



2024 ARMED FORCES MEN'S AND WOMEN'S SOFTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

1. COMPETITION RULES:

a. Current USA Softball Rules for Men's B competition and Women's Open Division, as amended by the Armed Forces Sports Council (AFSC).

b. When the player enters the playing area (actual field of play, not including dugout) with a non-approved bat/warm-up device (any bat/device not stamped approved by the USA Softball Umpires onsite), the player shall be ejected from the game and all games remaining in tournament. Team bats may be used for infield prior to the game but must be removed from the field of play prior to the first pitch. All bats will remain on the field of play.

c. Home-Run Rule: Complies with current B and Women's Open Division home-run limits. The batter and any runners will NOT run the bases on home runs (over the fence). Penalty, first such occurrence, the batter shall be declared out and all runners will return to the bases occupied at the time of the pitch. Second team occurrence, the batter shall be declared out and all runners will return to the bases occupied at the time of the pitch, player is ejected for the remainder of the game.

d. Dugout Rule:

1). All players, except for the base coaches, batter, and on-deck batter, must remain in their assigned dugout. Unauthorized players caught in the field of play will result in the active batter called out. If defensive team substitute players are caught in the field of play, the first batter will be called out.

2) Only official roster team members are authorized in the dugout.

3) Music is not authorized in or around the dugout and the competition venue. Authorized music may only be provided by the host site organizers. Service representatives have the authority to shut off all music at the competition venue.

2. GAME BALL: IAW USA Softball Rules. Ball to be used is to be publicized by the host service 60 days prior to the Armed Forces Championship. Balls must adhere to USA Softball specifications (compression and CORE).

3. TOURNAMENT FORMAT: Double round robin for seeding followed by double elimination tournament.

4. DRAW: As determined by established annual draw.

5. FINAL TEAM STANDINGS: Final team standings are determined by outcome of double elimination bracket.

6. TIE-BREAKER POLICY: Breaking a tie for seeding at the conclusion of round-robin play is determined by the following in order:

a. Head-to-Head record.

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b. Run for/against differential of the games played between the tied teams.

c. Run for/against differential of all games played by tied teams.

7. FACILITY, EQUIPMENT AND PERSONNEL:

a. IAW current IAW USA Softball Rules. Shoes with metal cleats are not allowed in Armed Forces Softball competition.

b. The host installation will announce specific ball to be used no later than 60 days prior to the championship.

c. A 3-person officiating system will be utilized provided by Armed Forces Sports through IAW USA Softball.

d. Bats must adhere to IAW USA Softball specifications. Participants can bring and use their own bats if they pass the USA Softball bat test. The host Service must have a USA Softball bat tester on site. All bats will be inspected and tested by the UIC. If the bat passes, a tamper proof sticker will be placed on it. All bats passing the inspection and test will be collected and stored by the Host Service Tournament Director and only brought out for teams when they are scheduled to play. Officials reserve the right to retest any bat at any time during the tournament. At the conclusion of the game, the bats will be collected and secured until they are needed again. Each team is limited to a maximum of 30 bats. No additional bats shall be tested after the initial bat tests have concluded.

e. Uniforms. All players shall wear the same competitive uniform, which may include either shorts or pants. Teams may elect to wear shorts or pants, but all players shall be uniform (all shorts or all pants).

f. Host Project Officer shall obtain experienced scorers and statisticians through the local officials association/sources. Local rates will be paid by hosting Service to these individuals.

g. Field of Play. Only authorized personnel may enter the field to take photographs. Public Affairs and other personnel must obtain permission from the tournament director.

8. PROTESTS: Protests on rules or eligibility are handled by the protest committee. The protest committee consisting of Service representatives and Umpires in Charge will only accept protests when they are submitted in accordance with USA Softball rules. Protests must be resolved before a contest can continue.

