



## NORTHWEST GIRLS SOFTBALL

### 14 AND 16/18U RULES

**UPDATED March 2023**

USA Rules will be used with the following modifications:

GAME TIME BEGINS WITH FIRST WARM UP PITCH. Pitcher warm-up before the game and between innings is 5 pitches or 1 minute, whichever comes first.

ALL COACHES MUST BE ACE CERTIFIED. All coaching staff must wear their USA cards at practices and games. **An ACE certified female must be in the dugout or on the field at all times during games and practices.**

1. **No new inning after 1 hour 20 minutes. Innings begin with the last out. There will be a drop dead time limit on all games of 1 hour and 30 minutes. If a final full inning is not completed at 1 hour 30 minutes then the game score will revert back to the score from the previous fully completed inning. Player will complete at bat only if at bat can determine outcome of game.**
2. Forfeits will occur 5 minutes after game time unless prior game has run late.
3. A game will NOT be rescheduled unless it is called by the Umpire due to weather or safety issues.
4. A game that has completed three innings, or that has completed two and one-half innings with the home team ahead, will be an official game and not rescheduled if called by the umpire due to weather or safety issues.
5. **14U** - Girls must be in full uniform with shirts tucked in. **Face masks are mandatory for any girl playing all infield positions.** If hats are worn, they must be "like" in color. **Metal cleats are NOT PERMITTED.**
6. **16U/18U** - Girls must be in full uniform. Shirts must be tucked in. Face masks are not mandatory; however, they are highly recommended. If hats are worn, they must be "like" in color. **Metal cleats are NOT PERMITTED.**
7. No jewelry or hard hair accessories. Sport rope necklaces are allowed.
8. Umpires and the opposing coach must have your lineup prior to the start of the game. **LINEUP CARDS MUST INCLUDE EACH PLAYER'S FIRST AND LAST NAME, JERSEY NUMBER, AND STARTING POSITION.** It is the responsibility of each team's scorekeeper to check the score with the umpire at the end of each half inning. Umpires who have a conference with any player shall have a coach present.

9. Bat the bench. (All players in attendance.)
10. A minimum of 8 players must be used to start a game. If there are only 8 players in attendance, the 9<sup>th</sup> position will take an out. This penalty is effective the entire game. A team may not play with 7 players regardless of circumstances.
11. Unlimited pitching and catching outs per week. Any pitcher or catcher who participates at those positions for 20 percent of her team's outs in a season will be labeled as such in the following season's draft. Outs are tracked as follows:
  - i. If the pitcher or catcher plays the entire inning, then each pitcher and catcher is charged with three outs.
  - ii. If the pitcher or catcher is relieved in the inning, then each pitcher and catcher is charged with the actual outs she records, but must be charged with at least one out each.
  - iii. If the pitcher or catcher is relieved in the inning and no outs are recorded, then each pitcher and catcher is charged with one out.
  - iv. If application of these rules results in a total of only two outs being assigned to all pitchers or all catchers in an inning, then the pitcher or catcher who pitched or caught the most pitches in the inning will be assigned an additional out. If the pitchers or catchers pitched or caught the same number of pitches, then the pitcher or catcher who started the inning will be assigned an additional out.
12. Pitching distance is 43'.
13. Inning Run Limits: 4 runs per inning for the first 3 innings, 6 runs per inning beginning in the 4<sup>th</sup> inning.
14. After game time expires, a game shall end if at any point a team cannot at least tie its opponent because of run cap rules.
15. There is a mercy rule: 12 runs ahead after the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning; 10 runs ahead after the 4<sup>th</sup> inning; and 8 runs ahead after the 5<sup>th</sup> inning.
16. Every girl must play two defensive innings per game. All substitutions must be made by the top of the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning. If any players were unable to play their 2 innings, those players must start the next game and complete any missed innings. It is the sole responsibility for the coach to demonstrate proper use of players by either book or player card. A team in violation of this rule will have the Head Coach suspended from the field for one full game.

17. If the pitcher and/or catcher is on base you may utilize the courtesy runner rule at any time, which means that the player who was the last recorded out may run for the pitcher/catcher. If the pitcher/catcher are the last out, proceed to the next out. If there are no outs furthest away will be utilized. In the first inning, the pitcher and catcher are the players identified at that position on the lineup card. Thereafter, the pitcher and catcher are identified as the last players who physically played that position on defense. In the event there are 0 outs in the first inning, the player in the lineup who is furthest away from batting may run for the pitcher/catcher.

18. If a pitcher hits 3 batters in an inning, the pitcher must be removed as pitcher but may pitch in another inning. If a pitcher hits 5 batters in a game, the pitcher may not continue to pitch in the game. In either case the pitcher may play any other defensive position.

19. Commonly used softball chants by softball teams are permitted. Negative cheering that is felt to be excessive, or done to humiliate a player is not permitted, and should be brought to your Division Representative's attention to review. Any necessary disciplinary steps needed will be addressed by Vice President.

20. ***NO ARTIFICIAL NOISEMAKERS.***