

2017 UNITED WAY KICKBALL TOURNAMENT – DETAILED RULES

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2017 UNITED WAY KICKBALL TOURNAMENT DETAILED RULES

Kickball is a simple game consisting of two teams, bases, and a big red ball. The following rules will govern all United Way 2017 Kickball Tournament games. For the enjoyment of all and to ensure a fun day, proper respect and civility is required of all participants toward one another. All games are to be played in a sportsmanlike manner. With the following exceptions/clarifications, standard softball rules will be in effect for all games.

1. GENERAL ITEMS

- The Tournament is scheduled for Saturday, September 9th. In the event of rain the Tournament may be postponed until Saturday, October 14th.
- All players must be at least 21 years old.
- Rosters of up to 16 players, minimum of nine.
- Players must be on one roster only, and are not allowed to play for multiple teams in the Tournament. *Teams found using non-roster players will have to forfeit some or all of their games.*
- Maximum of 11 fielders and 16 kickers – minimum of nine.
- Teams will be divided into pools. The pool-play stage of the tournament will be round robin. The top teams in each pool will advance to a single-elimination playoff.
- Games will be the lesser of five innings or approximately 30 minutes, except for the semi-finals and final which will be the lesser of seven innings or approximately 45 minutes.
- All games will have officials, who will track the score and number of outs per inning as well as call close plays. On “too close to call” plays officials can resort to Rock-Paper-Scissors by the two players involved. Please remember that this event is supposed to be fun, and try not to get carried away in the heat of a moment. After all, this is kickball!
- Since we need to fit many games into one day, we will need to manage some games to fit within their designated time limit. Officials will communicate modifications to the rules on a case by case basis. For example, if a fourth inning finishes five minutes from the 30-minute mark, an official may decide to start the fifth inning but with each team getting only two outs. This will be somewhat complicated and imprecise, but necessary to ensure that games finish within designated time period with each team receiving an equal number of outs – please bear with us.
- On a related note, to ensure games start promptly please make sure that your team is assembled in the “on-deck” area and ready to go by your designated time. This on-deck area is just outside the center-field gate. Games will start as soon as each team has at least nine players. *Forfeits will be declared if a team has less than nine players five minutes after the designated start-time.*
- If you know your team will be short-handed for a game please see a tournament Official prior to the start. While the official result will be a forfeit, we may be able to find non-roster players to fill in which case both teams can scrimmage.
- All games will be played on the field of PeoplesBank Park, and for most of the day play will occur simultaneously on these fields. Some overlap will occur but hopefully it will be minimal. All balls and fielders from neighboring fields are in play – e.g., no do-over if a kicked ball hits an outfielder from a neighboring field. Only exception is that if a fielder from another game intentionally interferes with play – either by kicking or throwing a live ball or intentionally impeding a fielder or runner – then the impeded team will have the option of a do-over.

- Line-up sheets (and pens/pencils) will be provided – more details provided below.
- Mercy Rule: Game ends if a team leads by 15 runs after completing the first two innings or 10 runs after innings three or four. Also either team can call it quits whenever, thus forfeiting game to the other team. For the semis and final game, game ends if a team leads by 15 runs after completing the first three innings or 10 runs after innings four through six.
- Park logistics: Check-in desk will be located on the Stadium concourse, immediately to the right after entering the Stadium. *All teams must check in at least 30 minutes prior to the start of their first game.* Scorer's table will be located near the center-field entrance / on-deck area. First-aid station is located on right wall as you enter the Stadium.

2. THE PLAYING FIELD

- The dimensions of our kickball fields will approximate those of a softball field.
- The Pitching Line will be the center of the diamond directly aligned with the 1st/3rd base diagonal.
- Double First Base – used to try to avoid collisions at first base. The fielder should try to use the base closer to fair territory and the runner should try to use the other, but either work.

3. EQUIPMENT

- Matching uniforms are strongly encouraged – at minimum same-color shirts are required.
- Athletic shoes are required; however, **no cleats or turf shoes are allowed.**
- Players may wear protective equipment providing it does not give the wearer an unfair performance advantage (officials' discretion).

4. OFFICIALS

- All games will have one or more officials, who will track the score and number of outs per inning as well as call close plays. On “too close to call” plays officials can resort to Rock-Paper-Scissors between the two players involved.
- Official decisions are final and should not be contested. Badgering officials may result in player ejections, team forfeits or both.

5. SHORT-HANDED RULE

- Teams may play with as few as nine players.
- If an additional player arrives he can join game in progress – immediately if his team is fielding and at end of kicking order when team is kicking.
- However, teams must strive to maintain a gender balance, so if team goes from nine to 10 players then the tenth player should bring gender split to 50/50 if possible (for both fielding and kicking).

6. GENERAL GAME RULES

- As mentioned above, all games will run the lesser of five innings and approx 30 minutes, except for the semi-finals and final which will run the lesser of seven innings and approx 45 minutes.
- To minimize confusion, all teams not playing must leave the playing field area. Teams can leave the Stadium if they have a long enough break, but need to make sure they know the time of their next game and are back in time to start promptly.

