

2023 FALL BALL
GIRLS 10U FASTPITCH SOFTBALL RULES
GOLD & SILVER DIVISIONS

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2023 GIRLS 10U FAST PITCH SOFTBALL RULES

Peninsula League

The following rules are organized and based on the USA Official Rules of Softball, Team Edition. 2023 USA Official Rules shall apply, unless modified in the following rules. Rules stated herein may restate official rules for added emphasis or clarity, may make local exceptions to the Official Rules, or may add rules that are otherwise not embodied in the Official Rules. In case of a conflict, the rules stated herein shall apply.

RULE 1 – DEFINITIONS

Definitions shall be as stated in the USA Official Rules.

RULE 2 – THE PLAYING FIELD

- A. Field: The playing field shall be as prescribed in the USA Official Rules. If an end of outfield demarcation line is utilized (as opposed to an open, unrestricted field), the distance to that line shall be set at least 125. The pitching distance in the 10U division is 35 feet.
- B. Set-up: Host team of the first game is responsible for setting up the field, including dragging, chalking and installing bases before the start of the game and host team of the last game for returning bases to storage when the game has ended.

RULE 3 – EQUIPMENT *(Please see specific Association rules as well for these rules, being Fall Ball, they can be modified)*

- A. Uniforms: Uniforms must be worn by each player on a team and must be alike in color. An exception is when a player from another division is filling out the roster for another team and none of that team's uniforms are available. In this instance, the player shall wear the uniform from her own team even though it may be different in color and style. A pitcher shall be allowed to wear sleeves under her uniform jersey so long as they are not optic yellow.
- B. Sweatshirts or Jackets on Cold Days: Sweatshirts or jackets with or without numbers may be worn in the field and up at bat on cold days and nights. If numbers are not visible, the player's number on her jersey must be shown to the umpire and opposing team, when requested. Colors of sweatshirts and jackets need not match.

- C. Jewelry and Medical Alert: Jewelry shall not be worn during an official game. Medical alert bracelets and necklaces are not jewelry and may be worn but must be taped to the body in such fashion that the medical alert information is visible.
- D. Pitcher's Glove Color: A pitcher's glove may be of one solid color or multi colored as long as the color(s) are not the color of the ball being used in the game being played. Since yellow balls are used exclusively in this division, a pitcher's glove shall not have any yellow or optic yellow color on it. If a pitcher is found to be using a non-conforming glove, the umpire will stop the game and require the pitcher to obtain a conforming glove.
- E. Replacement Gloves and Mitts: If during play, a glove or mitt breaks or is otherwise determined to be unusable by the umpire, the player may immediately and without delay obtain a legal replacement glove or mitt and is entitled to three warm-up catches prior to restarting the game.
- F. Batting Helmet Masks: All batting helmets shall be outfitted with a securely fastened NOCSAE approved face mask. Batting helmets MUST be worn during warm ups and at all times when players are on the field. Chin strap is optional but if worn must be snug and secured.
- G. Balls: The official game ball is an 11" optic yellow softball of either the Dudley, Worth, or Wilson brands.
- H. Cleats: Metal cleats are NOT allowed.

RULE 4 – PLAYERS, COACHES, SUBSTITUTES

- A. Players: A player is defined as any youth of the proper age for their division of play. A team must have the minimum number of players present in the dugout or team area to start or continue a game. Though the 10U division is locally allowed to play with ten players – four outfielders or three (team option), the minimum number of players is eight. A game may begin or finish with eight players, but no fewer.
- B. Players Arriving Late: If playing with fewer than ten players and a new player arrives, that player shall be inserted in last position in the batting order. If a player arrives prior to the start of the second inning, she is eligible to play and shall be inserted as the last batter in the line-up. Players arriving after the start of the second inning are not eligible to play unless both coaches have approved the late arrival prior to the start of the game.
- C. Players Leaving Early: Any player leaving a game prior to its completion will have her turn at bat counted as an out. Local exceptions to this rule are players leaving

because of (1) illness, (2) injury, (3) emergency, and (4) notification by one coach to the other prior to the start of the game that a particular player or players will be leaving the game prior to its completion. After the game has

