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# Softball 101

Presented by Earl Kilian



# History

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Softball was invented on a blustery, windy day in November 1887 in Chicago, Illinois inside the Farragut Boat Club. There a bunch of Yale and Harvard alumni anxiously awaited the results of the Harvard-Yale football game. When the news came that Yale had defeated Harvard, 17-8, one Yale supporter, overcome with enthusiasm, picked up an old boxing glove and threw it at a nearby Harvard alumni, who promptly tried to hit it back with a stick. This gave George Hancock, a reporter for the Chicago Board of Trade, an idea. He suggested a game of indoor baseball. Naturally, Hancock's friends thought he was talking about playing a game outdoors, not indoors. Hancock, however, wasn't kidding. Using what was available, he tied together the laces of a boxing glove for a ball. Using a piece of chalk, Hancock marked off a home plate, bases and a pitcher's box inside the Farragut Boat Club gymnasium, with the two groups divided into two teams. The final score of the game was 41-40, but what was significant was that Hancock and his friends had invented a sport that would grow in popularity to where today more than 25 million people enjoy playing it in the United States and millions more internationally in more than 100 countries.



# Player(s) and team etiquette

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- ❑ Since softball is a team sport, the game requires a minimum of 10 players to play with a full team. For coed leagues you need 5 guys and 5 gals. Because of this requirement, it puts pressure on you as a manager to field a team every week. Here are some helpful tips to ensure that you field a time every week:
  - Select Players that you know (Family and Friends)
  - Stress commitment
  - Host at least 2 practices before the season starts
  - Recruit players thru our office pick up player list or Craig's list
  - Communication: email players, text, give them a full schedule at the start of the season.
  - Recruit a team manager, no cost to him or her ....have as a sub who can keep score.
  - Other recommendations
- ❑ Note players that do not show for a game not only put a hardship or burden on your time/team mates but the other team you are scheduled to play and their families, potential loss of recreation time using their cherished disposable income.



# Player(s) and team etiquette

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- ❑ Lastly, be careful not to put too many players on your team; causing the committed players to not get enough playing time.
- ❑ Recommend players on a team:
  - Men – 12-14
  - Coed – 14-16
  - Women's – 12-14
- ❑ More players can cause conflict in playing times. See unlimited substitution rule and pick up player cards.



# Rules and Equipment

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1. Tennis shoes or rubber-cleated shoes must be worn. Metal cleats are illegal in all leagues.
2. GAME TIME IS FORFEIT TIME! Teams must be ready to play at scheduled time with a minimum of 8 players. Penalty: Forfeit. Home team is determined by a pre-game coin toss. Scorebook: The home team is the official book for the game... see rule book/scorebook.
3. Seven innings will constitute an official game, unless time limit, darkness, rain or run rule prevails, which is 5 innings.
4. 6 <sup>1/2</sup> if the home team is ahead is an official game. If a game is postponed while in progress, it will be resumed at the point from which it was stopped. No new inning will be started after 70 minutes. Game time begins with the coin toss. At the end of the time limit (upon completion of inning started), the game will be called, unless darkness, rain, or run rule have been invoked.
5. A team leading by 12 runs after five innings or 4 <sup>1/2</sup> innings if home team is ahead or any complete inning thereafter will be declared the winner and the game complete.



# Rules and Equipment

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6. During the regular season, there will be an extra innings if time is available.
7. A team may place a maximum of 11 (12 for coed) and minimum of 8 players in the batting order. There are no restrictions concerning field substitution but, the batting order must remain the same.
8. If a team begins with only 8 players they may add players at the bottom of the batting order up until all players in the line-up have batted once. They will not be charged an out in 9th and 10th positions. **(See unlimited substitution)**
9. Whenever a team is playing with only eight or nine players, an out(s) will be taken when the 9th / 10th position in the batting order appears.
10. When the batter enters the batter's box he/she will have the count of one ball and one strike. After the batter has received a count of two strikes, he/she will be declared out on the second foul (the first foul will be called a "courtesy foul").
11. All players in the field (maximum of 10, minimum of 8) must appear in the batting order. Defensive changes are unlimited provided that the game is not unduly delayed.



