

# CGFP DIVISION RULES

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USA Official Rules of Softball govern all play unless specified below per CGFP. USA Rules are listed for reference and some USA Rules are modified for CGFP.

Clairemont Girls Fast Pitch main objectives are to have fun, develop fundamentals and skills to prepare our players for the next division level and experience a healthy approach to competition. All managers shall ensure recreational softball values and rules are maintained, and team involvement and player development must always be stressed.

Executive board members may be eligible to coach or manage as long as duties are fulfilled in both responsibilities. If at any time, the member feels they cannot maintain both duties, they will address the board for replacement.

## DEFINITIONS ( USA Rule 1)

**Dropped Ball:** If the ball slips from the pitcher's hand during the delivery, a ball is declared on the batter, the ball remains live and runners may advance at their own risk.

**Foul Tip:** A batted ball that goes sharply and directly from the bat to the catcher's hand(s) or glove/mitt and is legally caught by the catcher. Only on the third strike does this constitute an out.

**Interference:** The act of an offensive player or team member, umpire or spectator that impedes, hinders, or confuses a defensive player attempting to execute a play. Contact is not necessary.

**Leaping:** An act by the pitcher when both feet become airborne on the initial move and push from the pitcher's plate.

**Obstruction:** The act of a defensive team member: A. Who hinders or impedes a batter from striking at or hitting a pitched ball. B. Who impedes the progress of a runner or batter-runner who is legally running bases unless the fielder is; in possession of the ball or in the act of fielding a batted ball. Contact is not necessary.

**Pivot Foot:** The foot which must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate prior to pushing off. (See Rule 6)

**Quick Pitch:** A pitch made with the obvious attempt to catch the batter off balance. (No pitch is ruled, dead ball)

**Strike Zone:** That space over any part of home plate, when a batter assumes a natural batter's stance adjacent to home plate; between the batter's arm pits and the top of the knees.

## PLAYING FIELD (USA Rule2)

**A. Pitching Distance:** Measured from the back point of home plate to the front edge of the pitchers plate.

8U: 30 feet

10U: 35 feet

12U: 40 feet

14U: 43 feet

**B. Base Distance:** 60 feet between bases.

**C. Pitcher's Circle:** 8 foot radius drawn from the front edge of the pitcher's plate.

**D. Field Maintenance: Home team:** Occupy 3rd base dugout and responsible for field setup (chalk, bases, game ball, etc.)

**Visitor:** Occupy 1st base dugout, responsible for cleaning after the game to include bases, equipment, and both dugouts.

Both teams are responsible for ensuring an accurate game result is recorded in the official scorebook, and turn in score card/record result.

## EQUIPMENT (USA Rule 3)

**A. Official Bat:** Bats must meet the requirements of USA Rule 3, Section 1

**B. Official Softball:** USA certified softball per age division.

8U: 10 inch yellow, reduced impact

10U: 11 inch yellow, reduced impact

12U / 14U: 12 inch "Dream Seam"

**C. Helmets & Face Masks:** Must be USA Approved. Any player may wear a face mask/guard or helmet at any time. All batters, including the on-deck batter, and base runners must wear helmets with approved face mask/guard. Pitcher face masks are required in 12U & 14U unless parent/guardian signs waiver.

**D. Catcher's Equipment:** Must wear a mask with throat protector, approved helmet with ear flaps, shin guards which offer protection to the knee caps and body protector. Catchers warming up a pitcher must wear a mask with throat protector and approved helmet with ear flaps.

**E. Uniforms:** Players must wear league issued uniforms during all games.

**F. Jewelry:** All jewelry must be removed and may not be worn during the game.

## PLAYERS, COACHES, SUBSTITUTES (USA Rule 4)

**A. Players:** At least 8 players required to start a game. For known shorthanded games (not late arrivals)- teams may borrow a 9th player from another team, and this player may only play outfield, and bat LAST in the batting order. This is not allowed during playoffs. All field positions must be filled if you have 9 or 10 (8U) players present who are willing and able to play.

**B. Late/Leaving Players:** Insert at the end of the batting order, without penalty. Leaving the game early results in no penalty and player is scratched from lineup.

**C. Injury / Illness:** Players may be removed from the field or batting lineup and will not be penalized. Player may re-enter the game without penalty.

**D. Player Participation:** Equal playing time for ALL players, and they must play an entire half inning to satisfy the Rule 4 - E requirement. No player shall sit out two innings before all others sit out once, and so on. Players must sit an entire half inning.

The opposing team must bring this violation to the attention of the umpire and the violating manager, and it MUST be corrected at the time it occurs.

