NWGS End of Season Tournament Rules – Double Elimination

The current USA Softball Rules and regular season NWGS Rules for each division will govern the tournament, except where amended by these tournament rules. All age divisions are played in a double elimination bracket.

PROTESTS
No protests allowed.

TOURNAMENT SEEDING
Teams will be seeded into a double elimination bracket based on the final NWGS regular season standings, with tiebreakers applied.

GAME BALLS
Game balls will be issued to the umpires by NWGS before reporting to their assigned game, and those balls must be returned when the game is over.

HOME TEAM AND DUGOUTS
The higher seeded team will be the designated home team for each tournament game prior to the Championship Game. For the Championship Game, the team advancing from the winners' bracket will be the designated home team. In the, If Necessary, Game ("If Game"), the home and visiting teams will be reversed. The home team will take the third base dugout in all games, unless it is already occupied by a team that played in the previous game.

GROUND RULES, LINEUPS, AND ROSTERS
The umpires will review the ground rules at the pre-game meeting. Coaches must submit their lineups at the pre-game meeting, including player numbers, first and last names, and positions. Forfeit time is five minutes after game time. The official game time will start when the plate meeting ends, and the umpires will keep the official time.

PLAYER USE

- All teams must bat their entire bench of available players in every game, as they would in regular season play, and may use only the players assigned to their team for the season. Pick-up players are not permitted.
- All available players must play at least two defensive innings in every game, except in games that last only three innings, in which case all available players must play at least one defensive inning.
- Each defensive change needs to be submitted to the umpire.
- There are no limits on pitching or catching innings for individual players.

CONDUCT

Any coach or player ejected from a game will sit out their team's next NWGS Tournament game. Ejections may be reviewed by the NWGS Board of Directors for additional sanctions.

Any team who plays an ineligible player will forfeit the game in question. Any team not using players as required for defensive innings will face a review by the NWGS Board of Directors and may face sanctions including, but not limited to, forfeiting the team's remaining tournament games and removal of future coaching privileges in Northwest Girls Softball.

The NWGS Tournament should be a celebration of our players' accomplishments this season. Coaches will be responsible for the conduct of their teams' parents and fans. Abuse of umpires, coaches, players, spectators, or NWGS Board Members may result in expulsion from the park.

RUN LIMITS

Run limits for each inning will be as follows:

- 8U – 2 runs in the first inning, 3 runs in the second inning, and 4 runs in every inning starting with the third inning until time expires. If the game goes to a tiebreaker, all tiebreaker innings will have unlimited batters and runs until the defense records three outs.
- 10U, 12U, 14U and 16/18U – 4 runs in each of the first three innings, 6 runs in every inning starting with the fourth inning until time expires. If the game goes to a tiebreaker, all tiebreaker innings will have unlimited batters and runs until the defense records three outs.

TIME LIMITS AND TIEBREAKERS

- 8U – all games, except for Championship and "If" game, will have a time limit of one hour and ten minutes, with no new inning beginning after time is expired. Championship and "If" games will have a time limit of one hour and twenty minutes, with no new inning beginning after time is expired.
- 10U, 12U, 14U, and 18U divisions - all games, except for Championship and "If" games, will have a time limit of one hour and twenty minutes, with no new inning beginning after time is expired. Championship and "If" games will have a time limit of one hour and thirty minutes, with no new inning beginning after time is expired.
- If time is expired and the home team cannot win the game in the bottom of the last regulation inning because of a run limit in an inning or a restriction on the number of batters in an inning, game will be called final without completing the inning.
- In all divisions, games will be played to a maximum of seven innings, unless the time limit is reached, or a tiebreaker is needed.
- Games cannot end in a tie. If the teams are tied at the end of the last inning, a tiebreaker inning will be played with the last batter due up in the half-inning starting at second base for each team's half-inning. Tiebreaker innings will continue until the tie is broken.
- 8U Only: in the event of a tie, teams will have one inning in international tie breaker. If a winner is not determined, they will proceed to coach pitch only until we have a winner.

RUN AHEAD RULE

- The "run ahead" rule will be used in all tournament games, and all games will end if a team is ahead by 12 runs after three innings, 10 runs after four innings, and 8 runs after five innings.
- Complete innings must be played unless the home team begins their half-inning ahead by the necessary margin to end the game, or if the home team reaches the necessary margin to end the game during their half-inning.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of rain, every effort will be made to continue and complete the Tournament. However, alternate formats may be implemented at the discretion of the Tournament Committee, including but not limited to lowering the "run ahead" rule to eight runs after three innings, six runs after four innings and four runs after five innings, and/or shortening the game to a 60-minute time limit and/or five innings of play.

In the event of extreme conditions, the safety and welfare of the players will be the primary concern of the Tournament Committee. Games may be shortened to the above-mentioned formats as necessary.

Teams must be prepared to play at any time. The Tournament Committee will decide on revising the tournament schedule and/or game formats and will let all teams involved know as soon as possible.

If a game is progress has to be stopped, the umpires will note all relevant information, including balls, strikes, outs, the score, players who are on base and at bat, and the time remaining. The umpires will also validate the information with each team's scorebook. Suspended games that are restarted will resume from the point where they were suspended. The resumed game may be subject to a shortened format to allow the tournament to be completed.

Any game that is suspended due to weather and cannot be restarted the same day will be official if three innings are complete, or if 2 ½ innings are complete if the home team is ahead. The score will revert back to the last completed inning if a suspension occurs before an inning is complete, unless the home team is ahead. If the score is tied when reverting back to the last completed inning, or if three innings (or 2 ½ innings with the home team ahead) are not complete, the game will resume from the point where it was suspended. The resumed game may be subject to a shortened format to allow the tournament to be completed.

If the tournament cannot be completed, the first and second place teams will be determined as follows based on the games that are completed:

- If the tournament is stopped after the final eight teams are determined in the winners' bracket, but before there are four teams remaining in the winners' bracket, the two highest seeded teams remaining of the last eight will be awarded first and second place based on their seed.
- If the tournament is stopped after the final four teams are determined in the winners' bracket, but before there are just two teams remaining in the winners' bracket, the two highest seeded teams remaining of the last four will be awarded first and second place based on their seed.
- If the tournament is stopped with two teams remaining in the winners' bracket, the two teams will be awarded first and second place based on their seed.
- If the tournament is stopped with one team remaining in the winners' bracket waiting to play the championship game, the team left in the winners' bracket will be awarded first place, and the team in the losers' bracket that has advanced the farthest will be awarded second place. If two or more teams have advanced to the same round of the losers' bracket, the team with the highest seed will be awarded second place.
- If the tournament is stopped with two teams remaining who are waiting to play the "if" game, first and second place will be awarded based on head-to-head play during the tournament. If the two teams split their head-to-head games, first and second place will be awarded based on their seeds.