

2024 Tucson Inferno Pride Softball Open League Playing Rules

ALL 2024 USA SOFTBALL RULES AND NAGAAA RULES SHALL APPLY
EXCEPT AS MODIFIED OR **NOTED** HEREIN

- A) Manager Representation:** Each team participating in the Tucson Inferno Pride Softball (TIPS) League must be represented by its team manager.
- B) Player Registration:** Each eligible playing participant must register on the TIPS TeamSnap website prior to competition. Participants must be 18 years or older to participate. Eligible players are listed on the roster in TeamSnap on a specific TIPS team.
- C) Bat Check:** Prior to each softball game, all team bats **should** be inspected and approved for use by UIC or designated umpire in accordance with USA Softball standards, specifications, and compression testing (if available).
- 1) Any player discovered using an illegal bat that is doctored or loaded by additional weight shall be ejected from the game.
 - a) A team that is discovered to have within its possession or control an illegal bat may be disqualified from further competition.
 - 2) If an unapproved bat is discovered in the batter's box (no pitch required):
 - a) The batter and documented team manager are ejected from that game;
 - b) They must leave the playing field and dugout but not the complex based on the ejection alone;
 - c) The violation results in an inning-ending out;
 - d) The entire team will receive a warning and if the team has a second occurrence of an unapproved bat entering the batter's box the team will be removed from the remainder of the league.
- D) Ball: The Official ball for 2024:**
- 1) The 12" yellow optic AT1252PS - 52/300 will be used for play according to NAGAAA requirements.
- E) Official Scorekeeper & Final Scores:**
- 1) Home team is the Official Scorekeeper. (Visiting team should keep a scorebook for their records too.)
 - 2) Official Final Scores: Official final scores will be drawn only from the official game scores sheets. Managers are responsible for verifying the game score at the completion of each game and signing the Umpire's scorecard confirming this verification.
- F) Pitching: A "legal pitch" will be between 6 and 12 feet high.** The ball must be delivered with a perceptible arc and reach a height of at least six (6) feet from the ground while not exceeding a maximum height of twelve (12) feet from the ground.¹ If the pitched ball hits the plate, it is a ball. The slow pitch strike zone is that space over any part of home plate, when a batter assumes a natural batting stance adjacent to home plate, and the pitched ball passes between the batter's back shoulder and the front knee.
- G) Stealing:** A player may not steal nor lead off a base.

¹ This rule varies from USA Rule 6C, Sec 3 (H) and uses the Senior Slow Pitch rule therefrom.

- H) Homeruns:** A team is allowed one homerun per game over the designated fence utilized for the league. The homerun batter and all runners are not required to advance nor touch any base on homeruns over the fence; all are credited with a run (except where equalizer rule applies). The batting team must retrieve the ball.
- I) Game Time:** Game times shall be as stated on the league website, on the bracket play schedule, or when the field umpire declares it so. The designated team manager will be notified of any game time revisions. Teams will be required to abide by any time changes.
- J) Forfeits:** Scheduled game time, or revised game time as communicated to the team manager, plus 10 minutes grace period is forfeit time.
- 1) USA Softball rules will be followed for forfeits.
 - 2) Both written and verbal notification of forfeit situations must occur immediately by the team designee to the League Commissioner and/or UIC so an assessment of the situation and resolution can occur immediately.
 - 3) The League Commissioner will notify the team within a reasonable period of their decision either verbally or in writing.
 - a) If the forfeit is approved, the forfeiting team will be given a loss with a score of 0-7, the winning team will be awarded the win with a score of 7-0, as dictated by USA Softball. If the forfeit is denied, the team will have to immediately notify the League Commissioner of their decision to play or be removed from the Games at that time.
 - b) The seeding or bracket placement for all teams affected will be updated accordingly. Approved forfeits will simply be recorded as a win/loss accordingly and standings will reflect these games as decided.
 - c) All decisions on forfeits are final. No appeals will be allowed.

