

COACHES:

Here are the official rules for the 2024 Women's Major Softball (WMS) National Championship. All WMS umpires will receive this prior to the event so they can be familiar with the rules. Most notably, there has been a change to the WMS "courtesy runner" rule:

Just as in previous WMS Tournaments, courtesy runners are allowed only for the pitcher and catcher after they have reached base safely. To further protect our pitchers and catchers, teams may now employ as a courtesy runner either 1) their player that made the previous out (at the plate or on the bases) OR 2) a player that is not in the game in any capacity. Any position player, and/or any player used as an extra hitter (EH), Flex/Designated Player (DP), or Pinch-Runner (PR) is ineligible to be used as a courtesy runner, unless they made their team's last out prior to the need for a courtesy runner (again, only to be used for pitchers and catchers that have reached base safely). In the event that a courtesy runner is needed, and previous out was made by a pitcher or catcher, the player that made the out prior to that (pitcher/catcher) out can serve as the courtesy runner, and so on and so forth.

Please make sure you familiarize yourself, base coaches, and players with the rules so you do not make a mistake during the game. In addition, the official scorekeeper in the press box has been told to inform the announcer, who will announce a stoppage of play, if in fact it was an incorrect interpretation of the rule. **Coaches are to report all player position/batting changes to the umpire and they in turn will notify the official scorekeeper in press box.**

All coaches are responsible for knowing the WMS rules and making sure they are followed. We thank you in advance for your support. We want to avoid any embarrassing situations before they happen. Remember this tournament is FOR and ABOUT the players. We do not want, nor will we allow any coach to make a spectacle of him or herself by berating officials, opposing players, or players on their own team.

Thanks,

Rob Baird
2024 WMS Tournament Director

Tournament Information

LOCATION: DeLuca Field & Short Beach Recreation Complex, Stratford, CT

DATES: Thursday, August 1 - Sunday, August 4, 2024

STAFF: Tournament Director: Rob Baird (Brakettes GM)

Umpire-in-Chief: Dan Neumann

AWARDS: Team Awards: First Place, Runner-up, & Third Place team plaques, all other teams will receive participation plaques.
Individual medals for first and second place teams
Individual Awards:

Micki Stratton Most Valuable Player Award

Joan Joyce Outstanding Pitcher Award

Allyson Rioux Defensive Player Award

Diane Schumacher Batting Champion

Pat Dufficy Home Run Champion

Danni Kemp - Sportsmanship Award - (presented to a Stratford Brakettes player based on 2024 regular season)

The WMS All-America team will be announced.

LINE-UP: Line-up cards and game balls may be picked up at the ticket booth upon entering DeLuca Field. **Copy of lineup should be turned into the scorekeeper in press box at least 20 minutes prior to game time.** Please complete the line-up card with first and last names, position, uniform number, and substitutes and coaches.

GAME TIMES: Game time is forfeit time. Teams should be at the field at least 30 minutes before the scheduled starting time. Games may start earlier than the posted time.

INFIELD

PRACTICE: No infield practice will be allowed. Ground balls may be hit on the dirt area behind the baselines once field has been groomed and provided time remains. Do not hit while the grounds crew is working. Area behind outfield fence may be used for warmups only-throwing, or pitching, nothing else. No hitting fly balls or throwing fly balls. Hitting before the game is limited to pop-ups nets in the fenced in area beyond the right field fence or in the old batting cage in behind the third base bleachers. **Spectators are allowed behind the outfield home run fence this year, thus the reason for no hitting of any kind out there.**

DUGOUT LIMITS: Only roster players, coaches, manager, and scorekeeper are permitted in the dugout. No bat girls or bat boys allowed.

PROTESTS: All protests will be handled by the U-I-C at the point before play proceeds.

RUN RULE: The 12-run rule after 3 innings, 10 runs after 4 innings, and 8 runs after 5 shall be in effect. Complete inning must be played unless the home team scores the run while at bat. The run rule is in effect throughout the tournament.

