

**UNITED STATES SPECIALTY SPORTS ASSOCIATION**

**USSA**  
*United States Specialty Sports Association*

**2010  
RULEBOOK**



**\$5.00**



# **UNITED STATES SPECIALTY SPORTS ASSOCIATION**

United States Specialty Sports Association

## **2010 Official Slow Pitch Rule Book and National By-laws**

*Official Slow Pitch Softball Rules Adopted,  
Published and Distributed by*

**UNITED STATES SPECIALTY SPORTS ASSOCIATION**

**611 Line Drive, Kissimmee, Florida 34744**

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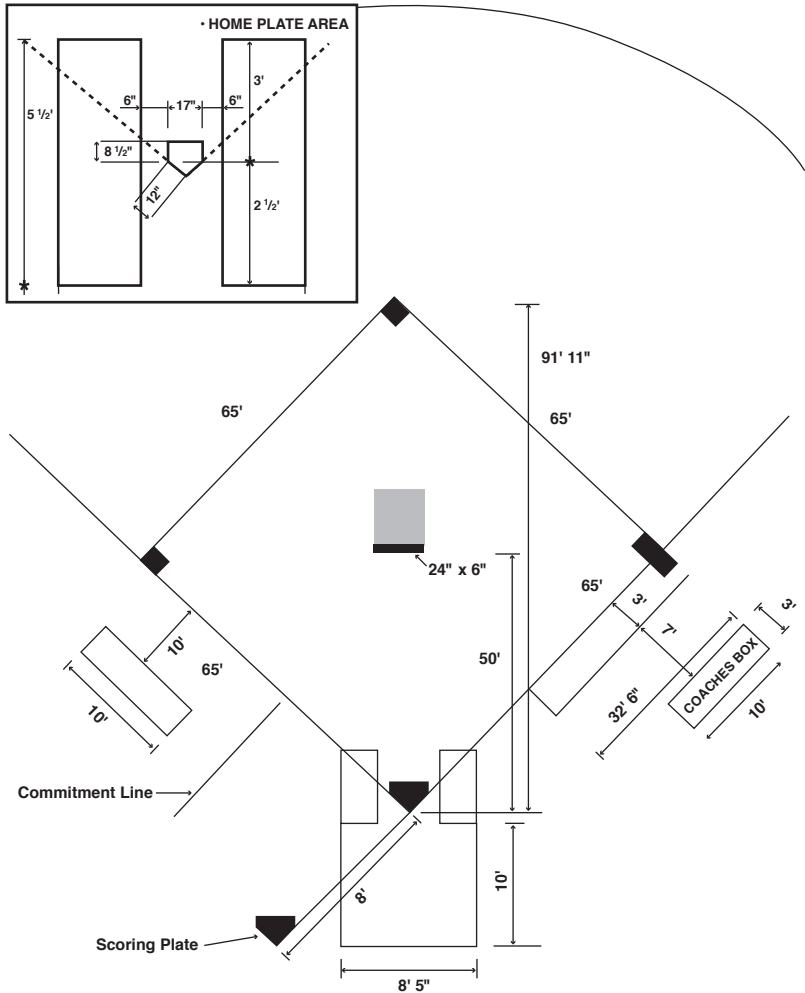
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**IF AN UNUSUAL OR DISPUTED PLAY OCCURS IN A GAME**  
describe the incident in detail and send a self-addressed, stamped envelope  
for an answer or interpretation. Should you wish to have an  
**OFFICIAL RULE BOOK**, please send \$5.50 to help  
defray mailing and handling costs.

# OFFICIAL USSSA STANDARD PLAYING FIELD DIMENSIONS



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**Note: Additional rules and information can be found on [usssa.com](http://usssa.com) (Policy & Procedures) for the following programs as well as under “Additional Playing Rules Not Found In USSSA Rule Book”**

- Men’s Major
- Men’s A
- Black American
- Corporate
- Hispanic
- Law Enforcement/Fire
- Masters
- Military
- Youth
- Native American
- Indoor
- Slow Pitch Overhand Softball
- Sixteen Inch Rules
- One Pitch Rules
- Scoring Rules

# **USSSA SLOW PITCH SOFTBALL**

## **The Slow Pitch Softball Game Official Playing Rules**

### **11 Inch and 12 Inch Games Copyright USSSA 1968-2010**

**NOTE:** all new rule changes are screened in gray throughout the rule book.

→ This marking means change in wording or numbering for clarification only.

NOTE: Use of the word “he” in this publication is intended to include both the masculine and feminine genders unless otherwise noted.

## RULE 1. THE PLAYING FIELD

**Sec. 1. THE PLAYING FIELD** is the area where the ball may be legally played or fielded. The field shall be an area within an established minimum radius from home plate to the far boundaries between the foul lines.

**Sec. 2. SPECIAL GROUND RULES** may be made by Tournament Directors when the field is less than the official minimum dimensions, which are:

- A. In 12 inch the radius distance is 300 feet for men.
- B. In Women's Class "A" and "B," the radius distance will be a minimum of 275 feet to a maximum of 325 feet distance for National or World tournament play. Temporary fences cannot be used if a permanent outfield fence is present.
- C. In Women's Class "C" and "D," the radius distance will be a minimum of 250 feet to a maximum of 325 feet fence distance for Regional, National, or World tournament play.

EFFECT Sec. 2 A-D. It is optional at the state program level that when an outfield fence or obstruction less than legal radius is of such height to warrant consideration, a Tournament Director may determine whether or not to award the batter fewer than 4 bases on a fair batted ball that goes over the fence.

**Sec. 3. THE OFFICIAL DIAMONDS** of the field shall be established for 11 inch and 12 inch with:

- A. 65 or 70 foot baselines shall be used in all adult programs. Exception: Special playing rules may be adopted by the USSSA Board of Directors in selected Men's Major and "A" events.

Example: To figure the distance from home plate to 2nd base for 70 foot bases you multiply  $70 \times 70 \times 2$  which equals 9800 and then the square root of 9800 which equals 98.99 or 98 feet 11 inches.

- B. Pitcher's distances of 50 feet for both men and women along with a pitching area the width of the pitcher's plate up to six (6) feet behind the back edge of the pitcher's plate.

**Sec. 4. THE LAYOUT OF THE FIELD** is shown in the accompanying diagram. First, select the desired location of home plate (preferably toward Southwest) and drive a stake in the ground. This will establish the rear corner of home plate. Fasten a cord to this stake and tie knots at distances of 50, 65, 92 and 130 feet. Place this cord along a line desired and at the 50 foot marker place a stake. This will be the middle of the front edge of the Pitcher's Plate. Further along this cord, drive a stake at the 91 foot 11 inch mark. This will be the outside corner of second base. Place the 130 foot marker at the second base stake. Next, take the cord at the 65 foot marker and walk to the right until the cord is taut, both from home to first and from second to first, then drive a stake. This will mark the outside corner of first base. The line from home to first becomes the first base foul line. Again, taking the cord at

the 65 foot marker, walk across the diamond until the cord is again taut between second and third and home and third. Then drive a stake to establish the outside corner of third base. The line between home and third becomes the third base foul line. Both the first and third base foul lines shall be extended to the far extremities of the field. Home plate, first, second and third bases are all completely within the established base lines, or diamond.

**Sec. 5. BATTER'S BOXES** shall be provided on either side of home plate, with the inside line of this box 6 inches from home plate and parallel to the sideline. The batter's box shall be 5-1/2 feet long, extending 3 feet forward and 2-1/2 feet toward the rear, measured from the center corner of home plate. The batter's box shall be 3 feet wide, thus forming a rectangle of 5-1/2 feet by 3 feet. The lines marking the batter's box are considered to be part of the batter's box.

**Sec. 6. THE CATCHER'S BOX** shall be 10 feet long from the rear outside corners of the batter's box on each side of home plate, thus forming a rectangle 10 feet long and 8 feet 5 inches wide.

**Sec. 7. THE THREE FOOT LINE** is drawn outside of and parallel to the first base foul line starting at the outside corner of first base and extending halfway toward home plate.

**Sec. 8. THE COACHES' BOXES** shall be established at both first and third bases, 10 feet from and parallel to the base lines. They shall be 10 feet long starting at the outside corners of the bases and extending toward home plate. The width of the box shall be 3 feet, thus forming a rectangle 10 feet long and 3 feet wide.

## **RULE 2. EQUIPMENT**

**Sec. 1. DUE TO RAPIDLY EXPANDING** and advanced technologies of softball equipment, all new equipment introduced to the game of slow pitch softball must be reviewed and approved by the USSSA Equipment Performance and Safety Standards Committee. Each item approved shall be tested for one year. During this time the item can be further evaluated in actual game-playing situations. The USSSA reserves the right to disapprove any equipment due to failure to meet current safety standards as set by the USSSA Equipment Performance and Safety Standards Committee.

**Sec. 2. THE OFFICIAL BAT** shall be round in cross section, straight in length and measure not more than 34 inches long, including tape or other grip additions to the bat, and not more than 2-1/4 inches in diameter at its largest part. Its weight shall not exceed 31-1/2 ounces, including tape or grip addition to the bat. The bat shall have a safety grip of tape or some other material to facilitate holding the bat during the batter's swing. The safety grip shall be not less than 10 inches long, nor extend more than 15 inches from the small end, or handle end, of the bat. Graphics, including BPF markings, must be permanent and cannot be decals or any other method that can be easily removed or added to the bat.

**A. THE BAT** may be made of hard wood of one piece, or laminated from sections of hard wood bonded together with adhesive in such a way that the grain directions of all the pieces are essentially parallel to the length of the bat.

**B.** THE BAT may also be made of aluminum or other metals, fiberglass, graphite or a composite material. The bat may be made in pieces from different materials but must have a closed barrel end and may be modular with interchangeable parts, subject to additional safety and tampering requirements as set forth in the standard USSSA Bat Licensing Agreement. The knob portion must be welded or mechanically attached to the bat. Only USSSA approved bats, USSSA approved weighted bats, or USSSA approved bat weight attachments may be used in loosening up. Nothing such as a donut or fan may be used when loosening up.

**C.** Authorized bat manufacturers shall mark their products with the words “Official Softball” or words to that effect. If the words “Official Softball” are illegible or it is a Little League bat, the bat should be declared legal if it is legal in all other respects. When a bat does not meet the specifications as defined, has flat spots or pronounced dents or if in the umpire’s judgment, the bat has been altered, the umpire shall prohibit the use of the doubtful bat.

**D.** The performance standard for all non-wooden bats will be a Bat Performance Factor (BPF) of 1.20, or less under the ASTM BPF test as applied under the standard USSSA Bat License Agreement. A list of those bats licensed and complying with this standard and therefore legal in USSSA play shall be kept by USSSA and published and made available by means including, but not limited to, the USSSA website. Only bats on the published list will be legal for USSSA play. In addition, no bat shall be legal in USSSA play unless it is marked “USSSA BPF 1.20”; bats manufactured before January 1, 2004, are to be marked “1.20 BPF” or BPF 1.20.”

