

# the CHICAGO DESIGN LEAGUE at Grant Park

## *A. General League & Ground Rules*

**A1** - Please have your entire team to the fields at least 15 minutes prior to your game time. This will ensure that games start on time. Games will last no longer than the hour (or the hour and fifteen minutes) allotted.

**A2** - Each game day an air-horn will sound (2) times... first at 5:55, this horn signifies that the first game should begin momentarily... Depending on which portion of the schedule we're in, the second horn will sound at either 6:55 or 7:10, this signifies that whatever inning is currently underway in the early game... is the last inning.

**A3** - A regulation game is (7) innings. Extra-inning's are allowed, time permitting. Games may end in a TIE. Within this rule, teams scheduled for the late game (7:00 or 7:15) should wait patiently, backed away from the field, keeping tabs that the inning being played when the horn sounded, is the last inning (check with one of the early game Captains at the time the horn sounds).

**A4** - In the event that the early games are played and then late games are rained out, none of the games for that day will be counted in the standings.

**A5** - No baseball mitts or metal spikes are permitted. Batting gloves may not be worn on defense.

**A6** - No 'bunts' or 'swinging-bunts' are permitted. A full swing is required in attempts at hitting the ball.

**A7 - *When a ball is out-of-play***; No thrown balls are automatically out-of-play. The onus falls to the defensive team to call a ball out-of-play. This is accomplished when a defensive player raises his/her hands over their head and clearly yells "out-of-play". A line extending from the ends of the backstops parallel to the base lines defines the boundary a thrown ball needs to pass before making it eligible to be deemed out-of-play. When a defensive team calls a ball out-of-play, that moment defines baserunner position(s) and ALL baserunners are awarded the base they are approaching plus (1) extra base. If a defensive team DOES NOT call a ball out-of-play, baserunners may continue to advance at their own risk. Bags, bikes, beer and other team paraphernalia along the sidelines remains in-play unless called otherwise by the defense.

**A8** - When a baserunner intentionally kicks, strips, smacks or otherwise knocks away a ball thrown by a defensive player in an attempt to make a play, that baserunner is automatically called OUT and all other base runners must return to the base they occupied before the play in which the interference occurred.

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**A9** - There are no lead-offs. Runners may not leave the base they are on until contact is made with the ball.

**A10** - Keeping with the tradition of the league, no area's on Upper Hutchinson are considered 'out-of-play'. Balls that hit leaves on trees as they fall to the ground, are therefore 'in-play'. The exception is if a batted ball becomes stuck in a tree and comes to a complete stop, in this case the play is dead and ruled a foul ball.

**A11** - Pinch-runners are only allowed after a batter has safely reached base. The pinch-runner will always be the last batted out. In other words, the last batter to have made an out preceding the player requiring the pinch-runner. Women for women, men for men.

**A12** - The HOME team picks/approves the game ball.

**A13** - Tournament Eligibility; To play with your team on Tournament Day, a player must have been in attendance for at least 50% of your teams games that season.

## *B. Co-Ed Guidelines*

**B1** - 8 players are required to play a game. Without the required 8 the game officially becomes a forfeit 10 minutes after the game was scheduled to start.

**B2** - With only (1) female your team may play with (9) players on the field (eliminating the Short Center position), taking an automatic-out at (1) slot within the first (10) slots of the batting order.

**B3** - Without any female's your team may still play with (8) players on the field, taking an automatic-out at (2) slots within the first (10) slots of the batting order. In this scenario, Short Center and the Catcher position are eliminated. The opposing team should provide a Catcher, however plays at the plate should be covered by one of the 'short' teams infielders.

**B4** - Your team must clearly notify the opposing team each time the automatic-out is to be taken. If the automatic-out slot in the line-up occurs with (2) outs, the inning is over. A team playing with (6) males and (2) females is NOT required to take any automatic-outs.

