

2019 NSGFA House Tournament Rules

These rules comprise 3 pages. Pages 1 and 2 apply to all teams. Page 3 is additional for U10 only. Unless otherwise noted, standard Softball BC Rules apply. In the event of a conflict between Softball BC rules and these rules, the rules below shall prevail. The Tournament Director(s) (“Director”) or the NSGFA Umpire in Chief may amend or interpret these rules as they determine necessary and appropriate in the circumstances.

- 1. Assumption of Risk:** Players and coaches must be Softball BC registered and covered by BC Medical Services Plan. Tournament officials, the NSGFA and its officers, board of directors, members and sponsors are not responsible for any injuries/damages suffered by anyone attending/participating. Participants and spectators attend the tournament at their own risk. Parents/guardians accept such risks for underage participants/spectators.
- 2. Tournament Format:** 3 or 4 game round-robin, after which the top 4, 6 or 8 seeded teams (depending on division schedule) advance to single-knockout playoffs. Teams earn 2 points per round robin win, 1 per tie, and 0 per loss and accumulate differentials on runs up to +/- 7 and bases touched up to +/- 30 per game. Seeding at the end of the round robin is determined in order by: points scored, run differential, bases touched, head to head, coin toss.
- 3. Schedule Disruptions:** Each team’s coach or manager is responsible for maintaining contact with the Director in the event of weather delays or schedule disruptions. Teams resume play as required by the revised schedule. If play cannot continue, the Director will determine the method of establishing the order of finish.
- 4. No Protests:** This is a competitive and friendly tournament. Umpire’s decisions are final and not subject to protest. A respectful appeal to the umpire may be considered at the umpire’s discretion. Umpires may offer explanations of their calls/decisions if requested respectfully.
- 5. Conduct:** Participants or spectators conducting themselves in an unsportsmanlike or disruptive manner are subject to individual or team to penalty, ejection, or suspension. Smoking, alcohol and profanity are not permitted in our parks. Pet bylaws are also in effect. Use of mobile phones/devices on the field and in the dugout are subject to applicable Softball BC rules. A player, coach, or manager ejected from a game must leave the park, and is subject to review by the Director to determine eligibility for the remainder of the tournament.
- 6. Rosters & Pickups:** Teams must submit an official roster to the Director (or designate) by the specified deadline. Using a player not on the roster may result in forfeiture of all games in which the illegal player participated. Rosters limited to 15 players (17 for U19) including pickups and cannot be changed once the first game starts. Up to 3 pickup players are permitted provided the roster does not exceed 15 players (i.e. U19 teams may have up to 17 players but only if none are pickups). Pickup players must be from the same or lower category and classification and wear the team’s uniform. A player may NOT play for more than one team in the tournament (includes all divisions). All-Star teams not permitted (except for U10 and only upon approval from the Director).
- 7. U10, U12, and U14 only:** All players on the game lineup card must play in at least 2 defensive innings per game. Each pitcher is limited to maximum 4 innings (3 for U10) pitched per game (one pitch is considered an inning). This pitching limit is suspended in extra-innings.
- 8. Uniforms & Equipment:** Players to wear the team uniform with jersey’s tucked in and no jewelry (stud earrings may be worn at the player’s own risk). Players and coaches to wear proper footwear. Metal cleats not permitted. Batters must wear helmets with chin straps done up, dugout to dugout. Mouth guards or face masks are encouraged for defensive players. Anyone, including catchers and parents, warming up a pitcher before or during a game must wear a mask. Minor players must wear full protective catching gear—a batting helmet with a mask is NOT considered adequate.
- 9. Field Preparation & Warm-up:** Both teams to help prepare the field before the game. No infield practice before the game. Pitcher/catcher warm-up in foul territory, and ground balls and warm-up throwing on the grass are allowed. No fly ball or hitting practice on the grass between fields while games are going on. Hitting practice into a net away from the field of play is permitted. Teams to be on the field and ready to play promptly at the start of each half-inning which begins when the third out is called in the last ½ inning. Warm-up balls allowed between innings at umpire’s discretion.
- 10. Home Team:** Home team for round robin games established by coin toss, the winner of which chooses home or away. In playoff games, the higher seeded team from the round robin may choose home or away, and pick their dugout at least 30 minutes prior to game-time. Home team always bats in the bottom half of each inning.