9. OFFICIATING PROBLEMS. Incidents or issues related to an official at an event will be addressed with the head official immediately. If not addressed immediately, Services should inform the AFSCS about problems occurred with official(s) within 30 days after the conclusion of the championship.

10. SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:

a. Day One: Teams Arrive (Travel Day)
 Team Practice Sessions

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Organizational Meeting
Informal Ice Breaker*

- b. Day Two: Team Photos
Opening Ceremony Rehearsal (Optional)

Opening Ceremony (Optional) – However, the National Anthem must be played prior to the opening game. All six Service flags must be displayed if Service flags are posted. If not all Service flags are available, then the American flag and host Service flag shall be displayed.

(Home team on the right)

Game #1	(M)	USAF vs USMC
Game #2	(W)	USAF vs USMC
Game #3	(M)	Navy vs Army
Game #4	(W)	Navy vs Army
Game #5	(M)	USMC vs Army
Game #6	(W)	USMC vs Army
Game #7	(M)	USAF vs Navy
Game #8	(W)	USAF vs Navy

- c. Day Three:

Game #9	(W)	Navy vs USMC
Game #10	(M)	Navy vs USMC
Game #11	(W)	USAF vs Army
Game #12	(M)	USAF vs Army
Game #13	(W)	Army vs Navy
Game #14	(M)	Army vs Navy
Game #15	(W)	USMC vs USAF
Game #16	(M)	USMC vs USAF

- d. Day Four:

Game #17	(M)	Navy vs USAF
Game #18	(W)	Navy vs USAF
Game #19	(M)	Army vs USMC
Game #20	(W)	Army vs USMC
Game #21	(M)	Army vs USAF
Game #22	(W)	Army vs USAF
Game #23	(M)	USMC vs Navy
Game #24	(W)	USMC vs Navy

- f. Day Five:

DOUBLE ELIMINATION BRACKET

Game #25	(W)	Seed 4 vs Seed 1
Game #26	(M)	Seed 4 vs Seed 1
Game #27	(W)	Seed 3 vs Seed 2
Game #28	(M)	Seed 3 vs Seed 2
Game #29	(W)	Loser 25 vs Loser 27
Game #30	(M)	Loser 26 vs Loser 28
Game #31	(W)	Winner 27 vs Winner 25
Game #32	(M)	Winner 28 vs Winner 26

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f. Day Six:

Game #33	(W)	Winner 29 vs Loser 31
Game #34	(M)	Winner 30 vs Loser 32
Game #35	(W)	Winner 33 vs Winner 31
Game #36	(M)	Winner 34 vs Winner 32
Game #37 (if needed)	(W)	Loser 35 vs Winner 35
Game #38 (if needed)	(M)	Loser 36 vs Winner 36

US Armed Forces Team Selection Committee meeting immediately following the last game and prior to the closing ceremony.

Awards Ceremony - (Immediately following the final game) Service teams are required to wear Service warm-ups or competitive uniforms at the awards ceremony. Individual athletes who do not comply will not receive awards, and if selected, will be removed from the Armed Forces team. If the Awards ceremony is conducted as a separate function in conjunction with the Ice- Breaker Social, then all Service Members must comply with Ice-Breaker Dress Policy.

g. Day Seven: Teams Depart (Travel Day)

11. ADVERSE WEATHER SCHEDULE: The schedule may be adjusted as follows due to extreme hot climates at southern tier locations: 0800 first set of games; 1700 second set of games; third set of games 20 minutes after the conclusion of the second set. Service representatives shall determine alternative solutions/schedules during adverse weather conditions.

12. AWARDS:

a. Individual: Each member of the winning and runner-up teams (to include the team trainer and OIC) receive individual awards.

b. Team: No team trophy is presented.

c. All-Tournament Team:

1. The All-tournament team is announced prior to the announcement of the 15 players selected to advance to higher-level competition. The Host Project Officer will select and purchase a special "All-Tournament" memento.