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started, a team shall not be entitled to exception (4) above. If a player leaves the game for reasons other than those provided in the exceptions above, the batter's position in the batting order will be taken as an out when the player is due to bat. Conversely, no outs will be taken when a position in the batting order is vacant as a result of one or more of the above exceptions. The batting order will be compressed to the number of remaining batters when a vacancy occurs based on the exceptions above. The umpire and opposing coach shall be notified when an exception under this rule is being invoked.

D. Players from a Lower Division Filling Out a Roster: When a team is short of players for a particular game, players may be brought up from a lower division of the league to fill out the roster up to 11 players giving the team one player over the number of players on the field. The player(s) shall be placed last in the batting order (rotation) and shall only play the outfield or on emergency basis they may pitch. An emergency basis is defined as when the team has no experienced 10U pitcher available to pitch due to situations such as absence, injury or innings availability. A regular player who is not expected to start a game but arrives prior to the second inning may be inserted in the last position of the batting order and any players brought up shall remain in the batting order. The player(s) who was (were) brought up to fill out the roster shall play at least six (6) outs on defense (i.e., the minimum playing time required in a game). The team should attempt to provide the player(s) with its team uniform to wear. If none are available, the player(s) shall wear her/their own team's uniform. Duplicate jersey numbers are allowed. **Pulling players from another team within the same division is not allowed.**

E. Defensive Substitutes: Defensive substitutions can be made at the coach's discretion to meet the minimum participation requirements. Pitching changes shall be reported to the umpire and other team, prior to the change taking place. To speed up play, other player changes need not be reported.

F. Courtesy Runner Substitutes: USA Softball rules permit the use of courtesy runners for a pitcher and catcher provided that the courtesy runner is someone who is not currently participating or has not participated in the game. Since by local rule all players must participate in the game, the rule is hereby locally modified to allow a courtesy runner from the participating players and the courtesy runner shall be the player who made the last out in the previous inning. Locally, a courtesy runner may also be used for an injured or ill player. If the pitcher, catcher, injured or ill player, and player who has left the game early are scheduled to bat last in the inning, the coach may use as a courtesy runner the player scheduled to bat last in the line-up prior to that player's position in the batting order. In the top of the first inning only, the pitcher and catcher are identified as those players listed on the line-up as the pitcher and catcher. Thereafter, the pitcher and catcher are identified as the last players who physically played that position on defense.

An exception to the rule would be where a team is going to change pitchers in the following half-inning but the player who will pitch is on base and is unable to warm-up. In this case, the player on base who is going to pitch may be replaced by the person scheduled who made the last out and if that player is not available, the player preceding that player in the line-up. If this is done, the player who is taken out shall pitch at least three outs in the next half inning. (Comment: A coach may not declare a player as a pitcher, catcher, injured or ill just for courtesy base running purposes. For courtesy base running purposes, a coach may not change pitchers or catchers while at bat. The official pitcher and catcher for courtesy base running purposes is the pitcher and catcher who completed the prior half-inning on defense, except as provided above.)

RULE 5 – THE GAME

- A. Starting Times: Weekday games may start as early as 6:00 p.m. (except that games at the Belmont Sport's Complex start at 5:00 p.m. all season). Consult schedule for weekend games. The umpire will announce the official starting time of the game to the Official Scorekeeper (home scorekeeper) at the start of each game.
- B. Starting Line-ups: Starting line-ups shall be presented to the Official Scorekeeper and/or opposing manager at least ten (10) minutes prior to the scheduled starting time of the game and must include the names and uniform numbers of the players present.
- C. Game Balls: Home team shall provide one new game ball and one additional new or nearly new ball to the umpire prior to the start of the game.
- D. Home Team/Third Base Dugout: Home team will normally occupy the third base dugout. An exception is that in the event of a double header, teams will not change dugouts, regardless of whether they are the home or visiting team for the second game.
- E. Warm-ups Prior to Game: Batting practice, pitching practice, and infield practice are not allowed in fair territory of the infield, prior to the start of the game. Warm-ups are confined to foul territory of the infield and the grass outfield in fair or foul territory. Players must wear batting helmets during batting warm-ups at all times.
- F. Game Length: Games shall be six (6) innings or one hour and thirty (1:30) minutes in length, whichever limit is reached first. A new inning starts when the

