

# MUSA Minnesota Official Kickball Rules

\*All rules are subject to Field Monitor discretion

## I. Field/Equipment/General

### Field:

- All games will be played on softball-sized diamonds (fields with no pitching mound). Fields with or without fences are acceptable.
- Bases will be approximately 60 to 65 feet apart.

### Equipment:

- All games will be played with an 8.5-inch MUSA Big Red Ball, official rubber kickball.
- Metal spikes ARE NOT allowed. Other types of cleats are acceptable (i.e. softball or soccer cleats)

### General:

#### Umping:

- Teams must furnish two individuals to ump, as assigned on the season schedule, to ump per game. Teams will not be assigned to ump their own games but either the game prior to or following their own game.
- Consistent failure to provide umpires as assigned will jeopardize future league participation.
- The umpire's word is final and not to be disputed unless a blatant contradiction to the official MUSA Kickball rules has been committed. The Field Monitor has the right to overturn an umpire's call if it is not within the parameters of the official MUSA Kickball rules.
- Umpires and/or Field Monitors may eject players for unsportsman-like behavior.
- Any occurrences that are not covered in the official MUSA Kickball rules shall be settled by the Field Monitor and noted for later rule updates.
- Players will remember that we are all out here for fun!

## II. Number of Participants

- Rosters may hold an unlimited number of people.
- A maximum of 11 players can be on the field for the fielding team.
- Teams must have at least a minimum of seven players for a regulation game, with at least two players of each gender. Teams not providing these minimum requirements will forfeit their game.
- A full team must have a minimum of four players of each gender.
- If a team does not have the required four females/males for a scheduled game, a "ghost" player must be written into the kicking order and represents an automatic out for each female/male under the minimum. A team that is missing the required female/male minimum must also play short defensively the same number of missing player(s). Example: Two females + 10 males = a team can only play two females and seven males defensively.
- A catcher is mandatory for teams with nine or more players.
- All players present on the roster must kick in the line-up, unless a player is injured.
- There is not a boy/girl kicking order rule. Players can kick in any order and must remain in that order during the game.

- Teams with fewer than seven players shall have a 10-minute grace period at the scheduled game's start time before a forfeit is declared.
- Substitute players may be used at any time as long as the opposing team is not object.

### **III. Regulation Games**

- A regulation game shall consist of nine innings or a time limit of 55 minutes. If a game starts late, it shall be played up to five minutes before the start time of the next game.
- The umpire or Field Monitor may call a game due to time; a full inning may not reasonably be completed before the 55-minute time limit if it has been started after 10 minutes to the hour. As such, an inning cannot begin 50 minutes after the hour.
- A game is considered official once five full innings have been completed.
- Regular season games may end in a tie. If time permits, Field Monitors may grant additional innings if both captains agree to continue play. During the playoffs, the winner shall be determined by which team wins the next full inning (both teams get at-kicks).
- In playoff and tournament situations, each team shall play short one fielder for each inning beyond 9 full innings, in boy then girl order. For example, a team in the 10th inning must take one male off the field. In the 11th inning, a team must take one male and one female off the field. This is for defense only; players should still kick in their respective order in the kicking line-up.
- Called games played under five innings shall be played at a future date agreeable to both team captains at a site to be agreed upon. Any games not replayed shall be counted as a 0 – 0 tie in the standings.
- Home and Away team determination is decided by Rock, Paper, Scissors best two out of three attempts for every game. The “Away” team shall kick first. The “Home” shall kick second and gets last-at-kicks, in an inning.