2. See selection process in paragraph (11) for All-Tournament Team selection procedures.

3. Women: The All-Tournament team is selected of 4 infielders, 4 outfielders, 2 utility, and 1 pitcher.

4. Men: The All-Tournament team is selected of 5 infielders, 3 outfielders, 2 utility, and 1 pitcher.

13. TEAM COMPOSITION - ARMED FORCES CHAMPIONSHIP:

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Roster not to exceed 20 individuals*:

15 Players

1 Coach

1 Asst Coach

1 Certified Athletic Trainer/Physician*

1 ad libitum

1 OIC

TOTAL: 20

* Medical personnel listed on roster must be trained medical providers and properly certified/licensed. Teams are not authorized to substitute this position with an additional coach or statistician. Personnel failing to provide appropriate credentials (if challenged) shall be deemed unauthorized and removed from the bench.

Note: Rosters must be submitted NLT four days prior to championship report date. Only the above personnel are authorized in the designated Service dugout area.

14. SELECTION PROCESS - HIGHER LEVEL AND ALL-TOURNAMENT:

a. Athlete Selection Process.

1) The AFSWG members, or designated representatives, at the site of the Armed Forces Championship are responsible for the selection of the All-Tournament Team and the U.S. Armed Forces Team for higher-level competition.

2) Selection meeting attendance is limited to the Service Representative and the Service Head Coach. Each Service is authorized one spokesperson during the meeting. The Armed Forces Sports Representative shall chair the selection meeting. If the Armed Forces Sports Representative is not in attendance, then the host Service shall chair the selection meeting. All discussion within the meeting shall remain confidential. Only selections of athletes shall be released at the designated awards ceremony.

3) The initial selection for the All-Tournament Team and the Armed Forces Team shall be conducted as a paper ballot (appendix E), both submitted and signed simultaneously by each Service Representative to the selection meeting chair at the beginning of the selection meeting. Signed submitted ballots are final. Selection Meeting Chairs shall not accept unsigned ballot forms. Ties shall be made by AFS representative on-site after objective discussion.

4) Participants selected to the All-Tournament Team shall automatically be selected to the Armed Forces Team unless unavailable. The most competent athletes, regardless of Service affiliation, shall be selected to complete the final Armed Forces Team roster.

5) When higher-level team sports competition does not immediately follow the Armed Forces championship, based on non-availability, Services may elect to send up to three (3) additional athletes per Service to the Armed Forces training camp from the available pool of those who participated at that year's Armed Forces Championship.

b. Coach Selection Policy: The Head Coach for the Armed Forces Team shall be the winning Head Coach of the Armed Forces Championship (subject to review by the Service Representatives at the Championship). This coach shall select his/her Assistant Coach from the pool of coaches that participated in the championship (subject to review by the Service

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Representatives at the championship). If the winning Head Coach is not available, then the second place team Head Coach shall be the Head Coach of the Armed Forces team. This individual shall also select his-her Assistant Coach from the pool of coaches who participated in their respective Armed Forces Championship (subject to review by the Service Representatives at the Championship). If neither the winning nor second place Head Coaches are available to advance to higher level competition, the AFSWG shall vote to select a Head Coach from the remaining pool of available coaches who participated in the championship. Priority shall be given to Head Coaches. If replacement coaches cannot be identified within 24 hours preceding the announcement of the team delegation, then the Armed Forces team shall not advance to higher level competition.

c. During the Athlete Selection Process, Service representatives shall reserve the right to not select top quality candidates based on behavior, grooming standards, or availability. The host Service will not make any additions or deletions to the selected Armed Forces Team without coordinating with the Working Group Member of the other three Services.

