

2022 PLAYERS' HANDBOOK



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ABOUT SWBL

SWBL offers a social, friendly, and inclusive baseball competition based in Marrickville. Established in 1995, SWBL is the longest running women's baseball league in the Sydney metropolitan area. We have players from many different sporting backgrounds and encourage all skill levels.

SWBL is a community league and is about baseball for all. We have fun together both on and off the diamond, with a healthy dose of sporting competition and a bunch of social events throughout the season. We also welcome friends and families to participate in non-playing roles such as umpiring, scoring or sausage flipping on the BBQ.

SWBL's Commitments

- **Community:** SWBL is about baseball for all. We provide a safe, fun and harmonious community for all members, cheer squads, families and friends.
- **Social:** We love baseball, but we're also a social bunch. The SWBL social calendar is jam packed with fun events throughout the season.
- **Development:** SWBL caters to all sporting abilities and runs skill sessions throughout the season. We also provide training for umpire and scorer roles.
- **Diversity:** As a league, SWBL recognises that gender isn't binary and welcomes trans, gender diverse, and intersex people as we work to reduce the barriers to participation in sport.

SWBL's Sponsors

SWBL is generously sponsored by ACON and The Golden Barley Hotel. ACON is a NSW based health promotion organisation specialising in lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) health, and have been sponsoring our league for over 13 years. The Golden Barley has also been a long-time sponsor, and you'll find us there every Sunday afternoon for post-match socialising.

SWBL's History

Established in 1995 by Amanda Hill, the Sydney Women's Baseball League Incorporated (the League) is celebrating 27 years of providing a baseball competition for women of metropolitan Sydney.

The baseball competition has been developed from a small group of enthusiasts in an inner city park to a competitive seven-team League to rival that of larger organisations. While the key focus of the League is participation and enjoyment, the League is structured to ensure skilled players are challenged and beginners' skills are developed.

THE 2022 COMMITTEE

- President: Holly Creenaune
- Vice Presidents: Collie Patterson and Jacqui Brooks
- Secretary: Katie Hughes
- Treasurer: Steph Greaney
- Grounds & Equipment: Kylie Whittam and Loz James
- Publicity: Unfilled
- Social: Loretta Cosgrove, Hayley Lockett and Sarah Marsden
- General: Olivia Liu
- General: Annemarie Manning
- General: Vanessa Braddon
- General: Van Hill
- General: Asma Ahmed
- General: Nicole Skylas-Vosta

THE TEAMS

ANGELS Coach & Coordinator: Claire Gorman

DEVILS Coach: Vanessa Braddon. Coordinator: Kate Gardiner

UNSW Coach: Mellisa Tallon; Coordinator: Annemarie Manning

SAINTS Coach: Loz James

SHAMROCKS Coaches: Hayley Lockett & Loretta Cosgrove. Coordinator: Lisa O'Sullivan

SLIDERS Coach and coordinators: Randi Irwin, Rochelle Peen & Chloe Mulheron

STEALERS Coach: Kel Griffiths. Coordinator: Cassandra Boyle

REGISTRATION FEES

\$120 Returning 2021 players*
\$150 General Members
\$100 Life Members
\$50 Social Members

*Because we cut the 2021 season short due to COVID, we are discounting 2022 season fees for returning players.

How to pay

After registering via the online form, you can pay online or in person.

How to pay in person: you can pay your registration fees in cash or by cheque at the BBQ to a SWBL Committee member, or directly to the SWBL Treasurer.

How to pay online:

Step 1. Online payment to the following account:

- Bank: Commonwealth Bank
- Account name: Sydney Women's Baseball League
- BSB: 062 258
- Account number: 1003 7646
- Description: Your name and team (e.g. JBrownStealers). The description must include your name and team. This allows us to match payments to individual members.

Step 2. Email us confirmation of payment at info@swbl.org. Please include the following information:

- Your name
- Amount paid
- Date of transfer
- Description on the transfer (see above)

Step 3. Individual receipts for registration fees will be provided to you directly or through your team coordinator by the SWBL Treasurer.

