

PSD Middle School Softball

Article 1 Operating Structure

- 1.1 Eligible Grades: Each member school may form teams composed of 7th and 8th grade students.
- 1.2 "Roster Size: A minimum of 12 players must be listed on the varsity roster. A minimum of 9 players are required to be present to begin a game. Failure to provide 9 players in legal uniform will result in a forfeit by the offending team. The game may still be played; however, the result of the game will be a forfeit win/loss. Once the game has started (with a minimum of 9 players), a team could finish the game with 8 players (short-handed rule)."
- 1.3 Levels: Varsity, JV (Teams may form more than one JV team).
- 1.4 Divisions: n/a
- 1.5 Scheduling: The district athletic office will create a schedule consisting of one complete round. Each school will play every member school once during the season. Each team will also compete in two post-season box bracketed games. Scheduling will take place in a two-year cycle. During year two of a cycle, home and away locations will flip. In addition to a complete round, one scrimmage will be scheduled by the district athletic office prior to the first game. Scrimmages will be assigned on an annual basis.

Article 2 Event Administration

- 2.1 Competition Day Locations: Varsity at one location, JV at another location or playing simultaneously on another field at the same location.
- 2.2 Start Times: 3:30pm (Timnath and Wellington at 4:15pm)
- 2.3 Warm-up Time: Each team shall take 10-minutes of infield practice, with the visiting team to take the field first, 20 minutes prior to the start of the game. Pitchers shall be allowed 5 warm-up pitches or one minute (whichever occurs first) between each inning.
- 2.4 Contest Length: Games will be 7 innings or 1 hour and 20 minutes, whichever occurs first. Once an inning has started, the full inning shall be played if necessary. No new inning will start after 1:20. For the championship tournament, games will be restricted to a 1 hour and 30-minute time limit or 7 innings whichever occurs first, once an inning has started the full inning will be played if necessary. The 10-run rule (after 5 complete innings) and the 15-run rule (after 3 complete innings) shall apply. The 6-run cap limit will not be in effect for the championship tournament.
- 2.5 Time between Contests: N/A
- 2.5 Overtime Rules:
- 2.7 Mercy Rule: The 10-run rule shall apply after 5 complete innings. The 15-run rule shall apply after 3 innings. A 6-run cap will be placed on all innings through the completion of the fourth inning. If a team scores more than 6 runs in an inning and the play is completed, that half of the inning will end, and the teams will switch. If the 6th run is scored in the middle of a play, the play may be completed, and runners may advance in a typical game-like scenario but only a maximum of 6 runs will be recorded.
- 2.8 Event Staff: Bookkeeper
- 2.9 A meeting will be held with the umpire/crew and a coach from each team prior to the game. At this time all ground rules will be covered, batting designations made (use of DP/Flex or 9/10/11 batter option designated).

Article 3 Additional Sport Specific Considerations

- 3.1 Bases will be placed at 60'. Single, white bases shall be used at all bases.

3.2 The pitching distance will be 43’.

3.3 The game ball will be 12”, shall be optic yellow, and must have the NFHS stamp. Only bats that are stamped as ASA approved fastpitch softball bats (and not on the non-approved list supplied to coaches at the start of each season) are allowed. Players may use their own bats provided that they meet this standard. NFHS rules shall apply for discovery of all illegal bats. The approved bat length shall not exceed 34”.

3.4 For Varsity Games- Coaches must indicate whether they will be using 9, 10 or 11 batters or 10 using Flex/DP when the line-up is turned in at the start of each contest. 9/10/11 batter option – coach designates number of batters that he/she will use throughout the game. If 10 or 11 batters are chosen, this number of positions must remain in effect for the entire game or the short-handed rule will apply. In this option, the coach can play any of the players listed in the batting order in the field during each inning; however, the batting order must remain the same unless a legal substitution is made. DP/Flex option is also allowed as a choice for coaches – see description included in this section.

3.5 All players that are suited up for the contest (at both the varsity and junior varsity level), must be allowed the opportunity to play a minimum of one complete inning. If a coach is using the 9, 10 or 11 batter option all players slotted in the line-up and all substitutes in uniform must play a minimum of one full inning (offense and defense). If a coach is using the DP/Flex option, the 10 players used in the DP/Flex line-up will be considered to have met the requirements of this rule; however, all substitutes must play one full inning as described (offense and defense). The NFHS substitution rules shall apply at the varsity level including the DP/Flex rule and the use of courtesy runners. Each player at the varsity level may each have one re-entry.

3.6 At the JV level, substitutes may be made freely defensively. Players must remain in the original batting order unless an official substitution is made. Coaches may elect to use the 9, 10 or 11 batter option or the DP/Flex option as with the varsity level. This designation must be made at the coaches meeting at the beginning of the game.

3.7 At the junior varsity level, all players on the roster (and listed in the official scorebook) must be allowed to play both offensively and defensively during the game. Coaches shall not use varsity pitchers at the junior varsity level unless needed to hold the contest.

3.8 Catcher’s masks shall include a throat protector. No optic markings, or solid optic colors shall be permitted on pitcher’s glove or catcher’s mitt. Batting helmets shall comply to the following provisions:

- Must be NOCSAE approved with double ear flaps.
- NOCSAE approved face guards shall be required.
- Chin straps shall be optional.
- All batters, base runners, on deck batters, and student base coaches must wear a helmet whenever on the field of play.

1.9 NFHS jewelry rules shall be strictly enforced. Defensive face masks shall be optional.

1.10 For all regular season and championship tournament play, a full batting count will be used (4 balls and 3 strikes). Unlimited foul balls are allowed on the 3rd strike. Metal cleats are allowed (but not required) by NFHS rules. A pitcher must throw four balls to intentionally walk a batter. Stealing shall be permitted on the release of the pitch. Runners may advance on passed balls. Batters may advance on a dropped third strike.

Article 4 Championship/Playoffs

4.1 Postseason Seeding

4.2 Championship format- For the championship tournament, games will be restricted to a 1 hour and 30-minute time limit or 7 innings whichever occurs first, once an inning has started the full inning will be played if necessary. The 10-run rule (after 5 complete innings) and the 15-run rule (after 3 complete innings) shall apply. The 6-run cap limit will not be in effect for all post-season play.