**E.** A USSSA Director may at any time ask to inspect a bat that has been brought into the location of a USSSA sanctioned event. The owner and/or user may either:

**a.** Allow the Director to inspect the bat and reach a conclusion as to whether or not the bat might be altered. If, after making the inspection, the Director in his discretion decides that the bat might be an altered bat, the suspected offending owner and/or user will be subject to Rule 7, Sec. 2B and may:

**i.** Allow the Director to send the bat to the USSSA Altered Bat Committee and/or Manufacturer of the bat for a determination as to whether or not the bat is altered. NOTE: During the time of the examination of the bat by the Manufacturer/Altered Bat Committee, the USSSA, by the discretion of the USSSA Altered Bat Committee, may suspend the suspected offending player pending the decision. If the Manufacturer or the USSSA Altered Bat Committee determines that the bat has been altered, the Altered Bat Committee may suspend a first time offender for up to two years from USSSA play. For a second time offender, any suspension may be up to lifetime.

ii. Accept a one year (up to lifetime for second time offenders) suspension from USSSA play with no right to appeal.

b. Withhold the bat from inspection and accept a one year (up to lifetime for second time offenders) suspension from USSSA play with no right to appeal.

F. After examination of a bat to determine if it is altered, the bat shall be returned to the owner. No owner and/or player altered bat suspensions will occur unless the bat is determined to be altered.

G. If a player withholds a suspected altered bat from inspection or refuses to allow a Director to send the suspected bat to the USSSA Altered Bat committee and/or manufacturer of the bat for a determination as to whether or not the bat is altered, said player and listed manager and coaches will be automatically suspended and his/her team will be forfeited from the sanctioned event and placed last in the standings.

H. If a player submits a suspected altered bat, no awards will be given to his/her team until the bat is determined to be legal. If the bat is found to be altered, no awards or berth will be given and the team will be placed last in the standings. Said player and listed manager and coaches will be suspended as stated in the Rules and By-Laws.

### Sec. 3

A. **THE OFFICIAL BALL** to be used shall be of a spherical design with a smooth surface. The center or core of the ball shall be of a material and design traditionally used to make softballs or other materials or design as approved by the USSSA. The cover shall be of horsehide, cowhide or other material approved by the USSSA and shall be cemented to the core and stitched with cotton, linen or nylon or any other material approved by the USSSA. A molded cover ball or a molded ball without separate cover, or a multiple layer core design or multiple material core design, may be approved by the discretion of the USSSA on a case by case basis. The thread shall be in either flat seam or concealed stitch type which gives a flat surface. The stitch color must be blue. The internal composition of the core and the material of the cover must be clearly printed on the ball and the words "Official Slow Pitch Softball" must be clearly printed on the ball.

B. In addition to standard brand identification, balls may have additional decorative graphics that cover, in combination with all other graphics, not more than 40% of the surface of the ball. Such additional graphics may not be brand identification, advertising or words.

1. **Size and weight:** The completed 12" ball shall have a circumference of 12" +/- 1/8", the weight shall be per the specifications under the **USSSA Softball License Agreement**. The seam shall have not less than 88 stitches in each cover, or 88 simulated stitches in molded cover balls. The completed 11" ball shall be 11" +/- 1/8" in circumference and weigh 6 ounces +/- 0.2 ounces and shall otherwise be proportional to the 12" ball.

**2. Name, Logo, COR, and Compression 12” Balls**

- a.** There shall be no COR or compression information written on the ball, marketing materials or packaging
- b. 12” Classic M Ball:**
  - i.** shall have an optic yellow cover
  - ii.** shall have “USSSA CLASSIC M” in 1/8” letters and the USSSA logo with a 1-1/8” diameter;
  - iii.** shall have lettering and logo in blue color and such lettering and logo shall be applied to be indelible;
  - iv.** shall have a COR of 40 or less under the ASTM test used under the USSSA Softball Ball License Agreement and
  - v.** shall have a compression of 325 pounds or less under the ASTM test used under the USSSA Softball Ball License Agreement.
- c. 12” Stadium M Ball:**
  - i.** shall have an optic yellow cover
  - ii.** shall have “USSSA STADIUM” in 1/8” letters and the USSSA logo with a 1-1/8” diameter
  - iii.** shall have lettering and logo in gray color and such lettering and logo shall be applied to be indelible
  - iv.** shall have a COR of 47 or less under the ASTM test used under the USSSA Softball Ball License Agreement and
  - v.** shall have a compression of 450 pounds or less under the ASTM test used under the USSSA Softball Ball License Agreement.
  - vi.** shall be used only in the Men’s Major Program
- d. 12” Classic Plus Ball:**
  - i.** shall have an optic yellow cover
  - ii.** shall have “USSSA Classic Plus “ in 1/8” letters and the USSSA logo with a 7/8” diameter
  - iii.** shall have lettering and logo in red and the stitching shall be blue and logo shall be applied to be indelible. Manufacturers, however, may have their name and logo in any color.
  - iv.** shall have a COR up to .52 or less under the ASTM test used under the USSSA Softball License Agreement and

v. shall have a compression between 375 and 225 pounds in weather between 40 degrees and 100 degrees under the ASTM test used under the USSSA Softball Ball License Agreement

vi. shall weigh 6.4 ounces +/- .2 ounces

**Note: The Classic Plus ball will be legal in USSSA play beginning April 1, 2010.**

**e. 11" Classic W Ball:**

i. shall have an optic yellow cover

ii. shall have "USSSA CLASSIC W" in 1/8" letters and the USSSA logo with a 7/8" diameter

iii. shall have lettering and logo in blue color and such lettering and logo shall be applied to be indelible

iv. shall have a COR of 44 or less under the ASTM test used under the USSSA Softball Ball License Agreement and

v. shall have a compression of 400 pounds or less under the ASTM test used under the USSSA Softball Ball License Agreement.

**f.** The Classic M and Classic Plus balls may be used only in the Men's and Mixed Programs. The Stadium ball may be used only in the Men's Major Program. The Classic W ball be used only in the Women's and Mixed Programs.

**Sec. 4. THE HOME PLATE** shall be made of rubber or other suitable materials. It shall be a five-sided figure, 17 inches across the front edge of the plate facing the pitcher. The two sides shall be perpendicular to the front edge and shall be 8-1/2 inches long, extending forward toward the pitcher's plate. The sides of the plate, from the rear corner, along with the base line, shall be 12 inches long and set completely within the base lines, where they form a 90 degree angle with the point pointing toward the catcher. The home plate is always a part of fair territory. The black border that outlines the plate is NOT to be considered home plate.

**Sec. 5. THE PITCHER'S PLATE** shall be made of rubber or wood. It shall be 24 inches long and 6 inches wide. The front edge of this plate shall be centered on the direct line from home plate to second base. The top of the plate shall be level with the flat surface of the ground. The front edge of the plate shall be of legal distance as measured from the extreme rear corner of home plate.

**Sec. 6. THE PITCHING AREA** is the area the width of the pitcher's plate (24 inches) up to six (6) feet behind the back edge of the pitcher's plate.

**NOTE:** All pitching rules that apply to the pitcher's actions before and during the release of the pitch along with the restrictions on height, speed, etc., shall remain the same.

**Sec. 7. THE BASES** other than the home plate shall be 15 inches square and not more than 3 inches high. They shall be made of canvas bags, plastic or other suitable materials filled with soft padding. They shall be **WHITE, RED or ORANGE** in color. All **BASES** must be securely fastened at their designated places.

**NOTE:** A safety base is optional. The safety base shall be 15 inches by 30 inches and not more than 3 inches high. The safety base should be positioned such that the white portion is located where first base would normally be (in fair territory) and the colored portion (red or orange) should be in foul territory. Any batted ball hitting the white portion should be fair and any ball hitting the red or orange portion should be foul. On the initial throw to first base from the infield or outfield, the batter-runner **MUST TOUCH** the red or orange portion of the base but not the white. If legally appealed by the defense, the runner will be called out. The defensive player **MUST** always touch the white portion. This rule is in effect only on the initial play at first base. This does not include:

1. Returning to the base after over running,
2. Running on a base hit to the outfield (runner may touch the red or white part) or
3. Re-tag to advance on a fly ball.

**EFFECT:** If the base runner uses the orange portion at any time after the first attempt at first base and is not in contact with the white portion, then he is considered off the base.

**Sec. 8. LEGALLY ADOPTED GLOVES** may be worn by any fielder.

**A.** Catchers and first basemen may wear a glove or mitt of any size; all other players are restricted to a finger type glove with the space between the thumb and forefinger not exceeding more than 4-1/2 inches at the top. The webbing shall not be constructed to form any type net or tray.

**B.** Multicolored gloves are legal.

**Sec. 9. A SHOE** shall be considered legal if it is made with either leather or canvas uppers or similar materials. The soles may have soft or hard rubber cleats. Metal cleats are prohibited. Shoe sole or heel projections other than the standard shoe plate are prohibited. The all-purpose molded cleat softball shoe is legal. All players must wear shoes.

**Sec. 10. Catchers may wear MASKS.**

**EFFECT Sec. 9 TO PREVENT INJURY** it is strongly recommended that all protective equipment be worn.

**Sec. 11. UNIFORMS**, including similar headpieces or CAPS, when required, should be adopted using similar colors and materials. If caps are worn they must be worn with the visor facing forward. Exception: Any defensive player wearing a mask.

**A.** All participants in a game should wear the adopted the TEAM UNIFORM. Managers and coaches, when on the field should wear the adopted full uniform, or a cap and jacket, which include the team's emblems and colors, to readily identify them as a member of the team. Individual numerals on each uniform are optional. **NOTE:** Refer to By-laws for uniform requirements in National and higher tournaments.

**EFFECT Sec. 11 A.** While participating in tournaments, players should be uniformly dressed.

**B.** All exposed jewelry or items that are judged to be hazardous or potentially dangerous by the umpire may not be worn during the game.

**C.** In all programs, batting helmets may be worn by players/coaches at any time.

**Sec. 12. EQUIPMENT** shall not be allowed to remain on the playing field during the playing of the game, either on Fair or Foul Territory, with the exception of an official warm-up bat or official warm-up device which may be kept in proximity to the on-deck circle during a team's turn at bat.

**EFFECT Sec. 12.** A bat dropped by the batter-runner in foul territory, or any mask, cap, etc. dropped incidental to making a play will be considered as foreign to the normal playing area and foul ball rulings will be made accordingly.

### **RULE 3. DEFINITIONS**

**ALTERED BAT** is one that has had its physical structure changed, including, but not limited to:

- 1.** The bat has had the surface of the barrel or the taper changed in any way such as by sandpapering or applying a solvent to the surface such as fingernail polish remover or by any other means.
- 2.** The bat has had the plug or the knob removed/replaced or changed in any way.
- 3.** The bat has had anything removed or added or inserted to the inside or outside of the bat other than tape at the handle or knob. Other examples of an altered bat would be changing or replacing manufacturers' markings or replacing the handle of the metal bat with a wooden handle. Replacing the safety grip with another safety grip is not considered altering a bat.

**NOTE:** Cracked, worn, or damaged bats are not altered bats, but will also be removed from play by Directors and umpires. Such cracked, worn, or damaged bats will not result in a player suspension unless the player returned the offend-

ing bat into USSSA play after it has been removed or the bat is also altered. Paint or lettering wear shall not result in a bat being considered an altered bat as long as the bat can be identified and has the appropriate BPF marking. However, the Director or umpire may remove from play a cracked, worn, or damaged bat.

**APPEAL PLAY** refers to a play in which the umpire cannot make a ruling until a decision is requested by the defensive or offensive team. This appeal must be made before the next legal pitch, intentional walk, illegal pitcher action or before all fielders have left fair territory.

