



# JUNIOR LEAGUE



**Competition Regulations  
2019/20**

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# FOREWORD

These regulations govern the terms and conditions of the Softball ACT (SACT) Junior League for the 2019/20 season.

The following rules of interpretation apply to these regulations, unless the context requires otherwise:

- The singular includes the plural and vice versa;
- Where a word or phrase is defined, its other grammatical forms have the corresponding meaning, and;
- Heading are for convenience only and do not affect interpretation.

All competition games will be played, administered and governed by the Softball Australia Official Playing Rules (current version), together with these regulations and any published policy of SACT.

If any inconsistency or conflict exists between the SA rules, these regulations and any published policy of SACT, these regulations and any published policy of SACT will apply.

SACT rulings are final regarding the application and interpretation of the rules.

Changes to playing rules and applications will not ordinarily be made, however SACT reserves the right to amend, modify or change these regulations prior to or during any stage of the competition.

A review period will be implemented after the completion of the 2019/20 season to review any changes that are required moving forward.

## DEFINITIONS

- **Away team** means the team named second in the draw, occupies the 1<sup>st</sup> base dugout and bats first
- **Club** means an affiliated entity of SACT that exists for the purpose of competing in softball competitions in the SACT domestic competitions, and includes school-based clubs and community clubs.
- **Competition** means the SACT Junior League
- **Farming** is when a player from one Club plays with another Club temporarily
- **Force Majeure** is an unforeseeable circumstance that prevents the fulfilment of a responsibility
- **Primary Club** means the club with which a player is registered for the season
- **Home Team** means the team named first in the draw, occupies the 3<sup>rd</sup> base dugout and fields first
- **Ineligible Player** means a player not suitably registered to play, and who will attract a forfeit if playing as such.
- **Inter-Club** means movement of players between clubs
- **Intra-Club** means movement of players within the same club across divisions
- **Playing** means (when determining finals eligibility rules) when a player actively engages with a game (not just sitting on the bench)
- **Registered Club Member** means an individual registered or permitted in the appropriate way to a Club as defined above
- **Registrar** means the person selected by the Club to deal with registration matters for that Club.
- **Round Games** means games played during the normal process of the season, not finals.
- **SUA ACT** means the Softball Umpires Association of the ACT

# 1 COMPETITION DETAILS

## 1.1 Length of Season

- a) The season will ordinarily include 12-14 rounds.
- b) The season length may be changed at SACT's discretion.

## 1.2 Nominations

- a) Affiliated Clubs will be invited by SACT to enter teams into the Competition.
- b) SACT will offer the following opportunities for entities to enter the ACT Junior League:
  - i. U8 Turbo Teeball
  - ii. U10 Teeball
  - iii. U12 Softball
  - iv. U14 Softball
  - v. U17 Softball
- b) SACT will make a determination once nominations have been finalised as to the viability of the divisions.
- c) All divisions will be mixed, with no gender restrictions.
- d) SACT reserves the right to regrade any team to an appropriate division at any stage.
- e) SACT will operate a single ladder for each age group, except Turbo Teeball
- f) The draw will be created and administered by SACT

## 1.3 Time Limits

- a) Games will be scheduled by SACT
  - i. Teeball will be limited to 60 minutes
  - ii. Softball will be limited to 70 minutes, with no new innings started after 60 minutes.
- b) Game times are absolute, with game scores reverting to the last completed innings if an innings is incapable of being completed in the time, except where the team batting second is in front.
- c) At the conclusion of time, if a batter is in the box, they must complete their turn at bat and the final play in progress must be finished.
- d) Requests for time outs to make fielding changes, substitutions, conferences or any other reason may be refused if the umpires believe there is insufficient time to complete the request.

## 1.4 Equipment

- a) SACT will supply all bases and tees for the competition.
- b) Each team must supply at least one match ball to the umpires before starting the game.
  - a. Turbo Teeball and Teeball – 11" Reduced Injury Balls (RIB)
  - b. U12 and U14 Softball – 11" hard softballs
  - c. U17 Softball – 12" hard softballs
- c) Clubs should supply bats, gloves and helmets for all players.
- d) SACT may be able to assist developing Clubs with equipment loans and purchases on a temporary basis if the Club does not possess these items.