**E. Fielders / Rotation:** Nine players permitted (10 for 8U division) with free defensive substitutions, not to violate rule D, above.

It is mandatory for every player to play a minimum of one half inning in the OUTFIELD (8U) within the first 4 innings, or INFIELD (10U/12U/14U) within the first FOUR INNINGS of the game.

8U – Outfielders must be at least 15 feet behind the base line at the time of the pitch.

The opposing team must bring this violation to the attention of the umpire and the violating manager, and it MUST be corrected at the time it occurs.

**F. Coach:** Responsible for the team's actions on the field and will represent the team in communications with the umpire and opposing team. Coaches should wear league issued shirts and hats during all games. Coaches will be held accountable for all team actions and/or violations, and the CGFP board will review all ejections from games. At a minimum a coach ejected will be immediately suspended for the following game. A second ejection during a season will result in suspension for the remainder of the season at a minimum. All cases will be reviewed by the board and additional penalties may be assessed.

## THE GAME: (USA Rule 5)

### A. Playing Time / Innings:

*8U:* NO NEW inning will begin after 1 hour & 20 minutes (1:20)\* or a complete game shall consist of 5 innings.

*10U / 12U / 14U:* NO NEW inning will begin after 1 hour & 30 minutes (1:30)\* or a complete game shall consist of 6 innings. Games in an Open Inning have a 1:45 drop dead time limit.

\*To determine whether a new inning should begin, if time has not expired at the time the last out of the inning is made, then a new inning will be started even if the new inning will extend the game past the time limit. The new inning will be completed in its entirety unless the home team leads after the visiting team has batted. The Umpire and Managers may agree to play out the inning to allow additional playing time.

**B. Suspended / Regulation Games:** Games will only be rescheduled for inclement weather or circumstances beyond the league's control.

Games can be called by the umpire and considered regulation after:

*8U / 10U:* 3 complete innings (2 1/2 if home team is leading) or 45 minutes.

*12U / 14U:* 4 complete innings (3 1/2 if home team is leading) or 45 minutes.

**C. Forfeited Games:** See USA Rule 5, section 4. Teams may borrow a player from the opponent to prevent forfeiture, and the game's result will count as played out.

**D. Division Run Rules:** Maximum runs per inning:

*8U:* 3

*10U / 12U:* 4

*14U:* Unlimited or by Manager agreement pre-game

### E. Open Inning:

*8U:* NONE.

*10U / 12U / 14U:* If a team is losing by the run rule limit or more, the UMPIRE, at their discretion, should attempt to open the last inning so the trailing team has an opportunity to tie or take the lead. More than one open inning is allowed, time permitting. Games in Open Innings have a 1:45 drop dead time limit.

## **F. Run Ahead Rule:**

*8U:* NONE.

*10U / 12U / 14U:* 12 runs after 4 innings. Complete innings must be played unless the home team scores the run ahead limit while at bat. When the visiting team reaches the limit in the top half of the inning, the home team must have their opportunity to bat in the bottom half of the inning.

**G. Inter-League Games:** Results will not count towards playoff seeding. The home field league's rules will apply during inter-league play. Team managers are responsible for verifying game time, field locations and logistics for away games.

## PITCHING REGULATIONS (USA Rule 6A)

ALL sections of USA Rule 6A must be adhered to with increasing strictness as you move up in age divisions. 8U is the developmental division for pitching and shall be officiated as such.

**A: Pitcher Limits:** One pitch constitutes a complete inning. The opposing team must bring violations to the attention of the umpire and the violating manager, and it MUST be corrected at the time it occurs.

8U: 2 innings per game

10U: 3 innings per game

12U: 4 innings per game (max 3 consecutive)

14U: No Limit

**B. Base on Balls (8U):** If a player pitcher reaches a four ball count, a team's coach will pitch from the pitchers plate and assume the batter's strike count. Coach may strike out a player but not allow base on balls.

There is a four pitch maximum by the coach, and the umpire must continue to call balls & strikes. e.g. If the coach enters to pitch with 2 strikes on the batter, and the umpire calls a strike without the batter swinging, she is out. If coach enters with 2 strikes and pitches 4 called balls, the batter is out. Fouled off balls on the third strike will not count towards the 4 pitch maximum. Batted ball that hits a coach is a dead ball, no pitch.

**C. Pitcher's Circle:** The pitcher is considered to be in the circle when both feet are on or within the 8 foot radius lines and has possession and control of the ball.

8U: The pitcher does not have to have possession or control of the ball, rather the ball is dead when it crosses into the circle by either contacting the ground, or the pitchers glove within the circle.

The runners may not advance unless they are past the halfway point to the next base, at the umpire's discretion.