- All bench players on a team which is playing (i.e., most of the kicking team and any/all subs for the fielding team) should stand back from their field's first- and third-base lines.
- To ensure as much playing time as possible, innings start immediately after the third out of the previous inning is made.
- As mentioned previously, line-up cards will be provided and must be completed and shown to an official before the start of each game.
- Pool-play games can end in ties, but single-elimination games cannot.
- If a single-elimination game is tied close to the end of its designated time period, an official will declare Overtime. Overtime will consist of one inning, but with each team receiving only one out and starting with a runner on second base when its turn to kick comes up. Kicking order must be maintained (i.e., order carries over from previous inning) and whoever made the last out in the previous inning becomes the runner on second base when his team kicks. If game is still tied at end of one Overtime inning, a second is played in the same format. This process continues until one team leads upon completion of an Overtime inning.

7. PITCHING & FIELDING

- To preserve playing time, no infield practice or warm-up pitches are allowed prior to the game or between innings.
- The pitcher must start the pitch at or behind the Pitching Line and must stay at or behind this line until the ball is kicked. Officials will call clear violations of this rule, which results in an immediate dead ball and do over.
- Pitchers should attempt to keep rolls straight and bouncing to a minimum. Kickers are allotted three strikes or four fouls before being called out.
- Players other than the pitcher can advance to the Bunting Line prior to the pitch, but they cannot advance past this line until the ball is kicked. Officials will call clear violations of this rule, which results in an immediate dead ball and do over.
- The catcher must stay behind the kicker until the ball is kicked. Again, officials will call clear violations of this rule, which results in an immediate dead ball and do over.
- NOTE: These "encroachment" infractions are hard to spot and debatable (given bang-bang nature of the plays and lack of instant replay for this tournament), so captains please communicate these rules to your teams, and tell them that when fielding they should not push envelope. Also officials will do their best to enforce these rules, but in interest of moving games along they will look to call only very clear violations. If no call made by ump then play continues.

8. CATCHING

- For most part, softball rules shall apply.
- If ball touches the ground during the catch then play will be ruled a "trap" – i.e., no catch.
- Catches made after a deflection off another fielder count as outs.

9. KICKING

- Teams must keep their kicking order constant throughout the game and alternate according to gender. If gender balance is maintained then all players on hand can kick. Captains should fill out a line-up card at the beginning of the day and make changes to it as players come and go. Cards must be ready for the start of each game, so if you want/need to make changes please do so in advance (i.e., during downtime between games). Kicking out of order results in an automatic out.

- All kicks should occur at or behind home plate. The kicker may step on home plate to kick, however no part of the planted foot may be in front of or cross the front edge of the home plate. Officials will call clear violations of this rule, which results in an immediate dead ball and a strike added to kicker's tally.
- Players can strike out by accumulating three strikes (ball crosses plate, whiff) or four fouls (kicked foul, double kick, step in front of plate). Fouls and strikes will be kept track of separately. For instance, a foul does not count as a strike.
- Softball rules apply for foul balls – e.g., balls that land fair but then go foul past either 1st or 3rd base are fair.
- There is no infield fly rule.
- Bunting is allowed, but stepping on top of the ball to stop it is illegal (automatic out).

10. BASERUNNING

- There are no leads – runners must wait until ball is kicked before leaving the base. Violation of this rule results in runner being out. Again, we don't have benefit of instant replay, so runners don't push envelope and officials will call only clear violations. As per this rule base stealing is not allowed.
- Runners may leave base as soon as ball is kicked, but if ball is caught they must return to their original base before advancing.
- Tag-ups are allowed – i.e., runners can advance from original base after ball is caught.
- Due to risk of injury, sliding into a manned base is not allowed. Violation of this rule results in an automatic out. Please realize that unintentional slips will occur – officials will do their best to distinguish but doing so can be difficult, so captains please communicate to your teams and players please do your best to stay upright.
- Hitting a runner's neck or head with a throw (or held ball) is not allowed. If a runner is hit in the neck or head, play is ruled dead, and the runner – and any/all other baserunners – advances to the base he was running toward when hit. The only exception is if someone is hit in the head while ducking or sliding. In that instance, the runner is ruled out.
- Runner must stay within a reasonable base path, or they will be ruled out. This is tough one to enforce so please instruct players not to push envelope – borderline calls will go to the fielding team.
- If a runner is hit by a kick (whether or not he is on base) or intentionally initiates contact with the ball (e.g., slaps, kicks or knees a live ball) then that runner is out, play is ruled dead and any/all other baserunners must return their last touched base.
- Runners may overrun first base (make sure they are not turning in towards second base).
- Limit one-base advance on an overthrow. Ex. If runner rounded second and on his/her way to third and ball is overthrow, they will get third base, but also the opportunity to go home.
- Running past another runner is not allowed. The runner passed by another runner is out.

11. COLLISIONS

- Players must avoid collisions whenever possible. Officials can call play dead and award runner the base (if fielder initiated contact) or rule runner out (if runner initiated) – and may eject perpetrator (*depending on severity of collision and game circumstances*).
- The defensive player must give at least 50% of the base and base path to the runner. Deliberate blocking of base or base path without possession of the ball is not allowed.

