

2026

GIRLS' WESTERN ATHLETIC CONFERENCE

FAST PITCH 3RD & 4TH GRADE





The Girls Western Athletic Conference (GWAC) is committed to provide a fun, yet competitive, environment whereby the young ladies of our community may compete and develop general or advanced skills in specific sports, while learning the basic values of teamwork, respect and sportsmanship.

At all times, we, as their leaders, shall conduct ourselves by word and action in a manner that will always set a good example and will contribute to the girls' roles as young, Christ-centered women, firmly rooted in the Catholic Faith stressing the following:

Discipleship – to empower young women to live as disciples of Jesus Christ in our world today.

Participation – to draw young women to responsible participation in the life, mission, and work of the Catholic faith community.

Growth – to foster the total personal and spiritual growth of each young woman.

Dear Coach,

Thank you for coaching! Welcome to the Girls' Western Athletic Conference (GWAC). This conference, founded in 1970, organizes leagues for girls' volleyball, basketball and softball. There are 18 member parishes from the west side of Cincinnati. We hope the upcoming season will be enjoyable for you and your team. If you would like to share your thoughts and opinions to continue to improve our league, please contact your league representative. He/she can then discuss it at the next monthly league meeting with the other league reps.

This clinic book contains the updated 2026 GWAC league rules pertaining to softball. If you have any questions concerning the rules, contact your school's softball coordinator or your school's GWAC representative.

Sincerely,

Girls' Western Athletic Conference

Jenny Nie –President jenlou@roadrunner.com

Eric Fay -Vice President erictfay@live.com

Bev Rosemeyer berosemeyer@yahoo.com

GWAC FAST PITCH SOFTBALL 2026

OFFICIAL RULES – 3rd & 4th Grades

The GWAC follows the National Federation of State High School Associations rules with the following exceptions and/or clarifications.

HOME TEAM

The home team is indicated on your schedule. Keeping with the spirit of our Catholic faith and good sportsmanship, the home team will be responsible for the prayer before each game.

SCOREKEEPER

It is the responsibility of the home team to provide the official scorekeeper. It is recommended that both scorekeepers consult the score at the end of each inning.

ROSTER

Rosters are unlimited, although **all players must play at least two innings on defense.**

Coaches will receive an email with a link to complete an online roster form. At that time coaches will submit their players' names, school, grade, and uniform number. They will also indicate their preference of trophies or t-shirts, should they place first or second in league standings. Be sure to indicate sizes of shirts on your submitted roster.

Coaches can print their completed roster which must be available at all games. Games will be forfeited if coaches have not completed their online rosters by their first league game.

- Any changes to the roster (e.g. uniform number change).
- A player may be added to the team roster by submitting a revised roster via email by **May 2, 2026.**

3rd & 4th LEAGUE CONTACT

Bev Rosemeyer at berosemeyer@yahoo.com or 513-659-1949

Softball Website – gwacsoftball.com

GUEST PLAYERS

In order to avoid forfeits, the GWAC will allow players rostered on teams within your organization to participate/sub as Guest Players in league softball games outside of their specific team as follows. A Guest Player **cannot** play pitcher, first base, or catch unless specifically agreed to by the opposing coach prior to the start of the game. Guest players must bat at the bottom of the batting order. Guest Players cannot play longer than any regular team player. Three (3) Guest Players will be allowed to play.

A Guest Player can be pulled up from a younger grade level; however, a Guest Player cannot play down at a younger grade level. A player from an A-level team cannot be a Guest Player for a B-level team at the same grade level. Prior to the start of the game, the coach using a Guest Player(s) must notify the opposing coach with umpire present stating his/her team will be playing with a Guest Player(s), show that the Guest Player(s) are batting at the end of the lineup, and either declare that they will not be playing pitcher, catcher, or first base. OR make a verbal request to the opposing coach for the approval for a specific Guest Player(s) to play one or more of these positions. Only with the opposing coach's consent may a Guest Player pitch, catch, or play first base.