**BALL** refers to a pitch that does not enter the strike zone in flight, nor conforms to the fairly delivered pitch stipulations and is not struck at by the batter.

**BASE** refers to one of the four stations, which must be touched by a runner in accordance with the rules that follow, to legally score a run. The term is most often applied to the bags marking the designated spots.

**BASE PATH** refers to an imaginary line 3 feet to either side of a direct line between two bases. The runner is restricted to the 3 foot line in some cases.

**BASE ON BALLS** permits a batter to gain first base, without liability to be put out and is awarded by the umpire when three pitches are adjudged to be balls.

**BASE-RUNNER OR RUNNER** is a player of the team at bat who has hit a fair ball or who has been awarded first base for any reason before he is put out.

**BATTED BALL** refers to any pitched ball that is hit by the bat or that hits the bat, thus becoming either a fair or foul ball. No intent to hit the ball is necessary.

**BATTER** refers to the offensive player who takes a position in the batter's box.

**BATTER-RUNNER** is the term identifying the offensive player who has just hit a fair ball and applies until he is either put out or until the play on which he became a runner is ended.

**BATTER'S BOX** is the area within which the batter takes his position when it is his turn to bat.

**BATTING ORDER** is the official listing of offensive players in the order in which they must bat.

**BENCH OR DUGOUT** is the seating facility reserved for team members in uniform when they are not actively engaged in participating in the game.

**BLOCKED BALL** is a batted or thrown Ball that is touched, stopped or handled by a spectator or person not engaged in the game, or that touches any object which is not part of the legal official equipment, or which hits or goes beyond a designated out-of-play area.

**BUNT** refers to a batted ball not swung at, but is intentionally met with the bat and tapped slowly.

**CALLED GAME** is one that the umpire-in-chief terminates play for any reason.

**CATCH (LEGAL)** is the act of a fielder getting the ball in flight (refer to: **IN FLIGHT**) securely in possession in his hand or glove and firmly holding it, provided he does not use his cap, protector, a pocket or other part of his uniform or the glove not in its normal position on the hand to stop or catch the ball. It is not a catch, however, if simultaneously or immediately following his contact with the ball, he collides with a wall, a fence, another person or if he falls down and, as a result of any such collision, drops the ball. To establish the validity of the catch, the fielder shall hold the ball long enough so the umpire is convinced he had complete control of the ball and any release of the ball by him was voluntary and intentional. Dropping the ball while attempting to throw it shall not invalidate the catch.

**CATCHER** refers to the defensive player who takes his position behind home plate.

**CATCHER'S BOX** is that area where the catcher must remain while and until a pitched ball has reached or passed home plate or is batted.

**CHOPPED BALL** is a batted ball that the batter strikes downward so that it hits the ground within the infield, with a deliberate attempt and downward chopping motion with the bat.

**COACH** refers to a member of the team at bat. Only one coach is permitted in each coach's box to direct the players of his own team while batting and running bases.

**CONFERENCE** refers to a meeting that takes place anytime a team representative delays the game or requests a suspension of play for any reason and delivers a message (by any means) to any player.

**DEAD BALL** is any ball not in play or a live ball that becomes dead during play.

**DEFENSIVE TEAM** is the team that is playing defensively in the field.

**DOUBLE PLAY** is a continuous play by the defense where two offensive players are legally put out without an intervening play or an error.

**FAIR BALL** is a batted ball that settles on fair territory between home plate and first base, or home plate and third base, or that is over fair territory, including any part of first or third bases when bounding to the outfield, or that first touches any base, other than home plate, or that first touches a player or umpire over fair territory, or which first touches the ground or an object in fair territory, or over fair territory, beyond first and third bases, or that while over and above fair territory passes out of the playing field, that is, over and beyond the outside fence.

**FAIR TERRITORY** is that part of the playing area within and including the first and third base foul lines, from the home plate to the bottom of the extreme playing area fence and then extending perpendicularly upward.

**FAKE TAG** is making the motions of a tag without the ball. This may be considered obstruction and the offender may be ejected.

**FIELDER** refers to any player of the defensive team playing in the field.

**FLY BALL** refers to any ball batted into the air and before it strikes some object other than a fielder.

**FORCE OUT** refers to when a runner is tagged by a fielder with the ball (while on or off a base) or a fielder holds the ball on the base to which a runner is forced to advance before the runner can reach that base and before any succeeding runner is put out.

**FOUL BALL** is any batted ball that stops or settles in foul territory without first being touched in fair territory, or which is first touched in foul territory, or that first touches some out-of-play object or area in foul territory, or that first touches foul ground beyond first and third base, or which does not conform to the requirements that would make it a fair ball.

**NOTE:** An untouched batted ball that strikes the pitcher's plate and rebounds into foul territory where it is touched or stops is a foul ball.

**FOUL TIP** is a batted ball that goes directly from the bat not higher than the batter's head, to the catcher's hands and is legally caught. First contact from bat must be catcher's hands.

**HOME TEAM** is the team on whose grounds the game is being played; or, if the game is scheduled on neutral grounds, it is decided by mutual agreement or a toss of a coin. Home team bats in the last half of the innings.

**ILLEGAL BAT** refers to one that does not meet the requirement/specifications of Rule 2, Sec. 2.

**ILLEGALLY BATTED BALL** is one batted fair or foul by the batter when either one or both of his feet are in contact with the ground COMPLETELY outside the lines of the batter's box or when his foot is in contact with home plate, or when the ball is batted with an illegal bat.

**ILLEGALLY CAUGHT BALL** occurs when a fielder catches a batted or thrown ball with a glove, a mask, a cap or with any part of his clothing detached from the proper position on the fielder's body.

**IN FLIGHT** describes any batted ball, a thrown or pitched ball, which has not yet touched the ground or some object other than a fielder.

**IN JEOPARDY** is a term indicating that the ball is live and in play and that an offensive player may be out under these rules.

**INFIELD** is that portion of the field within the baselines and also includes the areas of the field normally covered by infielders in defensive positions.

**INFIELD FLY** is a fair batted ball (not a line drive) that can be caught in flight by an infielder with ordinary effort. Any defensive player may catch the ball in the infield area.

**INNING** is that portion of a game within which teams alternate on defense and offense and each team is allowed three outs during its time at bat.

**INTERFERENCE** is an act where players or others interfere with a player's opportunities. There are three types of interference:

- A.** Offensive interference - When a player interferes with or impedes or confuses a defensive player while he is attempting to make a play. This can occur by either physical or vocal actions.

**B.** Spectator interference - Occurs when a person not engaged in the game touches a live batted or thrown ball which could prevent a blocked ball to occur or when a person not engaged in the game physically interferes with a player's opportunities.

**C.** Umpire interference - Occurs when a fair-batted ball strikes the umpire on fair ground before passing a fielder other than the pitcher.

**LEGAL TOUCH** - Refer to TAG for details.

**LINE DRIVE** is a fly ball that is batted sharply and directly into the playing field. NOTE: A line drive should never be considered an infield fly.

**LIVE BALL** occurs when the umpire signals play ball. The ball remains live until the ball becomes dead for any reason as stated in these rules.

**MANAGER** refers to a person appointed by the team to be responsible for the team's actions on the field. Also, the manager represents the team when communicating with the umpire and the opposing team. A player may be designated as a manager.

## **OBSTRUCTION**

**A.** Obstruction is the act of a fielder while not in possession of the ball, or not in the act of fielding a batted ball or taking a proper position to receive a thrown ball (thrown ball must already be in flight) which impedes the progress of a runner who is legally running the bases.

**B.** Obstruction is the act of a fielder which impedes the batter from striking at a pitched ball.

**C.** The obstruction does not have to be intentional and may be vocal.

**OFFENSIVE TEAM** refers to a team during its half inning while it is at bat.

**OUT** refers to one of the three requirements of an offensive team each inning.

**OUTFIELD** is that portion of the field beyond the lines of the infield and extending to the extremities of the playing field. This usually refers to the area between the foul lines.

**OUTFIELDER** refers to the defensive player occupying a position in the outfield, which is the most distant from the home plate.

**OVER SLIDE** or **OVER SLIDING** is the act of a runner when his slide to a base is with such momentum that he loses contact with the base and he is thus placed in jeopardy. This does not apply to the batter-runner, as he is first approaching first base.

**OVERTHROW** is a ball thrown from one fielder toward another and which, for any reason, goes into foul territory and stays within the boundaries of the playing field. This ball always remains live unless it becomes a blocked ball.

**PENALTY** is the application of the rules following an illegal act or violation.

**PERSON** refers to an umpire or player includes all of his body, his clothing or his equipment.

**PITCH** refers to any delivery of the ball to the batter by the pitcher.

**PITCHER** is the fielder designated to deliver the pitch to the batter.

**PITCHER / INFIELDER** - The pitcher becomes an infielder when, after releasing the pitch to the batter, he has a reasonable opportunity to field a batted ball.

**PITCHING AREA** is the area the width of the pitcher's plate (24 inches) up to six (6) feet behind the pitcher's plate.

**PIVOT FOOT** is the foot, when placed on the pitcher's plate or pitching area by the pitcher that must be in contact with the pitcher's plate or pitching area when the pitched ball is released.

**PLAY OR PLAY BALL** is the term used by the umpire to indicate that play shall begin or continue after a dead ball interval.

**QUICK RETURN PITCH** is a pitch made by a pitcher with the obvious attempt to catch the batter off guard and balance. This could be when the batter first takes his position in the batter's box and before he is ready, or when the batter is still off balance from the previous pitch.

**RETOUCH** is the act of a runner in returning a touch to a base as legally required.

**ROSTER** - in all National and World Tournament play, a team shall not exceed 20 players.

**SACRIFICE FLY** is any caught fair fly ball that permits a runner to SCORE a run after a caught fly ball is first touched.

**STRIKE ZONE** is that space directly above home plate that is not higher than the batter's highest shoulder, nor lower than the bottom of the batter's front knee, when the batter assumes his natural batting stance. Any part of the pitched ball that passes through this zone is a strike.

**SUSPENDED GAME** is a game called before being completed which is to be completed at a later date.

**TAG** is the action of a fielder touching a base with any part of his body while holding the ball firmly and securely in his hand or glove. Also, tag refers to touching the runner with the ball, or with the glove holding the ball, while continuously holding the ball firmly and securely during and immediately following the tag.

**THROW** refers to the act of propelling the ball with the hand or arm toward a given objective and is always distinguished from the pitch.

**TIME** is the announcement by the umpire of a legal interruption of play, during which interval the ball becomes and remains dead until legally put back into play.

**TOUCH** refers to touching an umpire or player or person. This includes any part of his body, his clothing or his equipment.

**TEAM REPRESENTATIVE** is any person affiliated with the offensive or defensive team, including sponsors, managers, coaches and players in a game.

**TRIPLE PLAY** refers to any continuous play made by the defense in which three runners are put out, provided that there is no error made between the outs.

**TURN AT BAT** begins when it is any individual player's turn to bat, such as his name listed at the top of the offensive team's batting order at the beginning of an inning; or when the batter listed immediately preceding him in the batting order completes his turn at bat by being put out or becoming a runner.

## **RULE 4. THE GAME**

**Sec. 1. THE CHOICE OF FIRST OR LAST BAT** in the inning shall be decided by a toss of a coin, unless otherwise stated in the rules of the Organization under which the schedule of games is to be played.

