

BURLINGTON LADIES SLO-PITCH ASSOCIATION LEAGUE CONSTITUTION

Updated: March 27, 2025

In general, the Burlington Ladies Slo-Pitch Association (BLSPA or League) abides by SPN Rules and Guidelines. In addition to describing the operation of our League, this constitution is intended to emphasize key rules important to the operation of our league, along with League exceptions to SPN rules.

Discrepancies between League rules and SPN rules will be determined by the Umpire on field, and can be raised with the League Executive for a final ruling. If teams do not agree with a decision, they may play under protest.

A General

- A.1 The first rule is to stress **FUN, RECREATION, and SAFETY**.
- A.2 Game schedule, length of season and play-off schedule to be determined by the League Executive (Executive)
- A.3 Player Qualifications for League
- Each player must be 19 years of age or older as of the first game of the season.
 - Players must be women only as shown on valid government-issued identification.
 - All players must reside within 48 kilometers of Burlington and be a permanent resident.
 - Each player to pay registration fee to be determined annually by the Executive.
 - All players must be registered on SPN and sign the SPN waiver and submit the registration fee by the third week of May.
 - If required for age or residency identification purposes, new team members must also submit a copy of photo identification.
 - Any roster changes after the third week of May must be approved by the Executive.
- A.4 Maximum number of registered players per team is 20, minimum 15.
Teams are allowed to register less than 15 players with approval from Executive.
- A.5 All teams are responsible for their own sponsor.
- A.6 Changes to team uniform colours must be approved by the Executive. Team colours are listed on the schedule for reference.

B Game Play

- B.1 **Diamond locations** (unless changed and communicated separately by Executive)
Regular Season games:
LaSalle Park – North and South
Aldershot Park (behind Holy Rosary School) – North and South

Playoffs:
Location to be determined and communicated by Executive
- B.2 Umpires from Slo-Pitch National (SPN) will umpire all games.
- B.3 Start Time – 6:30 for regular season games

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- Diamonds should be set up by home team in time for game start time.
- 15-minute grace period for missing players or if bases are delayed.

B.4 Diamond set-up

- Home team to set up diamonds and provide one new, league-sanctioned ball.
- Second ball to be provided by visiting team (can be used, must be in good condition).
 - Base bags – 60' apart.
 - The pitcher's mound – 46' (give or take a stride) from home plate and may be marked in orange paint.
 - The commitment line – 20' from the front of the mat on the third base side.
- The safety line is an extension of the first base line.
- The top of the home plate board or mat must align with the top of the plate.
- Foul line cones will be placed in the outfield at the direction of the umpire.

B.5 DEFINITION OF A "PLAYER" (for game eligibility)

- **MUST** play a minimum of 3 innings in the field.
- **MUST** be listed in the batting order, as well as on the team roster.
- A later player **MAY** enter the game if her team has not completed the batting order.
- An injured player who is present for the start of the game and remains for the entire game will be considered to have been a "player" for purposes of qualifying for the playoffs. The player must sign the opposing score sheet at the start and finish of the game to qualify.
- Pregnant players play at their own discretion per SPN regulations.
- Playoff Qualification: Teams must not stack their lineups for Playoffs / Championships.
Teams must bring their scorebooks to the Playoffs / Championships in case of dispute.
To be eligible for playoffs:
 - Returning players (on roster in previous year) must play a minimum of 5 regular season games
 - New Players (first year in league) must play a minimum of 7 regular season games

B.6 Only players and the umpire are allowed on the field during game play; it is up to the Coach / executive members of each team to ensure that non-registered players are not allowed to coach on field or play.

B.7 If a team cannot field 10 players, the following applies:

- 9 players: the team shall play one player short in the field
- 8 players: the team shall play one player short in the field; for the safety of game play, the opposing team will supply a catcher, who will NOT make a defensive play at home plate.
- 7 players (or less) the team will forfeit.
- If using a "by" schedule, teams in a forfeit position can recruit players from the sitting team up to a maximum of 10 players. In these instances, the additional players must be declared to the opposing team and umpire at the beginning of the game.

