

Dear Players of the WSL,

We are women of the WSL and we show up every Sunday to help our team win a game. We plan our weddings on holiday weekends and don't make travel plans in September, all because we love playing in this league. The women of the WSL are dedicated and deeply involved. And in addition to the many veterans, there has been an influx of really talented lady-ballers this past season alone.

But we are not just women of the WSL, we are players of the WSL, and although our talent and numbers have increased, the league has not yet grown with us.

This is one of the few leagues in this city that requires only a two-woman lineup. We understand it's tough sometimes for teams to get 2 women to show up every week and that being co-ed doesn't require gender parity, but if a team is batting 12 players and only 2 are women that's less than 17% women!

The result is that sometimes the women in this league are more of an accessory to their team than an integral part. We see it when new women join and are discouraged by the minimal playing time, and we see it reflected in how managers manage their women differently. It is frustrating to experience and infuriating to watch. We are often told to manage ourselves, to rotate between the 2 designated female positions -- 2B and Catcher. It's as if our individual skills are irrelevant; it doesn't matter if we are left-handed playing second base or playing catcher for the first time in our lives.

So how do we make this better? Without widening the gap between the top and the bottom teams, without forcing too many teams to take an out because they didn't have enough time to recruit more women? We proposed two rule changes that will provide women more opportunities for playing time without unduly increasing the burden on managers.

For Spring/Summer 2018

- **[New Rule] 3 Girl Batting Line-up:** If both teams have 3 women present at the start of the game then both teams must *bat* at least 3 women (**regular season only**)
 - Rationale: This generates more at-bats for women who show up to games without *requiring* every team to have 3 women at every game.
- **[Adjusted Rule] Women re-entry:** Women may enter, or rotate within their spots in the batting order or in the field as many times as they like [*already in the current rule*]. A woman may re-enter into a female slot that was not initially hers as long as everyone in the batting order has come up to bat at least once since she exited the game [*updated*].
 - Rationale: This would allow 3 girls to split a game evenly - each playing 6 innings total instead of 1 girl playing a whole game and the other 2 splitting time.

For Fall 2018

- **[Adjusted Rule] 3 Girl Batting Line-up:** Every team must bat a minimum of 3 girls

- Rationale: To ease into a (potential) mandatory 3 woman rule for spring/summer 2019 we want to trial run it in Fall 2018, which is generally more relaxed and also a good time for recruiting new female players to the league. This also gives managers plenty of time to recruit more women for the following spring/summer season.

In addition, we will continue strengthening the community of women within the league and providing opportunities for additional playing time to improve our skills by organizing all-women's games. This will probably start out as a pickup game and we'll see how it evolves depending on attendance. If anyone is interested in playing, umping or wants to help organize in any way please reach out to myself and Megan Lytle.

We have also started a Women of the WSL Slack group so that new and current female players keep a dialogue open. We want to make the WSL more inviting for women who want to join and promote the strong sense of unity that many of us already feel.

Now that you have heard what we hope to accomplish, we are asking you to support these initiatives. The rule changes have been approved by the Rules Committee but still require a majority vote by the managers. **We recognize that rule changes require a period of adjustment, but we hope you'll respect these rules in the spirit of why we want to implement them. Not just their passage as rules, but take to heart why we are pushing to make this positive change and will continue pushing for greater female involvement.** We are united in this effort and are excited for you to join us.

Sincerely,
Your teammates

Caitlyn Pura
Chelsey Fitzgerald
Cheryl Zigrand
Danielle LoVaglio Caccavale
Elaine Lamm
Jackie Cotter
Jennifer Davidson
Jenny Kubicki
Jody Camarra
Kahala Bonsignore
Kathleen Clinchy
Katie French
Kristen Heitzman
Kristen Miller
Kristin Sears

Laura Kornhauser
Maddy Kronovet
Megan Lytle
Melissa Brody
Moira Tuohy
Natalie Chaquinga
Nina Rapaport
Palma Blank
Pilar Rau
Sam Warden
Sarah McKemie
Shelly Madick
Stephanie Gall
Trish Harnetiaux