

NATICK MEN'S SOFTBALL - 2016 SEASON RULES

I. ELIGIBILITY

- a) **Players:** All men who have reached their 18th birthday, and are out of high school or 17 years old and graduating in June of 2016 are eligible. The players name must be listed on all teams he plays for. Ineligible or “illegal” players are not permitted to play in any part of any game. Any illegal player discovered will automatically result in the teams’ forfeit of that game. Any player on the roster must be in the bench area and in sight of the umpire to be considered a legal player.
- b) **Teams:** There is a 24-man limit to the number of players on a team roster. Each team is required to pay the entry fee of \$1,400.00 by April 15, 2016. Checks should be made payable to: Natick Men’s Softball Association, Inc.
- c) **Natick Residents:** All Teams must have at least 80% Natick residents on their roster to be accepted. Proof of working in Natick is required with roster submission. Rosters will be inspected for accuracy including address verification.
- d) **Rosters:** Each team is required to submit a roster showing the names, addresses and age of all the eligible team members. Each team member is required to sign the roster. Incomplete or illegible rosters will not be accepted.

II. GAME INFORMATION

- e) **Divisions:** The league will be composed of two divisions. The Executive Committee will assign teams by division based on previous year’s record, number of teams, and proposed roster(s). All new teams entering the league will be assigned to Division 2, unless the Executive Committee sees fit to play that team in a different division
- f) **Days:** Division One scheduled games are typically played on Tuesdays and Thursday. Division Two scheduled games are typically played on Mondays and Wednesdays. Occasionally game days will change based on the needs of the league. Game day changes will be communicated to team managers.
- g) **Times:** Up to four games will be played on a scheduled game night, depending on the amount of teams in each division. Game times are 6:30pm and 7:45pm and 9:00pm. There are no grace periods, so games will start on-time. Game times may change based on the needs of the league. Game changes will be communicated to team managers. Warm up time is encouraged before games on soccer field and sidelines. No infield practice between games or before games. No inning may begin after 11:00pm.
- h) **Fields:** There are two softball fields assigned to Natick Men’s Softball are both located at the Memorial School on Route 16 (Eliot Street) in Natick. The field closest to the school is called “Memorial Two” and hosts 6:30pm games. There are no lights at this field. The field closest to Eliot Street is called The James Lavezzo Field and hosts all three time slots. This field has lights.
- i) **Bench Area:** Only team players, coaches, the sponsor, and the scorekeeper will be allowed in the bench area. Please keep young children away from the bench and field area. They sometimes are not paying attention and could easily be injured. No pets are allowed.
- j) **Parking:** All teams are advised to park along the left-hand side (community farm side) at James Lavezzo 1 Field, in front of the school near the playground or the parking lot near the tennis courts. There will be no parking on the right side of James Lavezzo 1 or in and around the island near the basketball court. Police will be encouraged to tag vehicles that violate the fire lane laws.
- k) **Game Cancellations:** Decisions on rainouts will be made by 5:00 p.m. A group text message will be sent to all managers. if no text is sent, games are to be considered on. Rainouts will be made up based on field availability at the discretion of the League Director. Forfeit rules will apply to short-handed teams if the field is in playable condition. In the event the field is playable and both teams fail to field at least nine players, both teams will be charged with a forfeit.
- l) **Make-up Games:** Make-up games will be scheduled toward the end of the season whenever possible. In some situations, make-up games may include a game played on a Sunday. Other situations may require a make-up game to be held on a non-traditional division day (for example D2 make-up game may be played on a Thursday). “Double-headers” may also be scheduled as needed for make-up games.

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III. GENERAL RULES:

- a) **Official Game:** A team must have nine players to start a game. If the team has nine players, they must start; no grace period is allowed. A team may add a tenth player after the ½ inning in progress has been completed. The tenth player must take the last spot in the batting order. Teams may not add an eleventh player once the game has started. Umpires and opposing team must be notified when players are added or substitutions are made. Teams must finish the game with the same number of players that started the game. EXAMPLE: *If a team started the game with ten players, they must finish the game with ten players. If a player is ejected or leaves the game and the team does not have a player to replace him, the game is over by means of forfeit*
- b) **Forfeits:** Aside from grounds for forfeiture cited in the rule above, pertinent sections of the current official rule book, as amended by Natick Men's Softball Association Rules (less than 9 players) will prevail. A \$25 forfeit fee will be paid by the team manager or alternate to Natick Men's Softball Association, Inc. on the first forfeit; and a \$25 fee will be paid by each forfeit after that. Any team having three forfeits is automatically out of the league. A forfeit due to a player injury during a game will not "count" towards the three forfeit rule.
- c) **Illegal Players:** Any illegal player discovered after the fact, will result in that game's score changing to reflect a forfeit of that game by the team having the illegal player. Managers who knowingly play an illegal player will be banned (he and the player) for a period up to one year. Opposing teams may protest the game (for having used illegal players) at the time of discovery. The game may continue. However, the Executive Committee will review, rule on the issue and communicate the final decision to both teams.
- d) **Manager's Responsibilities:** First and foremost, the manager's responsibility is to ensure his team's actions are within the guidelines of propriety. The manager must keep an accurate scorebook for each and every game played. He is responsible for maintaining the team's records, making sure they are up-to-date, ensuring that the scorebook and lineups are readily available, as well as reporting substitutions and the general overall conduct of his team.
- e) **Scores:** Scores MUST be texted (508-650-0790) or emailed (natickmenssoftball@yahoo.com) before 9:00am on the morning following the game. Teams who fail to call in their scores will be subject to penalties which may include a mandatory forfeit of a subsequent game(s).
- f) **Rules:** USSSA Slow Pitch Softball Rules will prevail, unless denoted otherwise

