

~ SOFTBALL CALENDAR ~

January

22 First day of practice

February

1 First day to hold interschool scrimmages

15 First day for playing interschool games

April

27 District Certification

May

4 Bi-District Certification

8 Area Certification

15 Regional Quarterfinal Certification

22 Regional Semi-final Certification

29 Regional Final Deadline

June

3-5 Softball State Tournament

*Warm up games must be played prior to participation in a bi-district game and must be counted toward the season game limitation.

Bi-district games may not be played until after the final date for district certification in that respective conference. All other playoff games may not be played until after the final date for completion of the prior round championships unless each potential next round opponent agrees.

~ NATIONAL FEDERATION SOFTBALL RULE CHANGES ~

1-1-2b - Changed the female fast-pitch pitching distance to 43 feet effective with the 2010-11 academic year. NOTE: Individual state associations are permitted to adopt the 43-foot distance in 2009-10, if desired.

1-5 - Identified and specified guidelines for each part of the bat, including: knob, handle/grip, taper, barrel and end cap. In addition, the rule clarifies that the taper must be a solid surface.

3-2-12 - Added an exception to permit hard, unadorned devices, such as bobby pins, barrettes and hair clips, no longer than 2 inches, to be worn to control a player's hair.

9-6-6 - Changed the required number of innings pitched to half of the total number of innings played in the game for a starting pitcher to be credited with a win.

2009-10 NFHS Softball Major Editorial Changes

1-3-3 - An eighth of an inch was added to the maximum circumference of both 11- and 12-inch softballs, to 11• and 12•, respectively.

2-20-1f - Clarified that a batted ball is fair if it first falls or is first touched on or over fair territory beyond first, second, or third base.

3-1-3 - Clarified that a team's lineup card shall include the first initial and last name of each player.

8-2-9 Note - Added a note to clarify that the batter-runner is called out when she hits an infield fly even when the infield fly is not initially called, if brought to the umpire's attention before the next pitch.

2009-10 NFHS Softball Points of Emphasis

1. Illegal Pitch Enforcement
2. Three-Foot Running Lane
3. Non-Traditional Game Equipment
4. DP/FLEX Rule

~ UIL RULE CHANGES ~

All amendments below are effective for the 2009-10 school year, unless otherwise noted.

- In football, Conference 1A, 11-man participating schools will be divided in to two divisions.
- Change in "Reclassification and Realignment" process by which six-man schools determine enrollment figures.
- Allow track and field regional and/or state qualifiers, including alternates to be eligible to participate in any event at a regional and/or state qualifiers meet. (Effective January 2009)
- Changes to the official fee scale for wrestling.
- Allow a school golf coach to coach from green to tee.
- Allow swimming and diving consolation finals at the regional meet.
- Change in the time frame to identify or place overage students in 504 or special education for an athletic eligibility waiver prior to the end of his or her second year in high school.
- Change to the softball practice start date.

~ SOFTBALL PLAN ~

Excerpts from the *UIL Constitution and Contest Rules*.

