

SCHOOL SPORT AUSTRALIA

Boys and Girls 18 Years & Under Softball Championships

RULES AND GUIDELINES

Section A – Championship Overview

- A - 1.** These Rules and Guidelines should be read in conjunction with School Sport Australia Policies, Championship Protocols and the Softball Championship Organisational Manual.
- A - 2.** The Championships shall be conducted in accordance with the Official Rules of Softball Australia Limited (SAL) unless otherwise stated in section B - 4.
- A - 3.** The Championships shall be conducted in accordance with a current Memorandum of Understanding between School Sport Australia and Softball Australia.

A - 4. Eligibility

All players must be 18 years of age and under on 31 December of the year of competition. Added November 2022

A - 5. Team Size

Each state/territory team roster shall consist of a maximum of fifteen (15) players.

A - 6. Attendance at Championships

All students who participate in the School Sport Australia Softball Championships must remain at the Championship location throughout the duration of the Championships and be bound by all Championship arrangements, except in exceptional circumstances as per School Sport Australia policy.

Added December 2020

Section B – Competition Structure

B - 1. Program / Schedule

B - 1.1 Double Headers

When constructing the draw, where possible, all teams will be given a similar number of double-header games and a similar number of split games.

B - 1.2 Game Schedules

A minimum of 2¼ hours should be allowed between the starting times of games. Should a game extend beyond 1¾ hours a minimum of ½ an hour

should be allowed between games if one of the teams is involved in a double-header.

B - 1.3 Commencement Time for Games

B - 1.3.1 An introduction of teams may be held fifteen (15) minutes prior to the commencement of the game.

B - 1.3.2 Each team shall be entitled to a five (5) minute warm-up on the diamond prior to each game. The home team shall have last use of the diamond and remain on the diamond for the commencement of the game.

B - 1.3.3 The standard warm-up procedure is to be adhered to at all times including games where the starting time is deferred.

B - 1.3.4 If one game is still being played at the scheduled warm-up time of the next game then the later game may be transferred to an alternative diamond at the discretion of the National Softball Advisor in consultation with the Championship Convenor and Chief Umpire.

B - 1.4 Interruption to Games

B - 1.4.1 In the event of a protest the umpire will note the time taken for the protest to be heard and decided. This time will be added to the finishing time for the game to ensure the full-time allocation for the game.

B - 1.4.2 In the event of an injury to a player extending beyond five (5) minutes, the umpire will note the time taken for the treatment of the injury. This time will be added to the finishing time for the game to ensure the full-time allocation for the game.

B - 1.4.3 If the injury time extends beyond fifteen (15) minutes the Championship Chief Umpire may declare the game to be an 'Interrupted Game'.

B - 1.4.4 For all interrupted games, the recommencement of play will be from the point of interruption unless determined otherwise by the Disputes Committee.

Note: If a regulation game of five (5) innings has been completed, the game will not be recommenced.

B - 1.4.5 In the event of a game being suspended, for more than five minutes, due to inclement weather the umpire will note the time lost. This time will be added to the finishing time for the game to ensure the full-time allocation for the game.

B - 1.5 Cancellation of Games

B - 1.5.1 If games are cancelled in the first or second round of a double round

robin, the competition will be reduced to a single round robin, if all attempts to play postponed games have been exhausted. The last game played between any two teams will be the game which counts.

B - 1.5.2 If because of inclement weather, sufficient play as determined by the Disputes Committee, is not available to complete the final series games, final placings will be determined by:

B - 1.5.2.1 The result of the final, if a regulation game.

B - 1.5.2.2 If a result in the final is not possible then the results of the final series cross over games, if regulation games, will result in the highest ranked winning team being awarded 1st place. The other winning team will be awarded 2nd place and the highest ranked losing team will be awarded 3rd place. The other team will then be awarded 4th place and other places determined from pool rankings.

B - 1.5.2.3 If play is not possible for any of the final series games, rankings will be decided by the pool placings.

B - 1.5.3 The Disputes Committee will consider all available time, prior to necessary departures for flights/transport, to ensure that regulation games are completed wherever possible.

B - 1.5.4 All round games postponed due to inclement weather will be rescheduled, where possible, in the same order as the published championship draw; however should there be other circumstances to be considered, the Disputes Committee will reschedule games after consideration of all factors.

B - 1.5.5 The rescheduling of round games must not interfere with the scheduling of the final series games.

B - 2. Draw

B - 2.1 For a five (5), six (6) or seven (7) team competition a double round robin will be played.