11. **Time:** Time starts when the plate conference ends. Official time is kept by the umpire or a timekeeper designated by the umpire. Teams are to be on the field and ready to play at the scheduled game time. A team may request and be granted a 10-minute grace period before a forfeit is called.
12. **Game Balls:** NSGFA supplies game balls. 12-inch softballs (11-inch for U10 and U12) to be used (no softies).
13. **Scorekeepers:** Both teams appoint a scorekeeper to record runs scored and bases touched during the game. Both scorekeepers prepare and sign one Score Summary sheet which the winning team is responsible for providing to the Director (or designate) promptly after the game.
14. **Backstop Area:** Coaches, players, and managers (including parents engaged in coaching or gaining information for their team) are not permitted behind the backstop during a game.
15. **Length of Games:** All games are 7 innings (5 innings for U10) unless time expires, and subject to the runs-ahead rule. No new inning to start after 80 minutes, except Gold medal games have a 2-hour time limit and play-off games cannot end in a tie. The game is over if the home team is leading in the bottom half of an inning when time has expired.
16. **Run Limits:** 5 run maximum per $\frac{1}{2}$ inning including playoff games. The 5 run limit is suspended in the 5th and subsequent innings. Exception: in the U10 division, the 5 run limit remains in effect for all innings.
17. **Runs Ahead Rule:** The game ends if either team leads by 15 or more runs after $2\frac{1}{2}$ or 3 complete innings, 10 or more runs after $3\frac{1}{2}$ or 4 complete innings, or 7 or more runs after $4\frac{1}{2}$, 5, $5\frac{1}{2}$ or 6 complete innings. Complete innings must be played unless the home team reaches the required number of runs while at bat. If the away team reaches the required number of runs in the top half of an inning, the home team has an opportunity to bat in the bottom half of that inning.
18. **Ties:** Ties permitted in round robin games only. If a playoff game is tied after 7 innings or at the end of the inning when time has expired, the game will continue with extra innings using the internal tie-breaker rule until there is a winner. Exception: see additional U10 rules regarding ties.
19. **Conference Rule and Delays:** Only one defensive conference permitted per inning, except for U10 and U12. Standard rules for offensive and defensive delays apply, except for U10 this shall be at the umpire's discretion.
20. **Warm-up Pitches:** The pitcher is allowed up to 3 warm up pitches at the start of each inning, or when the pitcher relieves another pitcher. Warm-up pitches must not cause unreasonable delay of the game.
21. **Dropped 3rd Strike:** For U10 and U12 only, the batter is out on an uncaught/dropped third strike.
22. **Infield Fly:** The infield fly rule is in effect except for U10. For U10 only, infield fly balls shall be treated like any other fly ball and may be caught, dropped, or called foul as appropriate.
23. **Substitutions:** Unlimited substitutions of defensive players in the field at any time when time has been requested and granted. Time granted for a defensive substitution shall not be used in whole or in part as a conference.
24. **Batting Order:** All players bat in the order set out on the lineup submitted at the start of the game. An error in batting order shall not count as an out if discovered while the incorrect player is still at bat, but the correct player assumes the pitch count. If the error is appealed after the at-bat is complete, it will result in an out.
25. **Number of Players:** Teams may start and play with a minimum of 8 players (7 for U10), in which case the 9th batter (and 8th batter for U10) is NOT an automatic out. Fewer than 8 players (7 for U10) is a forfeit. A player who cannot bat due to disability/injury and is able to play defense is allowed to play, provided this is agreed at the plate conference at the start of the game. A player may exit the game for any reason without penalty, unless it results in the team having fewer than 8 players (7 for U10) in which case the game is forfeited. A player cannot re-enter the game once exited. A player cannot be added to the lineup once the game has commenced.
26. **Catcher Runners:** With two outs, if a team's catcher becomes a base runner, a substitute runner (the last out) should be used when time is called and granted, to allow the catcher to prepare for the next inning.
27. **Cleanup:** The team's coach and manager are responsible for ensuring the dugout is clean at the end of the game—including removal of clothing, equipment, and personal items as well as proper disposal of all rubbish, etc.
28. **U10 Modifications:** see page 3 for additional rules/modifications for U10 division/games.

Additional Tournament Rules for U10

The following additional rules and modifications apply to U10 division/games only:

- a. **Batting (U10 only):** For each at-bat, the opposing pitcher shall pitch until a maximum of 3 balls are called, then the batter's coach will pitch to the batter (with the player-pitcher standing beside the coach-pitcher) until she gets a hit or is called out. Coaches are to pitch from the pitching rubber with a simulated windmill pitch. The strike count continues from the player-pitcher to coach-pitcher. There are no walks and a T may not be used for batting during the game. To encourage hitting, umpires are requested to call a large strike zone which should be emphasized during the pre-game plate conference.
- b. **Stealing (U10 only):** Base runners may leave their base and advance (at their peril) only when a player-pitched ball has crossed the plate. Runners cannot steal on a coach-pitched ball. A runner may steal only one base per pitch regardless of how many overthrows occur. Stealing home is not permitted. Once the ball is thrown back to the pitcher, runners may no longer advance, even on an overthrow to the pitcher. On a hit ball, runners may advance as many bases as they wish (regardless of overthrows) until they are put out, or the ball goes out of play, or the ball is returned to the pitcher in the pitcher's circle.
- c. **Sitting Out (U10 only):** All players who attend a game must be listed on the score sheet. No player may sit out for more than 1 consecutive inning, and a total of 2 innings in a 5-inning game. This rule is suspended in extra innings.
- d. **Defensive Positions (U10 only):** Outfielders must be positioned at least 20 feet behind the base line.
- e. **Umpires (U10 only):** In the event no umpire is available, the home team will appoint a parent responsible for clearly calling balls, strikes (including strikes when the batter does not swing), fouls, and outs. The parent calling the game cannot be a coach for either team.
- f. **Ties (U10 only):** Ties are permitted only in round robin games. In playoff games, if the game is tied after 5 innings or after time has expired, one additional inning is played following the international tie-breaker rule. If the game is still tied, the winner shall be the team that was leading at the end of the last complete untied inning. If the game is still tied, the winner shall be the team that had touched the most bases at the end of the last complete inning. If the game is still tied, the tie is broken by a base running relay race (see below). If the game is still tied, the winner shall be decided by a coin toss.
- g. **Base Running Relay (U10 only):** Home team lines up behind home plate, and away team behind second base. All players on each team must participate, except due to disability/injury existing at the end of the last inning. If both teams do not have the same number of players, the team with fewer players must choose which of its players run twice, in which case the designated players may run only one extra time. All able players must run at least once, and (except as noted in the previous sentence) no player may run more than once. The home team appoints a coach to stand in the pitching circle and yell "go" to start the race. Bases are run counter-clockwise in order. The next runner in line cannot start until previous runner tags her. If a player fails to touch a base in the correct order, she must go back and touch that base and then continue on in order from there.