*Note: The primary goals of this rule are to allow games to be played using a full complement of players, avoid forfeits and improve the balance of play; however, this rule is not intended to be used to gain an overt competitive advantage.

PLAYING TIME

All players at competitive levels must play a minimum of two innings on defense. An inning is defined as three consecutive outs. If a coach questions whether this is being done, the coach should email Bev Rosemeyer at berosemeyer@yahoo.com or 513-659-1949.

If the league finds a team has not been playing all team members properly, they will be given a forfeit for that game. No warning will be given. A coach wishing to discipline a player by not letting her play in a game must notify the opposing coach and the umpire prior to the start of the game. Once such notification is given, the girl may not enter the game under any circumstances. (See Substitution and Batting Order sections for related information.)

FIELD

The field shall be a regulation softball field and the field is to be appropriately marked. The home team is responsible for measuring the pitching and base distances as follows:

<u>LEVEL</u>	<u>PITCHER</u>	<u>BASES</u>
3 rd & 4 th	35 FEET	55 FEET

EQUIPMENT

BATS

Bats must be "Fast Pitch" softball bats in good working condition (no burrs, dents, cracks, sharp edges, rattles, etc.). Bats must meet the 2004 ASA Bat Performance Standard, bear either the 2000 or 2004 ASA certification marks and must not be listed on the USA Softball Non-approved bat list found at (link valid as of Feb. 10, 2017).

http://usa.asasoftball.com/e/build_batlist_one_page.asp It is the coach's responsibility to ensure bats used are compliant. OEM bat repairs and changes of grips are acceptable. Bats may not be further modified in any way to bypass or exceed the specifications of its ASA certification. These types of bat modifications are both safety and liability issues. If no ASA stamp is visible the umpire, at his/her sole discretion, may deem a bat would comply with the performance standard. This includes wooden bats. Unapproved bats may not be used. Use of an unapproved bat will result in an out called on the batter and may result in further disciplinary action by the GWAC.

SOFTBALLS

All teams will use a white or yellow, 11-inch ball with no raised stitching. The color of the ball must stay consistent throughout the game. The home team may need to provide a backup ball of the same color if the visitors do not have one.

PITCHING RUBBER

The home team is responsible for supplying a regulation size, anchored pitching rubber (6" x 24"). The pitching distance is measured from the rear tip of home plate to the front edge of the pitching rubber.

Note: If the home team is unable to provide bases or a regulation pitching rubber, the

visiting team may provide the items and can choose to take the Home Team designation.

BASES

Home team must provide bases. The use of a double base at first base is mandatory. Typically, game fields are lined prior to bases being set. In this scenario, first and third bases shall be measured 55 feet from the rear tip of home plate to the back edge of each base.

The white portion of the double base at first should cover the foul line while the orange portion should be placed completely in foul territory. The edge of third base should cover the foul line. To place second base, measure perpendicular 55 feet from the back corner of first base and draw a short arc. Repeat this measurement from third base. Where the two arcs intersect is the center of second base.

For unlined game fields, measure exactly 77 feet 9 ³/₈ inches from the rear tip of home plate through the center of the pitcher's plate. This will be the center of second base. Measure from the rear tip of home plate toward the first base area and make a short arc.

Measure 55 feet toward the third base area and make a short arc. Measure from the center of second base 55 feet toward first and third bases and strike arcs. Where these arcs intersect are where first and third bases will be located.

CATCHER'S EQUIPMENT

Each catcher must wear a helmet, mask with throat protector or hockey-style one piece NOSCAE certified mask. Catchers must also wear a chest protector and shin guards. Players on the sidelines warming up pitchers should also wear helmets with masks.

HELMETS

Helmets are required for all batters and for all baserunners. **Face guards on the helmets are required.**

SHOES

Players must wear softball, gym, soccer or turf shoes. A

player will not be permitted to participate in a game in any other type of shoe. Absolutely no steel spikes are permitted.

UNIFORM

All girls on a team must wear shirts and pants of identical color and style. All uniforms must have a number readily visible on the front or back. Any player not in uniform will not be permitted to participate. No jewelry may be worn on the playing field during the game. This includes earrings, necklaces, bracelets, rings, etc.

