

PCAL SPORTS RULES

SOFTBALL

As Amended by PCAL Board of Managers Jan 2026

1.1 Season of Sport

This sport shall be conducted in the Spring season as defined by the Central Coast Section and State CIF by-laws. See Article V of the By-Laws of the Central Coast Section.

1.2 Start Dates for Practices, Scrimmages and Contests

Dates for the start of practices, of scrimmages, and of contests shall be as set forth in Article V of the By-Laws of the Central Coast Section.

1.3 Contest Limits per Season

Limitations on the number of contests in which a team or athlete may compete shall be as set forth in Article V of the By-Laws of the Central Coast Section.

1.4 Divisions

Beginning Spring 2026, League play in this sport shall be conducted in 4 divisions formed according to league by-laws and policies concerning Division Placement (See Article 19 of the League By-Laws as well as the League's Division Placement Policy as published on the League website). Those 3 divisions shall be named as follows: PCAL-Gabilan, PCAL-Mission, PCAL-Cypress and PCAL-Santa Lucia.

1.5 League Schedules

1.5.1 Round Robin

The league schedule for each Division shall be a double or triple round robin schedule, as decided by the League Board of Managers from year to year.

1.5.2 Preparation and Approval of Schedules

League schedules shall be prepared by the League Commissioner and sent to the League Athletic Directors Council for review, modification as needed. The Athletic Directors Council then send a recommended schedule to the League Board of Managers who consider, change as they deem necessary, and vote approval of a final schedule.

1.5.3 Obligation of Schools to Compete According to Schedule

See Article 19 in the League By-laws regarding the obligation of all league schools to compete according to the approved league schedule.

1.6 Contests

The following provisions shall govern all regular season Softball contests hosted by a League School. Tournaments or Invitational events may be conducted under differing rules not in conflict with the rule book for this sport.

1.6.1 Rules

Contests in this sport shall be governed by the rules of the National Federation of High Schools for that sport and in accordance with any additional rules set forth in this Section 1.6.

1.6.2 League Contest Start Times:

All afternoon games shall be played as shown on the approved league schedule for each division. Home site shall determine at the start of the season the order of contests between JV and Varsity, and it will remain the same for the entire

season.

Note: It is understood that transportation schedules for visiting teams may interfere with starting times. It is also understood that visiting teams will notify home teams, administrators or Athletic Director by 12 noon on game date. No teams shall be penalized for transportation difficulties. Schools with one diamond available will play JV games upon availability of fields. Dates may vary from the schedule.

1.6.3 Equipment

PCAL teams shall use an NFHS approved game ball with the NFHS stamp on the ball.

1.6.4 Order of Events/Special rules re time or max run or events

The game order, Varsity, JV or Frosh shall be determined by the home school but remain the same for the entire season.

For sub-Varsity games only: no new inning shall be started after an elapsed game time of 1 hour, 45 minutes. Innings in progress at said time, shall be completed.

1.6.5 Ten Run Mercy Rule and International Tie Breaker

The 10 run mercy Rule shall be in effect for all PCAL softball contests once a 5 inning complete game is in the book.

1.6.6 International Tie Breaker

The international tie breaker shall be used after nine (9) innings.

1.6.7 Called games due to darkness. Make up rules.

If a game is tied and called due to darkness it will be continued on the day of the next scheduled contest between the two teams. The game shall be completed prior to the start of the regularly scheduled contest. If the called game is the last meeting of the season between the two teams, it will be continued at the next date available for both teams at the site of the Home team.

1.6.8 Rainouts

Rained out incomplete contests shall be made up the next date available for both teams. If the home coach declares his field unplayable, every effort shall be made to play the contest at an alternate location that same day.

1.6.9 Game Day batting cage.

There will be NO hitting of any kind in the batting cage on the day of a game.

1.6.10 Warm ups. Late bus.

Prior to pre-game infield by each team, the teams shall share the field equally, with each team having one-half of the infield and outfield on which to warm up, based on a line from home plate, through second base and to the center field barrier.

Teams arriving late to 3:30 starting time shall be given 15 minutes to warm up and 10 minutes infield/outfield. The home team shall not take infield/outfield until the visiting team has arrived.

1.7 League Championship Determination

Each of the Divisions shall have a champion, determined by the league round robin results. In the case of a first place tie between two teams, those teams shall be Co-Champions of the Division. In the case of a first place tie between three teams, those teams shall be Tri-Champions of the Division.

1.8 League Qualifiers to the CCS Playoffs

The 8 CCS automatic qualifier spots will be allocated as follows:

Gabilan -5

Mission -1

With Play In Games for the remaining two spots as follows:

Gabilan 6 at Mission 3 and

Mission 2 at winner of prior play in game between Santa Lucia 1 at Cypress 1

Ties for any of these qualifier spots shall be broken per league tie breaker rules in the PCAL By-laws, Article 23.

1.9 All League Selections

Each Division shall have its own All-League selections, with those selections made by the coaches of that Division after the end of the League season. Those selections shall be made and announced in accordance with the provisions of PCAL By-Laws, Article 24.

END PCAL SOFTBALL SPORTS RULES.

History

- Original Rules Adopted September 2018.
- Amended January 2019 to add International Tie Breaker (1.6.6).
- Amended May 2019 to clarify home teams in Play In games (1.8).
- Amended Mar 2020 to change play-in contestants (1.8)
- Amended May 2022 to change number of divisions (1.4) and play-in contestants (1.8)
- Amended May 2023 to delete old 1.6.9 (Spring Break scheduling) as superseded by new PCAL By-Law 18.3.1.1.
- Amended January 2026 to change both number of divisions (1.4) and play-in contestants (1.8)