### **IV. Pitching/Strikes vs. Balls/Fielding/Outs/Foul Balls/Overthrows**

#### **Pitching:**

- A legal pitch must be underhand, bounce a minimum of 3 times if it does bounce, and end up no higher than knee level of the kicker upon crossing of home plate (see “Ball” description below also). Whether a pitch is a ball or strike, based on bounciness, should be based on the height of the last bounce before it crosses home plate.
- Pitches will be thrown in a civil manner, at a reasonable rate. A guideline is pitching as though you are rolling it casually to a teammate. Fast, sidearm, curveball or overhand pitching is not allowed. Any pitch deemed by the ump or Field Monitor to be out of the context of a casual pitch and MUSA sportsmanship will result in a warning to the pitcher and be called as a ball. The next infraction will result in the replacement of the pitcher. Umps in doubt, as to what is an allowable pitch should consult the MUSA Field Monitor on duty, for assistance.
- The pitcher must release the ball the back rubber. The pitcher's foot must remain on or behind the rubber.
- Lateral movement by the pitcher is tolerated, as long as there is no encroachment on the kicker and they stay behind the cone line (The Forbidden Zone).

- Pitchers who repeatedly pitch for the “tee” may be replaced at the discretion of the Field Monitor or umpire.

#### **Strikes:**

- A strike consists of a ball that crosses over any part of home plate, is below knee level of the kicker.
- Any ball that is kicked into foul territory shall also be considered a strike.
- Making an attempt to kick the ball and then missing the ball, constitutes a strike, regardless if any contact was made to the ball.
- Two strikes of any kind will result in an out.

#### **Balls:**

- A “ball” shall be called on anything that does not pass over any portion of home plate.
- Any pitch higher than knee level of the kicker shall be a called “ball”.
- Three called “balls” shall result in the ball being placed on a tee within two feet from either side of home plate.
- If the kicker kicks the ball into foul territory off the tee they are automatically called out, regardless of the number of called strikes the kicker has against them.

#### **Fielding:**

##### **Float versus No Float rule:**

- For female kickers, defensive fielders may not encroach the kicker past the 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> base paths, until the ball is kicked (No Float). Encroachment into the “Forbidden Zone” or past the baseline restriction for female kickers results in a “no play” with a called ball to the kicker. Continued disregard of this rule will result in the kicker automatically being awarded first base and all other base runners advancing one base, if forced to do so.
- For male kickers, defensive fielders may encroach up to the boundary of the “Forbidden Zone”, defined as the midpoint from home plate to 1<sup>st</sup> base and from home plate to 3<sup>rd</sup> base (to be marked with cones or field chalk) and said midpoints to the pitchers mound (Float).
- The pitcher can only advance as previously stated in the rule above (see Pitching).

#### **Outs:**

- The kicking team gets 3 outs per inning. An out results due to the following:
  - Two strikes
  - A ball caught on the fly
  - A base runner is forced out
  - A base runner is hit with ball while not on base
  - If a double kick occurs while a kicker is in foul territory, a strike is counted.
  - See ghost batter rule above (under Number of Participants).

#### **In-Field Pop-Ups:**

- As even the most innocent looking pop-ups are potential hits in kickball, there *is not an infield fly rule*. There will be a “No Cheese” rule for situations in which a fielder is judged to have intentionally allowed the ball to drop to turn a double play. As this is contrary to the fair sportsmanship MUSA promotes, the tactic will be determined “Cheesy” and the runner and kicker will be deemed safe.

#### **Force-Out Situations:**

- A force-out is described as a defensive player holding the ball and touching the base where forced player is running to. Tagging the runner or throwing the ball at the runner does not constitute a force play. Runners crossing home plate on the third forced out do not score.

#### **Foul balls:**

- A foul ball that is caught is an out for the kicker, but is also a dead play for the offense meaning all other runners on base may not advance or tag-up to advance to another base.
- If a ball is touched in fair territory, it is fair, regardless of other factors such as foot placement of the fielder.
- Fair vs. Foul: The umpire will make the determination of where the **ball** has landed in regards to the plane of the foul line, not where the defensive player's positioning may be (i.e. foot placement).

