



2012
Tournament
Rule Book & Guide



BIG LEAGUE DREAMS SPORTS PARK
1150 Big League Dreams Parkway
League City, TX 77573
281-316-3400

THE GOLDEN RULE

This is a Charity Event.

National Oilwell Varco and Schlumberger have worked very hard to create a unique event that we hope attendees, participating companies and supporting businesses enjoy participating in and feel appreciation for in regards to their involvement.

The essence of our event is the desire to unite the oil and gas industry in an effort to raise awareness and funds to aide various organizations in their attempts to treat children who suffer from medical ailments as well as their families. Nothing that happens or that could have happened on a softball field during one of our games is of a greater importance than this.

We expect everyone's actions both on and off the field to reflect the very nature of our event.

GENERAL

If any circumstance or situation occurs during the course of the event not covered in these rules or in the guide book the Derricks & Diamonds Tournament Directors will make a decision to rectify the situation based on what they determine to be in the best interests of the event.

We thank everyone for taking the time to participate in our event and wish everyone a safe and enjoyable time!

FORMAT

- 50 team Round Robin Co-Ed Slowpitch Softball Tournament at Big League Dreams Sports Park on Saturday April 14th and Sunday April 15th
- Big League Dreams is a 20 acre sports park with six replica fields from Major League Baseball.
- Each team will be paired up with four others to form a division. All teams will play each team in their division under a round robin format to determine a division winner.
- There will be ten divisions. The divisions will be named Babe Ruth, Honus Wagner, Jackie Robinson, Lou Gehrig, Craig Biggio, Nolan Ryan, Willie Mays, Hank Aaron, Stan Musial and Roberto Clemente. All teams are guaranteed to play in four games with two games on Saturday and two games on Sunday.

- At the conclusion of the Round Robin tournament there will be a division champion. Divisions are paired into groups. Groups are made up of only two divisions
- There are five groups; **The Astros Legends Group** – Nolan Ryan and Craig Biggio, **The Home Run Kings Group** – Willie Mays and Hank Aaron, **The League MVP Group** – Lou Gehrig and Jackie Robinson, **The 3,000 Hit Group** Stan Musial and Roberto Clemente and the **Hall of Fame Originals Group**- Babe Ruth and Honus Wagner.
- All coaches must go to Indoor Soccer Pavilion prior to their first game to receive their team gift bag, receive other information and register with D&D staff personnel.

Day 1 – Saturday April 14th

7:00am – Park Opens, Registration

8:00am - First softball games start, Raffle Tickets go on sale & Family Area Opens

10:00am- 501st Star Wars Costumed Group Visits

1:00pm – National Anthem sung by a TCH Patient or former patient followed by the Hall of Fame Game

7:00pm - Last softball games end

Day 2 - Sunday April 15th

7:00am – Park Opens

8:00am - First softball games start & Family Area Opens

6:00pm - Draw tickets and assign winners from Raffle

7:00pm – Round Robin Tournament Concludes. Divisional Winner Determined

7:00pm – 8:00 pm – Group Championship Games

Plan for Rain – This Park is remarkably engineered to handle a significant amount of rain and still be able to be played on for several hours. All efforts will be made to complete the tournament. The number of games played by each team will be in relation to the effect rain has on the availability of the field(s). If we are rained out, there will be no make up games/tournament.

It is recommended that you give yourself plenty of time to get to the park. Traffic to and from League City via Interstate 45 is notoriously heavy and unpredictable. Please give yourself plenty of time to get to the park and encourage others to do so as well.

Players are encouraged to have their families come out and watch games throughout the duration of the tournament. Adherence to park and tournament rules by all people including guests of participants is mandatory.

Entrance of the park is free for all those that attend however we are encouraging everyone who comes to the park to contribute to our *media, book and hat drive*. These items will be given to Texas Children's Hospital at the conclusion of the tournament Participation is **VOLUNTARY**. If you'd like to participate please bring one or any number of the following items:

Media – There is a dedicated floor in one of the buildings at Texas Children's Hospital that is a non-medically oriented floor. They have a media room where the patients and their families can play games, watch movies and more or less relax. This is an awesome opportunity to get rid of any DVD's, VHS tapes, video games and the like that you don't use, don't need or have duplicates of.

