

Softball (Girls)

SEASON REGULATIONS

(Rules in this section are specific for sport involved. Refer to Constitution, Bylaws, and Rules of Eligibility for regulations related to age, residence, scholarship, amateur status, etc.)

ALERT: State Law (175.22) prohibits use of cell phones (and other image-recording devices) in locker rooms except in emergency situations.

1. PRESEASON AND OUT-OF-SEASON

- a. Organizational meetings may be conducted outside the season provided no instruction or practice is included and the meeting(s) has been approved by school administration.
- b. So long as participation is voluntary and available to all interested students, there shall be no restrictions upon schools, school teams and school coaches (grades 9-12) relative to assembling in the summertime, for up to 5 days which do not need to be consecutive for all WIAA sports sponsored by the school. Sanctioned school contact days must conclude no later than July 31.
- c. It is the philosophy of this Association that athletes should not be unreasonably restricted, except during the actual school season of a sport. Subsequently, students may voluntarily assemble at any time without school and/or school coach involvement. With school consent, in the summertime, members of a school's team may voluntarily assemble with their teammates and coaches for purposes of instruction and/or competition for up to 5 days in all WIAA sports sponsored by the school, without restriction. **Note: Whether an opportunity is school sponsored or not, coach contact may not exceed Board of Control approved contact days.**
- d. Other than during the actual school season and those days designated as sanctioned school coach contact days in the summertime, the following provisions shall apply to nonschool participation in accordance with the above:
 - (1) An acceptable nonschool program or activity is one which is not limited to students on the basis of a school affiliation, athletic experience, team status, etc. and no school monies or resources can be applied.
 - (2) The person who will be coaching a student in the following school season shall not be permitted to coach that student other than during the designated school season and Board of Control approved coach contact days in the summertime. Board of Control approved summertime contact is as follows:
 - (a) Sanctioned School Coaching Contact - Coaches in all WIAA recognized sports (baseball, cross country, football, golf, gymnastics, lacrosse, softball, swimming & diving, tennis, track & field, volleyball, soccer, basketball, hockey and wrestling) have been afforded up to 5 days of sanctioned school coaching contact between the end of school and July 31, in accordance with the Bylaws and as described in item B of this section. The five days do not need to be consecutive.
 - 1) There must be a minimum of one calendar week (Sun.-Sat.) of no sanctioned school coaching contact prior to (i.e. the week immediately preceding) the first allowed practice in a fall sport. This does not affect nonschool programming.
 - 2) Football must follow the WIAA Fall Acclimatization policy.
 - (b) Nonschool Programming – Coaches in all sports except football have been afforded nonschool program contact beyond the five sanctioned school contact days that is permitted to continue throughout the summertime (when school is not in session from the last day of school to the start of school) in accordance with the Bylaws and as described in Section 2 – A and C-1) of Rules of Eligibility, Article VI - Nonschool Participation.

Note: Coaches or others may not mandate participation or provide any incentives to athletes for participating in summertime/out-of-season activities/programs. Participation may not be a requirement for making a school team or earning a letter award, etc.

2. LENGTH OF SEASON

The earliest day practice may begin is Monday of Week 37 (March 11). The season ends with the State Tournament concluding on Saturday of Week 49 (June 8).

3. MINIMUM DAYS OF PRACTICE

- a. There must be practices on a minimum of seven different days before the first game may be played.
- b. The first five days of practice may not involve a team from outside the school.
- c. The minimum days of practice prior to the first competition is a team requirement. While it is desirable for each participant to satisfy this requirement, schools will determine when students may begin competition.
- d. Teams must rest from all physical activity for at least one calendar day after six consecutive days of practice or competition. In the event extreme weather forces a WIAA tournament contest to be cancelled, school administration may request relief.

4. SCRIMMAGES

- a. One scrimmage, over one day, with another school or schools may be conducted in addition to the maximum allowed games, meets, or contests, provided all athletes participating meet all WIAA and school eligibility requirements (exceptions: students ineligible due to academic deficiency, code of conduct violations, or those required to miss the next competitive event, due to being ejected from their last competitive event, may participate at the discretion of the school), and:
 - (1) Five different days of practice have elapsed.
 - (2) There is no loss of academic class time.
 - (3) There is no score in a book, or on a scoreboard.
 - (4) A format other than three outs per inning is used.
- b. Any interschool scrimmage other than the one in 4.a. counts toward the maximum allowed games.
- c. Each high school team, i.e., varsity, JV, freshman is allowed one scrimmage.
- d. An individual student is allowed to participate in only one day of scrimmage activity. Note: An individual student may participate in multiple levels of scrimmages conducted on the same day.

Note: If either school counts a scrimmage as a game, it must be counted as a game for both programs, schools or teams.

