather. In the event that rain occurs between the time you call and the time you arrive, please be understanding. Sportsplex USA's goal is to play ball, but your safety is more important.

(A) Games called due to rain, inclement weather or circumstances beyond Sportsplex USA's control will be a regulation game if 5 or more complete innings have been played or if the home team is ahead after 4-1/2 innings. At the point in which the game is called, the last complete inning will determine if the game is regulation or not. If the home team is at bat and they have taken the lead or tied the score, then that inning will be considered complete. In games that cannot be considered a complete game, the following will happen:

(1) If less than 3 complete innings have been played, the game will start over.

(2) If 3 complete innings or more have been played, the game will continue from the point in which it became suspended until time expires or 7 innings have been played.

**8. Make Up Game Policy:** All games canceled due to rain, inclement weather or circumstances beyond Sportsplex USA's control will be made up at the earliest opportunity pending field availability. Revised schedules will be available 3 days after the cancellation on the website. **Team managers are responsible for calling in or checking the website to find out this information.**

**9. League Standings:** Game scores are posted on the web by 5 p.m. the following day and updated standings are posted in the restaurant daily. The team manager should check to make sure that the standings are correct. If necessary, ties in the league standings will be broken by the following process:

(A) Head-to-head competition of previously played games between the teams involved.

(B) Run differential in games played between the tied teams. Run differential will be determined by subtracting runs given up from the total runs scored.

(C) Run differential from all games played in the season for the tied teams.

(D) If still tied, Sportsplex will flip a coin with both team managers.

**10. League Awards:** At the completion of the league playoffs, 1st and 2nd place teams will receive 14 individual awards.

**11. Forfeits:** In the event that your team must forfeit a game for any circumstance please have your team manager contact the league office so the opposing team can be notified. Forfeited games are nonrefundable.

### **Section Five: League Rules**

The following rules govern all teams and players participating in Sportsplex USA leagues. Sportsplex USA leagues play under the rules of the United States Specialty Sports Assoc. (USSSA) Official Rule Book with explanations and exceptions in this Rule Book. Some rules may not apply to certain specialty leagues. Please check for an additional rule sheet if playing in a specialty league. Sportsplex USA shall have the power to make decisions on any points in the rules or to revise any rule as it deems necessary. Final decisions shall be made by Sportsplex USA.

**1. Playing Field:** On fields where the fence does not run completely across the outfield, an imaginary line exists. If a batted ball goes across the imaginary line, the umpire will call the ball dead and a ground rule double will be awarded. Bases will be awarded accordingly to the runners.

The line closest to home plate extending from the fence is the on deck batters line. Only one on deck batter is allowed in this area. All other players are to remain in the dugout or behind the out of play fence.

Until the City of Santee builds a new, taller net in left field on PureFlo by the YMCA pool, any ball hit into the pool enclosure will result in an out, an ejection, and possible further discipline from Sportsplex USA.

**2. Equipment:** Sportsplex will supply the game ball. The home team must furnish a usable backup ball. Teams that hit balls out of play will be required to furnish balls to keep the game moving. All leagues use the 12", .44 COR, 375 lb. compression softball.

### **Bats**

SPORTSPLEX USA uses USSSA as a basic standard for bat approval. SPORTSPLEX USA reserves the right to ban the use of any piece of equipment that SPORTSPLEX USA feels is dangerous and/or not acceptable for fair and safe play. SPORTSPLEX USA reserves the right to ban such equipment immediately. If you are not sure if your bat meets these specifications, please contact the league coordinator.

**3. Protests:** The manager has a right to protest if he/she feels that the team has been the victim of a misinterpretation of the rules or an illegal action on the part of the opposing team. All protests will be handled on the spot by the league director. The team manager must protest immediately at the point in question. Protests lodged after the game will not be accepted. The team manager must protest to the umpire and state the reason for the protest. The umpire will stop the clock and call for a league director. The protest will be decided by the league director on duty before the game continues. **Judgment calls cannot be protested.**