Books, Magazines, etc – On the same floor as described above there is a library. If you have a magazine, soft cover book or other reading material you'd like to donate, that would be great. We only ask that the items be of appropriate subject matter. Kids of all ages and adults use the library.

Hat Drive – One of the most important days in a cancer patient's treatment is Hat Day. Due to chemotherapy, they lose their hair and on Hat Day they pick out a hat to wear. If you have a hat you'd like to donate we'd love to have it.

All donation items will be collected by D&D personnel at the designated area inside the Indoor Soccer Pavilion.

Big League Dreams Sports Park has an outstanding array of facilities that apply to both the people playing softball and their families. All areas of the park are open to participating personnel.

The batting cages will be open and are free for all to use. Anyone not adhering to the batting cage rules will be removed from the applicable area and will not be allowed to use them for the duration of the tournament.

There are two restaurants (*The Stadium Club*) that have a great variety of refreshments and food while allowing a wonderful viewing area of three different softball fields. Each restaurant also has 11 TV's for your viewing pleasure.

There are 180 Stadium seats per field, bleachers and tables outside under cover that allow for ample areas to sit and watch the game.

The covered playground, sand volley-ball courts and designated Family Area are complimentary and open to all adults and children to play on. We ask that caution be

used by all participants during any of these physical activities and respect be given to all those using and operating these areas.

ROSTER & WAIVERS

- A maximum of 15 players are allowed on the roster for each team for each game. The names on the roster do not have to be the same for each game. We ask that 80% of the people on the roster be made up of employees and/or their family members from the sponsoring company's.
- Team roster's will be checked and validated prior to the start of each game by D&D personnel. Each player must be listed on the roster, have signed the Big League Dreams Waiver and the D&D Waiver in order to play.
- Any player caught playing who is not on the roster and/or has not signed all of the necessary waivers will be subject to REMOVAL from the game. Any player caught twice violating the rosters and waivers rule will be subject to an EJECTION.
- Any team who has multiple roster violations will be subject to additional rulings from the D&D Tournament Directors.
- A player's participation on a one team does not negate their eligibility to play on other teams.

Bat Boy/Girls

Each team will be assigned a bat boy/girl (as available). This is a special and unique aspect of the tournament as the great majority of the bat boy/girl's are former or current patients at TCH.

Some of them will be there the entire tournament and some will be there for just one game on one of the days. There are no requirements or duties. We thought this would add a nice touch to the weekend.

If a bat boy or girl is assigned to your team please just ensure they're welcomed by the team.

Team Photo

PLEASE know when your team photo time is and have your team there. We'd like to include the bat boy/girl from your team in the photo.

THE PLAYING FIELD

1. Please see file Softball Field Dimensions.pdf for infield dimensions (includes location of Safety First Base, Scoring Plate and Commitment Line). Outfield dimensions change based on the field being played on.
2. Only one on-deck batter is allowed outside the dugout at all times. All other players are to remain in the dugout or behind the out-of-play fence.
3. No coolers are allowed in the park.
4. Only players on the roster may be in the dugout during the game. Rosters will be checked and validated prior to the start of each game.
5. No smoking is allowed in the dugouts or on the field of play. Smoking is not allowed within 25 ft of each field. Smoking is permitted away from the buildings in open areas.
6. There will be cones on the 1st and 3rd base line 200 feet from home plate. This is marking the line that outfielders must stand behind when a lady is batting. They cannot cross the line until the ball is struck by the batter.
7. No alcohol is allowed in the dugouts. Umpire and/or league officials will issue one warning to the offending team. If continued, the game will be declared a forfeit and the team and/or offending player may face suspension from the park.
8. There will be a pitchers box in use during every game. The box will be a chalk line that extends 8 ft. back from the rubber, 2 ft. on each side of the rubber, and 3 ft. above the head of the pitcher (imaginary line). Any ball hit 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:
 1. Any ball hit through the pitchers box must go past the rubber (in the air) and inside the box to be declared an out. Any ball that hits the ground before the rubber is live and in play.
 2. Pitchers can pitch from anywhere in the box but must have both feet inside the pitchers box at the time of release. The penalty for not having both feet inside the box will be a “ball” declared by the umpire.
 3. All calls are judgment calls and cannot be protested.
9. There will be a “Safety First Base”. On the initial throw to First Base from the infield or outfield, the Batter-runner MUST TOUCH the orange portion of the base but not the white. If legally appealed by the Defense during a live ball situation, the runner may be called out. The defensive Player MUST always touch the white portion. This rule is in effect only on the initial play at First Base. This does not include:

1. Returning to the base after over running,
2. Running on a base hit to the outfield
3. Tagging to advance on a fly ball.

EFFECT: The orange safety bag is only in play during the initial attempt to get the runner out at first base and any interaction after that is with the white bag.

10. There will be a “Scoring Plate” and a “Commitment Line”. There will be a white commitment line drawn perpendicular to the third base line. If a base runner runs past the line they will be committed to run all the way to the scoring plate. If the runner does not cross the commitment line and decides to run back to third base normal rules apply to get the runner out. If the base runner runs past the commitment line they must touch the scoring plate to score. If the base runner runs past the commitment line the only way to record an out is for a player on the defensive team with full possession of the ball to touch home plate before the base runner touches the scoring plate. Once the base runner runs past the commitment line tagging the runner with the ball will not cause the runner to be out. The base runner cannot score by touching home plate and will be called out immediately for doing so. Before touching home plate if a defensive player touches the scoring plate after the base runner crosses the commitment line the base runner, and only the base runner that crossed the commitment line, is automatically safe. If there is a force at home, normal rules apply until the base runner physically crosses the commitment line wherein the commitment line/scoring plate rule will be in effect as described above.

EFFECT: We are committed to having the safest event possible as well as encouraging fair play and friendly competition. This rule is set up to protect both the base runners and infielders from any chance of an unsafe situation or incident during the play of the game at home plate.

EQUIPMENT

1. The use of any bat that exceeds 1.20 BPF or includes titanium will be prohibited during the tournament. The tournament will be guided by the current USSSA approved bat list. Only bats that appear on this list will be accepted during tournament play.
2. Altered Bats: The policy and procedures outlined in the USSSA rule book on altered bats will be implemented. (Copy available on www.ussa.com bylaws).
3. Anyone found with an altered bat will be immediately ejected from the game (see Ejection below). Collectively, if more than one altered bat is discovered during the tournament on players for a single team that team will forfeit all their games.

4. Softballs will be provided for each team for each game they play. A yellow 12” .44 cor softball will be used by both men and women.
5. Uniforms are optional; however, softball attire is required. No denim or steel cleats are permitted.

DEFINITIONS

AN EJECTION is an action taken by an umpire, when an individual flagrantly violates rules, vigorously argues judgment calls, or shows unsportsmanlike conduct. An ejection results in an individual being suspended from all further tournament play. Upon a player’s ejection the player must leave the playing area and the park immediately.

A REMOVAL is an action taken by an umpire when according to his/her judgment; a player is creating a hazard to his/herself or other players. This action is taken to avoid injury to any individual, or if the action did not warrant an ejection. Removal from a game is only for the remainder of the game.

GAME

1. It is the responsibility of the coach of each team to adhere to the rules as they pertain to their team playing in the tournament. Coaches are determined by the teams prior to playing in the tournament and each team must have a coach.
2. A representative for each team will be asked to meet with the umpire before the game to determine which team is home or visitor and discuss any pertinent issues brought forth by the umpire or representatives of each team. Failure to disclose any issues will be taken as an assumption of understanding of all the rules therein of this rule book. The home team will be determined by a coin flip by the umpire. The umpire will determine who gets to call Heads or Tails at their discretion.
3. If a guy walks and there is a lady batting in the position behind him, he advances to second base. Any existing base runners advance bases to allow for this situation and can score as determined by their position on base. The lady has the choice of either advancing to first base or to hit. Neither decision affects whether or not the batter advances to second base.
4. Each team is encouraged but not required to keep track of the games score (and subsequent information) in a scorebook. Scorebooks will be provided in the gift bag for each team. The Official Score will be kept by the Umpire and Tournament Representative who will be assigned to keep score for each game and considered the Official Scorer. It is the coach’s responsibility to get a line up with names and positions to the Official Scorer prior to the completion of the first inning. Any confusion on the number of runs scored needs to be brought up before the completion of the next half-inning. Once the half-inning is completed the previous half-inning as entered into the Official Scorebook will be considered correct and not able to be modified.