15. TEAM COMPOSITION – NATIONALS:

- 15 Players
- 1 Coach
- 1 Asst Coach
- 1 Certified Athletic Trainer*
- 1 Team Captain
- TOTAL: 19

** Medical personnel listed on roster must be trained medical providers and properly certified/licensed. Teams are not authorized to substitute this position with an additional coach or statistician.*

16. FORMS AND ROSTERS:

a. All final rosters and code of conduct forms are due by the end of the organization meeting and shall be submitted electronically. Teams are not authorized to compete at the Armed Forces Championship until the final roster is submitted. Once finalized, the Service team is required to send the electronic roster to the Armed Forces Sports representative prior to the start of competition.

b. All athletes, coaches, and staff shall complete and sign the Armed Forces Sports Higher Advancement Form (appendix C) for consideration of selection to the Armed Forces Team. All Higher Advancement Forms must be submitted by the Officer in Charge of the respective Service at or before the organizational meeting at the Armed Forces Championship. Failure to do so shall disqualify athletes from advancing to higher level competition.

c. All athletes, coaches and staff from each Service must sign the Armed Forces Sports Participant Code of Conduct (appendix D) in order to participate at the Armed Forces Championship, higher level competition, and CISM competition. The Code of Conduct shall be submitted at the Organizational Meeting. If a training camp to higher level competition is conducted without the conduct of an Armed Forces Championship, then Team Captains shall have all participants sign the Code of Conduct immediately upon arrival and prior to any official activity. If an Armed Forces Championship or training camp is not conducted prior to, the Team Captain shall collect the Code of Conduct forms electronically prior to the delegation's departure

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to higher level competition. Failure to do so shall disqualify athletes from competing at the Armed Forces Championship and advancing to higher level competition.

d. Team Captains, Coaches and Chiefs of Mission shall sign their respective LOI (appendix G/I).

e. All forms are available on the Armed Forces Sports Website at:
www.armedforcessports.defense.gov

17. ALCOHOL POLICY: There will be no alcohol consumption at the sports venue by personnel involved in the Armed Forces Sports competition and higher-level competitions, including sports staff, until all competition for the day has been completed to include the award ceremony on the final day if the awards banquet immediately follows the event. The venue is defined as the playing area, venue parking lot, and the assigned eating/spectator area. This policy will not apply if the awards banquet or ceremony is conducted as a separate event. However, more restrictive installation policies regarding alcohol will take precedence. Violation of this policy shall result in immediate suspension from the remaining championship/event, disqualification from higher-level competition and selection to the All-Tournament Team and shall be subject to further administrative actions by the AFSWG.

18. TOBACCO POLICY: All competitors and staff shall refrain from the use of tobacco related products, to include cigarettes, vaping, chewing tobacco, and other smokeless forms at the competition site. Use of these products shall comply with local installation policies and shall only occur in designated areas.

19. ICE-BREAKER SOCIAL.

a. Ice-breaker social shall be conducted at all Armed Forces Championships. Food/beverages are optional depending on the availability of funding/authorizations. If the event is conducted outside of a military installation, then the ice-breaker social shall be optional.

b. Authorized team members must attend the event in their Service polo or logo shirt, coordinated slacks, and appropriate footwear (exceptions may be made dependent on host site letter of instruction). Guests may attend with pre-coordination with the host site and Service representative. Final decision will be based on availability. Guests will assume costs associated with attending the ice breaker.

c. The Ice-Breaker Social is an official function and shall be conducted in accordance with local installation policies and all participants are expected to conduct themselves in the highest professional manner. Informal activities such as skits, hazing and other activities that include offensive language/behavior are not authorized.

20. HANDLING OF RULE VIOLATIONS: If there is a violation of the SOP or specific sport rule, the AFS Representative or in their absence, the project officer, will address the respective Service Representative to resolve the issue. Service Representative will resolve the violation before the Service competes in the next game. All code of conduct violations shall be handled according to the Armed Forces SOP (Paragraph 8.b.(4)(e)).

21. SAFETY REQUIREMENTS: All Armed Forces Sports shall comply with the safety procedures prescribed by USA Softball. Service Branches are encouraged to bring their own medical personnel with them to the competition.