Financial hardship

We understand that some players may experience financial hardship, but that shouldn't stop you from playing. Contact us at info@swbl.org to arrange a payment plan or alternative ways of contributing to the league.

PLAYER RESPONSIBILITIES

SWBL is a social league mixed with a healthy dose of competitive spirit. You can support the League and your team by following a few key requirements:

- Complete a registration form before you take the field.
- Your team is relying on you. Make sure you turn up for your game in time to warm- up and hear from your coach/coordinator about field positions and the batting line up.
- Communicate with your team. If you are away, running late, sick or stepping aside, make sure you let your team coordinator know.
- You are part of a team, so make an effort to get your uniform and wear it.
- Listen to your coordinator, coach, the umpires and trainers, and follow their advice in good faith.
- Demonstrate excellent 'sportsmanship'.
- Read and adhere to the Code of Conduct.
- Volunteer for your team duties (BBQ and Umpiring).
- Above all, enjoy yourself and don't beat yourself up if you make a mistake, it's all part of the thrills and spills of baseball.

DIAMOND SET UP + PACK UP

Diamond 1 set up and pack up duties are the responsibility of the Home team, as specified on the draw.

On Diamond 2, the Home team sets up, the Away team packs up - we only have one game on this diamond each week. The set up of the diamond must be completed 20 minutes before the scheduled start time of the game. (See Penalty System for penalties.)

The Home team always fields first. As the home team, you are responsible for ensuring the field is ready for the game, including the setup of nets & the diamond.

The Committee will drop off the equipment to the BBQ and collect it once the games have finished.

BBQ DUTIES

Each team must provide two assistants to run the BBQ, as per the duty roster.

BBQ Shift 1: Turn up at 11am and assist the committee member in setting up the BBQ, preparing food, cooking snags and keeping the cooler stocked.

BBQ Shift 2: Head straight to the BBQ after your game finishes so the first shift can be relieved. It is important that you assist with the BBQ until everyone has finished eating and then assist the committee to pack the BBQ away.

PLATE UMPIRE DUTY

Each team must provide one plate umpire as per the duty roster. Training is available.

BASE UMPIRE DUTY

Each team must provide one base umpire as per the duty roster. The base umpire should report to the plate umpire (who will provide instructions) at least 10 minutes before game time.

SCORING

Each team should provide one person per game to score. At the end of the game, each sheet should be countersigned by the opposing team (crosscheck the scores), and the umpires.

THE BIG RED FOLDER

You must sign the BIG RED FOLDER at the BBQ after you complete each duty. This is your proof that the duty was performed and avoids any loss of points for failure to complete a rostered duty.

RUBBISH & RECYCLING

It is every player's responsibility to keep the grounds clean. There will be a bin at the BBQ for Diamond 1. Note: the collection of rubbish is part of the Diamond 2 pack up duty.

UNIFORMS

Each team is responsible for acquiring and supplying their own uniforms. This can be on a borrow or buy to keep basis. While you wait to get a uniform, you can just wear a similar colour tee-shirt to that of your assigned team.

Rubber cleats (not spikes) are recommended because it can get pretty slippery but they're not compulsory. Baseball pants are also recommended but not compulsory. Baseball cap should be worn for each game.

Gloves can be borrowed from SWBL if you aren't able to buy one. These should be returned at the end of the season.

GAME DAY

- Home Team (1st named on the draw) sits on the 1st baseline and fields first.
- Away Team (2nd named on the draw) sits on the 3rd baseline and bats first.
- Signed score sheets need to be returned by the team coach/coordinator to the folder at the BBQ area. Yellow game sheets are in the scorer's pack with each kit bag.
- All players must wear a helmet when batting or running the bases during games and training.
- Catchers must wear the full catching equipment provided.
- Coaches must remain in the dugout, except when base coaching.
- Home team should collect 2 game balls before your game from the BBQ.

TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES

What you CAN'T do

- Smoke on the field. Move away from the diamond and ensure that you dispose of your butts in the rubbish bin.
- Wear metal cleats, for the safety of other players.
- Step onto the field without signing a registration form, or not paying your fees by the due date.
- Disrespect the umpires, any member of your team or the opposition.

PRE-GAME WARM UP

- A pre-game warm up normally starts about 1 hour before the game. This time should be spent stretching, throwing and batting in preparation for the game. Warm up also prevents unnecessary injury.
- All teams are expected to be on their respective sides 5-10 minutes before game time.
- Umpires are instructed to start games on time, at 12pm and 2pm, unless advised otherwise.

WET WEATHER

A game will be cancelled only if the grounds are closed, are deemed unsafe or there is very heavy rain or storm-like conditions. If the games are cancelled, your team coordinator will be contacted by the League by 10am. You can also view the sporting grounds status at <https://www.innerwest.nsw.gov.au/explore/parks-sport-and-recreation/sporting-ground-status>

SAFETY

A well-stocked first aid kit is kept at each Diamond with extras at the BBQ – just ask a Committee member.

POINTS

- Winning team - 3 points
- Losing team - 1 point
- Draw - 2 points for each team
- Forfeiting team – 0 points
- Bye - 0 points
- Abandoned game (due to weather etc) - each team is awarded 2 points
- Please see www.swbl.org for more details.

INFORMATION + COMMUNICATION

The SWBL website (www.swbl.org) is our hub of information. The website is the best place to find important documents such as the Constitution, Competition Rules, and the Code of Conduct.

The SWBL Facebook group and page is used as another communication tool during the season and as a way of sharing information between members.

You will receive regular SWBL emails advising game results, special announcements and any upcoming events. You can sign up to the email list on the SWBL website.

END OF SEASON AWARDS

Most Valuable Player: At the conclusion of each game, umpires provide a 3-2-1 vote for the best players of the game. These points are accumulated throughout the season, and the highest tally will be the overall MVP for the season.

Rookie of the Year: A player new to the League and/or baseball who has had an outstanding season.

Most Improved: A player who shows tremendous improvement in their game over the season.

Player's Player: A player who is giving of their time and energy to baseball and the League; they are generous, friendly, helpful, honest, always ready to step-up and an all-round class act.

President's Award: Awarded by the President to a member who has shown outstanding contribution to the League.

Slugger's Award: Awarded for the highest batting percentage during the season. It is calculated by how many times a player bats vs the number of times they successfully reach first base.

PLAYERS OF THE ROUND

Each week the players who received 3 points for MVP will receive a free snag from the weekly SWBL BBQ. Winners are announced in the weekly newsletter.

SOCIAL CALENDAR

SWBL loves to stay social, we meet back at the Golden Barley Hotel after games and enjoy a meal and some post game banter after our Sunday games. We also have a number of unofficial catch ups and most teams will have some social gatherings throughout the year, keep an eye on Facebook for the most up to date social info. Key social locked in dates for 2022 include:

- Anzac Day at the Imperial
- Meet and Greet - Friday 6th May - A fun and relaxed evening to meet some of your players at the Golden Barley Hotel, WAGS and cheer squad most welcome to attend.
- Pool Comp - (date TBC – June) - One of the most hotly contested events off the diamond and bragging rights for the year - Golden Barley Hotel.
- Mid Week Bowling at Manhattan Bowl (date TBC – July)
- SWBL AGM and Awards Night – (date TBC) – think DJs, drag and dress up!

CODE OF CONDUCT

Sydney Women's Baseball League is committed to providing a safe and harmonious community for all its members.