GAME POLICIES

In general, the rules of the National Federation of State High School Associations will be used. Clarifications and exceptions for GWAC are listed below.

NUMBER OF PLAYERS – The defensive team consists of 10 players. 7 players must be present to begin the game. If 10 players are present, you are required to play all 10. Players arriving late will be inserted at the bottom of the batting order at the completion of the current half-inning. **If less than nine (9) players are present, the difference between present players and nine (9) players shall be classified as a missing player(s). During ground rules, the coach will announce the batting order position the missing player(s) will reside. An automatic out will be recorded each time the missing player batting position is due up.**

STOPPAGE OF PLAY – After a ball is controlled by a defensive player within the area of the infield, any runner more than halfway to the next base may continue on to that base, but any runner who is not halfway may not advance and must return to the base previously occupied. The umpire will call time when a play is over. The umpire's judgment on whether a runner can advance or not is final and will not be questioned. (Once it is inside the base path with a defensive player it is a dead ball.)

HOME TEAM – The home team will be the first team listed on the schedule regardless of field location. Home team is responsible for the opening prayer.

GAME DURATION

The Umpire is the official time keeper. Please check with umpire to confirm start time of the game. All games are scheduled for seven innings. However, no **new inning** shall begin after one hour and ten minutes has passed from the actual start of the game. **If a game is tied** after the last complete inning and the **70 minute** time limit has been reached or 7 innings have been completed, these extra inning rules should immediately apply.

Please Note: "An inning is that portion of a game within which teams alternate on offense and defense and in which there are three outs for each team. A new inning begins immediately after the final out of the previous inning." From the NFHS

Extra Innings for tied games-

To start the new inning, the last player to complete an at bat shall occupy second base.

There shall be one out. Games should not end in a tie. Games should continue until a winner is determined.

- Teams must be ready to play at their scheduled starting times. There is no guarantee of any on field warm-up.

OFFICIAL GAME – A game is 'official' if the trailing team has completed batting in **four** innings or reached the time limit.

NO WALK RULE

- Walks will NOT be permitted.
- Once a pitcher issues a fourth ball to a batter, a coach from the batting team will pitch to the batter from the 35' pitching distance.
- The coach will pitch until the ball is put in play or 3 strikes are thrown.
- Strikes thrown by player pitcher will carry over to coach pitch portion of the at bat.
- All pitches from a coach are considered strikes.
- If the batter has not put the ball in play after 3 strikes the batter is retired and an 'out' is recorded.
- If the batter hits the third strike foul, she shall receive one additional pitch. This shall be repeated for if the next pitch is also hit foul until the batter (1) puts the ball in play, (2) swings and misses, or (3) does not swing. Base runners may not steal while a coach is pitching.
- Coach pitchers are to leave the field of play once the ball is batted into fair territory by taking the shortest path to foul territory which does NOT interfere with the play. The coach pitcher will start the pitch on the pitching rubber and finish the pitch near the pitching rubber.
- They are to leave the field of play once ball is batted into fair play.
- Coach interference with players or thrown ball results in batter being called out.
- If a batted ball contacts the coach, it is a dead ball and is treated as a foul ball. The hit does count as a strike (but cannot be the 3rd strike).
- Interference is at umpires' discretion.
- No Intentional walks are allowed.

SIX RUN RULE – No team will be credited with more than six runs in any inning. It is the responsibility of the official scorer to keep track of the number of runs per inning. The inning ends as soon as the sixth run crosses the plate without regard to the number of outs or number of batters. If the sixth run scores as a result of a batted ball or walk, the on-deck batter will be the first batter in the subsequent inning. If the sixth run scores as a result of a stolen base, the current batter will be the first batter in the subsequent inning.

MERCY RULE - If a team trails by 12 or more runs at the end of the fourth or any subsequent inning, the game will be stopped.

SPORTSMANSHIP RULE - No base stealing is permitted by the leading team after accumulating a lead of five (5) or more runs. Stealing is again permitted once the lead drops below five (5) runs at any point during the game.

