

## 8U Spring Tournament -- 2026

1. **Game Time:** 6 complete innings or 1 hour, 20 minutes “no new inning,” whichever occurs first.
  - A. The Championship game shall have a “no new inning” time limit of 1 hour, 30 minutes.
  - B. No new inning shall start after the time limit has expired unless the score is tied.
  - C. 5 Runs Max per inning per team for first 3 innings (Open for 4th Inning and beyond).
  - D. The final inning will be completed (see completed inning definition below).
  - E. The ‘run-ahead rule’ shall be used in all games at 15 runs after 3 innings, 12 runs after 4 innings or 8 runs after 5 innings.

**COMPLETED INNING DEFINITION** – An Inning is considered complete when one of the following events has occurred in each half of an inning:

- A. 3 outs are recorded; or
- B. 5 runs are scored (during one of the first 3 innings).

An inning is also considered complete if:

- C. The bottom of an inning is reached with the home team in the lead after 1 hour, 20 minutes (1 hour, 30 minutes for Championship games); or
- D. The home team takes the lead in the bottom of an inning after 1 hour, 20 minutes (1 hour, 30 minutes for Championship games).

2. **Tiebreaker Rule:** Pursuant to Rule 5 of the SMGSA Rule Book, the USA Softball Tiebreaker Rule shall be in effect after 6 innings (in lieu of 7 innings) or the top of the next inning after the time limit (as noted in section 1 above) has expired (The offensive player due to bat last in the half inning will be placed on 2<sup>nd</sup> base).
3. **Offense:** Bat-around SHALL be used.
  - A. All eligible players, present, shall be listed on the line-up and bat in the order presented at the plate meeting.
  - B. The Designated Player (DP) or Flex will not be used.
  - C. No courtesy runners shall be used except in case of injury while on offense, the last out may be used for the injured player. If a player cannot bat and run the bases the next time through the line-up, they will be declared ineligible for the remainder of the game for safety reasons. No out will be recorded unless the team has gone short-handed as in Rule 4, Section 1, Paragraph D (Less than nine (9) players).
4. **Stealing:** One base, per pitch, per runner. Runners may only advance one base from where they were at the time of the pitch. Stealing home is not permitted - Cold Home Plate
  - A. Runners are not permitted to advance on an over-throw. Any runner attempting to advance beyond the one base they are permitted is at risk of being put out.
  - B. A runner who makes it safely to the next base beyond the base permitted, including home, will be returned to the correct base. When playing action has been completed, a dead ball will be declared and the runner returned to the proper base.

- C. A batter who is awarded 1<sup>st</sup> base on a walk/base-on-balls may not steal second on the ball four pitch. A batter-runner who attempts to advance in this situation will be ruled on the same as paragraph 5.B
5. **Defense:** Ten players ONLY on defense. The ten players may play anywhere in fair territory except for the catcher who will be in the catcher box. Outfielders do not have to be on the Grass. One defensive coach is permissible and one coach is allowed in on deck circle area to call pitches. All other coaches must be in the dug out.
  6. Unlimited defensive substitutions are permitted except for the pitching position, which will be governed by USA Rulebook.
  7. Neither the Infield Fly nor Dropped Third Strike Rules will be used.
  8. **Pitching distance:** 30 feet.
  9. **Coach Pitch Rules:** A) After one walk per half inning, when four balls are called on a batter, the manager or a coach from the offensive team will come in to pitch to that batter. The batter retains the number of strikes in the count. Every pitch delivered by a coach-pitcher is considered a strike. The batter must hit one of the pitches delivered by the coach or be called out. A coach pitch **DOES NOT** count if the batter has two strikes and hits a foul ball that is not caught, or if the batter is hit by a coach. **Bunting and stealing are not allowed during coach-pitch.**
- A. **Ground rules for the tournament:**
1. Practice on infield dirt prior to the start of the game is NOT permitted. Teams may warm-up between the foul lines and the fence. If a relay player is used, they must stay on the grass. Pitchers may not use the pitcher's plate and circle.
  2. The team with the higher seed (1 is the highest) shall occupy the 3<sup>rd</sup> base dugout, except in the elimination bracket where the team listed on the top of the bracket shall occupy the 3rd base dugout. If a team plays back-to-back games on the same field, then the team playing the consecutive game does not change dugouts.
  3. Home team is the official scorekeeper.
  4. Home team is determined by higher seed except for elimination bracket and "if necessary" game.
  5. In the elimination bracket and "if necessary game," the home team is determined by a coin toss at the umpire pre-game meeting with coaches.
- B. **Protests:**
1. Playing rule protests must be made prior to the next pitch and a decision rendered by the UIC. The game will be stopped and the manager must be prepared to discuss the rule interpretation involved.
  2. Eligibility protests shall be ruled upon according to USA Softball Code.
- C. **Scheduling:** Games will not be rescheduled unless required by weather, or other improper playing conditions. Games may not be rescheduled until the Scheduler and Umpire-In-Chief have been contacted regarding field and umpire availability.

**D. Sportsmanship:**

1. Team managers are responsible and must have control of their players, coaches, and team followers at all times, including off the field of play.
2. The USA Code of Conduct and the USA Softball of Southern California Code of Conduct shall be enforced throughout the tournament. Any act or behavior considered contrary to the objectives and purpose of USA Softball will not be tolerated.
3. Artificial noisemakers of any type are NOT permitted (i.e. horns or cans filled with rocks).
4. Umpires have the responsibility and authority to eject (out of sight and sound) any team personnel or spectator for any act or behavior considered unsportsmanlike conduct.
5. An ejected coach, player, or other team personnel is ineligible to participate in the team's next game. Illegal participation in the team's next game by ejected personnel results in team forfeiture. A second ejection in the same tournament makes the participant ineligible for remainder of tournament. Each sanction (ineligible for next game, team forfeiture, and ineligible for remainder of tournament) may be appealed to the Tournament Protest Committee.