# Rules and Equipment

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12. Any of the starting players may be substituted or replaced and on a unlimited basis (unlimited sub), provided players occupy the original position in the line-up. The starting player and his substitute may not be in the batting line-up at the same time.
13. Courtesy runners are not allowed for injured players (See unlimited substitutions).
14. A pitch delivered legally with the proper arc requirement that crosses the plate within the strike zone will be called a strike. The strike zone is that space over any part of home plate, between the batter's back shoulder and front knee, when s/he assumes a natural batting stance. The pitch, delivered with an underhand motion, must have a perceptible arc and reach a height of at least 6 feet from the ground, while not exceeding a maximum of 10 feet.
15. If the catcher in any way obstructs the umpire's view, the pitch shall be declared a ball.



# Special Co-ed Modifications

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1. Teams must start a game with a minimum of 4 males and 4 females in the field of play. A team may play with unequal numbers of males and females, but must take an "automatic out" if doing so. For example, if a team plays with 5 females and 4 males, an automatic out will be recorded in the #10 position in the batting order.
2. The batting order must alternate males with females.
3. A coed team must have equal players in the outfield 2 male and 2 female, 2 male 2 female infield. In the infield and outfield the pitcher catcher must be opposite sex.
4. A male batter who receives a walk (intentional or not) will be awarded second base. Runners advance if forced. The next batter (a female) will bat. Exception: With two outs, the female batter has the option to walk or bat.



# The Game

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1. Teams with fewer than eight (8) players at game time automatically become the visiting team. If they do not get their 8th player there before they go on defense, they will forfeit the game or, for the first game of the night only, they may choose to use a ten minute grace period to get their 8th person there. The team will then be penalized 2 runs. The 10 minute grace period will not be added on to the end of the game.
2. No new inning will start after 1 hour 10 minutes or 7 completed innings. Exception: If the game is tied after 7 innings and there is time remaining in the game, the game will continue until one team wins or the 1:10 minute time limit is up, whichever comes first. If the .limit is up and the game is tied, it will not be played out. All started innings must be completed. (No new inning will start after 10:55pm). It is the coaches responsibility to note the starting time with the official. (Platinum: 1 hour 5 minute time limit unless the game is tied, then it will be played out.)



# The Game

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3. For the 2011 season, the Boise Parks & Recreation Softball Board has adopted the 1-1 count with courtesy foul ball for all gold leagues. This rule does not apply to Silver or Sunday Coed.
4. Pitching Arc. ASA National Rule: 6ft - 10 ft, with 6ft foot pitching box for safety of the pitcher allowing a pitcher to pitch anywhere behind or on the side of the 50ft. rubber.
5. A pitcher's box should be part of the playing field. The box should be 2 x 6 feet starting at the front edge of the pitcher's plate and extending back toward second base 6 feet.



# Game Line Up

## Gold and Silver Leagues

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1. A team may start and finish the game with a minimum of eight players. The missing players will bat in the lowest possible position(s) in the batting order empty. An out will result in all missing player's batting positions. If additional players arrive after the game has started, the short team may add players up to a maximum of ten. The added players will bat in the appropriate batting order. A team can play short handed in any position they choose, other than pitcher and catcher. Teams starting with nine or more players will not forfeit if they drop to eight players due to an ejection or other circumstances. A team not having a minimum of eight players on or within sight of the field at game time or anytime during the game, will forfeit the game. Teams may have a line up of 12 for coed and 11 for men's and women's even if they don't have everyone there at game time. The team will take an out for every missing player until they are entered into the game. (The outs/s will be in effect the remainder of the game should the player not arrive to fill the open position). **NEW:** 2011 Sunday COED & Grass (Silver) league can bat the full roster.



# Game Line Up

## Gold and Silver Leagues

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2. Games forfeited at game time will still be played and officiated as a practice game if both captains agree, provided there are eight players for each team. (A team will have 10 minutes from game time to put a team together.) (Players must be on Twilight League roster). The same rules as an official game apply to the Practice game.
3. Substitutes will follow the ASA Rules except a player may re-enter as many times as he/she wishes, provided he/she re-enters in the same place in the batting order.



