

Western Japan Activities Association  
<https://sites.google.com/site/wjaasports/>



# WJAA MS GIRLS SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT

*hosted by Senri & Osaka International Schools*

**15–16 May 2015**

***Canadian Academy Falcons***

***Marist Brothers International School Bulldogs***

***Nagoya International School Dolphins***

***Senri Osaka International School Sabers***



[sabers.senri.ed.jp/softball](http://sabers.senri.ed.jp/softball)

# WJAA SPORTS

**SENRI & OSAKA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS**  
*welcome all players, coaches and fans to the*

## **WJAA MS Softball Tournament**

### **Players, coaches, and fans:**

*The Sabers welcome you to SOIS in the city of Minoh in northern Osaka. Over the years WJAA tournaments have displayed excellent competition in all sports, both varsity and junior varsity, middle school and high school, girls and boys. We anticipate that this tournament will be no different. It is an honor and pleasure to have four quality middle school girls softball teams from Osaka, Kobe, and Nagoya together in one place for a weekend of friendly competition. We in the Sabers community look forward to showing you some good Osaka hospitality. Please just ask if we can help you in some way.*

*Good luck to all teams. Play hard, play well, play fair.*

**Peter Heimer, tournament director, umpire**  
*activities director*

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# WJAA SPORTS

## MS Softball Tournament

Friday-Saturday, 15-16 May 2015

@Senri & Osaka International Schools

### Game Schedule

#### Friday

*round-robin play*

	Visitors		Home	WINNER	Score
13:00	MBIS	v	SOIS		
14:15	NIS	v	CA		
15:30	CA	v	MBIS		
16:45	SOIS	v	NIS		
18:00	<i>finish</i>				

#### Saturday

*round-robin play in the morning*

	Visitors		Home	WINNER	Score
09:00	MBIS	v	NIS		
10:15	CA	v	SOIS		

11:30 – lunch break

11:35 – throwing contest

11:50 – home run contest

*championship play in the afternoon*

	Visitors		Home	WINNER	Score
12:30	4 <sup>th</sup>	v	3 <sup>rd</sup>		
13:45	2 <sup>nd</sup>	v	1 <sup>st</sup>		

15:00 – awards

15:15 – finish

*Teams listed first are visitors and bat first.*

*Round-robin games and 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> place game: 6 (six) innings, regardless of time.*

*Championship game: 7 (seven) innings, regardless of time.*

**Good luck to all teams!**

# Tournament Format, Regulations

**Round-robin play:** All teams play each other, 3 games each (Friday PM, Saturday AM).

**Championship round:** 2 games – 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> place game, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place game.

**Game length:** Round-robin games and 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> place game: 6 (six) innings (no time limit).  
Championship game: 7 (seven) innings (no time limit).

**Runs per inning:** A maximum of 7 runs per inning, except for the final inning.

**Extra innings:** Extra innings will be played in all games to break a tie. In each extra inning, the last batter of the previous inning starts the new inning on second base.

**Mercy rule:** If, after 4 innings (3½ if the home team is ahead) of a round-robin game or the 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> place game or after 5 innings (4½ if the home team is ahead) of the championship game, a run differential of 15 or more has been reached, the mercy rule goes into effect and the leading team is declared the winner. The score at this point is recorded as the official game score. Only a +15 run winning margin will be used for tie-break purposes. In the case of a mercy rule, the game will continue for the full set of innings so that substitute players get an opportunity to play. The winning team enters as many non-starting players as possible.

**Seating:** Normally, visitors sit along the 3<sup>rd</sup> base line; the home team sits along the 1<sup>st</sup> base line. However, both teams may chose to sit along the 3<sup>rd</sup> baseline to avoid the sun.

**Schedule, warm-ups:** To stay on schedule, teams must be ready to take the field quickly between games for infield practice. Warm-up pitches between innings will be limited to 3.