5. DATE OF FIRST GAME

The first game may not be played before Tuesday, March 19.

6. MAXIMUM ALLOWED GAMES

- The maximum number of games is 26. Schedules of all teams should be clearly published and separated by level for each team sponsored by a school.
- Conference tournaments must be included in count of regular season maximums.
- No game may be scheduled (but a game may be rescheduled if postponed) after either of the schools involved has begun WIAA tournament series competition.
- The WIAA tournament series is not part of the maximum allowed games.
- Except for events held in bordering states (MN, IL, MI and IA), no approval shall be provided for more than one out-of-state competition, event and/or scrimmage per team each school season.

7. INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPATION LIMITATIONS

- A student may not participate in more than 26 games, but playing in one inning of a varsity game or three innings of a sub-varsity game does not count toward the maximum number of games.
- The WIAA tournament series is not part of the maximum allowed games.
- For information about non-school participation, refer to Rules of Eligibility, Article VI, Section 1 of the Senior High Handbook and consult with Athletic Administration.

8. FLAGRANT OR UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

- A student, disqualified from a contest for flagrant or unsportsmanlike conduct, is suspended from interscholastic competition for no less than the next competitive event (but not less than one complete game or meet) at the same level of competition as the disqualification. Ejections for violations of Rule 3-6-13 and Rule 1-6-2 (removal of helmet) do not require the player to miss the next contest, unless the umpire deems the act to be flagrant or unsportsmanlike.
- Athletes who are ineligible during the WIAA Tournament (for any reason) may not appear in uniform, participate in warm-ups, and may not participate in the awards ceremony at the WIAA Tournament. Exception: An injured athlete will be allowed to participate in the awards ceremony provided he/she is included in the roster allotment for that game. During the regular season, schools should establish their own policy as to whether athletes are allowed to be in uniform and participate in pregame and postgame activity, if they are ineligible to compete due to flagrant and/or unsportsmanlike conduct, athletic and/or academic code violations, or for any other reason.
- Any player who in the judgment of the official, intentionally spits on, strikes, slaps, kicks, pushes or aggressively physically contacts an official at any time shall be immediately ineligible for competition a minimum of 90 calendar days from the date of the confrontation. In addition, the player is ineligible to compete for the first 25% of the next season in that same sport.

9. PROHIBITION OF PRACTICE AT GAME SITE

Schools are prohibited during the regular season and the WIAA tournament series from practicing for regional, sectional, and State Tournament preparation at sites and facilities hosting WIAA tournaments.

10. CONTEST CONTROL

- All schools are responsible before, during, and after a contest for the proper conduct of their coaches, athletes, students, and other spectators and, when requested, a school must complete a report regarding the contest in which a problem occurred (WIAA Bylaws, Article X).
- Schools are expected to prohibit and/or eliminate pranks and/or mischief or any other activity involving destruction, theft, etc., of athletic facilities, equipment and material.

11. LICENSED OFFICIALS

Two WIAA licensed officials (umpires) are required for all interscholastic competition.

12. MEDICAL COVERAGE

For all meets and practices, emergency procedures should be in place as per DPI and Wisconsin Statute 121.02 (1) (g) Emergency Nursing Service. These should include, but are not limited to, such things as:

- A physician available by phone or on location.
- Phone location and phone numbers available for contacting physician and/or ambulance service.
- A designated physician or licensed athletic trainer will determine whether an injured athlete may continue whether or not consciousness is involved. They may consult with another physician if they desire, but their decision will be final. Coaches cannot keep medical personnel from examining athletes that are or may be injured.

13. CONCUSSION AND/OR UNCONSCIOUS PARTICIPANT

No athlete shall return to play or practice on the same day of being diagnosed with a concussion. Any athlete suspected of having a concussion must be evaluated by an appropriate health-care professional that day. Any athlete with a concussion must be medically cleared by an appropriate health-care professional prior to resuming participation in any practice or competition. Return to play must follow a step-wise protocol which includes provisions for delaying return to play based upon the return of any signs or symptoms. Any athlete deemed unconscious must have medical evaluation and clearance before being allowed to return to participation.

14. OXYGEN AND FLUIDS PROVIDED INTRAVENOUSLY

- Oxygen administered by mechanical means for recuperative purposes is not permitted.
- Fluids provided intravenously is an invasive procedure to be used only in emergency situations. An athlete may not return to competition the same day.

Note: See WIAA Medical Policies and Procedures for additional medical information.