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B.8 A regular season game consists of a maximum of 7 innings.

- Four complete innings will constitute a game in the event a game is called due to rain or darkness.
- The maximum run rule is 5 runs per inning, except for the final inning which is declared an open inning.
- Last inning (open inning) should be called after 8 p.m. with umpire discretion due to game flow, safety (darkness, rain).
- If the home team is leading in the 7th inning, they do not take their final at bats.
- Mercy rule – 15 runs after the 5th inning.

B.9 Rainouts

- Rainouts will be declared in advance by the President or Vice-President, in consultation with the head umpire, or during the game by the umpire.
- Unless the game is called in advance, all teams must have enough players present to field a team. Teams without enough players will forfeit.
- Rescheduling rained out games or postponed games is at the discretion of the Executive.

B.10 Extreme Weather

In cases of extreme heat or poor air quality, the following guidelines (adapted from Athletics Canada Guidelines) will be used by the President or Vice-President to advise on gameplay.

Forecast for time of play, if either condition is met:

Air Quality Health Index: Burlington	Humidex: Aldershot	Recommendation:
1 – 6 (Low – Moderate)	Less than 27C	Play ball!
7-10 (High)	27C – 41C (Caution > Extreme Caution)	5-inning game
10+ (Very High)	>41C (Danger – Extreme Danger)	Games are cancelled

- Air Quality Health Index / forecast as published by the Ontario Government or equal authority:
<https://www.airqualityontario.com>
- Temperature / Humidex as predicted by The Weather Network or suitable source for Aldershot.

B.11 Alcoholic beverages are strictly prohibited at all parks according to our permits issued by the Dept. of Parks and Recreations, City of Burlington. If a player or coach consumes alcohol, the other team has the right to protest the game, in writing to the league convenor or president within 24 hours of game being played. **Smoking is prohibited in all City of Burlington parks/diamonds.**

B.12 Jewellery is allowed under SPN rules, but any items that dangle or are considered dangerous may be asked to be removed at the umpire's discretion.

B.13 Any participant (player, coach or umpire) who is bleeding or has blood on their uniform may not participate until the bleeding is controlled and their soiled uniform is changed.

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- B.14 Anticipation by a base runner is now allowed as per the SPN rules. A runner may leave the base once the pitch has crossed the plane of the plate. Stealing is NOT allowed.
- B.15 Any game challenges or discrepancies are to be reported to the president or vice-president in writing within 24 hours of the game being played.

C SPN Rule Exceptions

- C.1 A 2' by 3' plate board/mat sits on home plate extending from the front of the plate towards the back stop. This is considered home plate.
- If a pitched ball hits the plate and has a 6' minimum arc, it is called a strike. There is no maximum height restriction. If the batter swings at the pitch it is also a strike.
 - If a pitched ball is not swung at and does not hit the plate, or if the pitch does not conform to the height requirements, it is declared a ball.
 - If a batter has swung it is called a strike and if the batter hits a ball, it is in play, even if the pitch does not have the required arc.
- C.2 Home Plate: A commitment line from third base is in effect.
- Once the runner crosses the commitment line, they cannot return to third base. The play at home then becomes a force play.
 - A runner will be considered safe at home if they cross the line before the catcher/defensive player catches the ball while standing on the home plate mat/board.
 - The catcher/defensive player may NOT tag the runner on the way to home plate after the runner has crossed the commitment line.
 - If the runner slides or touches the mat, they are automatically out.
- C.3 A double safety bag will be used at first base. The orange bag is placed in foul territory and the white bag in fair.
- If there is a play at first base, the runner must touch the orange bag and the first baseman must touch the white bag.
 - If the runner touches the white bag they are automatically out, unless there is no play at first base.
- C.4 Third strike foul out.
- C.5 Courtesy runners – If a batter requires a courtesy runner, they are replaced at first base by the last out prior to the batter stepping to the plate. Should a player become injured, they are replaced by the last out at the base they reached.
- C.6 Batting Order: Any player leaving in the middle of the game is simply crossed out on the batting order and is not considered an out.
- C.7 Substituting players during a game is not allowed.

FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THESE RULES WILL RESULT IN THE GAME BEING FORFEITED

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D Scoring

- D.1 Team reps are responsible for appointing a scorekeeper for each game; scores must be reported by winning teams within 5 days of the game day. In the case of a tie, both teams report the scores.
- D.2 Scorebooks must be kept by both teams; all scorebooks must be available for review during playoff games.
- D.3 Opposing teams can register any score discrepancies to the Executive – both teams must submit their scorebooks for review.
- D.4 In case of a forfeit, the score will count as 15 – 0 for the non-forfeiting team.
- D.5 Failure to report the score per above will result in a loss of points.**
- D.6 Win is 2 points, tie is 1 point, loss is 0 points.

E Equipment

- E.1 League is responsible for supplying bases, home plate board, first aid kits and a new ball for each home game. Worn out equipment will be replaced as needed.
- E.2 Teams will be supplied money for additional equipment (bats, jerseys, etc.) as approved by the Executive.
- E.3 Teams that lose their League-supplied equipment must use their team-supplied money to replace the equipment (either current or following year).
- E.4 Catcher's masks are recommended but are optional.
- E.5 First Aid Kits are **mandatory** at each game and is each team's responsibility to keep them well stocked. Teams may apply to the Vice-President for supply requests.

F PLAY-OFFS

- F.1 The Executive will determine on a playoff format on an annual basis, with a default round robin format if there are 8 teams:

	Game 1	Game 2	Game 3	CHAMPIONSHIP
POOL 1	8 th vs 1 st	5 th vs 1 st	3 rd vs 1 st	WINNER OF POOL 1
	5 th vs 3 rd	8 th vs 3 rd	8 th vs 5 th	VS
POOL 2	7 th vs 2 nd	6 th vs 2 nd	4 th vs 2 nd	WINNER OF POOL 2
	6 th vs 4 th	7 th vs 4 th	7 th vs 6 th	

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- F.2 Playoff positioning is determined by standings at the end of the regular season.
- F.3 If two or more teams are tied at the end of the regular season, playoff rankings will be **determined by the team(s) head-to-head scores during the season vs. overall run differential.**
- F.4 Playoff game time and locations to be determined and communicated by the Executive.
- F.5 Home team during playoffs is the team with the higher position at the end of the regular season. Home team for the Championship Game will be decided by coin toss.
- F.6 Maximum run differential at end of game is +7 runs.
- F.7 A playoff game consists of 7 innings.
 - Regular game rules apply during playoffs, including rain out, mercy (15 after 5)
 - If the home team is leading by +7 runs or more in the 7th inning, they do not take their final at bats.
- F.8 If a game is tied after 7 innings, extra innings **MUST** be played.
- F.9 In the event of 2 or more teams winning the same number of games during the playoffs, **head-to-head results between the teams during the regular season** will be used to determine the team that proceeds to the championship.

G Executive/ Officers

- G.1 Executive to consist of at least one representative from each team. New executive to be elected at general meeting.
- G.2 Team reps are responsible for communication between executive and teams.
- G.3 The Executive will consist of League Officers as outlined below. Executive positions shall be held by members of the League.
- G.4 In the event a team does not provide a league officer (for the position they are responsible for) the team will forfeit games until these positions are filled. Further disciplinary action will be at the Executives discretion.
- G.5 Executive members are required to attend all Executive meetings. In the event that an Executive member is not able to attend a meeting, the Team should send another representative in their place.
 - Each team is allowed one missed meeting per calendar year without penalty.
 - If no team member is available, the Team Rep should send notes regarding Agenda items for voting; teams without a representative present must abide by decisions made at the meeting.
 - Any Team failing to provide a representative at more than one executive meeting per calendar year forfeits 2 points for each meeting missed.
- G.6 An Executive member may be removed from office at any time for dereliction of duties, aggressive or hostile behavior, or incompetence, with a majority vote of all members of the

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Executive. In the event that this takes place, the Team has 1 week to replace the executive member or they will forfeit all of their games until such person is replaced.