## 1.5 Prizes

- a) SACT will award a participation medal to each registered player
- b) SACT will replace the participation medal with a Winner or Runner Up medal for those players in teams that are awarded these finishing positions.

- c) Softball ACT will award the following individual awards:
  - a. Mon Pearson Award (Teeball)
  - b. Kathy Pryce Award (Softball)
- d) Teams will vote for Pearson and Pryce Awards for the **opposing teams'** best and fairest players under a 3-2-1 system each week

## 1.6 Canteen Duty

- a) Clubs will be rostered to assist with the operation of the canteen facility based on the number of teams they enter into competitions.
- b) Clubs are to provide 4 volunteers per shift
- c) The number of duties will be determined pre-season but will be the minimum required to facilitate the operation of the facility.
- d) Softball ACT will provide a canteen roster sign-on sheet that attendees will sign to confirm that they attended.
- e) Teams failing to perform their canteen duties will be sanctioned \$50 for each incidence of missing their duty, invoiced by SACT.
- f) Clubs failing to pay invoices for non-performance of canteen duty will not be permitted to take the diamond.

## 2 PLAYERS

### 2.1 Registration

- a) Players will be deemed eligible to register and participate in an ACT Junior League if they are:
  - i. Financial (not carrying a debt) with SACT or any affiliated entity
  - ii. Not suspended by SACT or any other affiliated entity
  - iii. A Registered Club Member using the appropriate online system as determined by Softball ACT (currently SportsTG)
  - iv. Aged less than the publicised year of age of the competition as of 31 December
- b) Once centrally registered with their club, Registrars will place individuals into a team within the club account.
- c) Players must be registered prior to, or as soon as practicably after, any play otherwise they will be deemed an ineligible player.
- d) Clubs represented by ineligible players will forfeit any game in which they play.
- e) Clubs are responsible for checking the eligibility of players and informing SACT of issues as soon as practicable.

### 2.2 Age Eligibility

- a) Any player is entitled to play in a division higher than their qualified age bracket, with responsibility resting with the coach and parents as to whether the player is capable and safe to do so.
- b) Players are entitled to request an exemption to play 'down' a single division if the player is less than 6 months older than cut-off date requires.
- c) Notwithstanding 2.2 (b), SACT may make a determination regarding eligibility to allow a flexible approach to dealing with unique situations (including disability or significant developmental disadvantage) at its discretion.
- d) All exemption requests will be assessed primarily on skill level, must come from the Club concerned and be completed prior to play using the Age Eligibility Exemption Request Form.
- e) SACT may conduct spot-checks throughout the season to ensure Clubs are maintaining properly graded teams in line with age restrictions.

### 2.3 Finals Eligibility

- a) Players must play four (4) games for a team throughout the year to be eligible to play finals
- b) Younger players that have played four (4) games for a lower age group are eligible to play finals for a higher age group within the same Club.
- c) Exception requests for finals must be requested prior to the end of Round games, and will require:
  - i. Concise reasons for consideration;
  - ii. Detailed supporting evidence, and;
  - iii. May require further information as requested by SACT.
- d) All requests under 2.3(c) must be completed prior to play by using the Finals Eligibility Exemption Request Form.

### 2.4 Uniform

- a) Clubs must register their Playing Uniform (playing top and playing pants) with SACT prior to the commencement of the season, including club colours and design(s).
- b) Playing uniforms must be alike in colour and design across a team's players

- c) Coaches and Managers are encouraged to wear a uniform that reflects their Clubs' colours, however this is a matter for Clubs to determine.
- d) All participants must remove any distracting personal items, such as jewellery or otherwise, if requested to do so by an umpire.

## 2.5 Player Safety

- a) Softball ACT recommends that pitchers and infielders wear a suitable face mask to protect themselves from impact injuries.
- b) Safety equipment (face masks, etc) are not subject to uniform rules.
- c) Players are to remove any items, including jewellery, that may cause injury to themselves or others.

# 3 FEES AND PAYMENT

## 3.1 Dates

- a) SACT requires payment from Clubs under the following terms:
  - i. Payment of club affiliation fees by 19 October.
  - ii. Payment of 50% of team fees by 19 October.
  - iii. Payment finalised by 30 November.