15. RULES GOVERNING COMPETITION

The official rules for all interscholastic competition are contained in the (a) current edition of SOFTBALL RULES and (b) related publications and interpretations of the National Federation with the following provisions:

NATIONAL FEDERATION ALLOWED ADAPTATIONS

- a. A double first base must be used for all games at all levels of competition (Rule 1-2-1 Note).
- b. A regular-season game called for any reason where a winner cannot be determined will be treated as a suspended game. If the game is to be completed, it will be continued from the point of suspension and a suspended game will be completed unless both schools agree not to do so (Rule 4-2-3). If the score is tied and both schools agree not to complete the game, it should be counted as one-half win and one-half loss for each team (Rule 4-2-5).
- c. If a regular season game is called prior to the completion of any full inning, NFHS Rule 4-2-2 will be applied.
- d. A regular-season game will end when after five innings a team is ten or more runs behind and has completed its turn at bat (Rule 4-2-3).
Note: The ten run rule must be used in all tournament games except for the five State Tournament championship games.
- e. By conference agreement or mutual agreement by both head coaches prior to the start of the game, a game may end after three innings if a team is 15 or more runs behind and has completed its turn at bat (Rule 4-2-3). Note: The 15 run rule must be used in all WIAA tournament games except the State Tournament games.
- f. A minimum of 1 1/2 hour time limit may be placed on games. No new inning may be started once the time limit has elapsed, regardless of the number of innings played, unless tied in tournament play (Rule 4-2-3). This is a conference or host school decision not umpire's prerogative.
- g. The number of innings for one or both games in a doubleheader may be scheduled for five (5) innings. Current game ending procedures still apply. (Rule 4-2-3 Note 2)
- h. The International Tie-breaker
 - (1) Regular Season – The International Tie-breaker may be used, with prior agreement/announcement, for all regular season games (mutual agreement by both teams) and regular season tournaments (host decision). Conferences may determine use of the tie-breaker and should have this stated in their by-laws.
 - (2) Tournament Series – The use of the International Tie-breaker is not allowed in the WIAA tournament series.
- i. If a WIAA regional or sectional tournament game is called prior to the completion of any full inning, after the fifth inning, the game becomes a suspended game if the visiting team has scored one or more runs to tie the score or take the lead and the home team has not retaken the lead (Rule 4-2-3).
- j. If a WIAA State Tournament game is called prior to its completion (7 innings), the game becomes a suspended game and every reasonable effort will be made to complete the game. If the game cannot be completed for any reason (e.g. no facility), NFHS Rule 4-2 and Wisconsin Adaptations will govern.

STATE ASSOCIATION REGULATIONS

- a. Nonvarsity teams shall be allowed to wear old varsity uniforms which are now unapproved provided participant safety is not jeopardized.
- b. Both head coaches and the umpires are responsible for being in possession of a current non-approved bat list from the ASA website.
- c. Pre-game warm-up shall consist of 35 minutes.
35 minutes prior to the start of the game the home team will take the field. The field is defined as the entire enclosed field (live ball area).
20 minutes prior to the start of the game the visiting team will take the field.
5 minutes prior to the start of the game the pre-game meeting will be held and the field will be prepped for play. Required for regular season and WIAA tournament games.
- d. All varsity softball games must be held on fields with outfield fences at 185-235' (as per NFHS Rule 1-1-3a1). In the event the home team does not have a fence at that distance they may move the game to another field with a legal fence. If they are unable to secure a field the visiting team may host if their field is legal or they may secure a legal field. If neither team has a legal field the game will be played at the home team's field. Schools hosting regular season tournaments on multiple fields, regulation fence distances are recommended but not required.
- e. All batting helmets are required to be school colors or neutral (white, black, grey) colors. Only school logos, reward or commemorative stickers are allowed beyond the NFHS requirement (Rule 1-6-1 and 1-7-1).
- f. Coaches must report to their school administration within 48 hours following a contest any player or coach ejection. School administrators must then report the ejection to the WIAA via written communication within three (3) school days following the contest. This written communication must also include a plan of action to prevent future ejections. Officials will continue to provide electronic reports to the WIAA.

16. NON-VARSITY TEAMS WITH ONLY GRADE 9 STUDENTS

The above rules apply with these adaptations:

- a. The season ends on the Saturday of Week 49.
- b. The maximum number of games is 17, including interschool practices and/or scrimmages. A game involving the faculty or a school controlled group, such as a team of intramural players, does not count as one of the maximum number of permissible contests.

17. GRADE 9 STUDENTS PARTICIPATING ON GRADE 8 TEAMS

- a. Rules governing junior high/middle level competition are contained in the Junior High/Middle Level Handbook.
- b. A school may not allow its students in Grades 9, 10, 11 and/or 12 to compete against another member school's students in Grade 8 and/or below.
Note: In emergency situations a waiver may be requested allowing 9th grade student(s) at member middle schools to compete at the 8th grade level at member middle schools.
- c. Rules governing Grade 9 season length apply for teams with students Grade 9 and below.