



OAKVILLE SENIOR SLO-PITCH LEAGUE (OSSPL) LEAGUE RULES and Guidelines JANUARY 1, 2026

GENERAL

The following rules apply to OSSPL and where not specified, playing rules will be in accordance with Slo-Pitch National (SPN) current year Rule Book.

Appeals, protests, incidents, etc. requiring League follow-up, will be submitted in writing to the League Executive by the team manager within three (3) days. The League Executive will meet and a decision will be made within seven (7) days of receiving the written protest.

Umpires:

Home plate and Base Umpires will be supplied by the "sitting" team, (the "sitting" teams manager will select the umpires).

In the event of an umpire "rule misinterpretation", the two managers, by mutual agreement, may over rule the initial call. "Judgement" calls will stand as ruled by the umpire.

Uniforms:

The League will supply team shirts and hats.

The appropriate shirts are to be worn during all League games by players on the official team roster; however, may be covered if the weather so dictates.

ROSTERS

Player Eligibility:

1. Any experienced slo-pitch player who attains a minimum age of 70 years during the current calendar year may submit an application to play. New players may be required to attend a pre-season player evaluation day.
2. The League Executive reserves the right to accept or refuse an application at their discretion.
3. All full-time players, replacements and spares must complete and sign an annual player registration/waiver form.
4. Annual player fees will be determined by League Executive.
5. Team rosters are set by the League Executive.
6. If, prior to the first game of the season, a player withdraws his application, a full refund of fees will be made.
7. No refunds will be offered once the league has played it's second league game.

Covid Specific Rules

All current covid rules shall be in place for the 2026 season dependent on the best advice of the Ontario Government.

Warm Ups

1. On field batting practice will be available from 9:15 to 9:45.
2. Anyone can provide batting practice pitching with priority given to game time pitchers.
3. Batters are to alternate between teams and will be allowed a maximum of 4 hits.
4. All players not batting can take a position on the field for fielding practice using the batted balls from the batting practice.
5. The home team will provide a person to receive the balls thrown to the pitcher from the outfield. That person should be sufficiently close to and behind the screen to avoid being hit by batted balls.
6. All other practice and warm up throws etc. must take place off the playing field.
7. There will be no warm-up throws at the start of any inning except the 1st inning, with the exception of pitchers, who will be allowed 3 pitches for warm at the start of each inning.
8. All players must obtain insurance coverage under the SPO insurance company to be eligible to play in the OSSPL.

GAMES

Equipment:

Home team will occupy 3rd base dugout. They will be responsible to install all bases, home plate board, bat rack, draw the commitment line and finish line. They will also supply a new game ball.

The away team is responsible to put all of the equipment away in the OSSPL box provided and ensure the box is padlocked prior to leaving the field. They must also supply the back up ball for the game.

All players must use only the bats provided by the League.

A tape measure is provided in the equipment box to expedite and ensure accuracy in the placement of bases from the plate (1st and 3rd – 65 and 2nd – 92 feet), and the 20' Commitment Line.

Pitching

PITCHER PROTECTION SCREEN

1. The pitching rubber (marked spot) will be 50 feet from the front of home plate, and the pitching screen will be installed at 46 feet from the front of home plate.

2. The pitcher is expected to start the pitching motion from the marked pitching spot (50') and is not allowed to pitch the ball from in front of the screen.

THE PITCHING SCREEN MAY BE MOVED FROM ONE SIDE TO THE OTHER TO ACCOMMODATE LEFT-HAND AND RIGHT-HAND PITCHERS. DO NOT MOVE THE SCREEN FORWARD OR BACK FROM THE ORIGINAL SET UP.

3. Once the pitcher releases the ball he must immediately step behind the screen until the ball is struck. He may then move away from the screen to make a play.

4. Any breach of the above rules will result in a warning from the Umpire. If the violation continues the Managers will intervene and decide how to deal with the situation including prohibiting the violating pitcher from pitching that day.

5. If the batted ball hits the screen a strike will be called up to two strikes on the batter.

6. A batter **will not** be called out for a ball striking the screen if he already has two strikes. The pitch will be re-played.

7. Pitcher masks are recommended but not mandatory.

Commencement:

1. A designated player will review the park conditions prior to games and will provide the executive with the park conditions information.

The executive will make the decision to start the game. The managers, after consultation, may decide to cancel the games due to inclement weather.

The executive will notify the web site manager who will POST ONLY NO-PLAY DECISIONS on the league web site by 8 AM on game day. Nothing will be posted if the game is on.

www.osspl.ca

2. Games will start promptly at 10:00 AM, with no grace period.

3. Pre-game infield warm ups are limited to ten minutes for each team and must be completed before the game start time.

4. Managers are expected to have their team gathered at the dugout 15 minutes prior to the start time

5. Prior to the game, if required, the managers will meet at home plate to decide if there any encumbrances on the field that may cause a problem and decide how it shall be dealt with during the game. (Problems such as holes under the fence, pools of water that may impede the ball etc.) An example would be when a ball is hit into the puddle, the managers may have agreed to call "dead ball and stop play" at that time.)