**Sec. 2. THE FITNESS OF THE GROUND** for the beginning of the game shall be decided by the home team. If no home team has been previously designated, such as in tournament play, the umpire, with the advice of the Tournament Director, makes the decision. After the umpire has started a game, he shall be the sole judge as to the fitness of the ground, or the intensity of the weather, for continuing play.

**Sec. 3. A REGULATION GAME** shall consist of seven innings, unless otherwise listed below.

**A.** Seven full innings are not played if the team second at bat scores more runs in six innings or before the third out is made in their half of the seventh inning.

**B.** A game that is **TIED** at the end of seven innings shall be continued, by playing additional innings until one team has scored more runs than the other at the end of a completed inning or the team second at bat scores more runs in their half of the uncompleted extra inning.

**C.** A game called by the umpire, during regular season play, which can not be resumed within 30 minutes, may be regulation if four or more innings have been played or if the team second at bat has scored as many or more runs during the uncompleted fourth inning.

**D.** A regulation game shall be declared if the score is **TIED** when the game is called after four or more completed innings, or if the team second at bat has equaled the score of the first team at bat, while batting during any uncompleted inning.

**EFFECT** Sec. 3 C-D. The umpire is empowered to call a game at any time because of rain, darkness, panic or for any other cause which puts the umpire, players or the patrons in peril.

**E.** The run rules which award a win to a team that is ahead in a game are as follows: (See table below) At the State Program level (other than Men's "A"), a predetermined run rule may be adopted.

**F. Flip/Flop Rule—All Programs:** In the inning when the run rule for that particular program is exceeded and the home team is losing, the home team will remain at bat and become the visiting team. If the team (new visiting team) does not score enough runs to reduce the run difference below the run rule, the game is over. If they reduce the run difference to below the run rule then the new home team will bat. If they subsequently score enough runs to exceed the run rule, the game will be over; if they do not, the game will continue under that format. If the situation reverses, the teams would flip/flop again.

**Note:** The following table shows the run rule and when the flip/flop rule takes effect.

**Run Rule and when to Flip/Flop: All Programs**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Run Rule</b>	<b>Flip/Flop</b>
Men's B,C,D,E	25 after 3	After 2nd
	20 after 4	After 3rd
	15 after 5	After 4th
Women's A,B,C,D	10 after 5	After 4th
Mixed	20 after 4	After 3rd
	15 after 5	After 4th

**Sec. 4. THE WINNER OF THE GAME** shall be the team that scores the most runs in a regulation game.

- A.** The total number of runs scored legally when the game is called at the end of any completed inning after three shall be the score.
- B.** When the team second at bat has equaled or scored more runs during any uncompleted innings after three, the runs are all counted and the score is either tied or one team wins.
- C.** If the team second at bat has not scored more runs, or does not score as many or more runs in the half of the uncompleted inning to tie or win the game, the game reverts to the last inning that was fully completed.

**Sec. 5. ONE RUN SHALL BE SCORED** each time a base runner legally touches first, second, third and home bases before the third out of an inning, unless the third out is the result of a force out or the batter-runner is out before reaching first base.

Base runners may advance and a run may score only on a legally batted ball, on a play, on an overthrow or on an error resulting from plays that started with, and immediately follow the batted ball or when the bases are full, so that runners are forced to move up, or advance, by reason of the batter being awarded first base by the umpire in accordance with these rules.

**Sec. 6.**      **A RUN SHALL NOT BE SCORED** if the third out of an inning is the result of:

- A. The batter-runner being put out legally before touching first base.
- B. A base runner forced out at any base.
- C. A base runner being called out for leaving a base too soon on a pitched ball.
- D. A preceding base runner being called out for failure to touch a base.
- E. The batter-runner being called out for carrying his bat to first base or beyond.

**Sec. 7.**      **A BASE RUNNER SHALL NOT SCORE A RUN** ahead of a base runner preceding him in the team's batting order if the preceding runner has not been put out.

EFFECT Sec. 7. A preceding runner appealed out for missing a base does not affect the following runners on a first or second out. However, no preceding runner crossing home plate may return to touch any missed base after a following runner has scored. If the defensive team appeals a preceding runner missing a base, which is allowed, the following runner's score is counted unless the appealed out is the third out of the inning. If no appeal is made, then all the runs scored are counted.

**Sec. 8.**      **THE FOLLOWING HOME RUN RULES WILL BE USED FOR DESIGNATED PROGRAMS.**

- A. Over-the-fence home runs are limited in selected USSSA programs. All fair untouched fly balls over-the-fence in excess of the limit will be ruled an out.

EFFECT Sec. 8. A.

1. Any time the batter is ruled out because of an over-the-fence home run in excess of the limit, the ball is dead and no runners can advance.
2. Any fair fly ball touched by a defensive player which then goes over the fence in fair territory will be declared a four base award and is not to be included in the total of over the fence home runs.
3. A home run will be charged for any untouched fair fly ball hit over the fence in fair territory, whether or not runs score.

The following are home run limitations per game and per team, by program.

Men's Class B	4
Men's Class C	2
Men's Class D	0
Men's Class E	0
Women's Class A	Unlimited
Women's Class B	Unlimited
Women's Class C	3
Women's Class D	0
Mixed Major Male	8
Mixed Major Female	Unlimited
Mixed C Male	2
Mixed C Female	2
Mixed D Male	0
Mixed D Female	0
Mixed E Female	0
Mixed E Male	0

**B.** The following home run limits will be used in Men's B-C National Invitational Tournaments: when a Men's B Team plays another Men's B Team, the B home run rule will be used. When a Men's B Team plays a Men's C Team, the home run limit will be 3 home runs per game, per team. When a Men's C Team plays another Men's C Team, the home run limit will be 2 home runs per game, per team.

**C.** In the Men's Class "E" and Mixed "E" Programs, any batter who hits an untouched fair fly ball over the fence in fair territory will be declared out and it will be an inning ending out. Each subsequent time that position in the lineup is due to bat, the batter shall automatically be declared out. The player shall remain in the game for defensive purposes only. This applies to any substitute in that batting position.

**Note:** The defensive team may walk the preceding batter or multiple batters to get to the position or positions in the lineup that is an out due to hitting a home run. There are no base appeals allowed when this results in the third out of the inning.

**Sec. 9.** A **FORFEITED GAME** shall be declared by the umpire in favor of the team not at fault in the following cases: The score will be 7-0 in favor of the team not at fault.

**A.** If a team fails to appear on the field, or being on the field, refuses to begin the game for which it had been scheduled at the time the game was assigned.

- B.** If after a game has begun, a team refuses to play or resume play as directed by the umpire.
- C.** If a team uses tactics noticeably designed to delay or hasten the playing of a game.
- D.** If an ejected player does not leave the field immediately when ordered to do so.
- E.** If for any reason a team does not have the designated number of players to begin or continue the game.
- F.** If, after a warning by the umpire, any one of these rules is willfully violated.
- G.** State Programs may adopt a grace period before a forfeit is declared in a tournament.

**EFFECT Sec. 9. A-G.** The umpire is instructed and cautioned to employ his best discretion to avoid forfeiture of any game, within the scope of good reasoning.

**Sec. 10.** A **SUSPENDED GAME** can result in tournament play, if the umpire stops play for any reason such as power failure of light, protested game in accordance with these rules, or any act of God, etc. that precludes immediate continuance of the game to the conclusion of the full seven innings, or as required.

**EFFECT Sec. 10.** When a suspended game is resumed, it must be resumed under the conditions that prevailed **PRIOR** to the interruption that caused the suspended game.

**Sec. 11.** A **PROTESTED GAME** can result when there is a difference of opinion on the field between the protesting team and the umpire regarding the application or interpretation of either Official Printed Playing Rules or Specially Adopted Ground Rules.

**EFFECT Sec. 11.** When a protest, not involving the umpire's judgment, is registered with the umpire on the field immediately and before any succeeding legal pitch, intentional walk, illegal pitcher action or before all fielders have left fair territory, the game assumes the status of a suspended game until the protest is allowed or disallowed.

- A.** Conditions governing acceptance of protests during playing of a game.
  - 1.** Based on an umpire's judgment such as whether a batted ball was fair or foul, a pitched ball was a ball or strike, a base runner was safe or out, or when any other situation is completely within the umpire's scope to make the decision, is not to be accepted for consideration.
  - 2.** Based on alleged misinterpretation or application of the playing rules should be accepted for consideration and decision.
  - 3.** The intention to protest a rule must be made known by the manager or captain of the protesting team to the umpire immediately and before the next legal pitch, intentional walk, illegal pitcher action or before all field-

ers have left fair territory. This is to enable all concerned, that is, umpires, scorekeepers and the opposing team to take notice of the exact conditions prevailing on the field at the time of the protest. The umpire receiving the protest shall immediately notify all concerned, including the public announcer.

4. In tournament play, all protests must be settled before any play can be resumed as a suspended game except protests concerning player eligibility. If a player eligibility protest is lodged during tournament play and cannot be resolved at the time of the protest, the game shall be completed. If the eligibility question cannot be resolved until the tournament is completed and it is subsequently found that the involved player or players are ineligible, the team shall be placed last in the tournament standings and the standings shall be adjusted accordingly.

**Note: See exception in Article III, Sec. 13 of the USSSA By-Laws pertaining to photo requirement.**

5. In tournament play, when an ineligible player is discovered during the game, the offending team loses the game, is ejected from the tournament, placed last in the standings and forfeits all awards, sponsor travel money and berths that would have been awarded at that tournament. If this ineligible player is discovered after the completion of the game (but during the tournament) the game shall stand as played. However the offending team is ejected from the tournament and assumes the same penalties as above.

**Note: See exception in Article III, Sec. 13 of the USSSA By-Laws pertaining to photo requirement.**

6. If a bat is protested as being altered during a game, the suspected offending player may:

a. Allow the Director to inspect the bat and reach an initial conclusion on whether or not the bat may be altered. If, after making an inspection, the Director in his discretion decides that the bat may be altered, the suspected offending owner and/or user will be subject to rule 7, sec. 2.B. and may:

i. Allow the Director to send the bat to the USSSA Altered Bat Committee and/or the manufacturer of the bat for a determination to find out if the bat has been altered. **NOTE:** During the time of the examination of the bat, the USSSA, in the discretion of the Altered Bat Committee, may suspend the suspected offending player pending the decision. If the manufacturer of the bat or the Altered Bat Committee determines the bat has been altered, the Altered Bat Committee may suspend a first time offender for up to two years from USSSA play. For a second time offender, a suspension may be up to lifetime.

ii. Accept a one year (up to lifetime for a second time offender) suspension from USSSA play with no right of appeal.



C. As each pitch is delivered, the catcher must be in the catcher's box.

**Sec. 2.** A **TEAM** must have the designated legal number of players to start or to continue a game. **NOTE:** Local governed leagues may designate this number during regular season play.

**Sec. 3.** A **PLAYER** or a **SUBSTITUTE** shall be officially in the game when his name has been entered on the Official Score Sheet, and in possession of the Official Scorer or who has been announced as a substitute by his manager. A substitute may take the place of a player whose name is on his team's batting order. The following regulations govern the substitution of players:

**A.** The manager of the team making the substitution or the substitute should immediately notify the umpire.

**B.** If for any reason the umpire is not notified of the substitution and the change is not announced, the substitute will be considered in the game as follows:

- 1.** If the batter, when he takes his place in the batter's box.
- 2.** If a fielder, when he takes the place of the fielder substituted for.
- 3.** If a runner, when he takes the base runner's place on the base he was holding.
- 4.** If a pitcher, when he occupies the pitcher's plate and delivers a practice pitch.

