

2021 - 2022 WPIAL SOFTBALL SCHEDULE

April 28, 2021

First Practice Date ~ March 7, 2022

First Scrimmage Date ~ March 12, 2022

First Play Date ~ March 25, 2022

Maximum Contests ~ 20

Maximum Scrimmages ~ 2

The WPIAL softball *section competition* begins on **March 29, 2022**. Please check your schedule carefully and notify the League Office of any errors at 412-921-7181. **A copy of this document must be given to your coach.**

Coaches are advised that the PIAA By-Laws Article XIV, Section 3 requires that the head coach attend a minimum of one PIAA mandatory rules interpretation prior to each season. Mandatory rules meeting dates and times are available on the PIAA website. www.piaa.org

PLEASE NOTE:

All SECTION games should be completed by May 11, 2022. Teams that do NOT qualify for the WPIAL Tournament may continue to play exhibition games with other non-qualifiers up until the district deadline (June 4, 2022), provided they do not exceed the maximum number of competitions. Teams who have qualified for the WPIAL playoffs cannot play an exhibition game after MAY 14, 2022 but may scrimmage as often as they want throughout the tournaments provided the team they scrimmage has also qualified and remains alive in the WPIAL/PIAA Tournament. Be aware that during the WPIAL tournament the Dudley SB12LNDYFP softball will be used exclusively.

1. **The top four (4) teams in each section will enter the WPIAL Tournament.** All playoff entries will be determined by section record only and will be determined by the best section won/lost record. Teams that tie for first place will not have the tie broken and **ALL** the tied teams will be declared section champions, will receive a section winner's plaque, and will be entered into the WPIAL tournament. If three or more teams tie for first place, only those teams will qualify for the playoffs.

In the event of a multiple team tie (two or more teams) for a playoff position, head-to-head competition will be the first determinant. If head-to-head does not break the tie, the following tie-breaking system will be used. If three or more teams are tied for second place and the tie breaking system identifies one team as the second-place team, the remaining teams will be then tied for third place and the process begins all over with head-to-head competition being the first determinant for establishing the third-place team. If a tie cannot be broken all tied teams will enter the playoffs.

TIE – BREAKING SYSTEM

Section won-lost records of the tied teams will be compiled.

- a. The team with the best numerical head-to-head section record among the tied teams will enter post-season play.
- b. If the tie cannot clearly be broken, all tied teams will enter post-season play.

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EXAMPLES:

- a. Team A is clearly first, Team B is clearly second, Teams C is clearly third, teams D and E have identical section won-loss records and are tied for fourth. To break this tie, we go back to head-to-head. If these two teams split, they both go into the playoffs as the fourth-place team.
 - b. Team A is first, Team B is second, teams C, D and E are tied for third place with identical section won-loss records. Team C is 2-2, Team D is 2-2, and Team E is 2-2. To break this tie, we go back to head-to-head. If these three teams split, they all go into the playoffs as the third and fourth-place teams.
 - c. Keeping in mind that **ONLY** the top four teams qualify for the playoffs, unless ties for a playoff spot cannot be broken. If Team A finishes first and Teams B, C and D tie for second, then the Teams A, B, C and D are the only qualifiers and the second-place tie does not need to be broken.
2. All WPIAL games must be played according to the National Federation Rule Book.
 3. The head coach of each team is responsible for providing an up-to-date Banned Bat list.
 4. The home team will furnish three new balls at the start of each contest. Balls should be allocated over the duration of the game.
 5. Only PIAA softball officials may officiate. The WPIAL recommends at least the use of two PIAA officials for each softball game.
 6. Please make sure that both teams and the umpires know the correct starting time. This should be established by the home team and made known to the visitors in plenty of time. It is recommended that all afternoon contests do not start **before 3:30 PM** unless the competing school principals agree.
 7. All games must be played on scheduled days. By mutual agreement, schedule adjustments may be made to take maximum advantage of good weather and field conditions.
 8. POSTPONED GAMES MUST BE PLAYED IN ORDER OF POSTPONEMENT AND SCHEDULED ON THE FIRST COMMON AVAILABLE DATE. MAKE UP WPIAL SECTION GAMES MUST HAVE PREFERENCE OVER EXHIBITION GAMES, JV, AND JUNIOR HIGH GAMES. Principals and/or Athletic Directors must make every effort to enforce the rule. ALL GAMES POSTPONED DURING THE FIRST HALF OF THE SEASON SHOULD BE RESCHEDULED AND PLAYED PRIOR TO THE BEGINNING OF THE SECOND HALF. If a conflict results because of abuse of this rule, the WPIAL will resolve it. All section games must be completed.
 9. Anytime a coach is in live-ball area to confer with players or an umpire, or to occupy a coach's box, the coach shall be attired in school issued coaching shorts/slacks or warm-up suits (including fleece warm-ups) in school colors or colors of khaki, black, white or gray. **Cut-offs or any type of jeans are prohibited.**