INJURIES – When approached by a head coach concerning a serious injury on the field, the umpire should use sound judgment with regard to time lost and may adjust the ending time of the game accordingly.

THROWING THE BAT – No warning will be given for throwing the bat. If this occurs, the umpire shall declare the batter out.

BUNTING – Bunting is not permitted.

INFIELD FLY RULE – Rule is not in effect.

BATTING ORDER – All players bat in a continuous order. If a player leaves the game while in progress, for any reason, an out will be automatically recorded any time her batting position is due up.

FOUL BALLS – There is no limit to the number of foul balls after the second strike.

OVERTHROWS - In the event of a ball thrown out of play, runners are awarded two bases from the base last legally occupied at the time of the throw. A pitched ball that goes out of play results in an award of one base from the base occupied at the time of the pitch. A fly ball caught by a fielder with less than two outs who then leaves the field of play results in an award of one base from the time the ball became dead.

A ball thrown by the catcher that goes out of play by any means in an attempt to put out a baserunner stealing a base results in NO additional base(s) being awarded to ANY baserunner.

STRIKE ZONE – The strike zone is that space over home plate between the batter’s forward armpit and the top of the knees when the batter assumes a natural batting stance. Any part of the ball passing through the strike zone in flight shall be considered a strike. The umpire shall determine the batter’s strike zone.

BASERUNNING - Runners cannot lead off base and can only leave their base after the pitched ball crosses the plate or the ball has been hit by the batter. One warning per team will be given. Any runner leading off of a base or leaving a base early will be returned to the base occupied at the time of pitch and team will be issued a warning. Additional violations will result in runner being called out.

LIMITED STEALING - Base runners will be allowed to steal 3rd base. **No stealing of second (2nd) or home.** Base runners must wait until the ball has crossed the plate before leaving the bag.

Catchers are encouraged to throw down to base in an attempt to record the out, however, base runner is not allowed to advance on an overthrow.

THIRD STRIKE – Batters are out whenever a third strike occurs, whether the pitch is caught or not.

ILLEGAL PITCH

- Pitcher must start with one (pivot) foot on pitching rubber
- the other (non-pivot) foot on or behind the pitching rubber
- Pitchers at the 3/4 level may begin their pitch with a step backward.

The pitcher **may not**:

- push off with the pivot foot from a place other than the pitching plate
- “crow hop”
- continue to wind up after taking forward step or after ball is released.

An umpire may rule a pitch "illegal". No bases will be awarded to baserunners on an illegal pitch. The umpire or coach should explain to the pitcher why the pitch was illegal to teach the rules of the game and improve the delivery of the player.

Once a pitcher strikes 3 batters in one inning she must be removed for the remainder of the inning. If a pitcher hits 6 batters total, she cannot pitch the remainder of the game.

APPEAL PLAY

Once all runners have completed their advancement and time has been called, any infielder with or without the ball, may make a verbal appeal to the umpire on a runner missing a base or leaving too soon on a caught fly ball. The umpire will then make a decision on the play.

SUBSTITUTIONS

Free defensive substitutions may be made at any time. There is no limit on the number of times a girl may enter or leave the game. Pitchers or injured players may be replaced at any time.

COURTESY RUNNERS

Courtesy runners may be used at any time for the pitcher or catcher once the pitcher or catcher reaches base. The same courtesy runner may not be used for both the catcher and pitcher in the same inning. The courtesy runner must be the most recent player in the game to complete an at bat who is not on base. In the first inning, this shall be the last player listed in the batting order. No courtesy runners are allowed in extra innings or in any new inning after the time limit has been exceeded. Courtesy runners must be reported to the umpire or they will be declared out.

SLIDING BASE RULE

When a runner goes into a base standing up and the runner and the base move more than the width of the base in any fashion whatsoever, and the runner is tagged, the runner is out. If the runner gets back to the spot where the base was before being tagged, the runner is safe.