IV. SUB-RUNNER RULES:

a) Non-Running Player:

- 1. A team may identify a "non-running player" before the start of the game that will require a sub-runner. If a non-running player is NOT identified before the start of a game, then a non-running player is NOT allowed.
- 2. Once a non-running player is identified, his status cannot be changed during the game. He must have a sub-runner after reaching 1st base.
- 3. If the non-running player, after successfully reaching 1st base, attempts to or successfully reaches another base (2nd/3rd/HR) then he is automatically out and the play is dead. All runners must return to the base on which they were standing prior to that non-running player's at-bat. .

b) Injured Player (extra players on bench):

- 1. If a player is injured during the game, and cannot continue to play, he must leave the game. Once an injured player leaves the game, he will be replaced by a substitute player who will assume his position in the batting order.
- 2. Once an injured player is declared and is substituted for, he cannot re-enter the game, even if he becomes healthy.

c) Injured Player (no extra players on bench):

- 1. If a player is injured during the game and cannot continue to play and there are no players on the bench, the game is over by means of forfeit. (All teams must end a game with the same number of players that started the game.) The official score entered will be 7-0. This forfeit will not "count" towards to the total forfeit rule.

d) Partially Injured Player (no extra players on bench):

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1. If a player is injured during the game he may continue to play in a limited capacity. This player is called a "partially-injured player".
2. A partially-injured player may use a sub-runner after he bats and successfully reaches first base.
3. If the partially-injured player, after successfully reaching 1st base, attempts to or successfully reaches another base (2nd/3rd/HR) then he is automatically out and the play is dead. All runners must return to the base on which they were standing prior to that partially-injured player's at-bat.
4. The sub-runner is always the player who made the last out with the exception that a non-running player cannot be a sub-runner for an injured player.
5. Once a partially-injured player is declared and is assigned a sub-runner, he cannot change his status to a non-injured player. During the game he will always have a sub-runner.

e) Sub-Runner Maximum:

1. The maximum allowed sub-runners per game is two based on One sub-runner for the non-running player declared at the beginning of the game AND 1 sub-runner for an injured player during the game that qualify under section D1
OR
2. The maximum allowed sub-runners per game is two based on having two sub-runners for two different players that were injured and identified during the course of the game and qualify under section D1.

V. CONDUCT

- a) **Ejected Players:** League Officials have authority to eject any player(s) from games for unsportsmanlike conduct; including threatening or abusive language. This also pertains to coaches and players' decorum with softball committee members at games. Two ejections will automatically mean suspension of player(s) from all remaining games.
- b) **Ejected Player Status:** An Ejected player must leave area grounds (from sight and sound of the umpire) as defined in league ground rules. The player then becomes an illegal player and must sit out his next scheduled game. In the event the game in which the player was ejected is called and must be replayed; he must also sit that game out. (Pitching and batting records may be erased but not ejections). NOTE: if a player is removed from the last game of the season, then he'll serve his suspension at the start of the next season.
- c) **Game Officials:** Any player(s) who "touches" an umpire (i.e. chest against chest, finger on chest, nose against nose, etc.) Will automatically be ejected from the game and draw a one game suspension. Any player who lays a hand or foot (or attempts to) on an umpire, will be expelled for the season and possibly from future men's athletic leagues in Natick. Any team that enters the field of play or playing field during an altercation will be subject to game forfeiture, league expulsion, and/ or individual player(s) expulsion to be determined by the umpire and/or League Board.
- d) **Notification Of Ejected Player:** Teams must report any ejected player(s) to the League Director that night or by noon the following day. If a team fails to comply and the player plays in the next game, his team will forfeit that game and any other games after that until the game(s) suspension is observed. The umpire will report ejection's to the League Director that night or the following morning. If the umpire sees fit that a "more than one game suspension is necessary", then he must put this in writing and bring it to the league director. This will mean that a player will no longer be allowed to play in the League for the period specified, if approved by the Natick Men's Softball Association (Conduct, Rule #1).
- e) **Town Ordinance:** The Town of Natick Ordinance prohibits the consumption of alcoholic beverages in public, and on town property. There shall be no alcoholic beverages of any type allowed on the bench, on the field, or in the stands by the players. Violators face ejection from the league, and if any team is written up for drinking, improper decorum, etc., by the Natick Police or the Recreation Department, then that team will be barred from the league and the use of town fields for at least one year. The umpire has the responsibility of notifying managers to control players, keep fans out of the bench area and to curb any possible drinking or smoking violations. There is a mandatory \$100.00 fine for smoking within 100 yards of Natick School property. If the manager is unwilling or unable to control any of these events from occurring, the game will be subject to forfeit.
- f) **Personal Behavior:** No profane language will be allowed on the field or on the bench. There will be no smoking on the field by players or umpires. If the team manager or players can't control their own teammates from foul mouth or fighting, then that team shall forfeit the game in which the incident first arises. A second such forfeit incurred under this rule will result in suspension from further play with no appeal allowed.
- g) **Protest Process:** Only managers or team representatives listed on the roster may file a protest if a situation should arise. Before filing, he should first make himself aware of official rules outlining powers, and duties and responsibilities of umpires, including

