



SOFTBALL ALBERTA

“The Original Game of Summer”

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RE: Change to U11 Provincials

Softball Alberta is pleased to announce the format for the 2024 U11 Provincials. We have been seeing significant growth in the last few years in registration numbers. This growth is awesome as this is how we want our game to grow. But along with this growth it does come with the need to look at how we conduct the Provincials.

We have offered just two divisions in the past – Jamboree and U11 “traditional”. We have not had teams register in the Jamboree division and thus effective in 2024, will be eliminating the Jamboree division.

The U11 Provincials for the last 10 years or so have been an “open” category - meaning that we accept all the teams who enter. All the teams entered were randomly placed into pools. After the round robin games, the top team went to the “A” side playoff and the second team went to the “B” side playoff. Last year when we had over 30 teams register, we wanted to move towards more meaningful competition. If we used the format that was in place we could have had some very imbalanced games. Therefore, we decided with the number of teams we had, we would try and split them into similar competition levels. While we labelled them A, B, C and D, those letters were only used to name the pools.

This year we are anticipating similar numbers (and would be excited to have even more teams), thus the need to look at the process and determine what is best for our program. At a Board Meeting held to discuss U11 Provincials, the following decisions have been made:

To remove the U11 Jamboree as a provincial category. Moving forward, U11 will have two primary divisions: U11 Advanced and U11 Developing. Teams are responsible to determine and register in the division they will be most competitive in.

By having only two designated levels of play in this age group, it allows Softball Alberta to dynamically increase the number of play divisions in this category. This format will allow our minor associations to have “competitive” teams without the designation of A, B, etc.

While each organization and team shall decide where they believe they should be registered below is a guideline to consider when registering (see next page):



Guidelines for U11 Provincials

Advanced:

- ❖ Teams who are primarily comprised of 2nd year U11 players or have been registered in softball either as a Timbits or underage player
- ❖ Teams who have 2-3 pitchers that are throwing strikes
- ❖ Teams who are attending tournaments and are competitive to the group playing against.
- ❖ Teams that have players who attended off season training for skills and pitching.

Developing:

- ❖ Teams that are using coach pitch or machine pitch for part of the year or playing with modified rules.
- ❖ Teams comprised of many first year U11 or first year ball players.
- ❖ Teams that do not have 2-3 pitchers that are throwing strikes
- ❖ Teams that for the most part started their training at the start of the season
- ❖ Teams that have not attended tournaments to determine how they relate to other teams in the province.

If you are competing in league play or tournament play, we strongly encourage coaches to have conversations with other teams you have competed against and see what level they are entering