Section 1280: GIRLS' SOFTBALL PLAN

- (a) **ATHLETIC PURPOSES, CODES, PLAN APPLICABLE.** Rules in Sections 1200-1209 also apply to the Girls' Softball Plan.
- (b) **ELIGIBILITY.** Only girls eligible under Subchapter M of the Constitution may try out for and participate under the high school Girls' Softball Plan.
- (c) **NUMBER OF GAMES, TOURNAMENTS AND SITES.**
 - (1) **Violations/Penalties.** The district executive committee shall determine the penalty for violations of the following regulations.
 - (2) **Total Number of Games.** No team or student shall compete in more than two invitational tournaments plus 19 softball games or three invitational tournaments plus 17 softball games in a season, including all games prior to the first playoff game. This shall include non-district and district games. If the district champions have a bye for the first round of the play-offs, those schools may schedule a warm-up game in addition to the game limits. This additional game shall be played on a non-school night with no loss of school time, but may not be played as an exception to the school week limitation.
 - (3) **Exception to Resolve District Ties.**
 - (A) **Two Schools Tied.** To resolve a two-way tie, the district executive committee may authorize a single elimination game. The tie breaking game may be in addition to the allowed number of games delineated above, but may not be played as an exception to the school week limitation.
 - (B) **Three or More Schools Tied.** If three or more schools are tied, the district executive committee may authorize a single elimination tournament in addition to the total number of games and tournaments allowed for the season. See Section 1203.
 - (4) **Substituting Games for Tournaments.** Two games may be substituted in place of a tournament. If a team or student does not play in any invitational tournaments, a total of 23 games may be played.
 - (5) **Invitational Tournament Restrictions.**
 - (A) No team shall participate in an invitational softball tournament held on a Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday, except on school holidays. However, games in tournaments may be played after school on the last day of the school week prior to holidays.
 - (B) **Tournament Restriction.** Softball teams shall play no more than six total games in a tournament and no more than three games in any one day.
 - (6) **Site of Game.** The district executive committee in arranging a schedule within the district shall determine the place of games in case of disagreement between the two teams.
 - (7) **Exception for Rescheduled Games.** District varsity softball games postponed by weather or public disaster (not including illness) shall be rescheduled on the next date, other than Sunday, on which another district game is not scheduled. In the event weather or public disaster forces the makeup game to be rescheduled it shall be rescheduled on the next date as described earlier. These makeup games may be played as an exception to the school week limitation. District varsity games that are postponed by weather or public disaster, and not played on the next available date, shall be rescheduled and played on a date determined by the district executive committee.
- (d) **PLAYING DATES.**
 - (1) **Off-Season Limitations.** There shall be no organized or formal school softball practice for a contestant or a team, before or after school, until the 19th Friday prior to the State Softball Tournament, and after the date for certifying district champions, except for teams that have not been eliminated in the playoffs.
 - (2) **Scrimmages.** Schools shall not scrimmage until the 18th Monday prior to the State Softball Tournament, not to exceed two scrimmages per week, Monday through Saturday. Only one scrimmage is permitted between Monday and the end of the school day Friday.
 - (3) **Games.** Schools shall not play their first game until the 16th Monday prior to the State Softball Tournament.
 - (4) **School Equipment.** It will be considered a school game if a team is wearing school uniforms and/or using school equipment following the close of the regular UIL season.
 - (5) **Non-School Participation.** See 1209.

- (e) TIES: DISTRICT AND NON-DISTRICT GAMES. Unless otherwise specified by district executive committee minutes prior to the beginning of the season, a regulation district or non-district game called with a tie score after five innings have been played (and a winner cannot be determined) shall be counted as one-half game won and one-half game lost for each team. The game shall not be replayed provided five innings have been completed. If five innings have not been completed, the game shall be replayed from the start.
- (f) PLAYOFF GAMES. In playoff games beyond district, a suspended game shall be continued from the point of suspension at a later time.
- (g) GAME CALLED BEFORE COMPLETION. If a district or nondistrict game is called before completion of the number of innings and conditions as specified in National Federation Softball Rules, the umpire shall declare the contest "no game". Unless otherwise specified by district minutes prior to the season, the game will be replayed from the start. In games beyond the district level, a game begun, then suspended, shall continue at a later time from the point of suspension.
- (h) GRADUATING SENIORS. Sections 400 (a) and 402 of the Constitution shall not disqualify a contestant during the softball season who is eligible in all other respects at the time of spring graduation. This exception refers only to contestants whose playoff competition extends into the summer from the end of school.
- (i) POST SEASON PLAYOFFS.
 - (1) Playoff. Playoffs may be single elimination or two-out-of-three from bi-district to state. If neither method is mutually agreeable, a coin flip shall determine play-off format.
 - (2) Two-out-of-Three Series. If schools play a two-out-of-three elimination series, the first (and only the first) game may be played prior to Friday, provided there is no loss of school time traveling to or participating in the game. Games 2 and/or 3 shall not be played until Friday. If one game is played and a second game cannot be played because of weather, then the winner of the one game advances to the next round. If two games are played (and split) and the third game cannot be played on Saturday because of weather conditions, the third and deciding game should be played on Monday of the next week.
 - (3) State Tournament. All conferences will be single elimination at the state tournament.
 - (4) Disputes. In case there is a dispute regarding a neutral or home site or time of a game it shall be settled by the flip of a coin. See Section 1208 (q).
 - (5) Day of Playoff Game. Playoff games shall not be played before Wednesday of that week unless by mutual consent.
 - (6) Gate Receipts From State Tournament. The UIL office retains an annually determined percentage of gate receipts from the state softball tournament.