



GCAA 10U-16U Rules

I. League Administration

GCAA will coordinate with the Johnston County Athletic Association to administer the league and reserves the right to make any changes they deem necessary.

-Official Tar Heel Softball Rules, INC (<https://www.tarheel leagues.com/forms>) will apply with the following modifications-

-For all other rules, see NFHS Rule Book-

II. General Guidelines

A. Age Divisions: 8u, 10u, 12u, & 16u

B. Cut-off Date: January 1, 2024.

C. Birth Certificates are required for each player. It will be each area's responsibility to have a copy of each participant on file.

D. Umpires: Each site will be responsible for booking and paying for the umpires to call games at their site. There shall be 2 umpires booked for each game. If for some unforeseen reason, only 1 umpire arrives for the ball game, the umpire MUST call the game from behind the plate. One umpire for 10u.

E. Scorekeepers: Leagues should have scorekeepers who will be responsible for the field supervision, time limits, run limits, mandatory playing rule and scorekeeping. The score will be displayed if able. If an official scorekeeper is not present, the home team is responsible for keeping the official scorebook. If the home team has to provide the scorekeeper, the scorekeeper should sit behind the fence at home plate if possible.

F. Farm Team Procedures: in order to prevent forfeits, a farm team system may be used for the 10u, 12u & 16u divisions. If a team does not have enough players to field a team, a coach may call their assigned farm league team coach for a list of eligible players. Farm teams can only play in the higher age group if they do not have a game with their own team at the same time. Farm team players may only be called up to ensure a ten-player roster. You cannot call up players for any situation, ie. position or eleven or more roster. Farm team players may not start above regular team members nor may they play more than regular team members. Farm team and regular members that are present at the start of the game must play defense according to the mandatory playing rule. Farm player must bat last in order.

G. If an area has more than one team in a particular age group, those teams must be split equally based upon talent.



GCAA 10U-16U Rules

H. It will be the responsibility of the host area to notify the opposing team of any cancellations due to the inclement weather. In the event of game stoppage, the rescheduled game will take place exactly where the original ended.

I. No change requests will be made to the game schedule except in the case of inclement weather. There will be no exceptions to this rule

J. Players and coaches must clean up their respective dugouts after each game before leaving the playing field.

III. Equipment Regulations

A. The home team will furnish the softballs for each game. Yellow must be used for the entire game.

1. 8u & 10u - 11" .47 core NFHS or ASA

2. 12u & 16u - 12" .47 core NFHS

B. Catcher's mask, helmet, chest protectors, shin guards and batting helmets are required. Any player that is warming up a pitcher must wear a catcher's helmet and mask.

C. All batting helmets must have a protective facemask.

D. No Hair Ribbons can be worn. This is new for 2010 and is mandated by NCHSAA.

E. All players must wear a fielder's protective mask while playing an infield position.

F. NO METAL CLEATS ARE ALLOWED FOR 8u, 10u, 12u.

IV. Regulation Game & Run Limits

A. All games will have maximum 6 innings (7 innings max for 16u) with no new inning starting after 1 hour and 15 minutes. Games will play until the inning has been completed, there will be no drop dead play.

B. Run Rule: The game will be declared a complete game when the home team is leading by 10 runs after 3 1/2 innings of play in the 10u & 12u age groups, and 4 1/2 innings in the 16u age group. The bottom half of the inning must be played if the visiting team accumulates the ten-run margin.

C. Maximum Runs/Inning: In the 10u league, the offensive team will bat until 5 runs or 3 outs have been recorded, whichever comes first. In the 12u league, the offensive team will bat until 7 runs or 3 outs have been recorded, whichever comes first. 16u unlimited scoring.



GCAA 10U-16U Rules

D. Grace Periods: a 10-minute grace period will be given for the first game of the day only. All other games will start at the official game time.

V. Playing Rules & Regulations

A. All age groups will use 60 ft bases.

B. Teams will be allowed to start a game with eight players. If a team cannot field at least eight players, they will lose by forfeit. If additional players arrive after the game has begun, teams may put their 9th or 10th (10u only) player in the field and place late players at the end of the continuous batting order. If, for any reason, a team drops below eight players, they will automatically forfeit.

C. Dropped Third Strike

1. 10u: May not advance
2. 12u & 16u May advance if:
 - a. Less than two outs & 1st base is NOT occupied
 - b. There are two outs.

D. Continuous Batting Order: each coach shall make a batting order consisting of all members of the team that are present for the game. Players will bat in this order throughout the game.

1. Lineups must be turned into the official scorekeeper at least 10 minutes prior to the scheduled game time.
2. All pitching changes must be reported to the official scorekeeper.
3. All players must play in every other defensive inning. No player may sit out two consecutive innings.
4. Coaches should report possible violations of the mandatory playing rule to their area B.O.D. A penalty will be issued within 24 hours of infraction.
5. The mandatory playing rule may only be waived for disciplinary reasons or injury. (Players injured or being disciplined must be reported to and approved by the appropriate B.O.D. for that area.)
6. If a player gets injured or has to leave the game, their batting position will be skipped and no out will be recorded. However, if a player cannot bat, they will not be allowed to reenter the game. *Note: If a player is ejected from the game, an out will be recorded each time their batting position comes up.*



GCAA 10U-16U Rules

E. Free substitution is allowed for all players throughout the game, pitchers may re-enter once per inning.

F. Infield Fly Rule

1. 10u No infield fly rule.
2. 12u & 16u Infield fly rule will apply.