## 3.2 Sanctions

- a) Should a Club fail to meet payment deadlines, SACT will impose a late fee of \$550 for each team that failed to meet the deadline.
- b) In addition, should a Club fail to meet payment deadlines, SACT may choose (at its discretion) to impose sanctions, including:
  - i. Prevention of teams from playing in the competition (forced forfeit)
  - ii. Rendering individuals from the offending Club ineligible for State teams
  - iii. Engaging debt collection agencies to recover sums from Clubs or leading individuals involved in Clubs (including any late fees imposed under this section).

# 4 FIELD SETUP

- a) Softball ACT will assume responsibility for preparation of the grounds at Hawker
- b) Pitching distances for each division will be:
  - a. U17 – 46' (males) and 43' (females)
  - b. U14 – 43' (males) and 40' (females)
  - c. U12 – 40'
- c) The Home team will ensure the diamond is ready for the game to commence including obtaining bases and plates and setting them out if not completed, clearing moveable objects from the playing area, and ensuring the Competition Convenor is made aware of any major issues impacting the commencement or completion of the game in a timely manner.
- d) The first team using a dugout area on any given day will be responsible for the setup of any shade structures provided.
- e) The last team using a dugout area on any given day will be responsible for the pack down of any shade structures provided.
- f) At the completion of the final game of the day, both teams will be responsible for collecting the bases and ensuring they are stacked neatly outside of the playing area.



- g) Failure to perform pack down duties will result in structures not being provided in the future.

## 5 PLAYING THE GAME

### 5.1 Team Makeup

- a) For Turbo Teeball;
  - a. The maximum number of players permitted on the diamond is six (6).
  - b. Rule restrictions on batting order and substitutions do not apply
  - c. Coaches are encouraged to remember their role as game leaders and ensure that all players are able to enjoy themselves
- b) For all other divisions;
  - a. Games may be played with a minimum of seven (7) players in a team's line-up.
  - b. If a team has fewer than nine (9) players:
    - i. A space will be left in the line-up for each missing player
    - ii. When it is the turn of a missing player to bat, an out will be recorded against their spot in the line-up
    - iii. A player who arrives during the game may fill a slot at any time
- c) Where teams are unable to field seven (7) players at the scheduled start time, a ten (10) minute grace period will be provided to obtain the extra players.
- d) Games that are delayed under this rule will have any time taken removed from the total game time.
- e) Where a team cannot field seven (7) players, a forfeit will be recorded.

### 5.2 Recording

#### Results

- a) Turbo Teeball is not scored.
- b) In all other divisions, a game will be a regulation game if
  - a. At least 45 minutes have been played, or
  - b. In accordance with the rulebook.
- c) If a game is abandoned due to wet weather or other circumstances before becoming a regulation game, then the game will be declared a 0-0 draw.

#### Scorecards

- a) A scorecard shall be provided by the Home team.
- b) Teams must exchange line-ups at least ten (10) minutes prior to game start
- c) Teams must list player batting order and all other appropriate information.
- d) The scorecard will be used by the umpire during the fixture.
- e) At the end of the game, the umpire will complete their section on the card and return to the winning team to submit to SACT
- f) Both teams are required to complete the player declaration section on the scorecard
- g) Cards are to be returned to the Competition Registrar via the Score Cards box.
- h) Whilst Turbo Teeball does not record scores, scorecards must be completed for registration and insurance purposes.

## Runs Ahead and Runs Across the Plate

- a) The Run-Ahead rule will not apply in teeball games
- b) In Softball games, the rulebook run-ahead rule will apply
- c) In all games, no more than five (5) runs may be scored in a single batting innings. Once five (5) runs have been scored, the batting inning will end, even if three (3) outs have not yet been recorded. *Note: In a situation where 4 runs have already been scored, and a home run hit with multiple runners on bases, only 5 runs will count.*

## Declarations

- a) In all games, the batting team may declare at any point during their inning, to voluntarily retire and send the fielding team in to bat, with no limit on the number of declarations per game.

## 5.3 Forfeits

- a) Teams may organise to forfeit a game by contacting SACT.
- b) SACT will notify affected Clubs and SUAAct of any forfeits as soon as practicable.
- c) Teams that forfeit in this manner shall record (0) competition points for the fixture.
- d) If scores are recorded for that division, the score of a forfeited game shall be 7-0 in favour of the team not at fault.
- e) Teams that record a forfeit will not have any players registered to their team for purposes of finals qualification.
- f) Teams that collect a forfeit victory are required to submit a scorecard with the players that would have played that weekend for the purposes of finals qualification, interchange and farming arrangements.