**C.** Whether a substitute is announced or not, when he assumes one of the above replacements of a player, any play made by or on this player shall be legal. **THERE IS NO PENALTY APPLIED FOR THIS UNANNOUNCED SUBSTITUTE.**

**D.** Each pitcher whose name is entered on the original lineup and batting order, or who is announced as a substitute pitcher, or who takes a position on the Pitcher's Plate and delivers **ONE PRACTICE PITCH**, must then pitch to the first batter facing him until the batter has completed that turn at bat, or the side has been retired.

**E.** Any other player may be substituted for or removed from the game whenever the ball is dead.

**F.** If an ejected player is discovered participating in the game he was ejected from, the game is declared a forfeit.

**Sec. 4.** **CONTINUED PARTICIPATION DUE TO INJURY, BLEEDING OR OPEN WOUND.**

Player/substitute, manager, coach, trainer or other team member or umpire who is bleeding or who has an open wound shall be prohibited from participating further in the game until the

bleeding is stopped and the wound covered.

- A. If treatment can be administered in a reasonable amount of time, the individual would not have to leave the game. The amount of time is determined by the umpire's judgment.
- B. If excessive time is involved, the re-entry rule would apply to players.
- C. If there is an excessive amount of blood on the uniform or if a bandage becomes blood soaked, in the judgment of the umpire, the uniform/bandage must be changed before the individual may participate.

**NOTE:** See suggested Communicable Disease Procedure PAGE Number 57.

**Sec. 5. RE-ENTRY:**

- A. Is permitted in all programs. Any of the starting players may withdraw and re-enter once, provided such player occupies the same batting position whenever he is in the lineup. A substitute who is withdrawn may not re-enter.

**EFFECT Sec. 5A.** All re-entry by any starter should be reported to the umpire and scorekeeper at the time of re-entry. **THERE IS TO BE NO PENALTY FOR UNANNOUNCED, PROPER RE-ENTRY.**

**B. IMPROPER RE-ENTRY:** The act of an improper re-entry is handled as a protest by the offended team. Improper re-entry is a violation after a pitch is made. Examples of improper re-entry are:

- 1. Starter who re-enters in an incorrect batting position.
- 2. Starter who re-enters a second time.
- 3. A substitute who re-enters the game.

**EFFECT Sec. 5.B.**

- 1. If an improper re-entry is discovered by the defense while the player is playing offensively, the following penalties will be enforced:
  - A. If the improper re-entry is discovered while he is at bat, player is ejected and a proper substitute assumes any accumulated balls and strikes.
  - B. If the improper re-entry is discovered after he has completed his time at bat, but before a pitch has been made to a succeeding batter, he is called out, and the player is ejected from the game. All base runners, if they have advanced, must return to the base occupied at the time the improper re-entry took a position in the batter's box.
  - C. If the improper re-entry is not discovered until a pitch is made to the next batter or the improper re-entry enters as a substitute runner, the player is ejected. All play that occurred while the improper re-entry was in the game will stand.

2. If an improper re-entry is discovered by the offense while the player is playing defensively, the following penalties will be enforced:

A. If the improper re-entry is discovered after he makes a play on a fair-batted ball (catch or throw) or a play on a foul fly ball before the next pitch, revert back to the previous pitch, the batter and each base runner are advanced one base. The improper player is ejected.

B. If the improper re-entry is discovered after a pitch, which did not result in a batted ball on which the improper player made a play, the improper player is ejected (this includes the pitcher).

**Sec. 6. ADDITIONAL HITTER (A.H.)** rule can be used in the entire program. A team may insert an additional hitter (1) or hitters (2) into its lineup. The batting order must remain constant; however, any 10 of the 11 or 12 players can take a defensive position throughout the game. If an A.H. is used, the team must finish with 11 or 12 players depending on if a team uses 1 or 2 additional hitters or the game is forfeited unless the program uses the shorthanded rule. In the Mixed Program when the A.H. is used a Male and Female A.H. must be used. If an additional hitter or hitters is inserted into the lineup after the game has started the player or players will be ejected. **Note: The Men's Major and Men's A Programs are not allowed more than one A.H.**

**Sec. 7. NO DEFENSIVE PLAYER** shall take a position in the batter's line of vision and with deliberate attempt, act unsportsmanslike in any manner in an effort to distract the batter.

EFFECT Sec 7. The umpire shall first warn the offender, and then eject any player from the game who repeats the offense.

**Sec. 8. THERE SHALL BE** not more than two coaches for the team at bat to give words of assistance and directions to the members of their own team. One coach shall be stationed in each coaching box at first and third bases. They may remain in that box. There shall not be more than one charged offensive conference between players and coaches or other players each inning. Any additional request shall be denied.

**Sec. 9. MANAGERS, COACHES, PLAYERS, SUBSTITUTES, TRAINERS** or other team member or occupant of the bench, SHALL NOT, from any place including coaches' boxes:

A. Incite, or try to incite by word, or sign, or demonstration either opponents and/or spectators.

B. Use language that will in any manner refers to or reflects upon opposing players, the umpires, or spectators. NOTE: Use of profane or abusive language or taunting will not be tolerated.

EFFECT Sec. 9 A-B. Players violating sections A or B above can be ejected from the game without warning.

- C. Shall not argue balls and strikes.
- D. Be outside the vicinity of the designated dugout (bench) area if not a batter, base runner on deck batter, in the coaches' boxes or one of the ten players on defense.
- E. Commit any act that could be considered unsportsmanslike conduct.
- F. Carelessly throw a bat.

EFFECT Sec. 9. C-F. For a first offense, the violator may be warned that to repeat the offense will cause prompt ejection from the game. All flagrant offenses (including a first offense) shall cause the offender to be immediately removed from the game and playing area. An ejected player must leave the park immediately and take no further part in the game, remaining away from his team's bench or bullpen.

**Sec. 10. WHEN TEAM MEMBERS** continue to harass the umpire from the bench, and he is unable to detect the offenders, the umpire shall first give warnings, and then if repeated, tell the manager to send all substitutes out of sight of the field, while giving the manager the privilege of sending for as many substitute players as he may need, as he needs them to finish the game.

## **RULE 6. PITCHING RULE**

**Sec. 1. AT NO TIME** during the progress of the game shall the pitcher be allowed to use tape or any other substance, including a glove, upon the pitching hand or fingers; nor shall any foreign substance be applied to the ball, provided that, under supervision and control of the umpire, a bag containing powdered resin may be used to dry the hands.

**Sec. 2. AT THE BEGINNING** of an inning or when a pitcher relieves another pitcher, one minute may be used to deliver not more than **THREE PRACTICE PITCHES** to the catcher or some other teammate.

### **Sec. 3. LEGAL POSITIONS OF THE PITCHER'S FEET.**

- A. The pitcher may pitch from the pitching plate or from the pitching area, an area the width of the plate and up to six (6) feet behind the pitcher's plate.
- B. Preliminary to pitching, the pitcher shall take a position with his/her pivot foot firmly on the ground and in contact with the pitching plate or pitching area. The pivot foot must be in contact with the pitcher's plate or Pitching area when the pitched ball is released.
- C. The other foot (free foot) has no restriction on position and may be placed on, in front of, to the rear of, or to the side of the pitcher's plate or pitching area. After taking the initial position, the pitcher may take more than one step with the free foot, in any direction of his choice, provided that it is taken prior to, simultaneously with or during the actions of delivering the pitched ball.

D. After the release of the pitch, there are no restrictions on pitcher's subsequent movements or the fielding positions he may assume as a defensive player.

#### **Sec. 4. PITCHER'S LEGAL MOTIONS ALLOWED IN ACTUAL DELIVERY OF THE PITCH.**

A. After assuming the pitching position on the pitcher's plate or in the pitching area, the pitcher must present the ball in **FRONT OF HIS BODY** (for at least one second) in either one or both hands before starting the delivery motions. Note: All pitching rules that apply to the pitcher's actions before and during the release of the pitch along with the restrictions on height, speed, etc., shall remain the same.

B. The pitcher may hold or grip the ball in any manner before delivery.

C. Only a definite underhand motion is permitted in the delivery of the pitch.

D. The pitcher may release the pitched ball in any manner when delivering the pitch. This includes any and all types of delivery.

**EFFECT** Sec. A-D. After the pitcher presents the ball, he may make any windup or arm motions desired, either in front of his body, above his head or behind his back, including stops and pauses in these motions.

E. Once the pitcher begins his delivery motions; the umpire shall not give a call or signal for "time" unless something unusual occurs.

F. The pitched ball must be released within 5 seconds from the time the pitcher has the ball and the batter has taken his position in the batter's box. From this point, the umpire shall not give a call or signal for "time" unless something unusual occurs.

G. Pitcher must face home plate on delivery of pitch.

(NOTE Sec. 4. A-E. Realizing that the pitcher does not fool very many batters to the extent that they can not hit the ball, it is desired that pitchers not be handicapped by technicalities, when they do develop a new technique or delivery that, perhaps, will add to the pleasure and appeal to the spectators, as long as the pitcher adheres to the basic pitching rules.)

#### **Sec. 5. TYPE OF PITCH PERMITTED.**

A. The ball must be pitched underhanded at slow speed.

B. The pitched ball must arc at least 3 feet after leaving the pitcher's hand and before it passes any part of home plate.

C. The pitched ball shall not rise higher than 10 feet above the ground.

**EFFECT** Sec. 5. A-C. The speed of the pitch and height of the pitched ball are left entirely to the judgment of the umpire (**NOTE:** For sake of uniformity in decisions, any doubtful pitch should be ruled as an unfairly delivered pitch). The umpire shall warn a pitcher who delivers a pitch with **EXCESSIVE SPEED** that repeating such **EXCESSIVE SPEED PITCH** will

cause the pitcher's removal from the pitcher's position for the remainder of the game. A pitch that does not arc the full 3 feet as required (flat level pitch) may not be an EXCESSIVE SPEED PITCH, but merely an unfairly delivered pitch.

**Sec. 6. THE CATCHER MUST:**

- A. Be in and remain in the lines of the catcher's box when the pitcher is in position and remain until a pitched ball has reached or passed home plate, or is batted.

EFFECT Sec. 6. A. An unfairly delivered pitch.

- B. Immediately return each pitch not hit directly to the pitcher.

EFFECT Sec. 6. B. ball shall be awarded to the batter.

**Sec. 7. NO PITCH** shall be declared immediately when:

- A. The pitcher pitches during a dead ball interval.
- B. A base runner is called out for leaving a base too soon.

**Sec. 8. A FAIRLY DELIVERED PITCHED BALL** includes all pitches that the pitcher delivers in accordance with the several preceding paragraphs and provisions of the pitching rule.

**Sec. 9. UNFAIRLY DELIVERED PITCHED BALLS INCLUDE:**

- A. Any pitched ball that does not conform to all requirements of a fairly delivered pitched ball.
- B. All pitches made by the pitcher when not conforming to pitching restrictions.
- C. Delivering a pitch from other than the pitcher's plate or pitching area and pitcher's position.
- D. A quick-return pitch.
- E. The pitcher failing to face home plate on delivery of the pitch.