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**B5 - The Deep-Lineup Rule;** Teams are allowed to have a batting order equal to the number of players they have in attendance. The 'deep-lineup' is an option, it is NOT something that is required. In fact, certain situations preclude your team from using a 'deep-lineup'. If you choose to take advantage of the 'deep-lineup', the following guidelines must be followed;

- (2) women must bat within the first (10) slots in the lineup. From the 11th slot onward, (1) woman must bat for every (4) men. Lineups must be arranged so that no more than (8) males bat in succession at any point, including when the lineup 'rolls over' to the top. For example, with a 14-slot lineup and women batting 9th and 10th, a third woman must bat in the 14th slot.
- When playing a 'deep-lineup', defensive positions can be substituted at will, however players that are not in the batting order are not permitted to play defense.
- Every player has to take all of their at-bats, even in the positions beyond the 10 slot. If your team starts a game with a 13-player batting order, it must finish the game with a 13-player batting order. Players may not change position in the batting order once the game begins.
- With only (2) women in attendance, your team is NOT permitted to play a 'deep-lineup'.

Although lineup configurations beyond 10 slots are possible with (2) women where no more than 8 men ever bat in a row... they are not allowed as they are not in keeping with the co-ed spirit of the league.

Batting orders must now be provided to your opposing Captain before the game begins (first names are fine). Once the game begins your batting order cannot change, with the following exception;

**B6 -** When playing a 'deep-lineup', late arriving players must be inserted at the end of the lineup and the opposing Captains must be notified. If the lineup has already turned over, late arriving players may only enter the lineup by replacing a player that is already in the lineup. The player that was replaced may not play defense once replaced and may only re-enter the lineup by replacing the player that replaced him/her (the same slot in the order).

**B7 -** It is permissible to pick up players from other teams that have either played their game or are waiting to play their game. The number of 'borrowed' players may not exceed the number of actual team members present. Also, you can NOT have a 'borrowed' player on the field while an actual member of your roster is on the sideline. Borrowed players are only allowed in bringing your lineup to an even 10. If a team has (10) of their own players, it is NOT permissible for that team to pick up extras from other teams in order to take advantage of the 'deep-lineup' rule.

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**B8** - When playing a traditional 10-slot lineup, any individual player can only occupy a single slot in that lineup throughout the course of a game. i.e. if *Player X* starts the game batting 2nd, he/she can only bat 2nd during that game. If *Player Y* is inserted into the lineup in the 6-hole once the game has begun, he/she can only bat 6th for the duration of that game. Any player that steps to the plate 'out-of-order' will generate an automatic OUT and shall return to the sideline until his/her actual spot in the lineup comes up.

Defensive substitutions are handled exclusive of the offensive batting order, although a player must take at least half of the at-bats in any given slot in the offensive batting order to be eligible to play defense. (*Keep in mind this only applies to a traditional 10-slot lineup, if you're playing a 'deep-lineup', please refer to Rule B5 as the rules for that are different*).

**B9** - Whenever girls are batting, all (4) defensive outfielders (including the short center position) must stay beyond the grass line and off the infield dirt until contact is made.

## *C. No Umpire Guidelines*

**C1** - Team Captains are responsible for keeping the score of their game. Captains should also verify runs scored with their opposing scorekeeper every half inning. It's also suggested that teams review their opponents batting order before the start of every game.

**C2 - Strikeout Rule;** There are no balls and strikes, although there are two ways to strikeout; (a) Batters are allowed (2) foul balls, hitting a third foul ball in any given at-bat results in an OUT. And (b), if a batter swings and completely misses the ball (3) times in a given at bat, cumulatively, that batter is OUT. Foul balls and swings and misses are mutually exclusive.

**C3** - The Catcher of the defensive team must clearly and loudly call 'fair' or 'foul' on any plays down the lines. It is important that all team Captains coach their Catchers on this duty (if necessary).

**C4 - Base Path Rule** (*base paths are defined as a straight line connecting any two bases + 2 feet on either side of that line*); Runners on the base paths must avoid contact with fielders at all times. Conversely, defensive players are not allowed to block that path unless they are in POSSESSION of the ball attempting to tag the runner out. In the case of defensive player interference, the baserunner is awarded their destination base + the next base. If a baserunner takes a wide turn around a base and gets tangled up with a defensive player that's clearly out of the baseline (as it's defined above), this is not defensive interference and the baserunner will be called OUT. **Interference, whether offensive or defensive, is not subject to the Close Call Rule C6**, it simply is what it is and should be called as such.

**C5 - Rule Concerning Plays at Bases;** The defensive teams fielders must concede any base to the runner if there is no play imminent. If a play at any given base IS a possibility then the defensive player has the right to position themselves at the base to make a play

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and any incoming runner has the right to attempt to reach the base safely, however; head-on collisions or any attempt by the baserunner to knock the ball free from the defensive players hands are NOT allowed and will result in the baserunner being called out. Contact that is glancing or sideswiping however, IS permitted under the rules and in this second circumstance, the defensive player must retain possession of the ball to record an out. Sliding is often the best possible way to remove all doubt as to whether interference occurred... Slide, and you didn't interfere.

