



A BATTER SWUNG while the catcher (above) waited for the ball to hit her mitt. Keith Grafel (below) threw the ball slow-pitch style during the first game Thursday night.

Men, women swing the bat on the field

The man winds back his arm, swings it in a circle and lets the ball go.

The ball soars across the plate. A woman swings the bat with all her might, knocking the softball into the right field.

The girl in right jumps to catch the ball, and as it hits her mitt, it gives a thud and he batter is out.

That was a typical scene on the big ball diamond in Oberlin on Sunday and Tuesday nights during the summer. It's adult co-ed slow pitch softball season.

The teams start playing near the end of May and the first part of June, with games two times or more a week. With rains the last few weeks, the teams have been making up games whenever they could get on the field.

On Thursday, two of the teams were on the diamond playing one of those games.

Ken Badsky, who coaches the Dupree 1 Inc., said they have to use

five men and five women from each team to start a game. In the batting order, there is to be an equal number of men and women. He said they pretty much follows the American Softball Association rules for slow pitch.

This year there are 10 teams playing in the league.

Mr. Badsky said each of the teams has to pay \$150 to the Decatur County Recreation Commission and then \$5 to the American Softball Association. Some teams have business sponsors and others are sponsored by families.

Some of the players pay for their own team T-shirt while sponsors pay for some.

The only age requirement is that players have to be over 16 or have finished their freshman year of high school.

The games run throughout the summer. Mr. Badsky said it will all end next week with the postseason tournament.



ON THE NEW PLAYGROUND equipment at the big ball diamond, Rielly Rittmann, 3 1/2, (above) swung while her parents, Butch and Colleen Rittmann, waited for their game to start. Jack Benton (right) got out a soda to sell at the concession stand operated by the Oberlin Lions Club.