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protest rules. Umpires, managers and league officials shall meet before the start of the season to settle any rule interpretations and problems.

- h) **Protest Notification:** Any protest of a game(s) must be called in to the League Director the night of the protest. The manager or alternate of the protesting team, who's playing the game, no later than 5:00 p.m. on the next day to be valid, must sign it. Only protests filed in accordance with official softball rules governing protests and that are legitimate will be entertained by the Arbitration Committee to consist of two board members and the League Director. A \$25.00 protest fee must accompany each protest before protest is considered. The fee is refunded if the protest is upheld. The board will meet as soon as possible following a valid protest filing. Protests involving a particular play must be made known to both umpire and the opposing team before the next pitch is made. The umpire will notify both the managers and the scorebooks of both teams will be annotated by the umpire as to the point where the protest was made. Number of outs, men on base, and which base and count of batter, if any.
- i) **Responsibilities:** The Executive Committee and the League Director constitute the 2016 Natick Men's Softball Committee and will have final approval or disapproval over all league matters and will conduct necessary hearings. Coaches and teams are asked to cooperate with league officials in order to make the league more enjoyable.

VI. EQUIPMENT AND SCHEDULES

- a) **Softballs:** Team managers will be issued restricted flight softballs (one per game) at the beginning of each season. The Home Team is responsible to bring the (new) game ball and a backup ball for every home game.
- b) **Bats:** In an effort to minimize the risk of players being injured by a softball, the Natick Men's Softball League will approve softball bats that, in the opinion of the Executive Board, are less likely to cause injury.
- i. Approved bats will require a label to be affixed to the bat. Most recently, the Executive Board approved only USSSA bats manufactured from DeMarini. Older Worth or other manufactures bats that were not composite, were also permitted.
- c) For 2016, the only newly purchased bat permitted will be the USSSA bats manufactured by DeMarini. This allows us to have a level playing field between all players in our league. In addition to the Natick Men's Softball label, all newly purchased bats must display the "1.20 BPF" thumbprint on the taper of the barrel.
- d)



- i. Previously approved bats having the appropriate Natick Men's Softball label will also be permitted for use.
- ii. Approved DeMarini bats for 2016 are as follows:
- Ultimate Weapon – WTDXUWE-15
 - 2016 Ultimate Weapon Single wall – DXUWE
 - The One USSSA only
 - SF7 – DXSF7
 - Stadium CL22
 - 2016 Stadium
- e) **Illegal Equipment:** The Executive Board reserves the right to add or remove any bat or softball at any time from approved status for any reason they determine to be related to the safety of the players. Any bat that does not display the sticker and is used or is attempted to be used in league play will be removed from play. Additionally any player using an illegal bat, as determined by the Executive Board, will be ejected from the league for the remainder of the season. The manager of the team

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whose roster includes the ejected player will also be ejected from the league for one game for the first offense, two games for the second offense and the remainder of the season for the third offense. Future penalties will be determined by the Executive Board.

- f) **Uniforms:** All players of a team must be dressed in matching tops of similar color. The current list of team colors (as well as available colors) will be confirmed during manager meetings.

VII. PLAYOFFS

- a) **Schedule:** The playoff schedule will begin at the end of the regular season. Teams are encouraged to remind players to keep the month of August “open” for consecutive play-off games.
- b) **Teams:** Teams in each division will qualify for the playoffs with the first and second place teams drawing a bye on the first round. All games will be best of three for round one, and two; the best of five for the final rounds. The number of teams will be decided on the total number of teams in each division.
3. **Players:** A player on a team's roster must play in seven regular season games to be eligible for playoff competition. Managers will be asked to provide proof in some cases by showing a signed scorebook. Scorebooks, that in the opinion of the Executive Board or League Director, that have been altered, will cause the offending team to forfeit the game in question. Additionally, the player in question will be disqualified from league play and playoff competition.

VIII. CONTACT INFORMATION

Main Number: 508-650-0790

Website: <http://natickmenssoftball.com/>

Email: natickmenssoftball@yahoo.com

League President: Paul Adams

Board Members: Jim Argir, Andy Meyer, Scott Johnson, Ryan Ciccarelli, Dave Nelson