**Tie breakers:** If, after round-robin play, two teams have identical win-loss records, the first tie breaker is the head-to-head result. If three teams finish round-robin play with identical win-loss records, the following tie breakers will be used, in the order listed, to determine final seedings for the championship round:

1. Largest run differential amongst tied teams, all three games in round-robin play (total runs scored minus total runs allowed; 15 runs maximum differential per game according to mercy rule)
  - a) If two teams are still tied, then head-to-head.
2. If three teams are still tied, then most total runs scored amongst tied teams.
  - a) If two teams are still tied, then head-to-head.
3. If three teams are still tied, then fewest total runs conceded amongst tied teams.
  - a) If two teams are still tied, then head-to-head.
4. If three teams are still tied, then “rock paper scissors” (*jancken*) played by the team captains (and the tournament director will eat his hat).

## Throwing contest

- Held at the start of the lunch break on Saturday. Choose one thrower. Be ready.
- One thrower from each team – 2 throws only.
- Distance and accuracy are measured. For example, if a player throws the ball 50 meters and the ball lands 10 meters to the left or right of the measuring tape, the final distance is calculated by deducting 10 from 50, for a final distance of 40 m.
- Only the further of the 2 attempts counts.
- Furthest throw wins.
- [Example](#) on YouTube (screaming is encouraged).

## Homerun competition

- Held immediately after the throwing contest on Saturday. Be ready.
- One batter from each team – 10 swings.
- The batter who hits the most balls that land beyond the marked perimeter line (shallow outfield, 25 meters) wins.
- Foul balls count as one of the 10 swings.
- A swing and a miss counts as one of the 10 swings.
- Pitchers may be a player or a coach and may pitch closer to home plate.
- No arc restrictions on pitches; flat pitches are allowed.
- 1 warm-up swing/hit allowed – only 1. If it is a HR, it does not count.
- [500-feet \(152 meters\) examples](#) on YouTube.



<p>Tossed and turned all night. Slept through the alarm. Late for school. Completely spaced the test. Broke up with my boyfriend. Played softball. ...not a bad day.</p>	<p><b>Trade sweat for Strength Trade weakness for Power Trade doubt for Confidence Trade fear for Courage Trade Softball for Nothing!</b></p>	<p>I don't need the Glory I don't need the Fame I don't need the Spotlight I just need to Hit the Ball.</p>
<p><b>To some softball is a hobby. To others it's a sport. To me it's an obsession.</b></p>	<p>I'm a girl. I'm an athlete. And yeah, I'll kick your butt.</p>	<p><b>My boyfriend told me I had to choose between him and softball. ...I'm really going to miss him.</b></p>
<p>You wish you could hit like a girl.</p>	<p><b>People say that I hit like a girl. And I thank them.</b></p>	<p>Yeah, I play like a girl. You got a problem with that?</p>

## WJAA Middle School Softball Rules

- **Rules:** International Softball Federation (slow pitch), with WJAA modifications
- **Ball:** 12-inch leather ball
- **Distances:** 37-foot (11.3 m) pitching distance, 60 feet (18.3 m) between bases.
- **Strike zone:** Home plate + the mat behind home plate.
- **Strike outs:** A legally pitched ball landing on the strike zone before an attempted swing results in a strike out. A foul ball on the 3<sup>rd</sup> strike results in a strike out.
- **Pitching arc:** 6 feet (1.8 m) to 12 feet (3.7 m). Umpire calls “flat” or “high” as appropriate as the ball is in the air and, if the batter does not swing, the pitch is called a “ball”. If the batter swings at a called “flat” or “high” pitch, the ball is live.
- **First base safety base:** Runners to first base must use the orange safety base.
- **Home safety plate:** An orange home plate is placed outside the 3<sup>rd</sup> base line even with the official home plate. To score, runners need only to touch the orange safety plate before a player catches the ball while touching home plate. All plays at home plate are force plays; no sliding or tagging. Runners must not touch the official home plate; they should touch only the orange safety plate.
- **Commit line:** A commit line is marked 20 feet (6.1 meters) before home plate. Runners advancing toward home plate must, if they cross this commit line, continue toward home plate.  
**One exception to the commit line rule:** If a fly ball has been caught and a runner crosses the commit line without having tagged up, she may attempt to return to 3<sup>rd</sup> base to avoid being “doubled up.”
- **Bunting:** Not permitted.
- **Stealing:** Not permitted.
- **Leading off:** Not permitted. Base runners may not leave the base until contact is made. Or, if there is a swing and a miss, the ball is dead, so the runner will not be called out if she has left the base on the swing. To be clear: runners shall not leave the base even on a swing; they must wait until contact is made..
- **Calling time:** Umpires should call “time” once the ball has been thrown to the infield and the umpires are sure that no more play is happening. That is, for example, when an infielder has the ball in good possession and throws the ball to the pitcher, runners are not allowed to advance bases while the ball is in air.
- **Thrown bat:** 1) Bat thrown accidentally: warning. A second warning to the same player, anytime during the game: batter is called out. 2) Bat thrown dangerously on purpose: batter is called out the first time, no warning.
- **Infield fly rule:** Not enforced for WJAA middle school softball.