When sliding, the runner shall remain on the ground until the umpire calls time. If the player gets up and moves before the umpire calls time, the runner will be called OUT if tagged and not standing on the original spot of the base. If the player moves the base and gets up and makes the next base, any following runner will go to the original spot of the base.

BATTER HIT BY PITCH – If a batter is struck by a pitched ball, she will be awarded first base if in the judgment of the umpire an adequate attempt was made to avoid being struck.

WEATHER AND GAME CONDITIONS

A game may be called off while in progress due to rain or other severe weather conditions such as lightning or thunderstorm warnings. The game may also be stopped by darkness.

The umpire will decide if the game should be stopped. If the game is halted before becoming official, it will be rescheduled by the GWAC and replayed from the start. The coaches should notify the league contact. Please note that when lightning is the area all teams need to take shelter. Teams need to wait 30 minutes from the last thunder/lightning strike to restart a game. In the event of bad weather, check the GWAC website: www.gwacsoftball.com

RESCHEDULING

Coaches may not reschedule any games scheduled by the league except rainouts. If you, as a coach, cannot make it to a game, please instruct an assistant coach or a parent to take the team for that game. If your game is rained out, it is the responsibility of the coaches to agree on a new date, time and field to reschedule the game. He/she will need to contact the following people with the new date, time, and field.

Game should be rescheduled within 72 hours.

Notify these GWAC officials of the change via email.

Please give time to assign an umpire. If you have someone that will umpire the rescheduled game, please let the umpire coordinator know.

Website Administrator: Sue DiTullio: sditullio@gmail.com

Umpire Coordinator: Megan Yeager: shocklma@gmail.com

REPORTING SCORES

NEW PROCEDURE TO REPORT SCORES

Coaches will receive an email and a link to report the score. You will be sent a link and have 72 hrs to enter a score. After 72hrs you will be locked out and the score will be put in as 0-0. If you do not receive an email please contact Sue at sditullio@gmail.com.

LEAGUE STANDINGS

Division standings will be posted at www.gwacsoftball.com

AWARDS

First and second place awards will be provided in all competitive divisions (based on # of games won) at the end of league play except in the case of ties in the final league standings.

- (1) If two or more teams are tied for first place, all of those teams will receive first place awards and no second place awards will be provided.
- (2) If there is a single first place team and two or more teams tied for second place, the league winner will receive first place awards and all of the teams tied for second place will receive second place awards.

FORFEITS

If your team is unable to make a scheduled game, the forfeiting coach is responsible for contacting Bev Rosemeyer at, berosemeyer@yahoo.com who will be responsible for informing the opposing coach. Coaches should not pay any umpire fees at the game site if a forfeit occurs. **The forfeiting school will be charged both school's umpire fees.**

(i.e. \$40 per team = \$80 forfeit fee.)

*****If a game is forfeited in advance and would have been rained out, the game will be rescheduled as any other rainout.

OFFICIALS

Umpires will be provided by the GWAC. Fees must be paid to the umpire prior to the game by both coaches.

Grade	Umpire Fee	Per team
3rd/4th	\$60	\$30

Should you find any official to be questionable in his/her officiating, please contact Megan Yeager at shocklma@gmail.com

The umpires will be made aware that they are open to criticism (we hope constructively) so please do not hesitate to do this. It is the only way we can obtain reliable feedback. We do not expect to hear about every bad call. Please use good judgment. We are not able to take action without complete details.

ONLY THE HEAD COACH IS TO ADDRESS THE UMPIRES.

ABSENCE OF OFFICIAL

At times, umpires will be coming from other fields to officiate a game. While we try to allow for this, games may sometimes run into extra innings or be unexpectedly delayed for other reasons. In the rare event that an umpire is not present at game time, if the head coaches can agree on a substitute (parent, coach, etc.), the game may be played as scheduled. Once an agreement is made, the game will be played and will count in the standings without regard to the competency of the replacement. The coaches should realize that the substitute umpire may not know all of the GWAC rules. Please assist the substitute umpire in a respectful and sportsmanlike manner if he/she needs to be educated on any specific rules. If the assigned umpire arrives within a reasonable amount of time, allow him/her to take over at that point. If the assigned umpire does not arrive, the replacement should be paid the appropriate umpire fee. If the coaches are unable to agree on a substitute umpire, the coaches should notify Bev Rosemeyer at berosemeyer@yahoo.com or 513-659-1949 and the game will be rescheduled by the league.