EFFECT Sec. 9. A-E. In each case, an unfairly delivered ball shall be declared a ball by the umpire provided, however, that if the batter strikes at any unfairly delivered pitch, it shall be declared a strike with no penalty for the unfairly delivered pitch. The ball remains in play if batted by the batter.

(NOTE Sec. 9. A-E. These unfairly delivered pitches may not be so declared until the pitched ball reaches or crosses the plate.)

**Sec. 10. ILLEGAL PITCHER'S ACTIONS INCLUDE:**

- A. Holding the ball by the pitcher longer than 5 seconds.

- B.** Throwing the ball by the pitcher to any fielder, unless making preliminary warm-up pitches or making an effort to complete an appeal play, or while the ball is dead.

EFFECT: Sec. 10. A-B. The umpire should immediately indicate “DEAD BALL” and award a ball to the batter.

**Sec. 11. APPEALING WHILE THE BALL IS LIVE** (before umpire calls “time”): Any fielder can appeal a runner once. During a live ball appeal, the defensive team must verbally state their appeal and touch the runner or the base which they are appealing. Ball is live and all runners may advance with liability of being put out.

**Sec. 12. APPEALING AFTER BALL IS DEAD:** Umpire signals “play ball”; the pitcher announces which runner and base he is appealing. The ball is now live only for the purpose of making an appeal.

EFFECT: Sec. 12.

- A.** The defensive team can have only one attempted appeal per runner.
- B.** No runner may advance on an appeal play after time has been called.
- C.** No runner is out if he steps off the base during an appeal.
- D.** When a ball is thrown into a dead ball area, the team forfeits their right for a second appeal on any runner.

**Sec. 13.** Any second conference with the same pitcher in an inning will require the removal of that Pitcher from that position for the remainder of the game.

## **RULE 7. BATTING**

**Sec. 1. THE BATTING ORDER** of each team must be listed and delivered to the OFFICIAL SCOREKEEPER, by the MANAGER or team representative. SHOULD an Official Scorekeeper not be assigned to the game, the BATTING ORDER must be delivered to the umpire-in-chief, prior to the starting time of the game. After each team has submitted its own batting order, both lineups shall be made available to both teams, for their inspection and knowledge. The lineups are considered official once the umpire puts the ball in play to begin the game.

EFFECT Sec. 1. Each manager must have submitted his own team’s lineup, before he can have access to the lineup of his opponents. The umpire may forfeit the game if there is unwarranted delay in providing a lineup for batting order purposes.

- A.** The batting order thus submitted must be followed throughout the game, unless a substitute replaces a player. When this occurs, the substitute must take the turn in the regular order at bat of the player he replaces.
- B.** Each player of the side at bat shall become the batter and enter the batter’s box in the order in which his name appears on the score sheet.

- C. The first batter in each following inning shall be the batter whose name follows that of the player who last completed a turn at bat in the preceding inning.
- D. A batter completes a time at bat when he has either been put out or has become a base runner.
- E. When a third out of an inning is made before the batter can complete his turn at bat, the same batter will be the first batter in the next inning and all previous called balls and strikes will be canceled.

EFFECT Sec. 1. A-E. Batting out of order is an appeal play by the defense.

- 1. If an incorrect batter is discovered before he completes his turn at bat, the correct batter may take his proper place, assuming any accumulated balls and strikes.
- 2. If the mistake is discovered after the incorrect batter has completed the turn at bat and before a pitch has been made to a succeeding batter, the batter who should have batted is called out. All base runners, if they have advanced, must return to the base occupied at the time the incorrect batter took a position in the batter's box. The next batter is the player whose name follows that of the batter called out for failure to bat. This may even be carried over to the first batter of the next inning, if the appealed out was the third out.
- 3. If the mistake was not discovered until a pitch is made to the next batter, the turn at bat of the incorrect batter is then legal. All bases advanced or runs scored are counted, the next following batter shall be the one whose name follows that of the incorrect batter who just finished a time at bat. No one is called out for failure to bat and players missing their turn at bat have lost that turn and do not bat again until reached in the regular batter rotation.

EFFECT Sec. 1. E. 2-3. For purposes of interpretation, an intentional walk to a next batter or illegal pitcher's action shall be considered the same as a pitch delivered to the batter.

- 4. No base runner shall be removed from the base he is occupying to bat in his proper place. He just misses his turn at bat with no penalty. The batter following him in the batting order becomes the legal batter.

**Sec. 2. THE BATTER IS OUT IF:**

- A. He bats illegally. (Refer to RULE 3.)
- B. He hits the ball with an illegal or altered bat. The umpire must discover this illegal action before the next pitch, either by observation or because of an appeal from the defensive team.

EFFECT Sec. 2B. If the Batter hits the ball with an altered bat, the ball is dead, the batter is out, and he is ejected from the game/tournament, and immediately reported to the State Director for consideration of disbarment proceedings.

- C. He bunts or chops the ball deliberately downward (either fair or foul).
- D. He has a second strike.
  - 1. He hits second foul after one strike, then the ball is dead.
- E. He steps across the plate with the pitcher in pitching position.
- F. He intentionally interferes with the catcher attempting a play.
- G. Any member of his team interferes with a fielder attempting to make a play on a foul fly ball.
- H. He hits a fair fly ball or line drive that an infielder intentionally drops, with a runner on first, runner on first and second, first, second and third, or on first and third with less than two outs. NOTE: A trapped ball that hits the ground is never ruled intentionally dropped.

EFFECT Sec. 2. H. The umpire shall immediately call the batter out (in a forceful manner) and the ball is dead.

- I. He hits a fly ball that is legally caught.
- J. He hits an infield fly, with runners on first and second, or on first, second and third bases with less than two out.

EFFECT Sec. 2. I-J. The ball remains live and in play, and the runners are in jeopardy.

- 1. If a declared infield fly falls to the ground untouched and bounces foul before passing first or third base, it is a foul ball.
- 2. If a fly ball falls to the ground untouched outside the foul lines then bounces fair, before reaching first or third bases it is an infield fly.
- 3. **NOTE:** Umpire should always call “INFIELD FLY- IF FAIR” to protect himself.

**Sec. 3. A STRIKE IS CALLED BY THE UMPIRE:**

- A. For each fairly delivered pitched ball by the pitcher that passes through the strike zone before touching the ground.

EFFECT Sec. 3. A. An umpire should not let the batter’s position, either in the front part, or the rear of the batter’s box, be of influence in calling strikes. Each pitch should be adjudged according to the height of any part of the ball as it is crossing only above or over any part of the home plate. Any individual who repeatedly argues balls and strikes will be ejected.

- 1. The strike zone is only that part, or any part of the area, over home plate that is lower than the top of the batter’s highest shoulder, or higher than the bottom of his FRONT KNEE.
- B. For each pitch struck at and missed by the batter.

- C. For a batted ball striking the batter, while he is in the batter's box with no strikes.
- D. For each foul tip. The batter is out if this is the second strike.
- E. For a foul ball not caught on the fly with no strikes.
- F. The umpire shall not give a call or signal for "TIME" when a batter steps out of position after a pitcher has started his delivery motions.

EFFECT Sec. 3. F. If the pitcher pitches, the umpire shall call "STRIKE" on each such pitch. The batter may take his proper position after any such pitch (within 10 seconds) and regular ball and strike count shall continue.

- G. When the batter delays entering the batter's box after the umpire signals play ball. After 10 seconds the umpire shall declare dead ball and a strike shall be called on the batter.

**Sec. 4. A BALL IS CALLED BY THE UMPIRE** on each pitch not swung at by batter if:

- A. The pitched ball does not enter the strike zone.
- B. The ball strikes the ground before passing completely across home plate, or any part of the plate.
- C. A pitched ball strikes any part of home plate.
- D. Any unfairly delivered pitch is made and not struck at.
- E. There is an illegal pitcher action.
- F. A pitched ball is not released within 5 seconds from the time the pitcher has the ball and the batter has taken his position in the batter's box.
- G. The catcher fails to return each pitch that is not hit directly to the Pitcher.

EFFECT Sec. 4. A-G. The pitched ball is dead after each ball, strike or illegal pitcher action and must be returned immediately to the pitcher (unless an out occurs). Any individual who repeatedly argues balls and strikes will be ejected.

**Sec. 5. A FAIR BATTED BALL** is a legally batted ball that is immediately in play.

EFFECT Sec. 5. 1. A batted ball which first falls to the ground in foul territory and then rolls or bounces into fair territory, before passing first or third base, and without having touched some object other than the ground, is a fair ball. A batted ball first touching the ground in fair territory, then rolling into foul territory and then again rolling into fair territory, is also a fair ball provided the ball did not touch anything while over foul territory other than the ground.

2. A fair or foul ball shall be judged according to the position of the ball, relative to FOUL LINES including the FOUL POLE, and not whether the fielder is on or over the fair or foul territory at the time the ball is first touched.
3. When a batted ball passes out of the field over a fence the umpire shall declare it fair or foul, according to position of the ball, as it leaves the playing field.
4. When a batted ball hits any object including a fielder and is ruled a fair ball under the rules, it is always treated as a fair ball regardless of what happens to the ball or where it may go.
5. A fly ball falling beyond first or third base is judged at point of first contact.

**Sec. 6.** A **FOUL BALL** is a legally batted ball which does not conform to the provisions or rules that would cause it to be a fair ball.

EFFECT Sec. 6. A batted ball which first strikes any person, object, fence, bench, screen, bat or other equipment, or which goes into pre-determined out-of-play area in foul territory, remains a foul ball regardless of where it may go.

1. It is a strike unless the batter already has one strike.
2. A foul fly may be caught, thus putting the runners in jeopardy. (Refer to 7-2D for exception).
3. A foul ball not caught is a dead ball, and the runners must return to their bases.

## **RULE 8. BASERUNNING**

**Sec. 1.** A **BASE RUNNER WHILE ADVANCING OR RETURNING MUST TOUCH EACH BASE IN LEGAL ORDER:** viz., first, second, third and home base.

EFFECT Sec. 1. A base runner can only acquire the right to an advanced base by touching it before having been put out and shall be entitled to hold such base until he touches the next base legally or if forced to leave the base because the batter becomes a base runner and thus forces him to leave his base.

**Sec. 2.** **THE BATTER BECOMES A BATTER-RUNNER INSTANTLY WHEN HE HITS A FAIR BALL.**

EFFECT Sec. 2. The batter-runner is in jeopardy immediately:

1. If a fair batted ball strikes the umpire or base runner while off base before passing a fielder, other than the pitcher. The ball is dead immediately and the batter is entitled to first base without liability to be put out.

2. If the fair batted ball hits the umpire or base runner after passing a fielder other than the pitcher, or touches any fielder including the pitcher, it remains in play with all runners being in jeopardy.

3. The pitcher becomes an infielder after releasing the pitch to the batter and when, in the opinion of the umpire, has a reasonable opportunity to field a batted ball. (This will be considered an umpire's judgment.)

**Sec. 3. THE BATTER IS AWARDED FIRST BASE:**

A. When three balls are called by the umpire.

B. When the pitcher tells the umpire to intentionally walk a batter.

Effect Sec. 3. A-B. Batter is awarded first base only. The ball is dead.

C. If the catcher or other fielder obstructs or prevents him from striking at a pitched ball. The offensive manager has the option to accept obstruction or result of the play.