**Illegal Player Protests:** Players not listed on the roster or who have not filled out their player waiver will be considered an illegal player and will cause the team on which they are participating to forfeit. The suspected illegal player(s) must be protested before the last out of the bottom of the 5th inning. The opposing team manager must protest to the umpire and notify the league director which player(s) he/she wishes to protest. Only one illegal player protest is allowed per game, but up to 2 players may be protested. The league director on duty will check a picture ID and Drivers License against the team roster to prove eligibility. Illegal player(s) will be removed and that game will be forfeited. **The illegal player(s) and the team manager are subject to a thirty-day suspension from all league play.**

**Exception:** Sportsplex USA understands that teams will occasionally need to pick up players to avoid a forfeit, and one of our goals is to avoid forfeits wherever possible. Therefore, team managers will be allowed to pick up players who are already at the park if they notify both the opposing team manager and the league director of their intentions. Pick-ups will then be subject to the approval of both the opposing manager and the director before the game can begin. Team managers picking up players without notifying both the opposing team manager and the league director may be subject to the "Illegal Player Protest" procedure described above if the opposing manager chooses to protest.

**4. The Game:** The home team will be designated on the schedule. The home team will occupy the 3rd base dugout and has the option of being the official scorekeeper.

(A) A regulation game shall consist of 7 innings or 55 minutes. To help cut down the number of games starting later than their scheduled times, no new inning will be started after 55 minutes has expired even if the game ends in a tie. The current inning will be completed.

(B) A game that is tied after 7 innings **with time remaining on the clock** shall be continued by playing the next inning with the visitors placing the last batter (not last out) from the inning before on 2nd base. The same will apply for the home team's at bat. Play will continue until the tie is broken or the 55 minutes has expired, whichever comes first. Once again, any inning that is started will be completed.

(C) USSSA rules start with a one-ball and one-strike count rather than a no-ball and no-strike count. The batter is allowed one foul ball after two strikes, and then must hit it fair.

(D) After 50 minutes has expired on the clock a 12-run rule will be in place. During classification games (if used) there will be no run rule in effect.

(E) In a forfeit situation, the team being awarded the forfeit will receive a score of 7-0.

**5. Players and Substitutions: All players must be able to produce a valid picture ID and Drivers License upon request.**

(A) Any player can take a defensive position during any point of the game, as long as they are in the batting order.

(B) The minimum number of players to start or finish a game is eight. Any number less than eight at any time during the game is a forfeit.

(C) No player can be added to a batting order or defensively after the 5th inning.

(D) The following actions may warrant a player's ejection from the game:

**The umpire need not give advanced warnings. This is your team's first and last warning!**

1) Fake tags or similar unsportsmanlike conduct.

2) Rough tactics not limited to fighting.

3) Obscene gestures or objectionable demonstrations towards an official, opponent, spectator or Sportsplex USA staff member.

4) Saying the "F" word.

5) Intentional or unintentional throwing of any piece of equipment in a forceful manner.

6) For being under the influence of alcohol or any other substance that could cause the player to be at risk to themselves and others.

7) Flagrant rule violations.

8) Any actions deemed by Sportsplex USA as not being consistent with the park's positive atmosphere. Remember, Sportsplex USA is a family-oriented park. Any obscene language loud enough for the umpire to hear is loud enough for the spectators to hear. Sportsplex USA reserves the right to eject or remove any coach, player or spectator at any point before, during or after a game and apply any appropriate penalties including but not limited to a suspension from Sportsplex USA.

E) If a player or manager is ejected from a game, that player will be required to leave the park immediately without further abuse to prevent harsher penalties that may be imposed and will not be allowed to play for at least one week of league time. If a player is ejected for a second time during a season, that player will be disqualified from all play for at least 30 days. An ejection results in a dismissal from the remainder of that game. When a player is ejected from a game, his/her position in the batting order will be considered an out every time that their spot comes up for the remainder of that game. No substitutions will be allowed for that spot in the lineup. The opposing team must notify the umpire each and every time that spot comes up in the lineup. The opposing team must make the call before a pitch is thrown to the next batter in the lineup.

F) If 2 players from the same team are ejected from the same game, that team will forfeit the game.

G) If a player, manager or spectator lays a hand on, shoves, strikes, threatens or abuses a Sportsplex USA official or employee before, during or after a game he/she will be suspended from the park immediately and could face suspensions with a maximum penalty of permanent banishment from Sportsplex USA. If shoving, striking, attempting to strike or abusing another player or spectator, you will be suspended for a minimum of 30 days pending the results of the investigation by the league office. Further legal action may also take place.