G. Stealing

1. 10u May steal when the ball crosses home plate. May not steal home.
2. 12u & 16u May steal any base when the ball leaves the pitcher's hand.

Note: 10u Only: The runner may not advance more than one base during a steal attempt. If the runner is stealing second or third and there is an errant throw or catch and the ball gets by the fielder, the runner MAY NOT advance any further.

H. Speed up Rules:

1. Mandatory runner for the catcher with 2 outs.
2. Optional runner for the pitcher and/or catcher with less than 2 outs.
3. Runner must be the person who made the last out.
4. A coach must warm up the pitcher until the catcher is ready. Once the catcher is ready, the pitcher will receive two additional pitches.

I. Sliding Rule: a base runner, advancing to any base, must attempt to avoid a collision if the defensive player has possession of the ball or is about to catch a thrown ball. If the base runner does not attempt to avoid a collision and makes aggressive contact with the defensive player, she is automatically declared out and will be ejected from the game if deemed flagrant.

Note: This is a judgment call by the umpire and cannot be protested.

VI. Pitching Rules & Regulations

A. Pitching Distances

1. 10u 35 feet
2. 12u 40 feet
3. 16u 43 feet

B. Pitching Regulations



GCAA 10U-16U Rules

1. 10u & 12u: No pitcher may pitch more than 4 innings per game.
2. 16u No pitcher may pitch more than 5 innings per game.
3. One pitch constitutes an inning.

C. Pitcher's Delivery Clarification (directly from NFHS rule book):

1. Prior to starting the delivery (pitch), the pitcher shall take a position with the pivot foot on or partially on the top surface of the pitcher's plate and the non-pivot foot in contact with or behind the pitcher's plate. Both feet must be on the ground within or partially within the 24-inch length of the pitcher's plate.
2. The pitch starts when one hand is taken off the ball or the pitcher makes any motion that is part of the windup after the hands have been brought together.
3. Once the hands are brought together and are in motion, the pitcher shall not take more than one step which must be forward, toward the batter and simultaneous with the delivery. Any step backward shall begin before the hands come together. The step backward may end before or after the hands come together.

VII. Protests & Conduct

A. Protest: a coach may not protest a judgment call. The only allowable protests are those involving eligible players or rule misinterpretation.

B. Protest Procedures

1. Notify the umpires and official scorekeeper at the point of infraction.
2. Continue the game under protest.
3. All protests must be reported to the League President within 24 hours of occurrence. Then, protests should be submitted in writing to the League President within 96 hours of the game start time. Attach a check for \$100.00 for the protest fee: Payable to Greater Cleveland Athletic Association, check will be returned if the protest is upheld. The protest committee will render a decision within 24 hours of receiving the protest.

C. Conduct: Players, coaches and spectators are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner for a youth recreational sporting event. Any player, coach or spectator is subject for removal from the game by the official for unsportsmanlike conduct, profanity, or other objectionable behavior. Any coach, player or spectator ejected from the game must leave the facility immediately and will be suspended for the next two games. A second ejection will automatically result in a suspension for the remainder of the season.



GCAA 10U-16U Rules

VIII. Special Rules for 10u League Only

A. In order to play a more competitive game, the hitter will receive pitches from the player pitcher until 4 balls have been called by the umpire, the batter has struck out, or the batter puts the ball into play, whichever comes first. The coach will then step in and pitch the remaining strikes that batter has left (i.e., the batter has no strikes, then the coach will pitch 3 pitches, if the batter has 2 strikes, then the coach will pitch 1 pitch) . The batter CAN NOT RECEIVE A BASE ON BALLS, BUT CAN STRIKE OUT. The umpire will not be behind the plate for the coach pitches. There must be an umpire behind the plate during the player pitcher pitches to make a call on the pitches.

B. If at anytime a batter is hit by a pitch she may take first base. If a coach-pitcher hits a batter, the pitch will not count and the batter will remain at bat.

C. Stealing may only take place when the player-pitcher is throwing. A runner may not steal a base when the coach-pitcher is throwing.

D. Overthrow: A player may advance at own risk on an overthrow to a base when the ball is put into play by the batter.

E. A batter may not at anytime receive a base on balls.

F. A coach may not stand behind the catcher.

G. No bunting on coach pitches.

H. If a batted ball hits the pitcher (coach), the ball is dead.

CLARIFICATION: If the pitcher catches a line drive in self-defense or is hit by a batted ball, the ball is dead. The batter is then placed on first base and other runners advance only if forced but, if in the opinion of the umpire the pitcher interferes with the batted ball, the batter is out.

I. Ten players constitute a team, but a team may begin with eight players until additional players arrive.

i. Ten players will play defensive, 6 infielders and 4 outfielders. The outfield will be defined as 10' behind the base path.

ii. All outfielders must be positioned at a similar radius.