

Boston Alternative Women's League
Softball Constitution
Updated: May 3, 2011

Preamble:

We, the members of the Alternative Softball League, in order to provide a formal structure for the continuation of a women's softball league in the greater Boston area free from discrimination on the basis of race, religion, creed, gender, national origin or sexual orientation/preference, with special emphasis on the participation of members of the gay community, hereby adopt this constitution formalizing our objectives of friendly competition.

The league shall consist of divisions based on skill level.

Article I: Team Membership

A league team:

- a. Shall consist of not more than twenty-five playing members on its roster. Players may appear on the roster of only one BAWL team. Rosters shall include the legal signature of all team members.
- b. May be sponsored by a person, business, association or other organization.
- c. Shall pay a non-refundable team fee prior to each new season. At least half of each team's dues must be paid by the last organizational meeting before the start of the season, with the balance due by Opening Day. If a manager has not paid her/his team's dues by the start of their first game on Opening Day, a league officer will meet with the team to inform them of the situation and sanctions. The team will have until their next game to pay in full. If dues are not paid in full by the second game, the team will be expelled from the league. Opening day games involving expelled teams will not count in the season standings and all further games with those teams will be cancelled.
- d. Shall submit their team roster to the commissioner or secretary prior to the first Friday in June.
- e. May, for good cause, apply to the officers for authorization to make roster changes. Additions may be made only under extraordinary circumstances that will be presented to and voted on by the League officers.
- f. May conduct its internal affairs as deemed reasonable and consistent with this constitution.
- g. Minimum age of players is 18 and older.
- h. Any player shall be eligible for play in BAWL who self-identifies as female.

Article II: Officers

- A. The league officers shall consist of the Commissioner, the Assistant Commissioners, the Secretary, and the Treasurer.
- B. The league shall have one Assistant Commissioner for each division.
- C. Duties of the Officers:
 1. The Commissioner shall:
 - a. Preside at all Executive Committee meetings, but shall have no vote except in the case of a tie.

- b. Be chief administrator, representative, and main contact for all outside entities e.g. umpires, parks and recreation departments, and any other group needed to facilitate league play.
 - c. Settle disputes to this constitution and rules made hereunder, subject to the review of the Executive Committee.
2. The Assistant Commissioner shall:
- a. Assume the duties of the Commissioner in the event of the Commissioner's absence.
 - b. Keep respective division teams informed of any information pertinent to them; make the season run smoothly; work with the Commissioner to solve any issues that arise.
 - c. Draft a potential league schedule based on field availability, with the direction of the Commissioner.
 - d. Be responsible for determining playability of fields and informing teams involved of cancellations.
3. The Secretary shall:
- a. Keep accurate records of all league meetings.
 - b. Maintain all league documents, including but not limited to: minutes, by-laws, rules, rosters, phone lists, and correspondence; and shall make them available for inspection by any league member upon reasonable request.
 - c. Keep league standings.
4. The Treasurer shall:
- a. Set team fees with the approval of the Executive Committee.
 - b. Be responsible for the collection and accounting of all league funds.
 - c. Disburse league funds as decided at the executive meetings.
 - d. Be responsible for purchasing and distributing balls and books.
 - e. Be responsible for paying the umpires and the light fees.
 - f. A fund of up to \$300 shall be drawn from League accounts for use by League officers in the performance of their administrative duties during the fiscal year. The Executive Committee may choose to increase budget authorization for this purpose during the fiscal year, but this \$300 fund is automatically authorized without specific action of the Executive Committee.

Article III: Executive Committee

- A. The Executive Committee shall consist of the Commissioner, Assistant Commissioners, Secretary, Treasurer, and one representative from each team. All members of the league are welcome to attend these meetings as non-voting participants.
- B. Each member of the Executive Committee shall have one vote except the Commissioner, who shall vote only in the case of a tie.
- C. The Executive Committee shall hear all appeals made of rulings by the Commissioner, and may uphold or reverse her pursuant to the constitution and rules made hereunder.
- D. The Executive Committee shall approve all expenditures of league funds with the following guidelines:
 - 1. Expenditures for umpires, balls, and field permit fees, if any, shall have priority over all other expenditures.