# Scorebook / Scoring

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1. Make the determination before the game how many players you are will be at the game.
2. Use player pick up cards for hardship.
3. Make out a line up / use line up card place in dug out for players to see.
4. Write players names in the scorebook provided.
5. Determine where these players are going to play defense.
6. Unlimited subs



# Scorebook / Scoring

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7. Coed limitations (2 male 2 female in the outfield) (3 male and 3 female Infield and must have male female pitcher / catcher) – 10 players.
8. Other strategies
9. If you are the home team, see the rule book.
10. When managing a team for the first season do not worry about stats, for our program just be concerned about runs & outs and making sure players don't bat out of order.
11. Adding players to your roster ...you have until July 1st.
12. IMPORTANT: Write down in the scorebook game start time.
13. Always confirm with home book the official score at the end of each inning.



# Equipment

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1. The 12-inch size ball will be used for all men batters and 11-in for women's and coed in all games. ASA stamp .44 core and 375 compression.
2. Baseball gloves can be used, but it is not recommended. Softball gloves are made for the fit of the 12-inch ball. Batting gloves help in a glove for a sure fit and comfort.
3. Softball bats that are used in games are declared legal by the sanctioning ASA softball organization. Officials should check the bats for the correct specifications before game time. Use of Banned bats or non-approved and altered bats carries strict penalties from one game to 2 year suspension.



# Equipment / Uniforms

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1. No metal, hard plastic or polyurethane spikes similar to metal sole & heel plates are allowed in any league and invitational tournaments.
2. Each team must present a new or QUALITY ball for each game. (Coed – one 11" and one 12"). The umpire will attempt to have each team hit the ball they provide. Any infraction of this rule is not able to be protested. No at bats will be replayed due to violations of the rule. When the error is discovered the ball shall be exchanged and play shall resume. All balls must be .44 COR and .375 compression. Balls must be ASA certified. Yellow balls are highly recommended, white balls will be phased out after 2012 season
3. For an updated list of illegal bats go to the [softball.org](http://softball.org) Note the may change with banned bats.
4. Uniforms – uniforms are not required for league play or league tournament. Teams playing in any level of "Post Season" tournament play may be required to have matching uniforms with numbers. Teams are responsible to check with the tournament director ahead of time as to the uniform requirements.



# Manager's Duties before season:

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- **Recommend players on a team:**
  - Men: 12-14
  - Coed: 14-16
  - Women's: 12-14
  
- More players can cause conflict in playing times. See unlimited substitution rule and pick up player cards.

**NOTE: Only need a minimum of 12 players to sign-up.**

- 12 Players can be replaced before your first game at no cost.



# Current Rule Book Guidelines

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- ❑ A player may play on more than one team in league only, with the following exceptions:
  - Players must be signed on each team's roster and have paid their player fees.
  - A player must not play more than three divisions below their highest level of play (excluding all women players) Players not meeting this criteria will be deemed ineligible for play and teams subject to forfeit., For example, a D1 player may participate with teams in D2, D3 and D4 leagues only.
  - For ASA and USSSA tournament roster regulations see the ASA and USSSA rule book(s).



# League Structure

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1. The Gold, Silver and Coed Sunday leagues are sanctioned by ASA.
2. The league fee covers: the officials, field equipment, facilities, maintenance and operation costs, administrative costs, and awards. The Silver gold league player's fees are deposited into a capital fund for field improvements and acquisitions.
3. The ASA sanctioning fee provides the City with field liability insurance and allows teams to play in sanctioned tournaments among other benefits. ASA offer optional insurance that covers all players and coaches. Teams are encouraged to check into the insurance and other benefits on each respective website.



# League Structure

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4. By participating, all players agree to release Boise Parks & Recreation, the Softball Advisory Board and all cooperating agencies, employees, officials or managers thereof from all liability for damages to persons or property that may be sustained as a result of participation in the program.
5. Each team member is responsible to insure that payments due to insufficient funds are the entire team's responsibility. Team and players will be suspended from further participation in all Boise Parks & Recreation Programs until the fee is paid.



# League Classification

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- ❑ Teams are classified by the Program Coordinators and the Softball Advisory Board. Classifications are based on the following criteria: League standings from previous years, teams registering in each division, number of teams returning and the caliber of the players on the team. Mid - lower teams that have upper division men on their roster may be moved up one or more divisions. Teams are not guaranteed the division they request.
- ❑ Changing divisions can only be done by switching with another team. The manager is responsible to find a team that is willing to switch by contacting Boise Parks & Recreation.