- G.7 In the event of prolonged illness or absence of an Executive member, her duties must be assumed by a replacement appointed by the team.
- G.8 Executive Voting:
- One vote per team.
 - Quorum is defined as a majority of teams *present* for a vote.
 - In the event of a tie vote, the President (or acting President) shall break the tie.
- G.9 The Executive shall perform their duties as defined below.

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BY LAWS – Executive Duties

General Executive Role

All Executive Members shall:

- Have a working understanding of the League Constitution and SPN rules, abide at all times by the SPN code of conduct, and ensure their team members do the same.
- Be required to attend all scheduled meetings (at least one representative per team).
- Ensure all team members are eligible to play.
- Collect and submit team fees.
- Act as a liaison between the Executive and their team members.
- Have minutes available for their teammates (if required).
- Collect, maintain and present game sheets when requested and communicate to Executive regarding player eligibility for playoffs.

Executive Positions

Role	Responsibilities (in addition to General Executive Role)
President BACKUP: VP	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organize and preside at League meetings, or designate Vice-President to lead meeting.• Oversee all League functions and assist any operation that requires or requests help.• Act as liaison between the League and SPN, and complete SPN membership / insurance, payments, and other SPN-required documentation.• Acquire permits from City of Burlington and set schedule.• Provide teams and umpires with a schedule.• Maintain an up-to-date record of all Executive Committee members, Coaches, Team Reps and Team Members.• Have signing authority, along with the Treasurer and the Vice-President (and other designated Executive members) for all cheques issued on behalf of the League.• Responsible for umpire liaison
Vice-President BACKUP: Stats / Pres	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Perform duties as are assigned by the President and substitute for her as required.• Act as umpire liaison in the absence of the President.• Purchase and distribute team equipment, including balls and first aid kits.• Have signing authority, along with the Treasurer and the Vice-President for all cheques issued on behalf of the League.• Propose and finalize potential playoff / schedule formats as needed.
Treasurer BACKUPS: VP, Pres	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collect and record all League finances.• Submit a verbal monthly report at monthly meetings and a written report at the AGM.• Have signing authority, along with the President, and the Vice-President for all cheques issued on behalf of the League.• Have available, for audit, the records of the League for the current playing season, when called for by the President.
League Statistician BACKUP: Pres	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assume the duties of the Vice President in her absence or such duties as the President sees fits.• Responsible for collecting scores and reporting on League statistics.• Determine team positions for Playoffs.• Determines and informs team of playoff schedule/diamond locations.

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Executive Positions

Role	Responsibilities (in addition to General Executive Role)
Secretary BACKUP: VP	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keep an accurate record of the proceedings of the League.• Conduct all correspondence of the League, its Officers and the Executive committee, keeping a record of the latter.• Provide minutes of Executive Meetings within 2 weeks of the meeting date.• Notify all Officers and Executive Committee members of their duties as assigned.• Regularly issue a record of the items discussed at the meeting via email to all Executive members.
Recruitment BACKUP: Pres	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Coordinate with Website manager and league executive to recruit for new players on website, social media, and other platforms.• Liaise with teams to assess recruitment needs.• Recommend strategies to meet recruitment goals; implement actions approved by executive.• Maintain an active list of new players available to be recruited.
Website BACKUP: Pres	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintain League website (www.blspa.ca).• Maintain domain registration.• Ensure prominent advertising for new players.• Post season and playoff schedule.• Post score updates from statistician (time intervals as needed)• Post updates as requested by Executive.
Tournament Director / Social Events BACKUP VP	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Propose social events to the executive, and organize as approved.• Organize tournament day (as approved by Exec), including:• Co-ordinating a food / drink vendor for the beer gardens and make sure that they understand / fulfil all responsibilities with the City including permitting, fencing, health regulations.<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Coordinate prize draws and raffles.◦ Set up a board showing games to be played and scores to be entered on the day of the tournament.• Arrange for security for the beer gardens area of the park if needed.