5. Each game will last 55 minutes plus bonus time or 7 innings whichever comes first. The time will be set at 60 minutes based on the game times listed in the schedule for Day 1 and Day 2. (The scoreboard has a running clock which starts at 60 minutes and counts down to 0:00). If the game has not already begun when the clock reaches 54:59, the umpire will signal play ball and start calling balls or strikes every 20 seconds against the offending team until they have the minimum number of players present. If the clock reaches 45 minutes and the team still does not have the minimum number of players present, a forfeit will be called. If neither team has the minimum number of players the winner will be determined by a coin flip by the umpire. A team will be awarded victory by the score of 7-0 for a forfeit.
6. If the game starts before the clock runs down to 55 minutes, any extra time is a bonus. Games may start early if both teams are ready and agree.
7. If the 7th inning is completed and there is a tie the International Tie Breaker rule will come into effect until an inning is completed that determines a winner.
8. For the international Tie Breaker the last out of the previous inning will start on second base. Each batter will get one pitch. If the pitch is ruled a ball the batter will advance as normal rules allow. A strike or foul ball will result in an out. Base runners are allowed to advance upon a foul ball being caught in the air based on normal rules. A ball in play will be treated as a normal ball in play.
9. If time expires during the visiting teams at bat the inning will be completed.
10. If time runs out during the home teams at bat and they are ahead the game will be over.
11. In case of a tie after time has expired the International Tie Breaker rule will be in effect.
12. For innings 1 through 5 each half inning will end when the defensive team records three outs or the team on offense scores 7 runs whichever comes first. If an over the fence homerun is hit that would score more than 7 runs only 7 runs will score but the homerun will not count against the team on offense in regards to their home run tally.
13. Each team is allowed a total of 2 over the fence home runs per game. If a player hits an over the fence homerun after his team has already hit 2 (in the same game) it will be ruled an out and base runners will not be allowed to advance.
14. Substitutions are not allowed after the official start of the 6th inning. The 6th inning will officially start after the first pitch of the inning. Substitutions will be allowed in the event of an injury.
15. Prior to the start of the 5th inning, there will be a time limit of 10 seconds given between the end of the previous play and the next pitch to the next batter. The end of the play shall be determined when the Umpire grants time to conclude the previous play.
16. At any time during the contest, if the Umpire or Tournament Official deems a team deliberately and blatantly delaying time for the benefit of the time limit given for the game, the Umpire can award outs or bases depending on the offending side. One warning shall be given to the offending side to adhere to a reasonable time limit, while a second warning warrants a forfeit of the game of the offending side.

17. No warm up pitches or defensive infield practice will be allowed after the completion of the 5th inning. Upon completion of the 5th inning both teams must make every effort to get to their proper positions (infield and at bat).
18. A game will be conceded under a run rule if any of the following situations occurs. If after the completion of 3 innings a team leads by 15 or more runs, if after 5 innings a team leads by 10 or more runs.
19. Each batter will start with a 1-1 count.
20. Once a batter has two strikes against them they will get one foul ball with two strikes. The second foul ball struck with 2 strikes will result in an out.
21. There will be no leading off. A runner can advance once the ball is in play according to the normal rules. If a runner leaves the base before the ball is struck, the runner is out.