When signing up, you agree to the following:

- I respect my coordinators, coaches, umpires and committee members. I appreciate that they're volunteers who give their time to the League so that we can all have fun on the day and at social events.
- I also respect my team members, other League members and spectators.
- I'll display good "sportsmanship" at all times, i.e. Fair play and goodwill. At the end of the day, it's a game, not a life and death situation.
- I'll be friendly, courteous and always hear what the other person has to say (even if I don't agree). I will always follow the appropriate channels should my team need to challenge decisions, i.e. via team captain, coach or coordinator and understand that I may not always get my way.
- I will never insult, criticise, verbally abuse or sexually harass any members or spectators.
- I will never resort to physical threats or actions in response to a situation. For example, no hat throwing, no bat flinging, no poking people in the chest or getting in their personal space. I acknowledge that any occurrence will be directed to the SWBL Committee and that the umpire has the authority to immediately eject me from the game.
- I'm happy to pitch in and help, and do my duties, when required. All with a smile on my face.
- I won't drink alcohol or take other substances before or during my game.
- I acknowledge that it's my team's responsibility to keep our spectators' behaviour under control, and that the plate umpire has the right to step in, if required.
- And finally, I'll be proud to be a SWBL member. And I'll have FUN doing it.

When a breach occurs, it must be reported to the SWBL Committee within 7 days. Please understand that the Committee reserves the right to remove any member of the League from the competition should a breach occur. (So it's in everyone's best interest to play nice, all the time).

PENALTY SYSTEM

Each team must fulfil its duties by providing plate and base umpires, setting up and packing up the diamond, helping with the BBQ, and selling raffle tickets as per the duty roster. Failure to do so results in penalties, up to a maximum of 3 points per game day. One competition penalty point will be deducted per infringement.

Team coordinators are responsible for organising their team's commitments. In the event of a team forfeit, prearrange people to cover your team's responsibilities or you will be penalised.

If a team is to be penalised, the team coordinator will be advised of the penalty and the reason, as soon as possible. Should a team coordinator consider that a team has been unduly penalised, a protest may be submitted in writing to the President within 24 hours of the team coordinator being made aware of the failure to fulfil the duty.

INSURANCE

It's important to stretch and warm up before each game as it will reduce the risk of injury.

At SWBL, we take your safety seriously. We encourage you to play safely on and off the field and in the event of serious injury on the field we have the standard sports club player insurance. Details about what to do in the case of injury are available on our website but, if you've been hurt, make sure that you complete an incident form (available at the BBQ) and let your coach/coordinator know straight away.

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

SWBL acknowledges the emergence of new technologies and encourages the responsible use of social media to promote SWBL and its participants, associated activities, partners and sponsors and to applaud achievements.

When using technology-based forums, SWBL members are expected to upkeep our policy of 'playing nice' and follow recommended guidelines including:

- Any posting on social media should endeavour to portray SWBL in a positive light.
- Communication should not offend, intimidate, humiliate or bully any member of the SWBL community and its associations. This includes our scorers, umpires and supporters.
- Communication must not be misleading, false or injure the reputation of members or others.
- Communication must not bring SWBL into disrepute.
- Members should not engage in negative or destructive discussions or postings.
- Abusive, harassing, discriminatory or offensive communication should not be posted.
- Members should refer to appropriate page use guidelines as specified on SWBL Facebook.

If you feel a post has been placed on social media which does not meet these guidelines or you feel is inappropriate, contact your coach, team coordinator or SWBL Committee member.

The SWBL Committee reserves the right to review material posted and remove any comments that are deemed inappropriate, offensive or otherwise contravene the spirit of 'playing nice'. Those who continue to post material that is deemed to fall outside of appropriate guidelines may have access to SWBL forums blocked.

HOW TO CHALLENGE AN UMPIRE'S CALL

Like in any sport, it is unacceptable for players to argue with the umpire, and the umpire is to be respected at all times. If you disagree with an umpire's call, only your coach or captain can approach the umpire to question the ruling, before the next play. The umpire's judgment call is final.

PROTESTS & GRIEVANCE HANDLING

A team can lodge a protest after the game via the Committee. Refer to the rules and process on the SWBL website.