B - 3. Duration of matches

B - 3.1 Rule 5 The Game Sec 3 Regulation Game modified as follows:

B - 3.1.1 All games during the Championships will consist of seven (7) innings or one hour and thirty minutes, whichever comes first.

B - 3.1.2 After one (1) hour and thirty minutes, the innings in progress will be completed; however, if the team second at bat has scored more runs the second half of the innings will not be played.

B - 3.1.3 The plate umpire shall be responsible for recording the starting time of the games with the official scorer.

B - 3.1.4 A game that is tied at the end of seven (7) innings or at the end of a completed innings after 1½ hours shall be:

B - 3.1.5 considered a draw in all round robin games

B - 3.1.6 continued by playing additional tie breaker innings for all play-off games and finals.

B - 3.1.7 For all round robin games, play-off games and finals no new innings will be commenced in the last five (5) minutes of the time allocated for the game.

B - 3.1.8 The plate umpire shall be responsible for the keeping of the time.

B - 3.1.9 Loss of Time

In the event of an injury to a player lasting more than 5 minutes or a protest, the umpire will note the time taken. This time will be added to the finishing time for the game to ensure the full-time allocation for the game.

B - 4. Game Protocols / Specific Rules / Results

B - 4.1 Ground rules will be determined at the Pre-Championship Meeting held prior to the commencement of the championships.

B - 4.2 Any additional ground rules, other than those issued at the Opening Meeting, which become necessary, will be advised at the toss or submission of starting line-ups.

B - 4.3 Line-up Sheets

B - 4.3.1 Line-up sheets shall be provided by the School Sport Australia Softball Organising Committee.

B - 4.3.2 Each team shall hand three copies of the line-up sheet to the Umpire in-Chief thirty (30) minutes prior to the scheduled game time. The UIC shall hand each team a copy of the opposing team's line-up.

B - 4.3.3 When one of the two competing teams is playing the second game of a back-to-back double header, each team shall hand the three copies of their line-up sheet to the UIC thirty (30) minutes prior to the start of the second game or fifteen (15) minutes after the conclusion of the first game of the double header, whichever is the later.

B - 4.3.4 The UIC shall arrange for one copy of each line-up sheet to go to the Championship Chief Statistician.

B - 4.4 Rule 5 The Game Sec 1 Choice of Turn at Bat modified as follows:

B - 4.4.1 Home Team:

B - 4.4.1.1 When a double round robin is played the first named team in the draw shall be the home team. Home teams are to be allocated when the draw is made.

B - 4.4.1.2 For a single round robin, any official of the competing teams shall report to the Chief Umpire or a nominated person thirty (30) minutes prior to the scheduled starting time of the game for the toss to decide the choice of home team.

B - 4.4.1.3 For all play-off games and finals the highest ranked team will be designated as the Home Team.

B - 4.4.1.4 The home team shall occupy the third base bench and field first.

B - 4.5 Designated Runner

Official Rule 4 Sec 3 Players modified to allow the optional inclusion of a 'Designated Runner'.

B - 4.5.1 A "DESIGNATED RUNNER", referred to as a "DR", may be used for any baserunner once only in any offensive innings, provided it is made known prior to the start of the game and the player's name is indicated on the line-up sheet.

B - 4.5.2 The "DR" may be substituted for at any time by a player who then becomes the "DR". The substitute must be a player who has not been in the game.

B - 4.5.3 The "DR" substituted for may not return to the game.

B - 4.5.4 The "DR" may be used as a substitute for any fielder or batter during the game, at which time the position of "DR" shall lapse.

B - 4.6 The official diamond shall have a pitching distance of 13.11m (43ft) for girls or 14.02m (46ft) for boys.

Amended September 2016

B - 4.7 Rule 6 Sect. 8 Intentional Walk as detailed in the SAL Rulebook will not apply in this competition.

B - 4.8 Catcher Speed Up Rule

B - 4.8.1 If the catcher is on base or is awarded a base when there are two out, the catcher may be replaced on the base by any player, from the team line up, other than any of the next four batters.

B - 4.8.2 If the catcher is not replaced, another player in full protective gear should be ready to warm up the pitcher at the beginning of the next innings.

B - 4.9 Declaration Rule

In all games the batting team may declare their innings closed. This rule can be invoked when coaches from both teams agree that it is in the best interest of the game.

Added September 2016

B - 5. Points Allocation

- B - 5.1** Four (4) points shall be awarded for a win, two (2) points for a draw and no points for a loss.