Group Championship Game

1. The Group Championship Game will not use the 7 run per inning rule or any of the run rules.

THE PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTES

1. You must be 18 years or older to play.
2. Each team can have a maximum of 15 players on their roster for each game. All players on the roster must have signed the waiver release for Big League Dreams Sports Park and NOV/SLB Charity Softball Tournament.
3. Each team must play a minimum of 8 players and a maximum of 11.
4. There can only be 10 players playing in the field at one time. You can, but do not have to, hit an 11th player who will be in a position called Extra Hitter. The Extra Hitter can hit in any position in the line up but cannot play and does not count as a position in the field.
5. You must have a minimum of 3 ladies playing at all times. In regards to offense, ladies will be placed in lineup spots 2, 4 and 6. In regards to defense there must be at least one lady in the infield and one lady in the outfield. Catcher does not count as an infield position.
6. You can play with 1 lady in the line up but there must be a spot in the line up for the other two ladies. These spots will be an automatic out in the line up each time the position in the line up comes up to bat and the position is not filled by a lady. In the field there can only be 9 players as well. The absence of the second or third lady cannot be filled either in the line up or the field by another player (unless it's a lady).
7. Courtesy runners are permitted. They will be the last out of the same gender. For ladies if the last out is currently a base runner a lady who is on the roster and in the dug out can be used as courtesy runner.

8. The on-deck batter cannot be substituted for after one pitch has been pitched to the current batter regardless of whether the person is physically in the on-deck circle prior to the pitch to the current batter or not. The person as listed in the Official Scorebook will be the next hitter.
9. Due to the nature of the event the following actions will warrant a player ejection/removal at the discretion of the umpire:
 - a) Fake tags, rough tactics or similar unsportsmanlike conduct.
 - b) Flagrant rule violations such as fighting etc.
 - c) Obscene or objectionable demonstrations toward an official, opponent, or fan (this includes the use of trash talk in an attempt to incite unsportsmanlike conduct).
 - d) Intentional or unintentional bat throwing.
 - e) Being under the influence of alcohol or any other substance that could cause the player to be at risk to themselves and others.
 - f) Any action deemed by Big League Dreams staff, umpires or Charity Event Staff that is not conducive to the park's atmosphere.

Big League Dreams is a family oriented park and this is a charity event. Any obscene language that is loud enough for the umpire to hear is loud enough for spectators to hear. Umpires need not give advance warning.

10. If a player/coach physically abuses any BIG LEAGUE DREAMS official or staff member, he/she is subject to a minimum 1-year suspension. Abuse of another player or spectator shall result in a minimum 30-day suspension.
11. BIG LEAGUE DREAMS SPORTS PARK IS PRIVATLEY OWNED AND OPERATED; WE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO REFUSE PARK ACCESS TO ANYONE AT ANY TIME.

PITCHING RULE

A legal delivery shall be a ball which is delivered to the batter with an underhand motion.

- a) The pitch shall be released at a moderate speed. The speed is left entirely up to the umpire.
- b) The ball must arc higher than the batter's head.
- c) The ball must not exceed a height of more than 12 feet above the ground.
- d) A pitchers foot must be on the mound prior to beginning their pitching motion.
- e) No "Happy Gilmore" pitches will be allowed. The pitcher cannot step towards and onto the mound in order to adhere to the rule above.
- f) When the pitcher is in the pitching position, only a definite underhand motion is permitted in the delivery of the Pitch.

STRIKE ZONE

The strike zone is 19” from the rear of the plate making a 21” x 36” rectangle with the plate extension (mat). A legally pitched ball not struck that lands on any part of the plate or mat will be a strike.

Determining Round Robin Divisional and Group Winners

1. Each team will be guaranteed to play 4 games. 2 games will be played on Saturday April 9th and 2 games will be played on Sunday April 10th.
2. Once all the teams in a division have played their allotted games a Division Winner will be determined.
3. The ranking of the teams in each group will be based on the following rules until there is a definitive Division winner.
4. Overall record. This is based on the number of wins and losses.
5. Head to Head. Any teams that are tied based on wins and losses will ranked based on the teams Head to Head results.
6. Run Differential. The total runs allowed will be subtracted from the total runs scored from each team. The team with the greater total will be determined as the higher ranked team.
7. Runs Scored. The team with more overall runs scored will be determined as the higher ranked team.
8. Each division is paired with a “sister” division as part of a group. The Division Winners within the specified Group will play a one game Group Championship Game to determine the winner of the Group.