EFFECT Sec. 3. C. When a batter is obstructed, the batter is awarded first base because of the obstruction, EXCEPT that if the batter succeeds in hitting the pitch and reaches first safely and no preceding runner is put out before advancing at least one advanced base, the obstruction should not be called or enforced. If the obstruction is not enforced, the ball remains live and in play.

**Sec. 4. A BATTER-BASE RUNNER IS OUT** under the following circumstances.

A. When he is hit by his own batted ball in Fair territory, after leaving batter's box.

B. When he drops the bat in fair territory and it makes contact with a fair ball by moving into the ball.

C. When a fly ball is legally caught, with the fielder's feet within the established boundaries of the field.

E. When, after a fair ball, a fielder holds the ball on first base before he touches or passes that base.

F. When, after reaching first base safely, he over runs or over slides that base and then makes an attempt to start to second base before returning to first base.

EFFECT Sec. 4. F. The runner is in jeopardy and must be tagged or put out.

G. When, after hitting a fair ball, and while the ball is still live, the batter-runner carries the bat and touches first base or runs beyond first base while carrying the bat. Note: If this action results in the third out of an inning, no runs shall score.

H. When, after hitting a fair ball, and while the ball is still live, the batter-runner goes into dead ball territory.

EFFECT Sec. 4. G-H. In these situations, the ball remains live and in play and other base runners are in jeopardy. This does not apply to walks and home runs as the ball is dead in those situations.

**I.** When he runs out of the 3 foot line and interferes with a fielder taking the throw or making a play at first base.

**J.** When he interferes with a fielder attempting to field a batted ball or intentionally interferes with a thrown ball. If this interference in the judgment of the umpire is an obvious attempt to prevent a double play, the base runner closest to home plate shall also be called out.

EFFECT Sec. 4. I-J Ball is dead.

**Sec. 5. BASE RUNNERS ARE OUT** under the following circumstances:

**A.** When a base runner fails to keep contact with the base to which he is entitled, until a pitched ball touches the ground, has reached or passed home plate, or is batted.

EFFECT Sec. 5. A. No pitch is declared, the ball is dead and the runner out.

**B.** When the base runner interferes with a fielder attempting to field a batted ball or intentionally interferes with a fielder catching a ball or throwing a ball, or with a thrown ball.

EFFECT Sec. 5. B. If the interference is not ruled intentional; the batter-runner is entitled to go to first base. If, in the opinion of the umpire, the interference is an obvious attempt to prevent a double play, the immediate succeeding runner shall also be called out. When a base runner interferes after he is out or after scoring, the most advanced runner shall be declared out.

**C.** When a base runner is struck by a fair batted ball on fair ground while off his base and before it touches a fielder or passes a fielder.

**D.** When a base runner intentionally kicks a live ball, or intentionally interferes with a ball in play, whether or not the runner is in contact with his base.

**E.** When a base runner runs bases in reverse order other than when permitted to.

EFFECT Sec. 5. B-E. It is a dead ball immediately and the involved base runner is out.

**F.** When a base runner who has been put out continues to run the base, thus simulating a live base runner, and thereby draws a throw to retire him a second time.

**G.** When members of the team at bat stand or collect at or around a base toward which a base runner is advancing, thereby confusing the fielders in adding to the difficulty in making a play.

**H.** When a coach intentionally interferes with a live, batted ball or thrown ball.

- I.** When a coach runs in the direction of home plate or any other base, on or near a baseline, while the fielder is attempting to make a play on a batted ball or on a thrown ball, and thereby draws a throw in his direction.
- J.** When a base runner is attempting to score and the next batter or other team members interfere with the attempted play.
- K.** When a member of the offensive team or their equipment causes a blocked ball.

**EFFECT Sec. 5. F-K.** The infraction constitutes INTERFERENCE. All play stops; the ball is dead, and the **MOST ADVANCED RUNNER IS CALLED OUT**. **NOTE:** In “G,” immediately above, team members include all other persons who are on the team’s bench.

- L.** When anyone other than another runner physically assists him while the ball is in play.
- M.** When, while the ball is in play, he is legally touched with the ball in the hands of a fielder while not in contact with a base.
- N.** When, on a force out, a fielder tags him with the ball (while on or off a base) or holds the ball on the base to which the base runner is forced to advance before the base runner can reach the base.
- O.** When running toward any base, he runs more than 3 feet from a direct line between a base and the base he is trying for to avoid being tagged with the ball in the hands of a fielder.
- P.** When a base runner **PHYSICALLY PASSES** a preceding runner before that runner has been put out.
- Q.** When a base runner fails to attempt to advance and goes into dead ball territory.
- R.** When he positions himself behind, and not in contact with, the base to get a running start.

**EFFECT Sec. 5. L-R.** In these situations, the ball remains live and in play, the involved base runner is out and other base runners are in jeopardy.

- S.** When a base runner fails to return to touch the base to which he is entitled when play is resumed after any suspension of play caused by a dead ball situation, if the fielder legally holds the ball on that base.
- T.** When a base runner leaves his base to advance to the next base before a fly ball has been touched or touches some object, provided that if the fly ball is caught and returned to a fielder and legally held on the base left, or if a fielder touches the runner with the ball before the runner returns to retouch his original base.

EFFECT Sec. 5. S-T. These are appeal plays and the defensive team loses its right to make an appeal on any of these situations if the appeal is not made known before the next legal pitch, or illegal pitcher action, intentional walk or before all fielders have left fair territory.

1. Unless there are two outs, this status of a following runner is not affected by a preceding runner's violation or failure to comply.
2. If, on appeal, a preceding runner is the THIRD OUT no following runner shall be allowed to score.
3. If, the appealed out is the THIRD OUT, and is the result of a force out, neither the preceding nor following runners shall score.
4. If the appealed out is the third out and is the result of the batter-runner not touching first base, preceding runners shall not score.
5. On any appealed play not a force out, all runners in advance of runner being appealed out who touch home plate legally before actual physical completion of the THIRD APPEALED OUT in any inning, shall be counted. Succeeding runners cannot score.

U. When a base runner fails to touch an intervening base or bases in regular or reverse order while the ball is in play and the ball is held legally on the missed base or the runner is legally touched with the ball while off the base.

V. When a defensive player clearly has the ball and is waiting for the runner and the runner deliberately and forcefully runs into the defensive player, the runner is declared out.

EFFECT Sec. 5.V. The offender shall be ejected, the ball is dead and all other runners must return to the last base touched at the time of the collision.

## **Sec. 6. BASE RUNNERS ARE ENTITLED TO ADVANCE WITH LIABILITY TO BE OUT:**

- A. When any live ball continues to be in play.

EFFECT Sec. 6. A.

1. The umpire shall call "TIME" when base runners cease to try to advance, because the fielders have the ball ahead of them and all immediate play is apparently completed.
2. Base runners must return to the last base touched and entitled to, immediately when play is stopped in accordance with the above stipulations, they are to remain until able to leave this base legally on the next pitched ball.

B. When, during a live ball play, following a batted ball, the ball is overthrown in either fair or foul territory and does not become a blocked ball.

C. When any legally caught fly ball is first touched by a fielder.

- D. When a live thrown ball strikes the person of an umpire or base runner.
- E. When a fair batted ball or a live thrown ball accidentally strikes a coach.
- F. When another base runner physically passes a preceding base runner.
- G. When a preceding base runner fails to touch a base as required.

EFFECT Sec. 6. B-G. In all these cases the ball remains live with all runners continuing to be in jeopardy.

- H. When a fielder deliberately contacts or catches a batted or thrown ball with his cap, glove or any part of his uniform or equipment, while it is detached from its proper place on the fielder's person.

EFFECT Sec. 6. H.

1. On a fair batted ball, or a ball over foul ground in a situation that might become a fair ball, all base runners are entitled to advance 3 bases from the time of the pitch.
2. On a thrown ball all base runners are entitled to advance 2 bases.
3. In each case, the runners may advance further at their own risk, being in jeopardy after reaching the awarded bases. NOTE: If, in the opinion of the umpire, a fair batted ball would have cleared the outfield fence if not interfered with, the batter shall be awarded a home run.

**Sec. 7. BASE RUNNERS ARE ENTITLED TO ADVANCE WITHOUT LIABILITY TO BE PUT OUT:**

- A. When a fair batted ball goes over the fence or into a stand without touching the ground, the batter shall be entitled to a home run.

EFFECT Sec. 7. A. A fair ball that clears the fence before touching anything which is not caught, is a home run. This includes any ball hitting the top of the fence and going over the fence.

1. When a batted ball, either fair or foul, is legally caught on the fly while the fielder's feet are still within the established lines of the playing area, the batter is out even though the fielder's momentum may cause him to fall over the fence, into a dugout, or patron areas, or cross a line, or marking the out of play area, provided in the umpire's judgment the catch was completed. The ball is declared dead and each and every runner is advanced one base after the catch. If ball is carried intentionally into a dead ball area, two bases are awarded to each base runner.

- B. When a fair batted ball bounds or rolls into a stand over, under or through a fence or other boundary of the playing field, base runners are awarded two bases, from the time of the pitch.

EFFECT Sec. 7. B. This award is made whether or not the batted ball is first touched by a fielder.

**C.** When a fielder catches a ball with an illegal glove, the catch is nullified.

**EFFECT Sec. 7. C.** The umpire must discover this illegal action before a next pitch, either by observation, or because of an appeal from the offensive team. The result of this shall be to revert to the previous pitch, disallow the catch and charge an error to the fielder. The ball is dead, and the batter and each base runner are advanced one base.

**D.** When forced to advance because of the batter being awarded first base.

**E.** When he is obstructed by a fielder between the bases or as he rounds a base, unless the fielder is trying to field a batted ball, or had the ball in his possession ready to tag the runner.

**EFFECT Sec. 7. E.** The obstructed runner shall be awarded at least one base beyond the base he had last legally touched before the obstruction. The umpire should also award the runner all other advanced bases that he believes the runner would have made, had no obstruction occurred, without waiting for an appeal from the offensive team. If the runner continues beyond the base awarded by the obstruction, he then becomes in jeopardy. The ball remains live with all other runners in jeopardy, except any preceding runners, forced by the award for obstruction, shall advance without liability to be put out to the base which they are awarded.

**F.** When a ball is live after a batted ball and is overthrown into foul territory and is blocked.

**EFFECT Sec. 7. F.** In all cases, when a blocked ball occurs on an overthrown live ball, the ball is immediately dead. Each and every base runner is awarded two bases from last base occupied, unless required to retouch.

**NOTE:** For offensive equipment or team representative causing a blocked ball, the runner closest to home will be declared out and all other runners must return to the last base touched when the ball becomes blocked.

**1.** When a **FIRST** throw is made by an Infielder trying for a first play, the award is made from the batter's and a base runner's positions at the time of the pitch.

**2.** When an infielder makes any **FIRST** attempt at a play, and then makes a second attempted play or throw, or on any throw from the outfield, the award is made from the last base touched by a runner at the time this throw is released. **NOTE:** Should more than one runner be between the same bases, the advanced runner governs the award.

**G.** When an accident or incident occurs that prevents a base runner from proceeding to a base to which he is entitled, as on a home run or other awarded base, a substitute runner shall be permitted to take his place when a play is resumed so to complete the play.

**EFFECT Sec. 7. A-G.** In each and every instance, when a batter or runner is awarded one or more bases, each base must be touched in regular order when advancing; otherwise, the team in the field may make an appeal on the runner at the missed base, which shall be allowed.