# Rules Clarifications

## **WARM-UP TIME**

- Immediately after a game ends the next teams must be ready to play.
- Each team will get 5 minutes infield practice – visiting first, then home team.
- While a team is taking infield, the other team may warm up deep in the outfield.
- The 5-minute infield practice time should not be used for batting practice – not enough time and too dangerous.

## **PITCHING MOTION (ISF rules)**

- Pitcher may not step forward onto the rubber to start the pitching motion.
- The pitcher must start with at least 1 foot on the pitcher's rubber and then maintain contact with the rubber with a foot until the ball leaves the hand.

## **FOUL TIP, FOUL BALL (ISF rules)**

- For a foul ball caught by the catcher to be considered an out, the ball must rise clearly higher than the catcher's head.
- Foul tips or foul balls that do not go above the catcher's head, whether caught or not, are strikes.

## **“FAIR BALL” CALL**

- Umpires will NOT call out “fair ball” as it may confuse runners (who mishear it as “foul ball”). Umpires will use hand gestures to indicate fair balls. Umps will call only “foul ball.”

## **GAME CONTINUATION AFTER MERCY RULE**

- In the case of a mercy rule, the game will continue for the full set of innings so that substitute players get an opportunity to play. The winning team enters as many non-starting players as possible.

## **RUN DIFFERENTIAL TIE-BREAKER AND LAST AT-BAT**

- The home team, if ahead going into the bottom of the final inning, will not bat. For example, if the home team is ahead after the top of the 6<sup>th</sup> inning in a round robin game, the game will be declared over, even if the home team is behind in a potential run differential tie-breaker.

# SOIS Sabers softball ground rules

## Player safety

- 1) Players must remain in their team bench area behind the dead ball line.
  - Keep all equipment in this area.
- 2) Visiting teams sit on the concrete seats along the third base line.
  - Please keep gloves and helmets and bags on the seats, off the field of play.
  - Please sit on the second row of seats so that your feet are off the field of play.
- 3) Do not walk behind green net behind homeplate during play.

## Small field, several obstacles

In general, when in doubt, fielders should “play on” until the umpires call the official ruling. Baserunners keep running, fielders keep chasing the ball.

## Dead ball line

A white dead ball line marks the home bench area (partway along the gym wall). Along the 3<sup>rd</sup> base line, the area above the first level of the concrete seats is considered dead ball territory. The visiting team sits in this deadball area; please keep equipment off the field of play.

## Dead ball or play on

- 1) Overthrown or passed balls that go beyond 1<sup>st</sup> base dead ball line: **one extra base.**
- 2) Overthrown or passed balls that go up into the 3<sup>rd</sup> base concrete seating area: **one extra base.**
- 3) Balls that bounce cleanly off the wall or a net not marked by a dead ball line: **play on.**
- 4) Balls that bounce cleanly off the bottom (only the bottom) of the 3<sup>rd</sup> base concrete seats not marked by a dead ball line: **play on.**

## “Play on” balls

- 1) Balls that hit the fence or netting in rightfield and right-centerfield and bounce back cleanly into play.
- 2) Balls that hit the bottom stair of the rightfield stairwell and bounce back cleanly into play.
- 3) Balls that roll into the entrance way in deep centerfield.
- 4) Balls that roll out to the bushes in deep leftfield, crossing the sand pit.
- 5) Balls that bounce off the portable green safety nets or walls in fair territory.



## Ground rule double

- 1) Balls to rightfield and right-centerfield that land on the netting between the silver fence and the school building that do not cleanly bounce back out and that the defensive outfielder cannot reach. *Umpire's judgement.*
- 2) Balls that bounce or roll up into the stairwell in rightfield, whether they bounce back out cleanly or not.