final out is recorded in the prior inning, and a new inning shall begin if any amount of time is left on the official game clock. That new inning shall be played to its conclusion whether or not time expires during the playing of that new inning. (An exception to the completion of the new inning is a game being stopped due to rain, darkness, or some other reason as described below.)

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- G. Official Games: A game shall be recorded as "official" when either (1) at least four (4) full innings have been completed, or (2) one hour and thirty (1:30) minutes have elapsed. A game will be "official" at the conclusion of one hour and thirty (1:30) minutes of play, regardless of the number of innings completed. If time expires in the middle of an inning and the home team is behind in the game, the inning will be played to its conclusion. If time expires in the middle of an inning and the visiting team is behind in the game, the inning and game will end at that point. A game will be "official" if the game is ended by an umpire prior to the one hour and thirty (1:30) minute mark, so long as four (4) full innings have been completed. Games that are official, but are called to a stop by the umpire due to rain, darkness or some other reason shall revert back to the final complete inning. A game is unofficial if it is stopped before the completion of four (4) full innings and one hour and thirty (1:30) minutes. Games will not be posted in the league standings until they are "official." Games that are stopped before they are "official" shall be resumed from the exact point where they were stopped as recorded in the home team scorebook. **Exception:** Championship play shall have a two (2) hour time limit. In the event of a tie, tie breaker rule will go in effect until winner is achieved.
- H. Rescheduled and Resumed Games: Games will be rescheduled and resumed only when cancelled or not completed (as outlined above) due to rain, darkness, or some other reason determined necessary by the umpire. Games where the time limit has expired are official and will not be resumed. Games that will affect the final team standings shall be rescheduled; games that will not affect the final team standings may be rescheduled but are not mandatory. Should the league and/or coaches not wish to reschedule or resume a game, the league and/or coaches may do one of the following: (1) accept as complete and official a game that was stopped prematurely; or (2) declare a tie game. Should one coach wish to reschedule or resume a game and the other not, the game shall be rescheduled or resumed at a mutually agreed to time and location.

It is the responsibility of the home (host) team coach to coordinate with the visiting team coach and to contact the home/host team league president or designee to obtain a date, time, and location for a rescheduled/resumed game. Once a rescheduled/resumed game is assigned, the host league president or designee shall notify the umpire liaison who in turn shall contact the umpiring association to secure umpires. Incomplete or cancelled weekday games will normally be rescheduled for the following Sunday. Incomplete or cancelled Saturday games will normally be rescheduled for the Sunday of the following weekend (one week later). (The website should be consulted for the exact schedule.)

A resumed game shall be started from the exact point where it was stopped, including time left on the official game clock. It is recognized that not all of the same players may be available for the resumed game. To the extent possible, the same players should occupy the same positions in the batting order and the same players should resume their places on base (i.e., if runners were actually on base when the game was stopped). Changes in defensive positions may be made. A

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pitcher's game week outs shall revert to the week when the game was originally being played. A pitcher may not exceed her game week outs for the week in question.

