

WOMEN'S HOUSTON OPEN 2026

Official Playing Conditions

May 8 – 10, 2026 | Prairie View Cricket Complex, Houston, TX

Format: T20 | 6 Teams | League + Knockouts

Tournament Snapshot

Event	Women's Houston Open 2026
Dates	Friday, May 8 – Sunday, May 10, 2026
Venue	Prairie View Cricket Complex, Houston, TX
Format	T20 — 20 overs per side
Teams	6
Structure	5 league games per team, followed by 1st/2nd, 3rd/4th and 5th/6th playoffs
Governing Rules	ICC Women's T20 Playing Conditions, with WHO 2026 tournament-specific overrides as set out in this document

1. General

ICC Women's Cricket Playing Conditions for T20 International matches will apply to every match of the Women's Houston Open 2026, except where specifically modified in this document. Where a tournament-specific rule conflicts with the ICC condition, the tournament-specific rule prevails.

1.1 COVID-19 Policy

Players, officials and team support staff experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms must remain at home or in their hotel room and notify the Tournament Director immediately. Out-of-town participants must carry their insurance card at all times during the tournament.

1.2 Spirit of Cricket

All matches are to be played in the true Spirit of Cricket. Captains carry primary responsibility for the conduct of their players and must ensure compliance with the Houston Open 2026 Code of Conduct at all times.

2. Match Officials & Authority

- Each match will be officiated by two on-field umpires appointed by the Tournament Director.
- A scorer for each team must be present and confirm the score at the end of every over, and again at the end of each innings.
- The Tournament Director is the final on-ground authority on all matters not expressly covered by these Playing Conditions, and on all matters of interpretation.
- The Match Manager handles in-match administrative decisions; escalations move to the Tournament Director.
- Decision Review System (DRS) and ball-tracking technology are NOT in use. The on-field umpires' decision is final.

3. Playing Squad & Participation

The following applies to every match of the Women's Houston Open 2026:

- **Team Sheet:** Each team must submit a team sheet at the toss listing exactly eleven (11) nominated players (the Playing XI) and up to five (5) designated Impact Player candidates from their squad.
- **Playing XI:** The eleven (11) nominated players are the only players who may bat or bowl in the match, except where modified by the Impact Player rule (Section 13) or Concussion Replacement (Section 5.5).
- **Fielding rotation:** Eleven (11) players must always be on the field. Squad members not in the Playing XI may serve as fielding substitutes only (no batting, bowling, captaincy, or wicketkeeping), per Section 5.4.
- **Dual Team Sheets (optional):** If a captain wishes to nominate a different Playing XI based on the toss outcome (i.e., one XI for batting first, another for bowling first — using the Impact Player rule), they must prepare two (2) separate team sheets and bring both to the toss. After the toss, the correct sheet must be handed over immediately to the opposing captain and the on-field umpire. See Section 13.3.

4. Ground & Equipment

4.1 Ground Dimensions

- Inner circle (30-yard equivalent): 25.15 yards for Women's game.
- Boundary / Outer circle: 50 – 55 yards.
- All boundaries will be clearly marked using ropes/cones and inspected before the start of play.

4.2 Ball

- Match ball: 5 oz / 142 g, white leather ball.
- Each fielding team will be supplied with one new ball per innings. The umpires will hold spare balls of similar wear in case of ball loss or damage.

4.3 Pitch Rolling

- Rolling between innings is NOT permitted.

4.4 Player Equipment & Attire

- All players must wear their team's official colored kit. Sneakers, rubber spikes, or proper cricket shoes are permitted.
- Helmets are mandatory for all batters and wicketkeepers standing up to the stumps. Helmets are strongly recommended for all close-in fielders.
- All protective gear (pads, gloves, abdominal/chest guards as applicable) is the responsibility of the player.

5. Field Restrictions & Substitutions

5.1 Powerplay (Overs 1 – 6)

- A maximum of two (2) fielders are permitted outside the inner circle during the first 6 overs of an innings.

5.2 Non-Powerplay (Overs 7 – 20)

- A maximum of four (4) fielders are permitted outside the inner circle during overs 7 to 20.

5.3 Other Standard ICC Field Restrictions

- Minimum of four (4) fielders, including the wicketkeeper, must be inside the inner circle at the instant of delivery throughout the innings (in addition to the bowler).

- No more than five (5) fielders may be on the leg side at the instant of delivery.
- Breach of any field restriction will be called as a No Ball by the umpire.

5.4 Fielding Substitutions

- Squad players (not in the Playing XI) may be used as fielding substitutes to allow rotation. Substitutes may not bowl, bat, captain, or keep wicket.
- A bowler returning to the field after a temporary absence must complete the standard penalty time before being allowed to bowl, per ICC playing conditions.