**D. Batter Safety:** If a pitcher hits 3 batters in the same inning, the pitcher must be removed from that position for that inning only. If she hits 5 total batters in the same game, she must be removed from pitching for the remainder of that game. Coaches may agree to waive this if comparable pitchers are developing, especially in 8U.

## BATTING (USA Rule 7)

*A. Batting Order:* ALL players will bat in order each game. Batting order should be adjusted throughout the season to ensure fair play and experience.

*B. Bunting:* Not Permitted in 8U during coach pitch.

*C. Hit by Pitch:* 8U has option of being awarded first base or continuing to bat.

## BATTER-RUNNER AND RUNNER (USA Rule 8)

The batter becomes a batter-runner as soon as the batter legally hits a fair ball.

### A. Stealing Bases / Overthrows:

Runners are entitled to advance with liability to be put out when the ball leaves the pitcher's hand on the delivery.

*8U:* Runner may advance one base per pitch EXCEPT during coach pitch. Runner may steal one base per OVERTHROW. Stealing home plate is NOT permitted.

**B. Base Running:** Runners must avoid contact with fielders by going around to avoid interfering with a fielder attempting to field a batted ball. When a runner is off a base, and while the pitcher has control of the ball in the circle, the runner may stop once then must immediately return to the base, or attempt to advance to the next base. See USA Rule 8, Section 7 for all circle violation rules.

### C. Infield Fly Rule:

*8U:* Not invoked.

*10U / 12U / 14U:* A fair fly ball, not including a line drive or an attempted bunt, which can be caught by an infielder, pitcher or catcher with ordinary effort when first and second or first, second and third bases are occupied with less than 2 outs. Umpire must invoke the rule by stating "infield fly" when appropriate.

**D. Courtesy Runner:** Permitted for injured players only. The last player put out will serve as courtesy runner, and there is no penalty.

### E. Dropped Third Strike:

When the catcher fails to catch the third strike before the ball touches the ground and there are 2 outs, or fewer than 2 outs and first base is not occupied at the time of the pitch. Batter may attempt to take first base.

*8U:* Not applied.

**F. Passed Ball / Wild Pitch:** Runners may advance with liability to be put out. (8U: one base per pitch)

## PROTESTS (USA Rule 9)

**NOT ALLOWED.** Any questions regarding the playing rules must be made before the next pitch, and final decisions will be made by the chief umpire. Any complaints of illegal or ineligible players shall be brought to the attention of the umpire and the CGFP board for future review.

## UMPIRES (Rule 10)

All umpires must become familiar with CGFP Division rules, and enforce them in all league play.

Umpires are REQUIRED to continue to call balls & strikes during coach pitch in 8U.

Any umpiring issues need to be reported to the CGFP Umpire in Chief (UIC) representative, if available, or other league Board Members. All contact with the Umpire Organization is through the UIC.

## SCORING (Rule 11)

### Standings

**A** - A Team's record starting with the first game after Daylight Savings Time, excluding inter-league play, will be used to determine playoff seeding, and all teams will make the playoffs.

**B** – Team winning percentage will determine playoff seeding.  $\text{Win \%} = ((\# \text{ Wins}) + (.5 * \# \text{ Ties}))/\text{Total Games}$

**C** - Regular season games can end in a tie. Playoffs will utilize the tie-breaker rule as defined by USA Softball Rule 5 Sec 11.

**D** - Inter-league games will not count towards playoff seeding.

**E** - Official scorekeeper must be provided by the home team, unless none available and the visitor may then accept responsibility. Scorekeeper must at a minimum keep track of : correct batting order, pitch count , outs, runs scored, and pitcher innings.

## RULES SUPPLEMENT

### Playoffs

ALL CGFP DIVISION RULES apply to playoff and championship games unless specified below:

All Pitchers are allowed ONE ADDITIONAL inning for the championship game only.

Playoff games cannot end in ties, and during all tiebreaker innings any pitcher may be used regardless of inning limits. All other division rules must be followed.

All Playoff Games prior to Championship game will be 5 innings unless home team is winning after the top of the 5<sup>th</sup>.

*8U:* Championship game is 5 innings. Coach Pitch only after bases are loaded.

*10U:* Championship game is 6 innings.

*12U / 14U:* Championship game is 7 innings.

USA Rule 5, section 11: Tie-Breaker: At the beginning of each half inning, the offensive team shall begin its turn at bat with the player who is scheduled to bat last in that respective half inning being placed on second base. (e.g. If the #5 batter is the leadoff batter, the #4 batter in the batting order will be placed on second base. A SUBSTITUTE MAY NOT BE INSERTED (CGFP).