B - 6. Method of Determining a Winner

- B - 6.1** Teams will be ranked according to the total points gained at the end of round robin games (i.e. according to the win/draw/loss records).

B - 6.2 Standings and Resolution of Ties

The procedure set out below will determine the position of teams for the Final Standings at the completion of the round robin matches and resolve such positions in the event of a tie.

- B - 6.2.1** A tie exists when two or more teams have the same win/draw/loss record.

- B - 6.2.2** A tie shall be resolved by following, in order, the undermentioned procedures:

B - 6.2.2.1 With teams tied on total points from wins/draws/losses, rank them by their total points achieved in all round robin games between the tied teams – the team with the highest points is placed ahead of the others, the team with the second highest points is placed next, and so on.

B - 6.2.2.2 If still tied, rank them by their total runs against record in all round robin games between the tied teams – the team with the lowest runs against is placed ahead of the others, the team with the second lowest runs against is placed next, and so on.

B - 6.2.2.3 If still tied, rank them by their win/draw /loss record in

the games played against each other in the first round matches of the round robin – the team with the most wins/draws/losses is placed ahead of the others, the team with the second most wins/draws/losses is placed next, and so on.

B - 6.2.2.4 If any teams are still tied, rank them by total defensive runs divided by total defensive innings in

all games. (The smaller quotient will be ranked highest)

B - 6.2.2.5 If any teams are still tied, rank them by random selection – the first team selected is placed ahead of the others, the second team selected is placed next, and so on.

B - 6.2.2.6 For a tied team, “runs against” is the total number of runs scored by the specified opponents of that team.

B - 6.3 For a 5 (five) team competition:

B - 6.3.1 At the end of the double round robin teams are to be ranked 1 to 5.

Teams will then play final games to determine who will play in a bronze playoff and the Grand Final.

- F3 – 4th v 5th
- F2 – 2nd v 3rd
- F1 – 1st v Winner F3

- Bronze – L F1 v L F2
- Grand Final (Winner F1 v Winner F2)

B - 6.3.2 If teams are equal on points in the round robin play-off, the top team will be determined by percentages calculated on games played in the round robin play-off.

(Approved Recommendation - Amended September 2023)

B - 6.4 For a 6 (six) team competition:

B - 6.4.1 At the end of the round robin games, a final series will be played between the top four placed teams.

B - 6.4.2 Two games are to be played: 1 v 4, 2 v 3

B - 6.4.3 However, should the hosting association have a suitable third diamond available and sufficient umpires to officiate, a 5 v 6 playoff will also be played in the first timeslot on the final day.

B - 6.4.4 A final shall be played between the winners of the two semi-final games to determine 1st and 2nd places.

B - 6.4.5 The 3rd place shall be decided by the highest placed losing teams at the completion of the round robin games.

B - 6.5 For a seven (7) team competition:

B - 6.5.1 At the end of the round robin games, a final series will be played between the top four placed teams: 1 v 4, 2 v 3

B - 6.5.2 A final shall be played between the winners of the two games to determine 1st and 2nd places.

B - 6.5.3 The 3rd place shall be decided as the losing team of the final series placed highest at the completion of the round robin games.

Section C – Facilities / Equipment

C - 1. Fields

C - 1.1 A minimum of two (2) playing fields marked with official diamonds should be provided for the championships. Fields should be fenced. (Refer to Official Rules, Rule 2 – The Playing Field)

C - 1.2 Where a venue has both open field and fixed fences, cones to be placed at the same distance to enable both girls and boys to play on the same diamonds.

Added September 2016

C - 2. Warm-up Facilities

C - 2.1 Warm up areas should be provided to allow four (4) teams to warm up safely at the same time.

C - 3. Game Balls

C - 3.1 Official softballs approved by SAL are to be used for all games. (Refer to Official Rules, Rule3 – Equipment, Sec 3 The Official Softball)

C - 3.2 The School Sport body hosting the championship is to be responsible for providing game balls that shall remain the property of the Association.

C - 3.3 All competing teams should be advised of the make and type of ball to be used for the championships (preferably in an early bulletin).

C - 3.4 One game ball shall be given to each team at the toss or submission of the lineup, for use by the pitcher in the team warm-up. The game ball shall be returned to the plate umpire prior to the warm-up on the diamond.

C - 4. Equipment Checks

C - 4.1 Equipment checks shall be performed for all teams. Additional checks may be instigated at the discretion of the Umpire-in-Chief.

Section D – Uniform

D - 1. During the Softball Championship matches, players must wear the designated State / Territory uniform.