K) Courtesy Runner Rules:

- 1) Each team will be allowed one courtesy runner per inning.
- 2) The courtesy runner may be any eligible player listed on the lineup card, including substitutes, on the team.
- 3) If a courtesy runner is utilized, but is on base when the courtesy runner is scheduled to bat:
 - a) The scheduled batting slot is now empty and is, therefore an Out, or
 - b) The coach may substitute an eligible player for the batting slot and the courtesy runner may remain on base.
- 4) Due to International General Rules of Play, there will be no runners under the American Disabilities Act (ADA).

L) League Game Format:

1) Lineup Cards:

- a) Multi-part carbonless lineup cards will be provided to the team manager.
 - a. Press firmly using ballpoint pen for clearer carbon copies.
- b) Each player in attendance shall be listed with a minimum of first initial and full legal last name.
- c) Each player must have a jersey number. A lack of jersey number may occur for only one player per team.
- d) Indicate rostered substitute players under the word “Subs” in extra spaces on the lineup card.

- e) Indicate “(PU)” next to pickup players on the lineup card.
- f) If rostered players are running late to the game, list their names on the lineup card under the word “Expected” in extra space on the lineup card. When 10 or more rostered players are in attendance and additional rostered players arrive after the game starts, those additional “expected” players may be added as substitute players by the manager informing the umpire. When pickup players are playing and an expected player arrives, the manager must substitute a pickup player with the arrived rostered player. Examples:
 - a. The manager says *Blue, my expected player #x has arrived; subbing in for pickup player #y.*
 - b. The manager says *Blue, my three expected players #x, #y, #z arrived. We don't have any pickup players to replace, so we want to add them to the sub list.*
 - c. The manager says *Blue, we started the game with 9 players and a rostered player arrived, we want to add #x to the 10th spot.*
- g) During the pre-game meeting with the umpire, each team’s official lineup card will be presented to the umpire, who will check them for completeness. The umpire will keep the top copy of each. One copy of each lineup goes to your opponent.

2) **Home/Away:** Home and Away teams are determined by schedule. For the end of season tournament, a coin flip will be utilized to determine who shall be Home or Visitors.

3) **Players:** Teams must begin and finish with at least nine (9) players to avoid a forfeit. **An out will not be recorded every time the vacant 10th batting position has a turn to bat.** If a 10th player arrives, the player must be immediately entered into the game. Any other player arriving after this shall be entered as a substitute. Teams may bat up to 12, using two (2) extra hitters. If fielding positions are listed on the lineup card, extra hitters are indicated as EH. If a team starting with 10 or more players on the lineup loses a player due to ejection during the game and has no one to substitute, then an out will be assessed whenever that player would have come up to bat. If a team loses a player due to injury during the game and has no one to substitute, an out will **not** be assessed when the player(s) would have come up to bat as long as the team has 9 or more remaining players.

4) **Pitch Count** - Batters start with 1-1 count. There is no courtesy foul.

5) **Game Time:**

- i) **League games are 55 minutes** (no new inning after 55) or a full 7 innings, whichever occurs first and can end in a tie score.
- ii) **End of Season Tournament games are 55 minutes** (no new inning after 55) or a full 7 innings, whichever occurs first, and a winner must be declared (no ties).
- iii) **Tie Games:** If at the end of time or 7 innings the game is tied, the International Tiebreaker rule format will be utilized.
- iv) **International TieBreaker/One Pitch rule:**
 - (1) Last batter will be placed on second base.
 - (2) Game play will go on unless time is of the essence is designated (due to park hour limitations, weather, etc.) as determined by the League Commissioner or UIC. If time is of the essence, the game will go to a One Pitch as follows:
 - (3) Each batter gets ONE PITCH.
 - (a) Foul ball, caught or dropped = OUT
 - (b) Strike, swinging or called = OUT

- (c) Ball = Batter is awarded a walk
- (d) Batted Ball = Outcome of play

6) End of Season Tournament Seeding:

- a) Seeding will be based on the team's record in the following order (wins-losses-ties):
 - i. For example, a team might be (4-3-1) or 4 wins, 3 losses, and 1 tie.
- b) If two or more teams are tied with the same record, the tiebreaker(s) will be:
 - i. Head-to-head record
 - ii. Run differential (runs scored vs runs against)
 - iii. Coin flip
- c) The League tournament will utilize a double elimination bracket and the equalizer rules will not be utilized.