## 5.4 Special Rules – Softball

### Softball Pitching Restrictions

- a) Players may pitch for a maximum of three (3) innings or part thereof per game
- b) Where a game goes to seven (7) or more innings, a player who has pitched for three (3) innings in the game may return to pitch up to a further three (3) innings.

### Softball Strike Zone

- a) The strike zone shall be measured from the batter's armpits, rather than the bottom of the sternum.

## 5.5 Special Rules – Teeball

### Teeball Rules

- a) The ball is not pitched in teeball but is instead batted off a tee, which is positioned so that the ball is held over the front edge of home plate.
- b) Base runners must remain in contact with their base until the ball is hit.
- c) A "FOUL BALL" shall be declared in accordance with the Official Rules, or if the batted ball does not travel more than 20' (6.10m) from the tee, or if the batter hits the tee instead of the ball.

- d) The infield fly rule does not apply in teeball.
- e) The catcher must wear a catcher's mask and helmet, fielding facemask, or batting helmet at all times while in the field.
- f) The umpire will call "play ball" prior to each swing at the ball. If a batter swings at the ball before "play ball" has been called, the play will not count.
- g) The umpire will call "Time" at the end of a play, when:
  - a. The ball is possessed by an infielder, who stands either within the pitching circle, or is in front of the lead runner.
  - b. The runners have stopped running.
  - c. The umpire may call "time" even if the runners are still moving if, in his or her opinion, this is the appropriate action for the skill level of the players. Runners who are between bases when the time out is granted must proceed to the base they were going to.
- h) There are no restrictions on substitutions and re-entries in teeball

## 5.6 Special Rules – Turbo Teeball

- a) No score is kept.
- b) There is no umpire, but rather the allocated Game Manager has a role to ensure the game starts on time and manage the progress of the game.
- c) The teams' coaches, or a representative, will act as game leaders to help ensure a fun and educational experience for the players.
- d) Only six players may field at a time. Coaches are encouraged to rotate players
- e) Each batting inning will end after six batters have had their turn at bat that inning.
- f) Excepting the last batter, the batter and runners may only advance one base at a time per at-bat.
- g) Runners may remain on the bases even if an out is recorded. The fielding team's objective is to get the ball in front of the lead runner so that the umpire can call "time".

## 5.7 Ladder and Points

- a) If a division records ladder points, points shall be awarded as follows:

<b>Win</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Draw</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Loss</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Forfeit (loss)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Forfeit (win)</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Bye</b>	
<b>Washout</b>	<b>2</b>

- b) Where teams are equal on points, the highest run difference will determine the higher placed team.
- c) Where teams are equal on points and run difference, the most runs will be ranked higher.
- d) Where teams have not played the same number of games, then the ladder position will firstly be determined by the average points per game ratio.

## 5.8 Protests

### Rule Protests

- a) Protests regarding the application of the rules are not permitted in the Junior League.
- b) Coaches / Team Officials are not to approach green shirt trainee umpires to discuss any matters related to the game
- c) League Supervisors provided by SACT and SUA ACT will be available at the grounds at all times.

### Score Protests

- a) The umpires will confer with both teams after the match to ensure the score is correct.
- b) If a score is contested, teams and the umpire should discuss and attempt to rectify the situation immediately.
- c) If the situation is unable to be resolved at the time, teams must make a submission under the Protest Form, and must not sign the scorecard.
- d) If a team has signed the scorecard, SACT will not accept any protest on that game.
- e) Notwithstanding the above, if SACT becomes aware that a mistake has been made that is accepted by both teams, it will be rectified.

## 5.9 Finals

### Format

- a) SACT will play finals in all junior divisions, with the exception of Turbo Teeball.
- b) SACT will offer consolation finals (playoff games) for teams in junior divisions that do not play finals (Turbo Teeball) and for teams that do not make the finals, pending ground availability.
- c) Where there is a uneven number of teams in a competition, Softball ACT will provide consolation games for as many teams as possible.
- d) Where there are only three (3) teams within a division, the following format will apply:

<b>Semi Final</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> v 3 <sup>rd</sup>
<b>Grand Final</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> v Winner SF

- e) Where there are more than three (3) teams within a division, the following format will apply:

<b>Semi Finals</b>	SF 1 – 1 <sup>st</sup> v 4 <sup>th</sup>
	SF 2 – 2 <sup>nd</sup> v 3 <sup>rd</sup>
<b>Grand Final</b>	Winner SF1 v Winner SF2

- f) Finals shall follow the same format as regular competition games, except that there is no upper time limit.
- g) No new innings may be played after 60 minutes, unless the score is tied at the conclusion of the final inning, in which case tie-breaker innings shall be played until a winner is found.
- h) If a final cannot be played (except in instances of forfeit), then games will be attempted to be rescheduled to the following week.
- i) If a final cannot be rescheduled, the higher placed team on the ladder will be judged the winner.

## 6 UMPIRING

### 6.1 Umpires

- a) Turbo Teeball will not have umpires allocated. SACT will appoint a Game Manager.
- b) All other grades will have an appointed Umpire from a Club, rostered by SACT.
- c) SUAACT will allocate umpires to cover games throughout the ACT Junior League season.
- d) Where a SUAACT umpire is not allocated, the Duty Umpire Roster will apply

### 6.2 Duty Umpiring

- a) Softball ACT will schedule teams across the season into a Duty Umpire Roster.
- b) Duty Umpire team allocations will be evenly distributed throughout the season.
- c) SUAACT will advise Clubs and SACT of the coverage available by Thursday preceding a Saturday game.
- d) All plate umpires must wear the appropriate safety gear.

## 7 WEATHER AFFECTED ROUNDS

- a) Games may be adversely affected by weather, and SACT will support the safety of our participants as a primary function.
- b) Where excessive heat affects a game, the Softball Australia's Hot Weather Guidelines will apply.
- c) In the event of inclement weather, the responsibility for a determination of abandonment or modification will rest with:

<b>Prior to day of fixture</b>	SACT Operations Coordinator
<b>On the day of fixture</b>	SACT Competition Convenor

- d) As soon as notified and practicable, SACT will place notification on social media (Softball ACT Official Facebook page) and a dedicated WhatsApp group for this purpose.
- e) In the event of a Weather Affected Round, teams are required to submit a scorecard with the players that would have played that weekend for the purposes of finals qualification prior to their next scheduled game.
- f) If a Weather Affected Round is declared, any forfeit notifications and actions received prior to this declaration will be nullified.
- g) Any games that are weather affected to the extent that they cannot continue will not be replayed.

## 8 DISCIPLINE

### 8.1 General

- a) Any disciplinary matters arising from the ACT Junior League will be dealt with under the SACT Disciplinary Regulations, including those pertaining to spectators, participants, staff and volunteers, and any persons directly or indirectly connected with Softball competition.
- b) This includes both on-field and off-field complaints, issues and other matters
- c) Where applicable, the SACT Member Protection Policy (including Softball Australia Member Protection Policy) will also apply.

### 8.2 Ejection

- a) Umpires (including Duty Umpires), SUAACT Umpire Coordinator and the Competition Convenor may eject persons from a game at any time, for any reason, including spectators and officials.
- b) Any person ejected from a game must leave the grounds immediately.
- c) Leaving the grounds requires removal of the individual to a position where they can have no further influence on the game, including intimidating the umpire or any officials.
- d) Persons failing to adhere to the ejection ruling will have their supported team declared to forfeit, will personally be automatically banned for one (1) calendar month and may face further sanctions under the SACT Disciplinary Regulations.

## 9 COMPLAINTS

- a) All complaints should be directed via the Complaints Form to the SACT Operations Coordinator.

## 10 FACILITY RULES

- a) All Softball ACT competitions held at the Hawker Softball Centre and surrounding areas will adhere to any facility rules including, but not limited to:
  - a. Smoking
  - b. Alcohol
  - c. Dogs and animals
  - d. Cleats in the Clubhouse
- b) Any individuals caught flouting these rules will be issued have their Club issued with a fine of \$50

## 11 FORCE MAJEURE

- a) If SACT is unable to perform, in whole or part, any obligation under these regulations by reason of a force majeure event, SACT is relieved of that obligation under these regulations to the extent and the period it is unable to perform.
- b) SACT will endeavour to provide suitable alternatives for any circumstance affected in whole or part by a force majeure event, however is under no obligation to refund any amounts paid by Clubs to take part in the ACT Junior League