5.5 Concussion Replacement

- Where a player sustains a concussion or suspected concussion from a head/neck injury during play, a Concussion Replacement may be permitted.
- The injury must occur during play within the playing area; concussion must be formally diagnosed by the team medical representative or first-aider on site.
- A Concussion Replacement Request must be submitted to the Tournament Director as soon as possible after the incident.
- The replacement must be a like-for-like substitute (similar batting/bowling role) drawn from the registered squad. The Tournament Director's decision is final.
- Once approved, the replaced player takes no further part in the match. Both players are considered to have played for statistical purposes.

6. Time Management

- Each innings is allocated 90 minutes.
- Innings break: 20 minutes.
- **Slow over-rate penalty:** From the 91st minute of an innings onwards, for every over that has not been completed within the allotted time, the fielding side must bring one additional fielder inside the inner circle as a penalty for that over and any subsequent over until the over rate is restored.
- The umpires will be the sole judges of time, and may adjust the schedule for unavoidable delays (injury, lost ball, weather).

7. Bowling Restrictions

- Maximum overs per bowler: four (4) in a full 20-over innings.
- *In a reduced-overs match, maximum overs per bowler is calculated as: one-fifth (1/5) of the total overs, rounded down. Where total overs are not divisible by 5, one additional over is permitted to as many bowlers as needed to make up the balance.*
- *If the innings is scheduled for between 5 and 9 overs, no bowler may bowl more than 2 overs.*

8. No Balls, Wides & Free Hits

8.1 No Ball

- A No Ball results in 1 penalty run to the batting side, plus all runs scored from the delivery.
- The delivery is re-bowled.
- The batter cannot be dismissed off a No Ball except by Run Out, Obstructing the Field, Hit the Ball Twice, or Handled the Ball.

8.2 Free Hit

- The delivery following any No Ball (front-foot, back-foot, height, or fielding-restriction breach) is a Free Hit.
- On a Free Hit, the batter cannot be dismissed by any means other than those that apply to a No Ball.

- Field changes are not permitted between the No Ball and the Free Hit unless the batters cross or the striker has changed.

8.3 Wides

- Wides are called strictly under ICC Women's T20 standards. A delivery passing down the leg side without contacting the bat or person of the striker will be called a Wide.
- A Wide results in 1 penalty run to the batting side, plus all runs scored. The delivery is re-bowled.

8.4 Short-Pitched Bowling

- A maximum of one (1) fast short-pitched delivery (passing above the shoulder height of the striker in normal stance) is permitted per over.
- A second such delivery in the same over will be called a No Ball, and the bowler will receive a first warning. A subsequent breach in the same innings will result in the standard escalation: second warning, then final warning, then removal from bowling for the remainder of the innings.

9. Result, Tie & Super Over

9.1 Minimum Overs for a Result

- A minimum of five (5) overs per innings must be bowled for a match to constitute a result.
- If fewer than 5 overs can be bowled in the second innings (after any DLS adjustment), the match will be declared No Result.

9.2 Tied League Match

- In the event of a tied league match, points will be SHARED equally between the two teams. No Super Over will be played in league fixtures.

9.3 Tied Knockout / Final

- In the event of a tie in the FINAL only, a Super Over will be played to determine the winner.
- If the Super Over is also tied, additional Super Overs will be played until a result is achieved.
- The 3rd-place playoff and 5th-place playoff will follow the same Super Over rule as the Final, at the discretion of the Tournament Director, to ensure a finishing position is determined.

9.4 Super Over Mechanics

- Each side nominates 3 batters and 1 bowler.
- Each side bowls one over of six legitimate deliveries; the team scoring the higher total wins.
- An innings ends when 2 wickets fall or 6 legitimate deliveries are bowled, whichever comes first.
- The team batting second in the main match bats first in the Super Over.

10. Tournament Format & Standings

10.1 League Stage

- Each team plays five (5) league games. The schedule was finalized in front of team owners/managers using a random draw.

10.2 Points System

Result	Points
Win	2
Tie	1 (each team)
No Result / Abandoned	1 (each team)

Result	Points
Loss	0

10.3 League Tiebreakers (in order)

- Number of wins.
- Net Run Rate (NRR) across all league matches.
- Head-to-head result between the tied teams.
- Higher number of wickets taken per balls bowled in league matches.
- Toss of a coin (Tournament Director).

10.4 Knockout Stage

Following the league stage, teams will be ranked 1 through 6. Knockout fixtures are:

Match	Fixture
Final (1st Place)	Rank 1 vs Rank 2
3rd Place Playoff	Rank 3 vs Rank 4
5th Place Playoff	Rank 5 vs Rank 6

11. Reduced Overs & Inclement Weather

- In the event of weather, light, or other unavoidable interruption, the umpires will determine playing time lost in conjunction with the Tournament Director.
- Where overs are reduced, the Duckworth-Lewis-Stern (DLS) method will be used to determine revised targets and results, in accordance with ICC Women's T20 Playing Conditions.
- If the second innings cannot reach the minimum 5 overs (after any reduction), the match is a No Result.
- For knockout matches, every reasonable effort will be made to obtain a result on the scheduled day. If no result can be obtained, the higher-ranked team from the league stage will advance / be awarded the higher position.