7) Completion of Games: All games must be completed except as indicated below:

- a) If rain or any other cause interrupts a game before the completion of 4 complete innings, the game must be resumed at the exact point where it was stopped.
- b) The games schedule will be revised as needed if weather, facility issues, and the like become an issue. The League Commissioner and the Umpire in Charge will determine any format changes, which could result in shorter games, reduced pitch counts and the like. These format changes will take place at the top of the following inning.
- c) The League Commissioner will communicate this to all teams within a reasonable time frame.
- d) If the event cannot be completed as scheduled, the League Commissioner shall ascertain the procedure to determine the final standings.

M) Player Uniforms

1) Jerseys:

- a) Players competing in the TIPS league must wear a shirt with a number on it.
- b) Each shirt/jersey must have a unique number clearly visible at least 6 inches in height. Note that a number such as 03 is unique from 3.
- c) No taped or handwritten numbers will be allowed. They must be professionally printed.
- d) One player per team may wear a shirt with no number.

2) Headgear and Jewelry: All headgear is optional and may or may not be worn at the individual player's discretion. For purposes of this section, headgear may be headbands, caps, visors, or any combination thereof, without regard to color.

- a) Bandanas, handkerchiefs, and head coverings are allowed to be worn during play but may not be tied around the neck area.
- b) Sunglasses may be worn atop of the head, ball cap, or visor as a known risk to the player.
- c) Wearing a hat backwards is allowed for all players.
- d) Jewelry is allowed at the discretion of the umpire. If it is deemed unsafe, taping will be allowed, or removal will be required.

3) Cleats: No metal cleats shall be worn by any player, coach, or umpire.

N) EQUALIZER AND MERCY RULES

1) Equalizer Rule: During the first 4 innings of each game, when a team scores 5 runs (or has 3 outs) in its inning, the inning ends. The 5th inning (and innings that follow) will be open innings with no run limitation except the time limit.

2) A Mercy Rule is in effect and the game will end if a team is losing at the bottom of an inning by the following:²

- a) 20 Runs after 3 innings
- b) 15 Runs after 4 innings
- c) 10 Runs after 5 innings

O) PICKUP RULES

- 1) If a team does not have 9 players at 10 minutes past game time, the game is forfeit.
- 2) To prevent forfeits, each team can pick up eligible league players up to 10 prior to the start of a game. However, note that a team can begin a game with 9 players without penalty. A rostered player listed as “expected” (because they are running late) on the lineup card may be added to the 10th spot upon arrival and any additional arriving rostered players may be added as substitutes.
- 3) Once substituted out, non-pitcher pickup players may not re-enter.
- 4) A team cannot pick up any outside players that are not registered with the league. If a team utilizes an outside player, that game is forfeit.
- 5) Special Pitcher Pickup Rule: A team can pick up a Pitcher prior to the start of a game, even if they have more than 10 players. However, they can only play the Pitcher position.
 - a) A team may substitute a player on the bench to bat for the Pickup Pitcher, but if the Pickup Pitcher is not re-entered to resume the pitching position, the Pickup Pitcher is out of the game and cannot re-enter. If the team substitutes a player on the bench to bat for the pitcher a second time, the pickup pitcher may not re-enter because normal substitution rules apply.

These Rules may be amended anytime during the season with verbal and written communication to each manager.

² Due to the equalizer rule, a 20-run lead after 3 innings is not possible, but this will be in effect for the end of season tournament.