

2017 NSGFA Tournament Rules

North Shore Girls Fastpitch Association (NSGFA)

Unless otherwise noted, Softball Canada and Softball BC Rules shall apply. In the event of a conflict between those rules and the rules below, the rules below shall prevail. The Tournament Director or Umpire in Chief may amend or interpret the rules below as 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, followed by single-knockout playoffs. Top 4, 6 or 8 seeded teams advance to the playoffs, depending on tournament schedule. In the round robin, teams earn 2 points per win, 1 per tie, and 0 per loss; and score a differential on runs up to +/- 7 per game and on 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:** The team manager is responsible for maintaining contact with the Tournament Director in the event of weather delays or schedule disruptions. Teams resume play as required by the revised schedule. If play cannot continue, the Tournament 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 appeal or protest. Umpires may offer explanations of their calls/decisions if requested politely and respectfully.
- 5. Conduct:** Participants or spectators who conduct themselves in an unsportsmanlike or disruptive manner subject themselves and/or their team to penalty, ejection, or suspension. Profanity is not tolerated. Smoking and alcohol are not permitted in the park. Mobile phones/devices are not permitted on the field, in dugouts, or on players' benches during the game. Any player, coach, or manager ejected from a game is subject to review by the tournament director to determine eligibility for the remainder of the tournament.
- 6. Rosters & Pickups:** Teams must present an official roster to Tournament Officials before their first game. Using a player not on the roster may result in forfeiture of all games in which the illegal player participated. Rosters are limited to 15 players (17 for U19) including pickups and cannot be changed once the team starts its first game. 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 provided none are pickups). Pickup players must be from the same or lower category and classification, and must wear the team's uniform. A player may NOT play for more than one team in the tournament (includes all teams in all divisions). All-Star teams not permitted.
- 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 and no jewelry. 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 outside the field of play 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 adequate.
- 9. Field Preparation & Warm-up:** Both teams help prepare the fields 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. Warm-up balls allowed between innings at the umpire's discretion.
- 10. Home Team:** Home team for round robin games is established by a coin toss, the winner of which chooses home or away. In playoff games, the higher seeded team from the round robin chooses home or away. The 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 to be on the field and ready to play at the scheduled time. A team may request and be granted a 10-minute grace period before a forfeit is called.
12. **Game Balls:** The NSGFA supplies game balls—12" softballs (11" for U10 and U12) to be used (no softies).
13. **Scorekeepers:** Both teams to appoint a scorekeeper to record runs scored and bases touched during the game. Scorekeepers for both teams sign the Game Summary Sheet which the winning team is responsible for handing into the Tournament Director (or designate) immediately 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. No new inning to start after 80 minutes, except medal games which have a 2 hour time limit. The game is over if the home team is leading when time expires. Championship games are 7 innings (5 innings for U10) and subject to the mercy rule.
16. **Mercy Rule:** The game is over if one team leads by 15 or more runs at the bottom of the 3rd or 4th innings, or by 7 or more runs after the 5th or 6th innings.
17. **Run Limits:** 5 run maximum per ½ 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.
18. **Ties:** Ties permitted only in round robin games. In playoff games, if the game is tied after 7 innings or at the end of the inning when time has expired, the game will continue with extra innings following the internal tie-breaker rule until there is a winner. Exception: see additional U10 rules regarding ties.
19. **Conference Rule:** Only one defensive conference permitted per inning. Exception: the conference rule is not in effect for U10 and U12.
20. **Warm-up Pitches:** The pitcher is allowed 3 warm up pitches at the start of each inning. A new pitcher is allowed 3 warm up pitches initially.
21. **Dropped 3rd Strike:** For U10 and U12 only, the batter is out on an uncaught/dropped third strike.
22. **Infield Fly:** 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.
24. **Batting Order:** All players bat in the order set out on the lineup submitted by the coach at the start of the game. An error in batting order shall not count as an out but the correct player assumes the pitch count.
25. **Number of Players:** Teams may start and play with a minimum of 8 players (7 for U10), in which case the 9th batter (8th batter for U10) is NOT an automatic out. Fewer than 8 players (7 players for U10) is a forfeit. A player who cannot bat due to disability/injury and is able to play defense is allowed to play. 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) may be used, when time is called and granted, to allow the catcher to prepare for the next inning.
27. **Cleanup:** The team manager is responsible for ensuring the dugout is clean at the end of the game—including removal of all clothing, equipment and personal items, and proper disposal of all rubbish, etc.

Additional Tournament Rules (U10 only)

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28. The following additional modifications apply to the U10 division/games only:

- a. **Batting:** 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 confirmed during the pre-game plate conference.
- b. **Stealing:** 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:** 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:** Outfielders must be positioned at least 20 feet behind the base line.
- e. **Umpires:** 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:** 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:** Home team lines up behind home plate, and visitors behind 2nd base. All players on each team must participate, except due to a 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 chooses 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 parent 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 may not 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 from there.