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10. Softball coaches must be in the dugout or on the bench during a game with the following exceptions:
 - a. Coaching in the coaching box when their team is at bat.
 - b. Executing a pitching or position change.
 - c. Attending to an injured player with the approval of the umpire.
11. If rain or wet grounds prevent the playing of a game, the home team must notify the visiting team at least two hours before game time. **The home school principal must approve this postponement.** In this circumstance, use of the other team's field, if playable, is permissible and recommended.
12. **During all WPIAL section competition, any game that is interrupted by bad weather prior to becoming a legal game will be declared a suspended game and resumed at that point and concluded on the next available playing date.**
13. No protests based on play situations of official's decisions involving interpretation or judgement will be considered. In no case, will a contest be replayed.
14. The Ten Run/ Fifteen Run Rule will be in effect for all WPIAL softball games. It reads: If a team is ahead by ten runs or more at the end of five innings the game shall be terminated. This also means if the home team is ahead by ten runs after four and one-half innings, the game will be terminated. Thereafter, if one team should go ahead by ten runs, the same rule must apply. If the visiting team should go ahead by ten runs after the game has become official, the home team will be permitted to bat in their half of the inning. The same procedure applies at the end of three innings if a team is ahead by fifteen runs or more.
15. **POINT OF EMPHASIS – The PIAA is asking coaches to be cognizant of the number of pitches being thrown so as not to wear down the athlete, especially when they are participating in a program outside the realm of their school district sponsored team.**
16. In WPIAL tournament competition, the team at the top of the bracket is designated as the home team and will occupy the first base dugout. In the WPIAL Finals AND Consolation Finals a coin toss will determine the home team and the home team will occupy the first base dugout.
17. **WPIAL Championship play is scheduled to begin the week of May 16, 2022. The finals will be played Wednesday, June 1 and Thursday, June 2, 2022 with a rain date of Friday, June 3, 2022. The championships will be played at California University of Pennsylvania. The WPIAL reserves the right to adjust play dates during the tournament, as it deems necessary.**
18. The top three (3) WPIAL finishers in Classes 1A, 3A, 4A, the top four (4) WPIAL finishers in 2A & 5A as well as the top two (2) finalists in class 6A will qualify for the PIAA tournament. Final placement will be identified by consolation finals in Classes 1A, 3A & 4A and a follow the winner format (2A, 5A & 6A).

19. While not a requirement, programs are encouraged to offer true and meaningful Junior Varsity experiences that allow for full games when possible. This gives the student-athletes the opportunity to develop and execute skills in game settings. By limiting these opportunities, schools are inherently decreasing the value of interscholastic athletic teams.

20. REPORTING SCORES:

The home team is obliged to phone all scores to:

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (412-263-1621/877-672-6224) highschool@post-gazette.com

Tribune Review - PGH (1-888-748-8742) ptrsports@tribweb.com

Washington Observer Reporter (1-800-222-6397) orsports@observer-reporter.com

Other appropriate local papers should be notified as well.