Section E – Injury Management

E -1 Refer to School Sport Australia Championship Protocols and Policy for the management of injuries. This policy will override any sport specific injury management Protocols.

[School-Sport-Australia-Injury-Management-Policy.pdf \(schoolsportaustralia.edu.au\)](https://schoolsportaustralia.edu.au/School-Sport-Australia-Injury-Management-Policy.pdf)

New Policy Dec 2023

Section F – Officials

F - 1. It is recommended that the Chief Umpire be appointed in consultation with the state umpiring body.

F - 2. It is preferred that plate umpires be Level 3 or higher.

F - 3. Each participating state is invited to select suitably competent student umpires to accompany the team and officiate at the championship. It is recommended that student umpires be selected in consultation with the state umpiring body.

F - 4. At least one (1) senior umpire should be allocated to each game where student umpires are allocated.

Note: Where Level 1 or 2 student umpires are selected by states to attend the Championships, the students should be made aware that they may be allocated only 'base' umpiring duties

F - 5. An independent Championship Chief Statistician is to be appointed.

F - 6. Statisticians

F - 6.1 One official independent statistician is to be appointed to each game.

F - 6.2 It is preferred that statisticians be Level 2 or higher.

F - 6.3 Statisticians should be of such proficiency as to be able to produce a game summary for batting, fielding, and pitching.

Section G – Protests

G - 1. Rule 11 Protests modified as follows:

All protests shall be heard immediately at the time of the protest by the Chief Umpire or his/her appointed deputy.

Section H – Tribunal / Judiciary

H - 1. Disputes Committee

H - 1.1 The Disputes Committee will consist of the National Softball Advisor, Championship Chief Umpire and the Championship Convener.

Section I – Trophies / Awards / Medals

I - 1. Major Trophy

I - 1.1 The winning team will be presented with the School Sport Australia Softball Championship trophy.

I - 1.2 The winning state will be responsible for engraving the trophy after each championship.

I - 2. Winning Teams - Awards

I - 2.1 Medallions are to be presented as per School Sport Australia policy.

I - 2.2 Medallions are to be engraved –

18 /u Softball Championship

“Venue”

“Year”

I - 2.3 Medallions will be presented to up to three (3) team officials nominated by the School Sport Australia member bodies.

I - 3. Player Awards

I - 3.1 Suitable trophies are to be awarded for a Most Valuable Player for such a player in each competing team.

I - 3.2 Awards are to be engraved –

School Sport Australia Softball

Most Valuable Player

“Team Name”

“Year”

I - 3.3 The selection of the player for each team will be the responsibility of the team officials for that state/territory.

I - 4. All Australian Team

I - 4.1 Team Definition

I - 4.1.1 Fifteen (15) players will be selected in the All Australian Softball Team.

I - 4.1.2 The Australian team will be selected as an "All Australian Team" when no games are to be played.

I - 4.1.3 That the All Australian Team will be selected to include 3 x pitchers, 2 x catchers, 1 first base, 3 pivots, 1 third base, 3 x outfielders, 1 fielding utility and 1 batting utility. Should the team be selected as a touring team this formula may vary in accordance with the Appointed SSA Team Officials' requirements for the tour of that year.

Added September 2018

I - 4.1.4 Players selected must display a high level of sportsmanship and behaviour throughout the entire Championship.

I - 4.2 Selection Process

I - 4.2.1 The National Softball Advisor is to be Chairperson of the selection panel and is to convene meetings as required.

I - 4.3 Selectors

I - 4.3.1 The selection panel is to comprise one person from each participating state/territory, each having one vote. Members of the selection panel are to be nominated at the Opening Conference. If in attendance at the Championship the Australian Coach will be elected as a member of that panel. If the Australia Coach is not in attendance the National Softball Advisor will assume the selection role.

I - 4.3.2 If the selection panel has an even number of voting members the appointed Australian coach, if not a State Team Official, will have a casting vote. If the Australia coach is a State Team Official, the National Softball Advisor will have this casting vote. The casting vote will only be exercised as an option after all other methods of resolution have been exhausted.

I - 4.4 Awards are to be engraved –

School Sport Australia
All Australian Team
Softball
“Year”

I - 4.5 When the selected All Australian Team is participating in a tournament, an information bulletin is to be distributed by the National Softball Advisor one month prior to the Championships. The bulletin should contain details of the tournament, the anticipated cost to each player resulting from participation in the tournament and expected commitments for players participating in the tournament.

I - 4.6 A nomination form is to be completed by each player nominating for the team. The nomination forms are to be tabled by team managers at the preliminary meeting of the Championships.