12. BASE COACHES

- Members of the kicking team may coach first and/or third base.
- These coaches cannot interfere with play in any way (including yelling “I got it” during a pop fly – i.e., the A-Rod Rule).

13. OUTS

- A count of three outs by a team completes a team’s half of the inning. An out is:
 - a. Count of three strikes.
 - b. Any kicked ball (fair or foul) that is caught on the fly.
 - c. Force outs (as per softball rules).
 - d. Runner touched by the ball or who intentionally initiates contact with the ball while the ball is in play (except for head/neck shots – see Section 10).
 - e. Runner off of his base when the ball is kicked.
 - f. Runner tagged or forced if left base prior to a catch (and before he returns to his originating base – see Section 10).
 - g. First/third base coach or bench player intentionally interferes with play in any way.
 - h. Runner passes another runner while rounding bases.
 - i. Runner runs out of base path.
 - j. Runner slides into a manned base or initiates a clear collision (and fielder gave at least 50% of base / base path).
 - k. Kicker steps on top of ball and stops it.
 - l. A kicking order violation.
- As mentioned previously, the officials may decrease the number of outs per team in an inning in order to manage the time of a game. Also Overtime innings will have just one out per team.

14. BALL IN PLAY

- Play ends when the pitcher has the ball near the Pitching Line. Honor system will be in effect for base running – i.e., if runner has rounded one base and is clearly committed to advancing, then they can take that base even if pitcher receives ball while runner is between bases.
- Any play where a ball pops or deflates significantly will be a do-over.
- A fair ball which bounces over a fence is a ground-rule double.

15. SUBSTITUTIONS

- Free and unlimited substitutions for fielding, as long as gender balance is maintained for the players on the field (if there are an odd number of players, one extra male is permitted).
- Same-gender kicking substitutions are allowed if the team has Extra Kickers. For example, say a team has 14 players comprised of five women and nine men. In this case, the initial kicking order would be five women and six men. The women would have

then have rotate back into the lineup until all men had kicked and the order was back to the beginning.

- Pinch runners are not allowed.

16. INJURIES

- In cases of a fielder injury, *after completion of the play* the fielder may be substituted (same gender). If the injured player cannot return then: (i) if the substitute was an Extra Kicker he assumes the injured player's place in the kicking order, or (ii) if gender balance existed and the substitute was kicking already, then the injured player's spot in the kicking order is skipped for remainder of game or until he can return.
- In cases of a runner injury, *after completion of the play* the runner may be substituted (same gender) if he successfully made it to a base. In this case the new runner shall be one of the Extra Kickers – or, if none exists, then the new runner should be the player (same gender) immediately before the injured player in the kicking order (or two before if one before is already on base). If the injured player cannot return then: (i) if the substitute was an Extra Kicker he assumes the injured player's place in the kicking order, or (ii) if gender balance existed and the substitute was kicking already, then the injured players spot in the kicking order is skipped for remainder of game or until he can return.
- Injured players are allowed to return to the game at any time, though he must replace his substitute and assume the same spot in the kicking order.
- Officials reserve the right to stop play immediately if a serious injury occurs.
- Any player who has blood on their body must clean and cover the wound before continuing play, and may be required to replace soiled clothing. While this occurs, a substitution (same gender) is allowed.

17. SPORTSMANSHIP POLICY

- While we hope this tournament will be competitive, all participants are expected to evidence good sportsmanship at all times. Unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated and offenders are subject to immediate removal from game and/or tournament (by officials).
- Any player ejected will have to vacate the field immediately and possibly the Stadium (at official's discretion). Ejected players refusing to leave the field will result in their team's game being forfeit.
- An ejected player will be suspended for at least one of their team's games (at official's discretion). Failure to comply with this rule will result in their team's game(s) being forfeit.
- An ejected player may be replaced (same gender – as per injured player guidelines in Section 16). A team may drop to a minimum of nine players – less than nine will constitute a forfeit.

18. SCHEDULE

- Team captains will receive start times and field information for their pool-play games in advance, and will be responsible for communicating to their teams.
- All teams must check-in at least 30 minutes before the start of their first game.
- The first games begin at 9 AM and pool-play is scheduled to run until approximately 3 PM. Single elimination games will start thereafter with the final scheduled approximately 1 PM.

19. POOL PLAY

- As mentioned previously, each pool will play a round robin tournament with the top three teams in each pool advancing to a single-elimination playoff.
- In pool-play, teams receive three points for a win and one point for a tie.
- If two teams finish pool-play with an equal number of points, the tie breakers are as follows: (i) head to head, (ii) run differential (max 10 per game), (iii) total runs scored (max 10 per game), and (iv) a coin flip.
- If a forfeit occurs the winning team can choose either the score at the time of the forfeit or a 5-0 win (for the purpose of calculating run differential and total runs scored).
- For the playoffs, the four first-place teams receive first-round byes. [Note: May change based on number of fields.]
- If both teams agree, the semi-final losers will play to determine third place overall. This game would run concurrently with the final.