CONDUCT OF PLAYERS, COACHES AND SPECTATORS

Each head coach is responsible for the conduct of him/herself, his/her coaches, players and fans.

If a written or verbal complaint(s) is received by the GWAC stating that, in the opinion of the complainant, a coach, player or anyone else connected with the team has conducted him/herself in an unsportsmanlike manner, that person may be notified of the complaint by the GWAC president or vice president. Depending upon the nature of the complaint(s), an investigation may be made. If, subsequent to an investigation, the complaint(s) is deemed valid by the GWAC League representatives, appropriate disciplinary measures can and will be taken. Discipline may range from a warning to suspension from any further league activity for the remainder of the season.

Any coach, team member, or anyone else connected with a team, who is ejected by an official during a game will be suspended not only for the remainder of that game, but also from participation in that team's next league-sanctioned game. During suspension, the individual will not be permitted on the premises. Failure to comply will result in the team's forfeiture of the game(s) played during noncompliance.

The individual being disciplined is entitled to appear before the GWAC League representatives either during the investigative process, if feasible, or to appeal any disciplinary action taken

subsequent to the completion of the investigation. Any appeal must be in writing, and any disciplinary measures meted out by the GWAC must be complied with pending completion of the appeal and appearance before the GWAC. Failure to comply with disciplinary measures will result in the team's forfeiture of any games played during noncompliance.

If a coach, parent, or fan is ejected for any reason, he/she must leave the premises.

Examples of Unsportsmanlike conduct by a player, coach, fan may include, but are not limited to:

- Derogatory remarks
- Showing excessive disgust with official's decisions
- Using insulting language or gestures

PROTESTS

- (1) Any protest must be placed with the umpire and the opposing coach at the time of the infraction. Both coaches and the umpire must sign the official scorebook. From that time on, the remainder of the game will be played under protest. At the end of the game, the official will take this page from the official scorebook and submit it to the GWAC President.
- (2) The protest must be submitted in writing and received within 24 hours after the game by GWAC Secretary – Bev Rosemeyer. A \$25 protest fee must accompany the protest. If the protest is upheld, the protest fee will be refunded.
- (3) The Protest Board will consist of the Director of Officials and two impartial parish representatives from that sport's committee.
- (4) The GWAC President will preside over the meeting. Those in attendance at the protest meeting will be the Protest Board, if necessary, the game official(s) and one coach from each team involved in the protest. All those required to be present at the meeting will be notified by the GWAC President as to the date, time and location of the meeting.
- (5) The outcome of the protest will be decided by a majority vote of the three members of the Protest Board. A protest concerning an official's decision or judgment calls will NOT be considered. A rule interpretation is protestable. If a protest is upheld, the game ensues from the point of the protest.

FOUNDING MEMBERS of G.W.A.C. 1970

ST. CATHARINE
ST. JUDE
ST. ANTONINUS
ST. MARTIN
OUR LADY of VICTORY
OUR LADY of the VISITATION

CURRENT MEMBERS of G.W.A.C. 2026

OUR LADY of GRACE
OUR LADY of LOURDES
OUR LADY of VICTORY
OUR LADY of the VISITATION
ST. ALOYSIUS- Bridgetown
ST. ANTONINUS
ST. BARTS
ST. BERNARD- Taylor Creek
ST. CATHARINE of SIENA
ST. CLEMENTS
ST. DOMINIC
ST. IGNATIUS LOYOLA
ST. JAMES – White Oak
ST. JOHN – Dry Ridge
ST. JOHN the Baptist Harrison ST. JUDE
ST. LAWRENCE
ST. TERESA of AVILA
ST. WILLIAMS

SOFTBALL AFFILIATES

OAK HILLS YOUTH ASSN.
THREE RIVERS