

## Designated Player and Flex (Interpretation)

### Rule (Blue Book) Guide:

- a) The DP "must" bat and can play defense.
- b) The Flex "must" play defense and can bat (for the DP only).
- c) Therefore, both can play defense at the same time, but both **cannot be in the batting order** at the same time.
- d) Both are starters, so both can re-enter the game once after being substituted for, i.e. 2 lives each.
- e) Suspension of the Flex or DP is considered a substitution for the specific player suspended, not both at the same time.
- f) The DP must be identified for purposes of "designating" the direct replacement when suspending the DP, i.e. the Flex (or any substitutes for the Flex) is the player that must substitute for the DP when the DP is suspended.
- g) Suspension of either the DP or Flex must be announced to the Umpire as this is considered a substitution. Not announcing the change is an illegal substitution (on appeal).
- h) Once designated, the DP spot in the batting order is always the DP regardless of what player occupies that spot i.e. If 4<sup>th</sup> in the batting order is the DP at the start of the game, any player occupying the 4<sup>th</sup> spot is the DP. Also, if the DP is suspended then re-instated, the DP is back in the original place in the batting order.

### Common misconceptions:

- The DP and Flex can't play defense at the same time, so the DP must always sit on defense. See Guide a) & b) - Both **cannot** be in the batting order at the same time, but both **can** play defense at the same time. If the Flex is in the Line-up, the Flex and 8 of the remaining 9 players in the Line-up play defense.
- Cannot substitute the DP or Flex with any players besides each other. They are like all other players in the line up, so can be substituted by players from the bench. The "positions" are still linked (DP and Flex) but the players can be different.

### Strategies:

- 1) 2<sup>nd</sup> pitcher is a good hitter (better than the Starting Pitcher) - Starter is the Flex and 2<sup>nd</sup> Pitcher as DP. Starter pitches (*must play defense*) and DP bats for the Starter (must bat). 2<sup>nd</sup> pitcher can warm up on the sidelines (when not hitting or on base) and when needed brought in to pitch.
  - i. "a)" Suspend the Flex (Starting Pitcher) - 9 Player line up, one life for the Starting Pitcher used.
  - ii. "b)" The Starting Pitcher moves to 1<sup>st</sup> base and the 1<sup>st</sup> baseman goes to the bench - no change to the Line up is required, just 8 players plus the Flex take the field on defense. 2<sup>nd</sup> Pitcher could also play another position anytime (*DP can play defense*).NOTE: No substitutions used.
- 2) 2<sup>nd</sup> pitcher is not a good hitter – 2<sup>nd</sup> Pitcher in starting line up as the Flex and Starting Pitcher is the DP, then suspend the Flex prior to taking the field on defense - recommend making the move right after the Line up has been accepted at the Plate meeting. One life for the Flex has been used. When you need to bring in the 2<sup>nd</sup> pitcher into the game, (whether it is to Pitch or at

another position), re-enter the Flex. The Starting Pitcher can come to the bench and is not considered as being substituted for.

- 3) Flex is a much better base runner than the DP. DP gets on base in a crucial situation e.g. winning run and no substitutes on the bench available. Suspend the DP and the Flex "substitutes" for the DP. If the DP is a starter and has not been substituted for (i.e. has 1 life left), the DP can be re-entered after the "Winning run" is scored, to play the bottom of the 7<sup>th</sup>.
- 4) Player utilization - 10 players are active (1 does not bat) i.e. Flex is not always a Pitcher. ). E.g. use 4 outfielders (equivalent defensively and better hitters than 6 of the other starters) on a 2 inning rotation to keep them all active, plus keep a better bat in the batting order.
- 5) Protect pitcher from fatigue or chance of injury by using the DP to hit for her.

### *Designated Player Flex Examples*

1) i. Suspend Flex			Field		
	Batting Order	Starting	5th		
1	Amanda 8				
2	Becky 4				
3	Chelsea 2				
4	Diane DP	Bench - Warm up	1		
5	Evelyn 3				
6	Fran 5				
7	Gail 9				
8	Holly 6				
9	Ivy 7				
10	Jen Flex - 1		Suspended		
1) ii. DP plays defense			Field		
	Batting Order	Starting	5th		
1	Amanda 8				
2	Becky 4				
3	Chelsea 2				
4	Diane DP	Bench - Warm up	DP -1		
5	Evelyn 3		Bench		
6	Fran 5				
7	Gail 9				
8	Holly 6				
9	Ivy 7				
10	Jen Flex - 1		Flex - 3		
2) Suspend/ Re-enter Flex			Field		
	Batting Order	Starting	4th		
1	Amanda 8				
2	Becky 4				
3	Chelsea 2				
4	Diane DP	1	3		
5	Evelyn 3		Bench		
6	Fran 5				
7	Gail 9				
8	Holly 6				
9	Ivy 7				
10	Jen Flex - 1	Suspend	Re-enter		
3) Suspend / Re-enter DP			Field		
	Batting Order	Top 7	Bottom 7		
1	Amanda 8				
2	Becky 4				
3	Chelsea 2				
4	Diane DP - 6	Suspend	Re-enter		
5	Evelyn 3				
6	Fran 5				
7	Gail 9				
8	Holly Bench				
9	Ivy 7				
10	Jen Flex - 1	Run for Diane			

5) 10 Player Utilization			Field	
	Batting Order	3rd	5th	
1	Amanda	1	1	
2	Becky	2	2	
3	Chelsea	3	3	
4	Diane	4	4	
5	Evelyn	5	5	
6	Fran	DP - Bench	DP - 9	DP - 9
7	Gail	7	7	Bench
8	Holly	8	8	8
9	Ivy	9	Bench	7
10	Jen	Flex - 6	Flex - 6	Flex - 6