# Facility Guidelines

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1. Hitting into the fences is not allowed at anytime due to extensive damage it causes.
2. No children will be allowed in the dugouts or playing area. Only the players, coach, and scorekeeper will be allowed in the dugouts. (Liability and Safety reasons)
3. No pets are allowed in the softball playing area of Willow Lane, this includes warm up areas and spectator areas due to safety and sanitary reasons. Violators will be required to put the pet in their car or remove them from the park. The police may be called if the individual refuses to cooperate.
4. Problems that occur with teams that practice on school or private facilities may result in a possible suspension from the league. No alcohol is permitted on school grounds.



# Facility Guidelines

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5. Please use trash receptacles.
6. No glass containers are allowed on any parks or school facilities.
7. Field lighting will be turned off no later than 11:00 pm due to City Ordinance.
8. No non-motorized scooters, skateboards, bicycles and/or roller blades are allowed at Willow Lane Athletic Complex due to safety concerns.
9. Do not park in the no parking zones, cars will be towed.



# Rescheduled / Canceled and Rainout Games

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- ❑ If no official umpire arrives for a game, the game may be played if both managers agree and there is a volunteer to umpire the game, or it will be rescheduled. If the game is started with a volunteer umpire, it must be completed. Both coaches are required to sign the score book as proof of agreement. (Refund will not be given) Concerns against an umpire must be e-mailed to [sports@cityofboise.org](mailto:sports@cityofboise.org) and the concerns will be forwarded to BSUA. **NOTE:** We hire field supervisors who picks up scores each night.
- ❑ All games which are declared a no game because of poor weather conditions, unplayable field (umpire's decision), or umpire not showing up, will be rescheduled the next working day. Teams must notify the City Recreation Office before 10:00 am the next working day as to any dates that could be a conflict for future game dates. The league coordinator may cancel games at his/her discretion. Messages can be left on the night phone at 384-4256.
- ❑ Rained out games will be replayed the next available day and time. Teams should be prepared to play that same week.



# Manager's duties during season:

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1. On inclement weather days, call 608-7650 (rain out line).
2. Check for rescheduled games (next day).
3. Always have a copy of your roster for emergencies/contacts.
4. Make sure you have game balls.
5. Give your players each a schedule (planning purposes).
6. Tell players to give you at least a week notice if they aren't able to play.
7. Plan ahead for Tournament lists/dates.



# Fort Boise Field #1

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- ❑ Batter's box
- ❑ Strike Zone
- ❑ Use 2 ASA umpires per game
- ❑ Umpire Comments
- ❑ Bases / Double base
- ❑ Tips on where to place players (infield and outfield)
- ❑ Other running and fielding / batting tips
- ❑ Practice recommendations



# Best Core Exercises for Softball Players

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Step up your game with some great core exercises for softball. Find out how you can improve batting or pitching, flexibility and base running with a specific core exercise for softball that improves your performance and potentially reduces the risk of injury.

## STRETCHES

- Any athlete should stretch before practice or a game, softball players included, but there are some stretches geared more toward softball players than other athletes. According to the Stretching Institute, softball players should do three types of stretches: a lying knee roll-over, elbow-out rotator, and rotating wrist stretch.
- Start the lying knee roll-over stretch by lying on your back. Bend your knees to the ceiling and roll them both to one side, all the way to the floor. Keep knees here for ten seconds, bring them back up to the center, and roll them to the other side for another ten seconds. Repeat three times.



# Best Core Exercises for Softball Players

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## STRETCHES (cont'd)

- Perform the elbow-out rotator stretch standing up. Place one hand palm out, behind your back, on top of your spine. Reach your other arm across your stomach and grab the bent elbow. Pull the elbow forward very gently and hold for ten seconds. Do the same thing with the other arm and repeat three times.
- Any athlete should stretch before practice or a game, softball players Begin the rotating wrist core exercise for softball standing up. Extend one arm in front of your body with your wrist pointing downward. Point the wrist and hand straight out, then use your free hand to grab the hand and rotate it upward towards the ceiling. Do the same with the other hand and repeat three times.