- I. Tie Games and Tie-Breaker Rule: If the score is tied when time expires and all innings have been completed per above, the game will end in a tie except for playoffs where a winner is needed.
- J. Team Play: The maximum number of players participating on the field on defense at any time by one team shall be ten (10); the minimum number of players shall be eight (8). (If one team can field only eight [8] players, the opposing team may still field ten [10].) Any team with fewer than eight (8) players at the start of the game will lose by forfeit. If a team is playing with less than 9 players, the ninth position in their batting line up will be recorded as an out. If both teams are unable to field minimum teams at game time, a double forfeit will be declared resulting in a half-win/half-loss for each team.
- K. Minimum Play: Each player shall participate on defense a minimum of two (2) innings per game. Coaches are encouraged to allow players to play longer than the minimum innings during the season so that the girls will learn through experience to play better softball.
- L. Positioning of Players: Prior to the release of a pitch, teams shall have their outfielders positioned:
 - 1. At least ten (10) feet to the outfield side of first base, second base, and third base or ten (10) feet from any point along an imaginary line extending between the bases;
 - 2. Such that no more than two (2) outfielders are located on either side of dead center of the field. (Dead center is an imaginary line extending from home plate through second base and into the outfield to the end of the playing field.)
 - 3. A team fielding ten (10) players shall have four (4) outfielders; a team fielding nine (9) players shall have three (3) outfielders; and a team fielding eight (8) players shall have two (2) outfielders.
 - 4. It is considered poor sportsmanship for coaches to encourage their outfielders to artificially play infield positions in lieu of the players in those positions. For

example, the player at 2B or SS should cover the steal to second, not the center fielder. In general, coaches should be teaching the girls realistic positioning that would be not be inappropriate for higher levels of play.

- M. Ten-Run Rule: A ten (10) run rule will be used for all games except the Championship Game of the end of season tournament. If after four (4) innings one team is ahead by ten (10) runs or more, the game shall be concluded by the umpire.

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14. Four-Run Ahead Rule: The team at bat may score:

1. A total of four (4) runs, if the team begins their at bat ahead in the score, tied, or trailing by less than 4 runs. Continuation is in effect; or
2. The team at bat can score 1 run over the opponents score if they **begin their at bat** behind 4 or more runs. Continuation is in effect.

***Example:** Of how this could play out, would be in the first inning. The score is 0-0 (obviously...) to start the game. If the visiting team scores 4 runs in their at bat, then the home team can score 5 in their at bat as they would be beginning their at bat down 0-4 as opposed to beginning the inning 0-0.*

3. In tie breaker, there shall be no four (4) run rule and team(s) may score as many runs earned.
 4. Run rule is not in effect in playoff / championship play when extra innings are in play. Team(s) may score as many runs as earned.
- N. Home Run Rule: Any ball hit on a fly beyond a line designating the end of the outfield (e.g., designated by cones, fences, or other forms of demarcation) will be ruled a homerun. A fly ball caught in the air in the playing field and carried across the line designating the end of the outfield will be ruled an out and a dead ball; with fewer than two outs, all runners shall advance one base without risk of being put out. On a field that is open and unrestricted with no designation of the end of the outfield, all balls are played as live.
- O. Ground Rule Double: If fences, cones or a painted line are used to designate the end of the outfield, any ball crossing these forms of demarcation after having contacted the ground in fair territory will constitute a ground rule double. All runners may advance only two bases as indicated by the umpire.
- P. Peninsula League Champions: At the conclusion of the season teams will play a single-elimination tournament, the winner of which will be the "League Champion". Recognition (e.g. medals, trophies, etc) of the League Champion team will be provided by league for 1st & 2nd place.

1. Seeding: Teams shall be seeded by league standings and playoffs based on their order of finish in the regular schedule
2. Any ties in the order of finish will be broken based on the relative performance of the teams in the following areas:

- a. Percentage of wins to losses
- b. Head to head competition

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- c. Total runs against during the regular season (includes every game vs. every team the entire regular season)
- d. Total runs for during the regular season (includes every game vs. every team the entire regular season)
- e. Toss of a coin

3. Determination of Home Team: The higher seeded team in any game is the home team.

RULE 6 – PITCHING REGULATIONS

- A. Pitching Outs and Game Week: **NO** Pitching outs shall be recorded and it is at the team discretion of how many outs a pitcher may throw. However, with this said, coaches are expected to not over throw their pitchers and give their secondary pitchers a chance to pitch. This is Fall Ball and a great place for our pitchers to learn.
- B. Pitchers Verification Card (PVC): Not applicable.
- C. Changing Pitchers: An individual player may only be brought into the pitcher's position twice throughout a game. A team shall not be allowed to transfer a pitcher back and forth from pitching to a fielding position or from the bench to a pitching position in order to put a specific pitcher against a specific batter or batters throughout the entirety of the game. This may be considered contrary to fair play and/or delay of the game. Coaches guilty of this practice may be subject to disciplinary action.