#### **Overthrows:**

- Runners may only advance one base on an overthrow. An overthrow constitutes as a ball that is thrown or kicked "out of play" from within the infield to the intended base or target.
- If the ball bounces off the runner and stays within the stated boundaries the play is still live. Runners may advance at their own risk.
- The out of play boundaries are defined as the area extended backstop line.
- Because fields can have different types of boundary markers the Field Monitors will define the boundaries in question on given fields and let the captains know where the boundaries are.
- Any ball, thrown or kicked, from the outfield is a live ball.
- If a runner is more than halfway to the next base, they will be awarded that base plus the next base on an overthrow. Play is considered dead at this time.
- A ball thrown past the base and remains within the boundaries is a live ball and runners may advance at their own risk.
- Any intentional throw out of play will result in a live ball.

## **V. Kicking/Base Running**

### **Kicking:**

- The kicker must kick the ball behind the plane of home plate. Meaning, the kickers planted foot must be behind the front edge of home plate or the plane of home plate prior to the kick.
- Bunting is allowed, by male and female players, but is frowned upon when males execute a bunt. Male bunters are subject to ridicule and taunting by opposing and fellow team members. Respective heckling is encouraged when any kickers execute a bunt.
- Bunting of any kind (by male or female) may not be executed by a team that is up by 10 or more runs. If a kicker bunts when their team is up by 10 runs or more, the result will be an automatic out.

### **Running:**

- Runners must stay in the base path or they will automatically be called out.
- Infield base runners cannot advance until the ball is kicked by the kicker.
- Defensive fielders impeding the runners' base path shall result in the runner being awarded the base they are attempting to run to, however the defense has the right to make a play on the ball.
- Runners may not steal bases or lead off before the start of a new play. Leading off/leaving early by any base runner will result in a strike to the kicker
- Sliding is legal but, please do so with caution, keeping fielders and your safety in mind.
- **Runners can tag-up, at their own risk, once *first contact* is made** by any defensive player, even if the defensive player's first touch does not result in a caught ball.
- After first contact on a fly ball that is caught, the runner must tag up before advancing to the next base.

- If any runner passes a teammate that is running bases ahead of them, the “passing” player, will be called out.
- Balls thrown at the base runner must be below the head. *Any* head shot incurred while the runner is in an upright running position results in advancement to the base they were running to.
- Any head shot not initiated by the runner results in a safe call and the runner is granted the intended base.
- If a base runner slides, jumps or ducts to avoid a ball, this does not count as a head shot and runner will be “safe” or “out” depending on umpires play call.
- Any ball in fair territory that touches any base runner or the kicker in fair territory results in an out.
- If the kicker or base runner is in foul territory when struck by the ball, it is a foul ball and the kicker will take a strike/out while the base runner should return to their base.
- A kicker or base runner that intentionally kicks the ball out of play while running shall be called out and the play results in a dead ball.
- Pinch/substitute runners are allowed for injured players only, but the kicker must run to 1<sup>st</sup> base before the pinch/substitute runner can run for them. The pinch/substitute runner will be the player that made the last out, of the same sex, on the offensive team.
- Injured players that cannot kick in their respective place in the line-up are not allowed a pinch kicker and are not allowed back into the game once they miss their turn due to an injury. The injured player also cannot play in any defensive position on the field.
- When the pitcher has control of the ball near or around the pitchers mound and all action has reasonably ceased, he/she may request “TIME” be called. All play is considered dead and no base runners can advance, nor can the defense make a play once “TIME” is called by the ump.
- Each team may have one base coach at first and/or third bases.

## VII. Mercy Rule

- Teams may opt to submit if they are down 15 runs or more after five complete innings of play.

## VII. Standings/Scoring

- A win shall count as two points, a tie as one point, and losses as zero points.
- Forfeits - teams forfeiting any game will receive a loss in the official standings and receive zero Runs For and nine Runs Against in the division standings columns. Any team forfeited against will get nine Runs For and zero Runs Against in the standings. This equals one run per inning that would have been played.
- Seeding for any MUSA tournament is based on overall record before other considerations.
- Tie breakers between any team in the official standings are determined as follows:
  - Previous head to head game outcome
  - Runs Against (Runs Against per inning average, if teams have same number of losses, but different number of wins)
  - Runs For
  - Coin toss