# Best Core Exercises for Softball Players

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## STRENGTH AND STABILITY

- According to [bodybuilding.com](http://bodybuilding.com), softball players should work more on core stability and conditioning than on core training. In other words, don't worry so much about getting a six pack as in making your performance count.
- One good strength core exercise for softball is the abdominal crunch. You can do this on a weight machine or mimic a crunch with a sit-up. Place only as much weight as you can handle on the weight machine, sit on the bench, grab the handles and bend forward. Use only your ab muscles to bend - don't employ your back and legs to stabilize you too much. Do 10 to 20 crunches per set, and do about two or three sets at a time.
- The belly button to spine exercise is also a good core exercise for softball. This is actually an exercise you can employ whenever you do an ab exercise. Imagine a string pulling your belly button towards your spine. Don't suck in the stomach, but rather use ab muscles to tighten abdominals as much as possible. This will tone and condition your core.



# Best Core Exercises for Softball Players

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## ROLE-SPECIFIC EXERCISES

- ❑ There are specific exercises that help the core especially for batting or pitching.
- ❑ Pitchers should work on shoulder and upper core strength with lifting exercises. Dumbbell bench presses are a great way to do this. Lie on your back on the floor or a bench with an equal weight in each hand. Lift only as much weight as possible without injuring yourself. Raise both arms toward the ceiling, either one at a time or simultaneously. This will strengthen arms and stabilize your core.
- ❑ Batters need more power to hit the softball with speed and strength. Thus, they should consider doing sit-ups with feet tucked under a chair or held by a partner. Fold hands behind the head or across the chest and use abdominal muscles to sit up and lie down in a smooth, fluid motion without jerking.



# Benefits of a proper warm up

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- ❑ Increased Muscle Temperature - The temperature increases within muscles that are used during a warm-up routine. A warmed muscle both contracts more forcefully and relaxes more quickly. In this way both speed and strength can be enhanced. Also, the probability of overstretching a muscle and causing injury is far less.
- ❑ Increased Body Temperature - This improves muscle elasticity, also reducing the risk of strains and pulls.
- ❑ Blood Vessels Dilate - This reduces the resistance to blood flow and lower stress on the heart.
- ❑ Improve Efficient Cooling - By activating the heat-dissipation mechanisms in the body (efficient sweating) an athlete can cool efficiently and help prevent overheating early in the event or race.



# Benefits of a proper warm up

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- ❑ Increased Blood Temperature - The temperature of blood increases as it travels through the muscles. As blood temperature rises, the binding of oxygen to hemoglobin weakens so oxygen is more readily available to working muscles, which may improve endurance.
- ❑ Improved Range of Motion - The range of motion around a joint is increased.
- ❑ Hormonal Changes - Your body increases its production of various hormones responsible for regulating energy production. During warm-up this balance of hormones makes more carbohydrates and fatty acids available for energy production.
- ❑ Mental Preparation - The warm-up is also a good time to mentally prepare for an event by clearing the mind, increasing focus, reviewing skills and strategy. Positive imagery can also relax the athlete and build concentration.



# Typical Warm Up Exercises

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- ❑ Gradually increasing the intensity of your specific sport. This uses the specific skills of a sport and is sometimes called a related warm-up. For runners, the idea is to jog a while and add a few sprints into the routine to engage all the muscle fibers.
- ❑ Adding movements not related to your sport in a slow steady manner: calisthenics or flexibility exercises for example. Ball players often use unrelated exercise for their warm up.
- ❑ Which to choose? The best time to stretch a muscle is after it has an increased blood flow and has increased temperature to avoid injury. Stretching a cold muscle can increase the risk of injury from pulls and tears. So you are better off doing gradual aerobic exercise before stretching. Keep in mind that the best time to stretch is after exercise because your muscles are warm and pliable with the increase of blood in them. Make sure your warm up begins gradually, and uses the muscles that will be stressed during exercise.
- ❑ Keep in mind that the perfect warm up is a very individual process that can only come with practice, experimentation and experience. Try warming up in various way, at various intensities until you find what works best for you.

*Softball*

# How to Prevent the 5 Most Common Sports Injuries

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## **Ankle Sprains and Strains**

A number of factors can lead to ankle sprains, including poor technique and uneven terrain. The right footwear is essential to preventing a sprain, but it isn't the only thing you can do. If you have a history of ankle injuries a brace can provide extra stability to prevent re-injury. Physical therapy after an injury can increase strength and range of motion.