H) Unsportsmanlike conduct by players and spectators is cause for a forfeit. The team is held responsible for all of the actions of its spectators and players.

I) Any player(s) may leave during the game for any reason (i.e., injury, personal emergency, etc.). If the team does not have a substitute(s) for the departing player(s) the lineup will move up to cover the open spot; this will not result in the team being forced to take an out for that position. Once the umpire has been notified of the player(s) departure, that player or those players will not be eligible to return to that game for any reason. If the number of players gets below the league minimum at any time the game will be declared a forfeit. Sportsplex USA does not recognize player substitutions or the offensive re-entry rule, so any player added after the game has begun (and before the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> inning) will be inserted at the bottom of the batting order.

6. Pitching Rule: The plate-and-mat style of pitch will be used for all leagues unless otherwise noted. The pitched ball must be delivered at slow speed and have an arc of at least 6 feet off the ground, but be no higher than 10 feet at its peak. A strike is called if the ball hits the plate or the mat (plate extension). The pitcher has 5 seconds to release the ball once he/she has presented it. The pitcher is allowed to juke prior to releasing the pitch during these 5 seconds. The umpire does NOT say “illegal” or give a hand signal if a pitch has been delivered unfairly.

**A) Pitchers Box: SPORTSPLEX USA will be implementing the use of a pitcher’s box. The box will be a chalk line that extends back 8 ft. from the front of the rubber, 6 ft. wide and 3 ft. above the head of the pitcher (imaginary line). Any ball hit in the air through this box will result in an automatic out for the batter and will be declared a dead ball with all runners going back to the base at which they started.**

The following rules will also apply:

- Any ball hit through the pitcher’s box must go past the rubber in the air and through the front and back of the box to be declared an out.
- Pitchers can pitch from anywhere in the box but must have both feet inside the pitcher’s box at the time of release UNLESS THEY ARE ACTUALLY PITCHING FROM THE RUBBER. If pitching from the rubber, the pitcher may keep their pivot foot on the rubber and their plant foot in front of the box and still be in compliance with the pitcher’s box rule. The penalty for not complying with either of these stipulations will be a “ball” declared by the umpire.
- The pitcher’s box is not enforced when women are batting.
- The pitcher must remain in the pitcher’s box for an out to be called on a line drive through the middle. However, the spirit of the pitcher’s box rule is to protect the pitcher. Therefore, the umpire has sole discretion to enforce the rule whenever he deems it appropriate.
- If, in the opinion of the umpire, a line drive through the pitcher’s box was intentional, the responsible batter will be ejected immediately and be subject to possible suspension from Sportsplex USA.

All calls are judgment calls and cannot be protested.

7. Home Runs: Home run limits are used to aid in classification of teams. Any home runs above these limits will result in an out. These limits apply to balls hit fair untouched over the home run fence. The home run limits are:

Men's C = 7 Home Runs per team, then one-up

Men's and Co-Ed D = 5 Home Runs per team, then one-up

Men's D1/D2 and Co-Ed D1 = 3 Home Runs per team, then one-up

Men's E/E1 and Co-Ed E/E1 = 1 Home Run per team, then one-up

5PM and 3-Pitch Leagues = 1 Home Run per team, then one-up

All Classification Games - 3 home runs total per game

**8. Base Running:** One courtesy runner is allowed per gender per inning, must be last out.

A) In order to prevent injury, Sportsplex USA requests that when at all possible, base runners make an attempt to get out of the way or give themselves up at a base or home plate instead of colliding with a fielder or trying to attempt to jar the ball loose. If the base runner collides with the fielder, the umpire may call the player out and the ball dead. Any flagrant act by the runner is subject to an ejection or removal from the game. Fielders blocking the base or making fake tags are subject to ejection or removal from the game. The umpire need not give advanced warning. This is a judgment call on the part of the umpire and there are no protests on judgment calls!

B) Safety 1st bases are used in all Sportsplex USA Leagues. All base runners must touch the orange portion of the bag while the fielder must touch the white portion. On base hits that could lead to extra bases, the runner will be allowed to touch the white portion. It will be the umpire's judgment whether the base runner touches the correct portion of the bag.

**9. Co-Ed Rules:** Co-Ed rules may be altered or changed for specialty leagues, please check league information sheet for details.