Regular Season

1. One (9) inning game will be played at each of Glen Ashton Parks.

2. The game will consist of a (4) balls and (3) strikes format.

If it is determined on Monday evening that temperatures at game time are expected to be 30 Degrees or higher, the League Executive may direct the Managers, by mutual agreement, to reduce the innings being played.

2. If a game in progress is called because of inclement weather, the game will be deemed to be complete if (5) innings has been played. If the minimum innings have not been played, the Executive will make a decision to:

-not replay the game and award each team 1 point

League Standings:

Two points will be awarded to a team for a win. If a game is tied at the end of 9 innings, each team will receive one point in the standings.

Mercy Rule:

1. A maximum of 5 runs per team will be allowed per inning, except for the last inning, which will be an 'open' inning.

2. In a (9) inning game a mercy rule may be called if a team is leading by (12) runs after the (7) inning.

PARTICIPATION

Minimum Players:

The **minimum number of players** to start a game is NINE (9). Teams must field a minimum of NINE (9) players during the course of the game and finish with a minimum of NINE (9) players.

If at any time during the course of the game, the number of fielders or batters on a team falls below the minimum of NINE (9), the game shall be declared a forfeit by that team. (Note: The opposing team will supply a catcher bringing the on field number to TEN10.

Batting:

All players must bat. Players arriving after the first pitch to his team must be added to the bottom of the batting order.

A player who misses a turn at bat (e.g. due to illness or injury) must leave the game. When his turn to bat comes up, he WILL NOT be considered an out. NOTE that a player who leaves the field due to illness or injury may return to the game provided he does not miss his turn at bat.

Defence:

Before contact is made with the ball, Outfielders must be fully on the grass portion of the diamond, and Infielders must be fully on the ground portion of the infield. The ROVER is considered an infielder and cannot be used in the outfield.

Managers will do their best to provide players with **equal playing time** in the field, (pitchers may be excluded) but retain the discretion to play their best players in last inning/ close game situations. Who plays what position is the responsibility of the team manager. NOTE: It is the responsibility of the player involved to notify the League Executive in writing of any complaints or problems regarding player rotation on their respective team.

ON FIELD RULES

Pitching:

A pitched ball must have a perceptible arc of between 6 and 12 feet.

In place of an umpire-called strike zone, a strike zone mat / board measuring 21" x 36" will be employed.

Pitchers must use the pitcher protection screen.

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCE MAY A PITCHER/ MANAGER DELIBERATELY AWARD A BATTER FIRST BASE. If in the opinion of the managers such rule is breeched the offending batter will be allowed to return to the plate to start his time again with a no count.

Batting:

A strike will be called by the umpire if a legally pitched ball makes any contact with the board on its descent. Contact with the board must occur prior to the ball striking the ground. The batter is declared out if a **foul ball or tip** is caught by the catcher, regardless of the height of the ball.

A batted ball that bounces off home plate will be considered to be in play!

Courtesy Runners

No player shall run as a Courtesy Runner more than ONCE per inning including playoff games. The league will allow unlimited runners for regular and playoff games.

On the bases: Courtesy runners may be used at any time from first, second or third bases.

From Home Plate:

If a struck ball passes through the infield to the outfield the player will be awarded first base.

GRANDFATHER CLAUSE

An exception rule has been given to 3 or 4 players who are unable to run to first base after they have safely hit the ball. A courtesy runner from the plate is allowed (only if that player wishes).

Base Running:

Bases are 65 feet apart. At first base, runners must touch any portion of the orange safety base if a play is going to be made at first base; otherwise the runner is out. The fielder must play any portion of the white bag; otherwise the runner is safe. Once the play is made, the white base is the only base in play.

An **Anticipation step** is permitted once a pitched ball has reached, passed, bounced in front of home plate or is batted. Flagrant abuse of this rule will result in the runner being called out. No warning need be given.

Runners may slide into second and/or third base. **Overrunning** or running past second or third base results in the runner being vulnerable to being called out if tagged off the base. If a defensive player has the ball and is waiting for the runner and the runner deliberately, with great force, crashes into the defensive player, the offensive player is out and is automatically ejected from the game. The ball is dead and no runners may advance.

Home Plate Safe Line will be an extension of the first base line through Home Plate. In order to score, a base runner must touch the Home Plate Safe Line or the ground beyond the Safe Line before a defensive player, in control of the ball, touches the Board at home plate. Any base runner that touches the Board or attempts to slide across the Scoring Line will be called out. The base runner should avoid all collisions or be subject to ejection.