RULE 7 – BATTING

- A. Rotation Batting Order: All players who are in attendance shall be listed in the line-up and take their turn batting. Some players will be batting even though they are not playing defense. Since all players in attendance are listed in the line-up, the batting order will remain the same throughout the entire game. If

a team is playing with fewer than 9 players in their batting line up, the 9th batting position will be recorded as an out.

RULE 8 – BATTER-RUNNER AND RUNNER

- A. Dropped Third Strike: As per USA Softball rules.
- B. Infield Fly Rule: Infield Fly Rule is in effect.
- C. Base Runners Advancing and Scoring: Base runners may advance or score as per USASoftball Rules.

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RULE 9 – PROTESTS

USA rules on protests (Rule 9) shall apply with the following local modifications:

- A. Resolution of Issues: All questions of judgment and rule interpretations by umpires that arise during the playing of a game shall be resolved at the game. Final determinations on these issues shall be made by the umpire at the game and these determinations may not be protested.
- B. Protest Filer and Subject of Protest: Protests may be filed by the head coach, assistant coach or manager of a team (the latter two only if the head coach is unavailable) based on one or more alleged violations of rules regarding eligibility of players, use of disqualified or ejected players, not playing all players the minimum number of innings (outs) on defense.
- C. Protest Submission: Protests shall be submitted in writing to the Protest Committee within 72 hours of the ending of the game. If a violation has occurred in a game that was stopped for rain, darkness, or other reason determined necessary by the umpire or association, a protest may be submitted prior to the playing of the resumed game. Written protests may be submitted by email or hard copy. Protests shall contain the following information: (a) date, time, and place of the game; (b) names of the umpires and scorers, if known; (c) description of rule(s) alleged to have been violated; (d) description of essential facts supporting the protest.
- D. Review of Protests: The Protest Committee shall consider all valid protests and render a decision as soon as it is able. After due consideration, the decision on a protested game will result in one of the following: (1) the protest is determined to be invalid and the game result stands as played; (2) the protest is determined to be valid and the offending team shall forfeit the game; or (3) the protest is determined to be valid and some other appropriate remedy is adopted by the Protest Committee, based on its review of all facts in the case. All decisions of the Protest Committee shall be final; there will be no appeals to another body.

E. Composition of Protest Committee: The Protest Committee shall be comprised of the presidents of all of the softball programs participating in a particular division / league. Each president, in his or her discretion, may designate another individual to perform these functions for them.

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RULE 10 – UMPIRES

A. Umpires for Games: If no official USA Softball or other league designated umpires are available at game time, each team will be asked to provide one volunteer to umpire the game. If one team cannot provide a volunteer, the other team may provide two or the game may proceed with just one volunteer. If one or more official umpires arrives after the game has started, the umpire(s) will take control of the game in progress (games will not start over). The Official Scorekeeper shall record the time and point in the game that the umpire(s) arrived. All league designated umpires shall be required to call balls and strikes from behind the catcher.

RULE 11 – SCORING

A. Official Scorekeeper or Scorer: The home team shall be Official Scorekeeper/Scorer for each game. If a competent scorer is not available to the home team, the coaches may by mutual agreement appoint someone not from the home team to act as Official Scorekeeper. If agreement cannot be reached, the umpire shall designate the Official Scorekeeper/Scorer.

B. Records: The official scorekeeper or scorer shall keep records of each game based on the rules/guidelines of USA Softball.