## **Knee Pain**

Knee injuries are often caused by improper technique, lack of conditioning and poor flexibility. While it's important to build up training gradually to avoid overuse, biomechanics can also come into play, if you have flat feet or high arches, you may have more knee pain. Appropriate footwear or orthotics can improve alignment and help reduce injury risk. If you are a cyclist, proper bike fit can also make a huge difference.



# How to Prevent the 5 Most Common Sports Injuries

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## Lower Back Pain

Low back pain is a common problem and one of the main reasons is inactivity. As we get older and less active, we lose the strength and balance in the core muscles (abs and low back) can lead to poor posture, improper alignment, fatigue and pain. Regular exercise is the best way to protect your lower back.



# How to Prevent the 5 Most Common Sports Injuries

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## **Elbow Pain**

Tennis players and golfers have more elbow injuries than most, but anyone can develop elbow pain. Although conditioning is a major cause, proper technique is essential to preventing problems. Take a class or get professional instruction. Also, make sure your equipment fits well.

## **Shoulder Injuries**

frequently seen in throwing sports, rotator cuff tendonitis is a common cause of shoulder pain. Staying in shape and easing into an activity are the best ways to prevent problems. There are a number of potential shoulder injuries, however, so proper conditioning is essential for your sport.

Even with proper conditioning, equipment and other precautions you may still develop pain from exercise. If so, what you do immediately can prevent the pain from becoming a chronic problem. At the first sign of pain stop or ease back on your sport immediately. Apply ice for 15 to 20 minutes several times a day and elevate the injured area.

If you still have pain after two or three days, you should see your physician.



# Non-approved Bats

## New Rules for League 2011

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- ❑ Bats used must bear **either** the ASA approved 2000 certification mark **or the ASA 2004 certification mark** as shown below, and must not be listed on an ASA non approved list, **and** must be included on a list of approved bat models published by the ASA National Office; or Must, in the sole opinion and discretion of the umpire, have been manufactured prior to 2000 and if tested, would comply with the ASA bat performance standards then in effect.
- ❑ The official reference will be lists of approved and non-approved bats on ASA's website. <http://www.asasoftball.com>  
ASA's lists will be printed and kept for reference at the Boise City Park & Rec office *one month prior* to the start of each annual softball season and will serve as the official reference until the start of the next annual season.
- ❑ A player who enters the batter's box with a non-approved bat will immediately be called out and subject to a "Level Two Violation" penalty. Ownership of the bat is irrelevant.



# Non-approved Bats

## New Rules for League 2011

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- A second offense of using a non-approved bat will result in indefinite suspension from Boise City softball leagues. The player may request reinstatement by appearing in front of the softball advisory board or upon the discretion of the director. The softball advisory board and/or the director will determine what, if any, further suspension may be merited for second offenses.
  
- Altered/Doctored Bats-
  - Umpires may examine a bat at any time if they have reasonable suspicion to believe the bat to be altered, based on appearance or performance.
  - If, upon examination, the bat is suspected to have been modified, the umpire shall identify both the user and the owner of the bat. The umpire has the authority to immediately take the bat into his/her possession for testing.



# Non-approved Bats

## New Rules for League 2011

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- Testing process:
  - The umpire will turn the bat into Boise City Parks & Recreation office for testing. If the bat passes Boise City's test, it will be made available to the player within 2 business days.
  - If the bat fails Boise City's test, it will be sent to the ASA office to undergo further testing.
  - A player, who refuses to submit a bat to the umpire for examination and/or testing will be immediately called out, ejected from the game and suspended for a minimum of 1 year.



# Non-approved Bats

## New Rules for League 2011

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- A player who enters the softball field with a bat verified to be altered or modified will face a minimum 1-year suspension. *Both the user and the owner of the bat are subject to the rules and consequences pertaining to altered or modified bats.* Note: the suspension is subject to the discretion of the director of the program and/or the player(s) may appear before the softball advisory board to appeal the suspension.
- **Note:** Players can have their bats examined and tested upon appointment Monday thru Friday, the City of Boise Parks & Recreation office located behind Fort Boise softball field # 1. Additionally, umpires can be asked to examine bats prior to the start of a game. Buying used bats or bats from unknown vendors (especially web-based) presents a risk to the buyer – the bat may have been modified or altered. *Play it safe: if you're unsure, have your bat tested!*