The co-ed male-female ratio at Sportsplex USA – Santee is 6-and-4.

The E, E1 & E2 Divisions will be 3-pitch format. The C, D, D1 and D2 Divisions will be balls-and-strikes.

A) All outfielders must be on the grass until the ball is hit. If an outfielder violates this rule and becomes involved in the play, the umpire will award the batter at his discretion at least one base.

B) In the batting order, females cannot bat back to back unless the team has more women than men. Defensive positioning does not matter; any player can take a position anywhere on defense. Pitcher/catcher does not have to be male/female.

C) The minimum number of players to start or finish a game is eight. Co-Ed games can never begin with less than three women present. If the total of eight players includes only three women, the opposing team has the option to force a forfeit by protest. If the game is not protested and allowed to continue, the team that has only eight players will not have to take any automatic outs for the empty spots in the batting order. If a sixth man is added, he may play defense but the tenth spot in the batting order would then be an automatic out, or he may bat but remain on the bench defensively to avoid the automatic out. There can never be seven men on defense in a co-ed game.

D) When a male batter with a female batting next receives a base on balls or is intentionally walked, he will be awarded 1st and 2nd base. The female batter must bat.

E) In the co-ed leagues there will be a 9-run per-inning cap in effect during the first four innings of the game. During the first four innings, no team will be allowed to score more than 9 runs in any inning unless one of the following is true:

- The team at bat is trailing by more than 9 runs. In this case, they will be allowed to score enough runs to tie the game.
- The game is in its final inning. If time has run out during the first four innings, the 9-run cap is no longer in effect.

During the 5<sup>th</sup> inning and beyond, there is no limit to the number of runs that may be scored in one inning.

F) In the 3-pitch format, women will be allowed a 4<sup>th</sup> pitch if they foul off the 3<sup>rd</sup> pitch.

G) Leadoffs: Women are allowed to lead off once the pitcher has released the ball towards home plate. Leadoffs will be allowed only in the Co-Ed program. Men cannot lead off in men's or co-ed.

1) Base stealing is not permitted. However, a female base runner shall be permitted to lead off from any base after the ball leaves the pitcher's hand, but is subject to being thrown out trying to return to the base. This will be treated as a force play (live appeal), not a tag play.

2) If a pick-off attempt is made on any female base runner at any base by the catcher after a legally pitched ball, the base runners may advance only if the pick-off throw is dropped by the fielder or overthrown. Once dropped or overthrown, the ball remains live until time is called by the umpire.

3) If a female base runner advances to the next occupied or unoccupied base, prior to the pick-off attempt that runner is considered out.

4) The ball must return to the pitcher after each pitch not hit except on a pick-off attempt by the catcher.

5) Male runners preceding women on the bases shall only move up to the next base if forced to do so by a female runner advancing as a result of an overthrow or dropped ball on a pick-off attempt. Males may not advance if a female base runner is not "forcing" them to.

6) After a legal pitch which is not hit, if a pick-off is not attempted but the return throw to the pitcher is misplayed or overthrown, the ball shall be declared dead and the female base runner(s) may not advance.

### **Base Running (Co-Ed Leagues Only):**

A) There will be a commit line halfway between 3rd base and home plate. Once a base runner crosses this line they must continue home; they cannot return to 3rd base. Exception: If the runner crosses the commit line and then a fielder makes a catch on a fly ball then the runner will be allowed to go back to 3rd to tag up but that runner must continue to home plate or they will be called out. Commit line infractions are handled like any other appeal play by the defense, either live or dead.

B) There will be a line drawn to the foul side of home plate. Base runners must cross this line instead of touching home plate.

C) The play at the plate will be a force out. The catcher, being in possession of the ball, must touch home plate prior to the runner crossing the line. The catcher may not tag the runner!

D) Baserunners must go to the scoring line. If the base runner touches home plate while a play is being made there, and out will be declared. If, in the umpire's opinion, there is no play at home plate and the baserunner steps on home plate instead of running over the scoring line, the baserunner will be called safe. The spirit of this rule is to protect the catcher. Therefore, the umpire has sole discretion to enforce the rule whenever he deems it appropriate.

E) There is absolutely no sliding or **diving** at the home line; the runner will be called out if he/she slides across the line.