12. Player Conduct

All players, team officials, and match officials are bound by the Houston Open 2026 Code of Conduct, which incorporates the ICC Code of Conduct for Players and Player Support Personnel (Levels 1 – 4) with tournament-specific PMOA layers. Reportable offences must be raised to the on-field umpires immediately and escalated to the Tournament Director, who has full authority on hearings and sanctions in accordance with the Code.

13. Impact Player Rule (Exclusive to Houston Open 2026)

The Women's Houston Open 2026 adopts the Impact Player rule, allowing each team to make one tactical in-match substitution. The Impact Player may be a specialist batter, bowler, or all-rounder brought in to change the course of the game. This section governs the full procedure for registering, declaring, and fielding an Impact Player. This rule is harmonized with the Men's Houston Open 2026 Playing Conditions.

13.1 What Is the Impact Player Rule?

Each team is permitted to substitute one player from their nominated Playing XI with a previously designated Impact Player from their bench at any point during the match when the ball is dead. The

substituted player takes no further part in the match. The Impact Player rule is OPTIONAL — teams are not required to use it.

13.2 Eligibility

The Impact Player must:

- Be a registered Houston Open 2026 player eligible under the Player Regulations.
- Be listed on the team sheet as an Impact Player candidate prior to the toss.
- Not be listed as one of the 11 nominated Playing XI on the active team sheet submitted after the toss.

13.3 Team Sheet Protocol — Dual Team Sheets

Because the Impact Player rule allows a captain to field a different Playing XI depending on whether they bat or bowl first, the following team sheet protocol applies:

- If a captain intends to nominate a different Playing XI based on the toss outcome, they must prepare TWO separate team sheets before arriving at the toss.
- Both team sheets must be brought to the toss by the captain or their designated representative.
- Each team sheet must list exactly 11 nominated players and up to 5 designated Impact Player candidates.
- After the toss, the winning captain announces their decision to bat or bowl first. **IMMEDIATELY THEREAFTER**, both captains must hand over their correct team sheet to the opposing captain AND the on-field umpire (either umpire).
- Once the team sheet has been handed over, the nominated Playing XI is locked. No changes may be made except via the Impact Player substitution (this Section) or Concussion Replacement (Section 5.5).

TEAM SHEET REMINDER

If a team does NOT intend to change their XI based on the toss outcome, they only need ONE team sheet. Both scenarios (one sheet or two) are valid. The dual team sheet is only required when the captain wants to retain the tactical flexibility to field a different XI depending on the toss result.

13.4 When Can the Impact Player Be Introduced?

The Impact Player substitution may be made at any moment when the ball is dead, including:

- At the start of any over.
- After a wicket falls.
- During any other dead-ball situation (e.g., drinks break, boundary clearance, injury stoppage).

The captain wishing to introduce their Impact Player must notify the on-field umpires before play resumes. The umpires shall inform the opposing captain and the scorers.

13.5 Restrictions on the Impact Player

- Only ONE Impact Player substitution is permitted per team per match.
- The substituted player (the one leaving the field) may take no further part in the match in any capacity — they may not bat, bowl, field, or act as substitute.
- If the Impact Player is a batter, they may replace a player who has not yet batted, and shall bat in that player's position in the order.
- If the Impact Player is a bowler, they may bowl up to their full allowance (maximum 4 overs in a 20-over innings), regardless of how many overs the player they replaced had bowled.
- A batter who has already been dismissed CANNOT be replaced by an Impact Player. The substitution may only replace a player who is yet to bat or is currently in the field.
- The Impact Player must be drawn from the pre-designated candidates listed on the team sheet.

13.6 Batting Situation at Time of Substitution

If the Impact Player substitution is made mid-innings while the replaced player has not yet batted, the Impact Player shall take that player's place in the batting order. The captain shall notify the umpire of the revised batting position if the order changes.

13.7 Notification and Record

The umpire shall inform the scorers of the Impact Player substitution immediately. The scorers shall record the substitution in the official match scoresheet, noting the over at which the substitution was made. The Match Manager and Tournament Director shall be notified at the next available opportunity.

13.8 Strategic Summary

Scenario	Rule
Impact Player candidates	Up to 5 listed on the team sheet before the toss
Substitutions allowed	1 per team per match
When allowed	Any time the ball is dead
Replaced player status	Out of the match entirely (no batting, bowling, fielding, or sub duty)
Impact bowler overs	Full allocation (max 4 overs) regardless of replaced player
Already dismissed batter	Cannot be replaced — Impact Player substitution not allowed
Dual team sheets	Required only if XI differs based on toss outcome

14. Captain's Acknowledgement

By signing the Toss Roster sheet at the toss for any match in this tournament, the Captain confirms that all squad members have been briefed on, and agree to abide by, these Playing Conditions and the Houston Open 2026 Code of Conduct.

Tournament Director — Name & Signature

Date