## Special ground rule triple or home run

In the following two “unplayable ball” situations, the baserunner will be awarded the base she is running to plus one more base, based on the umpire's judgement.

- 1) An outfielder is unable to cleanly retrieve or play a ball that is hit all the way out to the left field bushes beyond the sand pit.
- 2) A ball that rolls past an outfielder or under her glove or between her legs and then squeezes through the gate in deep centerfield.

So, for example, if the runner has rounded second base by the time the umpire judges the ball to be unplayable, the hit will be declared a ground rule home run.

If the runner has yet to reach second base, the hit will be declared a ground rule triple.

*(Rather than calling these balls ground rule doubles, the purpose of this ruling is to give fair advantage to the base runner, who often would be likely to score on such hits.)*

## Ground rule home run

- 1) Balls hit massively on the fly against the walls or windows of the school building in rightfield or right-centerfield.
- 2) Balls hit majestically over the fence in deep leftfield into the bamboo grove.
- 3) Balls hit monstrosly over the centerfield fence into the parking lot.
- 4) Balls hit miraculously onto the school rooftop in rightfield and right-centerfield.



## Recent results

### Final standings

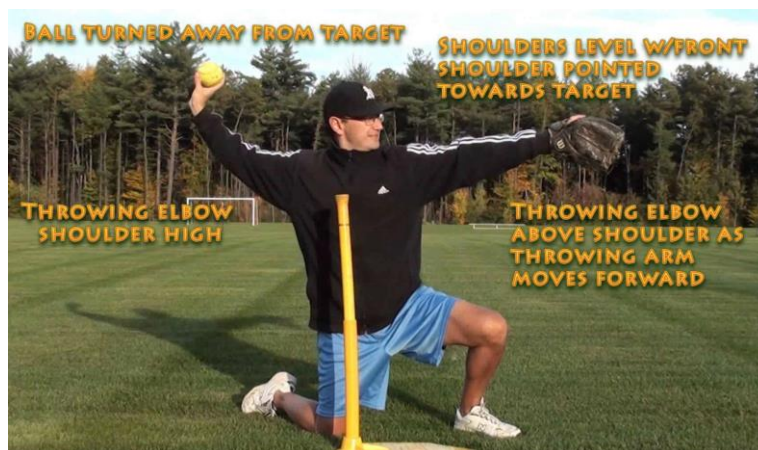
Year	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
2015				
2014	MBIS	SOIS	CA	NIS
2013	MBIS	SOIS	NIS	CA
2012	MBIS	SOIS	CA	NIS

### Long throw winners, distances (meters)

2015			
2014	Kasumi Kobo (8 <sup>th</sup> )	MBIS	45.7
2013	Corrine Watanabe (8 <sup>th</sup> )	SOIS	42.2
2012	Fuka Ugai (8 <sup>th</sup> grader)	SOIS	36.3

### Homerun winners, numbers (out of 10 swings)

2015			
2014	Jaascha (8 <sup>th</sup> )	MBIS	5
2013	Yukie (8 <sup>th</sup> )	MBIS	6
2012	Sarina (8 <sup>th</sup> grader)	MBIS	5



## Acknowledgements, Thanks

**It takes a schoolwide effort to conduct a sporting event like this.  
Many people put forth much effort to help this event succeed.  
We thank them all.**

- *Overnight teams – MBIS and NIS – for their patience and cooperation.*
- *Assistant tournament director: Mr. Toshifumi Mitsuhashi*
- *Sabers middle school softball head coach: Coach Nakamura*
- *Sabers softball managers: Maria Valentini and Mana Yutsudo*
- *Sabers Sports Council for the hospitality table set up.*
- *Umpires: Mr. Munetaka Sagara, Mr. Toshifumi Mitsuhashi, Mr. Bill Kralovec, Ms. Takako Hirai*
- *SOIS music teachers for allowing guests to sleep in their rooms*

***And finally thank you to all players and coaches.  
Have a great tournament and enjoy your stay with us at SOIS.  
We hope you make many new friends.***



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## Pics from the past....