TIME LIMIT: There is no time limit in effect. In the event of slow play, the committee may invoke a one-minute rule between half innings to ensure a reasonable time for a game's completion.

SUSPENDED

GAMES:

All suspended games will be resumed from the point of suspension. Tournament's Official scorer in press box will make certain lineup/batting order is followed.

INTERNATIONAL

TIE-BREAKER:

The international tie-breaker rule will NOT be used, unless needed due to inclement weather adversely affecting the tournament.

RUNNERS/EH:

Courtesy runners are allowed in the tournament only for the pitcher and catcher.

To further protect our pitchers and catchers, teams may now employ as a courtesy runner either 1) their player that made the previous out (at the plate or on the bases) OR 2) a player that is not in the game in any capacity.

Any position player, and/or any player used as an extra hitter (EH), Flex/Designated Player (DP), or Pinch-Runner (PR) is ineligible to be used as a courtesy runner, unless they made their team's last out prior to the need for a courtesy runner. If a courtesy runner is needed, and previous out was made by a pitcher or catcher, the player that made the out prior to that (pitcher/catcher) out can serve as the courtesy runner, and so on and so forth.

Teams **MAY** hit up to 11 players, which in addition to a DP/Flex Player, includes 2 EH (extra hitters). However, if the number of hitters falls below what you started with, every time that place in the order comes up it will be an OUT.

PLAYERS:

Teams may start and finish with 8 players. When the spot in the batting order for the 9th player arrives it shall be counted as an OUT.

COIN FLIP:

There will be a double coin flip before each game to decide 1) who gets to call the coin flip; and 2) to determine the Home and Visitor. It will take place at the top of the 5th inning of the previous game or 30 minutes prior to starting time for the first game of the session. It will take place where the U-I-C is located. Team traveling the farthest will make the call on the first coin toss.

TEAM BENCHES:

Also known as the "John Stratton Rule", the team listed on the top of the bracket sits in the third base dugout, unless it involves the Stratford Brakettes who are permanent residents of third base dugout so John can reach the men's room in time!

GAME BALL:

Game balls will be the Dudley Fast Pitch softball.

TICKETS:

Tickets will be \$5 per session for general admission (first and third base bleachers), \$6 for reserved/with back rests behind home plate, and \$8 for box seats. Tournament Passes are \$40 for box seats, \$30 for reserved, and \$20 for general admission. There are six sessions. No admission will be charged for games at Short Beach unless weather conditions necessitate moving all games there. **Please remind your fans that a separate admission is charged for each session. It is advisable to purchase the tournament pass.**

PRACTICE FIELDS: There are several fields available. The closest ones to Quality Suites are at the Birdseye Rec Complex, located two blocks from the hotel. There are three fields at the site.

FOOD/ALCOHOLIC

BEVERAGES & Pets: Alcoholic beverages are NOT permitted at the site. Smoking, vaping and the use of tobacco products are forbidden at the tournament site. Pets are also not permitted, unless it is a therapy pet.

Official USA Softball rules will be utilized in those areas that are not covered by the specifically listed tournament rules. Also, the tournament committee reserves the right to make any revisions to the schedule in the event of inclement weather, in order to bring the tournament to a successful conclusion.

HIGHLIGHTS OF COURTESY RUNNER RULE AND EH:

- **Team may use a courtesy runner for the pitcher and/or catcher providing the pitcher or catcher bats for themselves and reaches base safely.**
- **The extra hitter (EH) offers teams the opportunity to hit 11 players. The EH may enter the game defensively at any time, but the spot in the batting order remains the same. If you are using the DP/Flex, you are not permitted an EH if you only have 10 players.**

NOTE: The tournament will begin at 3:30 p.m. Thursday at DeLuca Field. All teams must attend the Team Social on Thursday from 5:00-6:00 p.m. and the Opening Ceremonies, immediately following the Team Social. The parade of teams will begin at approx. 6:00 p.m.