All members have access to a formal mechanism for resolution of a baseball- related grievance. The emphasis on grievance handling is on resolution through mediation. For more information refer to the SWBL website.

BORROWING PLAYERS

A team can borrow up to four players from another team when they are short players for the day (to a maximum of 9 players). These players must bat last in the line up. Teams are often short players, so if you want more game time, let your coach know and volunteer to be a 'floater' for the League and play on other teams when they need you!

TRAINING

SWBL aims to provide various training sessions through the year to ensure that members have access to experienced coaches and trainers, are able to develop their skills, and ultimately stay safe on the field.

Training can be provided in plate umpiring, pitching, catching, sliding and base running. If you're keen, tell your coordinator. Further details about times and locations, etc., will be provided in the weekly newsletter.

COVID 19

SWBL is committed to creating a covid-safe environment for our players, officials and spectators in line with NSW Government guidance.

We ask that everyone engage in social distancing practices of keeping 1.5m apart at all times including when queuing at the BBQ, while in the dugouts and while spectating. These are the measures that SWBL have put in place:

- Hand sanitiser will be provided at the BBQ and at each diamond for your use
- There should only be two people in the toilets at one time. Please queue outside and keep 1.5m apart.
- Wash/sanitise hands thoroughly and regularly particularly when using high touch items such as bats.

Anyone attending SWBL games or events must not attend if they feel unwell. Please check the NSW Government Website for current isolation, exposure and testing requirements: <https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/management>. We seek the cooperation of all players in complying with the government requirements.

RULE REMINDERS

How many players does a team need to take the field??

For this year, we've adjusted the rules to allow teams to play if they have at least 5 registered players available to play from your own team list. Teams can borrow up to 4 players from other teams, with a limit of 9 players on the day.

Time & Game

The top of innings should not commence after 80 minutes from the actual start of play.

At 90 minutes from the actual start of play (not the scheduled start of play),

- If the away team is batting, continue play until the change of innings.
- If the home team is batting and they are ahead, stop play immediately (even mid innings) and call time and game. Score stands.
- If the home team is batting and they are behind, continue until they score the winning run or three out or maximum time.

Maximum time is at 105 minutes from the scheduled start of play. If maximum time is reached, even if the score is tied, play stops and the score reverts to the previous even innings.

There are a few 'unspoken' rules in baseball. Here are some that SWBL adheres to:

- The seven run rule applies to each innings. This means you swap sides regardless of how many are out once seven runs have crossed the plate.
- If you are 7 runs or more ahead, you should not steal bases – advance on batted balls only.
- Pitchers, runners and fielders should always apologise to the opposition player if hit by a pitched ball or after a collision.
- Do not lift your team by criticising the opposition.
- Never use the infield of the baseball diamond to warm up before the game.
- Keep your spectators under control, no heckling!

SWBL DICTIONARY

Balk: Any pitching motion that is against the baseball rules. The pitcher is not to try and trick the base runners with illegal motions.

Bunt: When a batter holds the baseball bat out and tries to barely tap the ball vs taking a full swing at the ball.

Change up: A slow pitch that is meant to look much faster.

Count: The number of balls and strikes on a batter. For example a 3/2 count means there are three balls and two strikes on the batter.

Double play: A defensive baseball play that results in two outs.

Fly ball: A baseball that is hit high into the air.

Foul ball: A baseball that is hit outside the field of fair play.

Full count: When the pitch count is three balls and two strikes.

Ground ball: A baseball that is hit on the ground. Also called a 'grounder'.

Line up: The order the players bat in.

Loaded bases: When there is a base runner at all three bases.

On-deck: The next batter due to bat.

Relay: When one fielder throws the baseball to another fielder who then throws the baseball to another fielder.

Strike zone: The area above home plate where strikes are called. The pitch must be over home plate, above the batter's knees, and below the batter's armpits.

Walk: When the pitcher throws four 'balls' to a batter, the batter gets to go to first base.