2. A majority vote is required to authorize the expenditure of league funds.
 3. The Executive Committee may authorize the expenditures of league funds.
- E. The Executive Committee may establish new committees.
- F. The Executive Committee shall establish rules of order for the conduct of its meetings.
- G. The Executive Committee shall, as necessary, adopt by-laws consistent with the provisions of the constitution for the smooth and efficient administration of the league.

Article IV: Team Representative:

- A. The Team Representative shall be the designated individual who is responsible for league guidance to their team and coordination of all communication to their team players.
- B. Team Representative duties include:
1. Team Representative Shall:
 - a. Attend all league meetings (3 each year) and participate & vote (as needed).
 - b. Communicate league information to team players (schedules, make up games, events, special announcements).
 - c. Field preparation, pre-game (rake and prep for safe play) when 1st scheduled game on a designated field.
 - d. Pre-game duties, meet with umpires, prepare line up, go over rules of play and guidelines, and provide line up to opposing team.
 - e. Enforce league rules and constitutional policy.
 - f. Make sure fields are clean upon departure.

Article V: Disciplinary Committee

- A. A Disciplinary Committee has been established to rule on issues of unsportsmanlike conduct by members of the league.
1. The Disciplinary Committee shall consist of a representative from each division, one representative from the umpires, and one neutral person (someone not a member of or participant in BAWL or ASANA).
 2. Inaugural election of members of the committee shall take place at the first meeting of the 1998 season, and thereafter shall take place when officers are elected for the following season.
 3. The Disciplinary Committee shall meet once per year, after election but before the start of the new season, and then throughout the season as needed.
 4. The committee shall elect from among its members a chair, who will be responsible for coordinating and chairing meetings. A league officer, generally the Secretary, shall be present at all meetings and hearings to record the proceedings, and shall provide minutes to the league officers and representatives.
 5. In order for an incident or situation to be considered by the DC, a protest/appeal must be filed with the league and the Disciplinary Committee, according to the procedures set forth in Article VIII, section D, paragraph 1 of the BAWL constitution.
 6. After conducting a hearing, the DC may: dismiss the case, render an immediate ruling, decide to deliberate for a set period of time and then issue a ruling or decide to investigate the matter further (in which case another hearing must be held to announce their findings). Notification of any involved parties not present when the Committee renders its decision is the responsibility of the Committee.

7. The Disciplinary Committee may rule on any conduct that occurs before, during or after league or ASANA tournament play. Ejection from a BAWL or ASANA game or field of play is automatically counted as a violation of the conduct clause, unless the ejected individual petitions the Committee. While the Committee cannot “undo” an ejection, it may (should it find the ejection unreasonable or unwarranted) remove the violation from the individual’s record.
8. Decisions of the Committee are final.

Article VI: Meetings

- A. A meeting of the Executive Committee may be called by the Commissioner or by any two members of the Executive Committee.
- B. Quorum requirements shall be as follows:
 1. A majority of team representatives must be present.
 2. League officers do not represent their teams and will not be counted when determining if a majority of the teams are present.
- C. Whereas the focus of the divisions may vary, we hereby agree that under certain circumstances, divisional votes may be appropriate. Issues which arise that are divisional matters (to be determined by the officers) would then be subject to a divisional, rather than league, vote.

Article VII: Elections

- A. The election of officers and the Disciplinary Committee will take place at the last meeting of the preceding season. Nominations and voting will be by the Executive Committee.
- B. Any member of the league may run for any office, except Commissioner, upon nomination by two other league members.
- C. A league member must have served as an officer for one year prior to running for Commissioner. Candidates for Commissioner must also be nominated by two other league members.
- D. Elections shall be by secret ballot.
- E. If no candidate receives a majority of votes, there shall be a run-off election.

Article VIII: Rights and Privileges

- A. Each team shall organize without league interference as to its internal affairs. This includes how they elect their representative to the Executive Committee.
- B. A new team may join the league if the Executive Committee so votes. Votes regarding new teams will be held at the first league meeting of the season each year. A representative from the new team must be present at the meeting. Upon acceptance into the league, a team shall automatically have the right to a representative on the Executive Committee and the right to vote.
- C. A team must consist of 10-25 woman players.
- D. League requirements
 1. The Alternative Softball League is a member of the Amateur Sports Alliance of North America (hereafter called ASANA) and operates within the provisions of its constitution.
 2. The Alternative Softball League will meet its obligation to attend the spring and fall ASANA meetings in the following way:

- a. The Executive Committee will agree upon a volunteer to attend the meetings. Her team must have paid its share of the ASANA dues prior to the first game.
 - b. The league is not responsible for transportation to the meeting.
- E. The league will use ASA rules to govern league play with exceptions passed by the Executive Committee (see attached League Rules).