An EXCEPTION to this rule is at 1st Base where the runner's intent is to run 'through' the base and sometimes in an attempt to receive a cross-infield throw, a 1st Baseman is drawn into the basepath of the oncoming runner. As this dual-instinct is impossible to author a rule against, both fielder and runner should exercise self-preservation to the best of their ability. No interference should be called at 1st base.

**C6 - Close Call Rule;** 'Close-calls' will alternate. In the event that a play ends in a dispute between the teams, a team may invoke a 'close-call' resolving the play in their favor. The next 'close-call' must go to the team losing the first dispute. A team may not claim (2) consecutive 'close-calls'. In the event that both teams wish to use their 'close-call' on the same play, the HOME team will always be given preference. A 'close-call' may be called both defensively and offensively.

**C7 -** The offensive teams 1st and 3rd base coaches are responsible for the 'Safe' or 'Out' calls on the bases. Calls at 2nd and 3rd base should be made by the 3rd base coach, calls at 1st base and the plate by the 1st base coach. This doesn't necessarily mean that call will be the final call... From there a 'close-call' can be invoked following the 'close-call' rule detailed above. If the offensive team does not have a base coach in place, then the defensive players (in the vicinity of the play) will make the initial call. From this point, whichever team has the 'close-call' arrow pointing their way may choose to either invoke the rule or accept the ruling.

**C8 -** The **infield fly-rule** is in effect whenever there's a 'force' situation on the infield and less than (2) outs. In this situation, the batter is automatically called out upon hitting a pop-fly on the infield, runners advance at their own risk but must 'tag-up' to advance if the ball is caught. An infield-fly is defined as any pop fly hit on the infield in fair territory.

**C9 - How to Kill a Play;** Play is suspended when the defensive team calls a timeout. A timeout can only be called by a player that is in possession of the ball and standing within 5' of the pitching rubber.

**C10 - Sportsmanship Rule;** No team is allowed to diminish the experience of any other team in a game they are not involved in. If your team is not involved with a game being played on the field, you ARE allowed to cheer for one team over another assuming the following guidelines are followed; (a) No one is allowed to encroach the diamond. Imagining a line that starts at either end of the backstop and extends parallel down the foul lines... all members of your team need to stay behind that line. (b) No one is allowed to single out any individual actively playing on the field and verbally abuse them. Any team violating this rule should be

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reported to me immediately, if I am able to then witness this behavior, the offending team risks permanent removal from the Chicago Design League. This rule is most often broken on Tournament Day due to the long-term consumption of alcohol. Captains are wholly and completely responsible for keeping their teams in compliance.

**C11 - Fighting Rule;** Any player that throws a punch during a Design League game will be banished from the League on the spot and never allowed to return. Sho'nuff.

- **Important** : Some teams are more prone to calling 'close-calls' than others, please call a fair game.

- **Important** : In the case of a disputed play, when every player on two teams are all shouting at the same time, nothing gets resolved and the risk of escalating tensions increases rapidly. When there is a dispute on the field, Captains and only Captains are permitted to resolve the dispute. We've never had an actual fight occur, don't be the first.

## *D. Forfeit Rule* (So Important It Gets Its Own Heading)

- Designed to prevent an entire team from a serious inconvenience, we ask that the following be understood and followed to the letter without fail.

**D1** - Every attempt has been made within the rules to avoid forfeits. If your team must nonetheless forfeit for any reason, you must contact the opposing Captain BY TELEPHONE no later than 3pm on game day. Understand that if your team forfeits, a score of 7-0 will be entered against you in that weeks results and the Leaderboard will reflect that score accordingly.

**D2** - Any team with more than (2) forfeits during the Regular Season, will lose their spot in the Chicago Design League the following season. If your team ever forfeits by simply not showing up, failing to follow the forfeit procedure detailed above, you will only be allowed that (1) forfeit for that particular season.

**D3** - As it's so serious as to skew the results of the entire Design League season, any team that forfeits on Tournament Day will not be asked back the following year nor will they be permitted to rejoin the waiting list.