Commitment Line is twenty (20) feet from home plate. Once a runner touches or passes the line he is committed to go home and **cannot return to 3rd base**.

After crossing the Commitment Line, a runner cannot be "tagged out". The out must be made with the defensive player, in control of the ball, touching home mat/board before the runner touches or crosses the Safe Line. A runner who has been "tagged" after crossing the Commitment Line is considered safe at the plate.

A runner may be "tagged" prior to crossing the Commitment Line.

PLAYOFFS

Playoff Positions:

At the end of the regular season, ties in the league standings, will be determined as follows:

- 1) Most wins
- 2) Head to head record amongst teams tied
- 3) Run differential amongst teams tied.
- 4) Most runs for
- 5) Fewest runs against

Playoffs

Round robin of (9) inning game over three weeks.

Championship and Consolation final games based on finishing positions in round robin. (See schedule for times)

Trophies and Prizes

League Champions will be awarded the JIM CAREY trophy.

Playoff Champions will be awarded the HARVEY HEWGILL trophy.

A special RON BERRY TRIBUTE AWARD will also be awarded at this time.

PLAYER CONDUCT

Alcohol:

The City of Oakville has warned all permit holders that Permits will be cancelled if alcohol is consumed at the Ball Parks at any time during or after a game.

Sportsmanship:

While it is understandable that the heat of competition may occasionally give rise to occasional heightened emotions, the OSSPL is a recreational league and all players are expected to behave in a cordial and gentlemanly manner. As such, only team Managers or the Assistant Manager should discuss questionable calls or rule interpretations with the Umpire.

Discipline Committee

The discipline committee will be made up of one Executive, one manager. The Discipline committee will make discipline recommendations for the Executive to consider.

Roles:

League Executive

The three-person League Executive will direct, manage, supervise and control all operations and finances of the OSSPL and as such are responsible for the proper running and maintenance of the league. Decisions by the Executive will be made by majority vote and may include, rules, discipline, spending, banking and budgeting, equipment, assignment of Managers, and players etc. The three League Executives have equal authority.

2026 League Executives

Laurence Drew

- Primary League contact
- League Advisories
- Equipment
- Banking

Bob Falconi

- Applications and waivers
- Budget and banking
- Sponsor Contact

Bill Johnson

- Provide Managers contact and input
- Instruct managers of rule changes and interpretations
- Team Makeup in conjunction with all executives
- **Webmaster**

Team Managers

Team Managers will be active or past players and will be selected annually by the League Executive.

2026 Managers

- John Good
- Lloyd Johnson
- Doug McArther
- Gregg Aubert**

Team Managers shall:

- appoint a player from their team to the position of Assistant Manager and advise league Executive of the name
- Communicate and support the League's Code of Conduct and rules to their team members
- Be responsible for the on-field management and actions of his team and their spectators, and report any instances of objectionable conduct to the League Executive
- If required, temporarily suspend any player who violates the Code of Conduct for the remainder of a play date and report incident to the League Executive
- Assume control and responsibility for the League equipment and uniforms assigned to their team
- Attend meetings of League Executive as requested.
- Provide player ratings and opinions at the end of the season to assist in the following year's draft
- Teams will be drawn up by the Executive.

Players

OSSPL Players shall:

- Report any injuries or illnesses that will affect the player's ability to play, to the Team Manager.
- Agree to abide by the Code of Conduct, and Rules of the League

2026 Discipline Committee Members

-**Brian Sheridan**-player representative

-**Laurence Drew**- executive representative

Financial Policy

An annual operating budget shall be established prior to the beginning of each slo-pitch season in order to forecast anticipated expenses and to determine projected revenues. The League Executive will development an annual operating budget (including the recommended player registration fees) and maintains auditable records of all transactions.

The League account may be accessed, and disbursements made, solely via check with receipts and explanations. Any check issued requires the signatures of two members of the League Executive.

As a non-profit organization, surplus operating funds from one fiscal year will be rolled over to the following fiscal year. Any deficit will be made up through loans or other means and will be reimbursed the following year. In the event of the dissolution or winding-up of the League, all of its remaining assets, after payment of all of its liabilities, shall be distributed to a recognized charity as selected by the Executive Committee.

Sponsorship

To defray operating expenses of the League, the League may seek financial support from businesses, organizations, or individuals for a fee and length of time as determined by the League Executive. Sponsorship may be a) a single sponsor for the entire league; b) multiple sponsors for the League; or c) sponsors for individual teams.

Payment of sponsorship fees from any business, organization, or individual may entitle same to have their name appear on uniforms, or other league material(s).

The League Executive and Team Managers will do their best to endorse and promote player support for League sponsor(s).