Article IX: Standings

- A. League standings will be decided by a point system.
 - 1. Each team will earn points as follows: win = 2 points, tie = 1 point, loss = 0
 - 2. In the event of a points tie, each of the following will be considered between the teams involved until a clear standings can be established:
 - a. The team with the best head to head games win/loss/tie record. If tied, then;
 - b. The team with the fewest runs against in head to head games. If tied, then;
 - c. The team with the fewest runs against all games played

- B. The BAWL end-of-season tournament will be played by the same ASA and BAWL league rules that apply during the regular season. Team representatives will vote on the format each year at a meeting before the end of the season. If it is not voted on, the default format of the tournament will be as follows:
 - 1. Higher seed tournament:
Game 1: #1 seed vs. #4 seed
Game 2: #2 seed vs. #3 seed

 - 2. Middle seed tournament:
Game 1: #5 seed vs. #8 seed
Game 2: #6 seed vs. #7 seed

 - 3. Lower seed tournament:
Game 1: #1 seed vs. #4 seed
Game 2: #2 seed vs. #3 seed

The higher seed will be the home team in all games.
If there are a different number than 8 teams in a division the tournament will be in the appropriate championship style format.

- C. Competitive and Recreational representatives to the ASANA World Series will be selected by drawing. Selected teams will reimburse BAWL for the World Series entry fee and be responsible for their own expenses.
- D. The team that finishes the season in last place in the B division will move to the C division for the following season. The team that finishes the season in first place in the C division will move to the B division for the following year. In the event that both teams mutually agree not to switch divisions, the Executive Committee shall vote to approve this.

Article X: Penalties

- A. Individual Expulsion:

1. Expulsion of an individual for the remainder of a game will be decided by the umpire, based on the player's adherence to ASA rules and/or unsportsmanlike conduct.
2. Any BAWL member who violates the unsportsmanlike conduct clause twice in the same season shall be suspended from the league for one year to the date of the second incident and shall not be eligible to be on the roster of any league team for the purpose of league or ASANA play. For the purposes of this rule, a violation shall be considered to be:
 - a. Any ejection from a BAWL game or field of play.
 - b. Any ejection from an ASANA tournament game or field of play.
 - c. Conduct determined to be a violation of the conduct clause by the Disciplinary Committee.
3. The suspended member's team shall not be permitted to fill her space on the roster.
4. Should any team violate provisions 1 or/and 2 by allowing a suspended individual to be on their roster for league or ASANA play (after the Disciplinary Committee has ruled), that team shall also be suspended for the following two games of BAWL play (which may extend into the next season).
5. Any losses suffered by the suspended team will count as non-forfeited losses.

B. Team Forfeits:

1. As determined by ASA rules.
2. Any member has the right to point out forfeitable violations of membership or league rules to the Commissioner or the Executive Committee.
3. The Team Rep must inform their Division Commissioner of the forfeit at least 3 days (by Thurs. for a Sun. game) before the scheduled game otherwise the team will pay the full umpire fee (for both teams).

C. Team Expulsion:

1. A team that forfeits three games is no longer eligible to participate in the league for that year.
2. When a team forfeits out the regular season before the mid-season mark, all previously played games are removed from the standings and new standings will be determined.
3. If a team forfeits out of the league after mid-season, that team takes losses for all games played and all future opponents receive wins for those games.

D. Procedures for Protests and Appeals:

1. A written protest must be given in person or emailed to the commissioner within one week of becoming aware of the reason for the protest.
2. The Commissioner is responsible for determining whether a protest is upheld or denied. Appeals of rulings made by the Commissioner must be presented at the next meeting.
3. The Executive Committee may review and overturn the Commissioner's decision upon a two-thirds majority vote.

This constitution and its by-laws must be reviewed and agreed upon by the team representatives before acceptance.

After initial acceptance, amendments and additions can only be made at the first and last meetings of the season.