**Sec. 8. A BASE RUNNER FORFEITS EXEMPTION FROM LIABILITY TO BE PUT OUT, IF:**

- A.** While the ball is in play, he fails to touch each base in legal order before attempting to make the next base. Either the batter-runner at first base, or any other runner forced to advance because the batter became a base runner, is considered as a force out, should an appeal be made.
- B.** After reaching first base, the batter-runner's momentum causes him to overrun or over slide first base; the batter-runner makes an attempt to start toward second base before returning to retouch first base.
- C.** After dislodging a base, the runner attempts to continue to the next base.

**EFFECT Sec. 8 C.** To avoid being in jeopardy, the runner must either remain with the dislodged base or remain stationary at the base's proper location; that is, where the base was originally located. If the base runner makes a start toward the next advanced base and then tries to return to the dislodged base, he is in jeopardy and it is entirely within the umpire's judgment whether or not the runner should be safe or out.

**Sec. 9. BASE RUNNERS MAY, AND SHALL, RETURN TO BASES AT VARIOUS TIMES:**

- A.** Base runners required to return, or attempting to return, when the ball is in play must touch each base in regular legal reverse order, which includes any intervening bases.

**EFFECT Sec. 9. A. (NOTE: the below are APPEAL PLAYS.)**

- 1.** Base runners are in jeopardy until they return to their bases, in order to comply with the several sections of these rules, when the ball is live.
- 2.** No base runner may return to a preceding base after the ball has been declared dead if the base runner touches any succeeding base, or after a following Runner has scored.
- 3.** No base runner may return to retouch a missed base, after a following runner has scored.

- B.** Two base runners may not occupy the same base simultaneously.

**EFFECT Sec. 9. B.** The first runner touching a base shall be entitled to occupy it until he has touched the next base legally or is forced to leave the base due to the batter becoming a base runner. The following runner may be put out by being tagged with the ball even though both runners are in contact with the same base.

- C.** A base runner shall not run bases in reverse order to confuse the fielders nor to make a travesty of the game.

**EFFECT Sec. 9. C.** The base runner shall be declared out by the umpire and the ball is dead.

- D.** A base runner returning to a base to retag a base on a fly ball caught and thrown by a fielder to any base. If the ball is thrown by a fielder into the re-

stricted area, the base runner shall be awarded the base he must retouch, plus one base. Since the base runner is required to regain the base he first occupied, he is awarded that base and only one more.

**EFFECT Sec. 9. D.** If the base runner is in contact with the base, he will be awarded two bases from the time of the throw. If he leaves the base too soon, he will be awarded the base he must retouch plus one base. It may now become an APPEAL PLAY and the base runner may be put out. The determining factor shall be whether the base runner had possession of the base at the time of the throw.

**E.** A base runner returning to a base on a ground ball or any time runners are not required to retouch the bases; runners are awarded two bases from the last base occupied.

**Sec. 10. BASE RUNNERS MUST RETURN TO THEIR BASES:**

- A.** When any foul ball is not legally caught.
- B.** When any illegally batted ball occurs.
- C.** When a proper batter is out on appeal for failing to bat in order.
- D.** When an offensive player is called out for interference.
- E.** When an umpire or base runner is struck by a fair batted ball, before it touches a fielder or passes any fielder other than the Pitcher.
- F.** When time out is called by the umpire.

**EFFECT Sec 10. A-F.**

- 1.** The ball is immediately dead.
- 2.** Base runners may be forced to advance if the batter is credited with a hit as per "E" above, thus awarded first base, thereby forcing other runners to advance.
- 3.** Base runners need not touch intervening bases when required to return.
- 4.** Base runners must be allowed sufficient time to return when required.

**Sec. 11. BASE STEALING OR ADVANCING IS NOT PERMITTED AS A RESULT OF ANY PITCHED BALL NOT BATTED:**

Base runners must keep in contact with their base and may leave it ONLY when a pitched ball has reached or passed home plate, is batted or hits the ground.

**EFFECT Sec. 11.**

- 1.** Each pitch not hit becomes dead and base runners must immediately return to their base, as the catcher is returning the ball to the pitcher at his position.

2. After a runner has returned to his base, he cannot leave it again, during a pitched ball situation until the pitched ball again reaches home plate, is batted or touches the ground.

**Sec. 12. BASE RUNNERS ARE NOT OUT:**

- A. When a batter-runner overruns or over slides first base and immediately returns to that base.
- B. When a base runner is required to return to a base and is not given sufficient time to return.
- C. When a base runner is touched with the ball not securely held by a fielder.
- D. When a defensive team does not attempt an appeal play until after a next pitch is made
- E. When a base runner holds his base until a fly ball is touched, and then attempts to advance.
- F. When a base runner runs outside a baseline, and behind a fielder attempting to field a batted ball.
- G. When a base runner runs outside the baseline, other than to avoid a fielder attempting to tag him with the ball.
- H. When a base runner is hit by a batted ball that has passed or touched a fielder.
- I. When a base runner makes contact with a fielder, not entitled to field the ball, when more than one fielder is attempting to field a batted ball.
- J. When a base runner sliding into a base dislodges it from its proper position.

**EFFECT Sec. 12. J.** If a runner sliding into a base is adjudged to be safe by the umpire before dislodging the base, he remains safe by either staying at the position the base is supposed to occupy or by remaining in contact with the base. The runner puts himself in jeopardy when he attempts to advance to the next base. If he then tries to return to the misplaced base, it is entirely within the umpire's jurisdiction to declare the runner safe or out, if he is tagged with the ball.

- K. Following runners are not required to touch a base if the base is several feet removed from its proper location.

**EFFECT Sec. 12. K.** Following runners may either touch the dislodged base or touch the original position of the base as if the base were in its proper location.

- L. When, while in contact with the base, the base runner is hit with a fair batted ball unless the umpire rules that the ball was intentionally interfered with, or a fielder interfered with, while attempting to field a batted ball.

**M.** When while in contact or off of a base, the base runner is hit with a fair batted ball that first hits a base unless the umpire rules that the ball was intentionally interfered with, or a fielder with, while attempting to field a batted ball.

EFFECT Sec. 12 L-M. The ball remains live with all runners continuing to be in jeopardy.

## **RULE 9. BALL IN PLAY AND BALL DEAD**

### **Sec. 1. THE BALL IS LEGALLY PUT IN PLAY BY THE UMPIRE:**

**A.** At the start of the game when the pitcher has the ball while standing at the initial pitcher position on the pitcher's plate or in the pitching area, the batter in the batter's box, the catcher in catcher's box and the umpire signals "play."

**B.** In each instance thereafter when the ball becomes dead and the above procedure is repeated.

### **Sec. 2. THE BALL IS LIVE AND IN PLAY:**

**A.** When the pitcher has the ball in his possession at the pitcher's plate or in the pitching area.

**B.** When the pitcher delivers the pitch toward home plate.

**C.** When the batter hits the pitched ball legally.

**D.** As long as there is a play resulting from a legally batted ball.

**E.** When a live ball strikes a photographer, groundskeeper, policeman, or others when they are assigned to the field as part of the game.

**F.** When a fly ball is legally caught (unless it is the second foul caught after one strike.)

**G.** At all times during the enforcement of the infield fly rule.

**H.** When any thrown ball goes into foul territory and is not blocked.

**I.** When a fair-batted or thrown-live ball accidentally strikes the coach.

**J.** When a thrown ball strikes an umpire or offensive player.

**K.** When a fair-batted ball strikes an umpire or base runner after touching a fielder or after passing any fielder including the pitcher/infielder.

**L.** When a fair ball strikes the umpire or offensive player on foul ground.

**M.** When base runners have reached the base to which they are entitled because the fielder illegally touched or fielded a batted or thrown ball.

**N.** When obstruction is called but the runner obstructed cannot be put out until he reaches the base to which he is entitled because of the obstruction.

- O. When a base runner must return to a base in reverse order while the ball is live and in play.
- P. When a base runner is called out for passing a preceding runner.
- Q. When a base runner acquires the right to a base by legally touching it before being put out.
- R. When a base is dislodged while base runners are progressing around the bases.
- S. When a base runner is called out for being out of the baselines.
- T. When a base runner is forced or tagged out.
- U. When an appeal play is involved or enforced.

EFFECT Sec. 2. U. This applies during an appeal play situation, which is attempted before the umpire has called "TIME." However, after a DEAD BALL interval, base runners may not advance during the execution of an appeal play, made immediately after the ball is again put in play.

- V. Whenever the ball is not DEAD, as provided in section 3 of this rule.

**Sec. 3. THE BALL IS DEAD AND NOT IN PLAY:**

- A. When no pitch is declared.
- B. When an illegal pitcher's action is declared.
- C. When a base runner is called out for leaving a base too soon on a pitched ball.
- D. After each pitched ball and strike not batted.
- E. When a pitched ball touches any part of a batter's person.
- F. When a batter bats illegally, or hits the ball with an illegal or altered bat.
- G. When a batter deliberately BUNTS or CHOPS THE BALL DOWNWARD.
- H. When the batter is hit by his own-batted ball, either fair or foul.
- I. When a foul ball is not caught on fly.
- J. When a batter steps completely across the plate, with the pitcher on the pitcher's plate.
- K. Intentionally dropped fair fly ball or line drive, by an infielder. (See 7-2H)
- L. When the batter hits a second foul after one strike. (See 7-2D)
- M. When an offensive team member or their equipment causes a blocked ball.

EFFECT Sec. 9. A-M the ball is immediately dead, and no runner may advance a base.

- N. When an offensive team member causes interference.
- O. When the base runner deliberately crashes into a defensive player who is waiting to make a tag.
- P. When a base runner is off a base and is hit with a fair-batted ball before the ball is touched by or passes through the infielders.
- Q. When a blocked ball occurs.
- R. When the ball gets outside the established limits of the playing field.
- S. When a coach intentionally interferes with a batted or live-thrown ball.
- T. When a ball is caught with an illegal glove in any manner.
- U. When a spectator or other person not in the game causes interference.
- V. When a batted ball hits an umpire before the ball is touched by, or passes through the infielder, the batter is awarded first base. No base runners may advance except to make room for the batter-runner.
- W. When "TIME" is called for any reason by the umpire.
- X. When there is obstruction on the batter, which is enforced.

EFFECT Sec. 3. N-X. The ball is immediately dead; however, the runners are permitted to retain any bases they may have advanced to, or any bases they may be awarded at the time of, or because of, the interference.

## **RULE 10. UMPIRES**

**Sec. 1. POWERS AND DUTIES:** Umpires are the representatives of the organization or league for which they have been engaged or assigned to for a particular game. As such, they are **AUTHORIZED AND REQUIRED** to enforce every section and all parts of these rules.

EFFECT Sec. 1. Umpires have the power and should use it with discretion to order a manager, coach, captain or player to do or to omit to do any act which, in their judgment, is necessary to give force and effect to one and all of these rules and to assess penalties as prescribed within the Rule Book.

**Sec. 2. GENERAL INFORMATION AND REGULATIONS FOR UMPIRES:**

- A. The official umpire uniform, standard for sanctioned play, includes approved and licensed products.

**NOTE:** If more than one umpire is used per game, they must be dressed in a similar fashion.

- B. The umpire working behind the catcher, judging balls and strikes shall be designated umpire-in-chief, with the umpire judging initial base decisions designated as the base umpire.

- C. Neither umpire has the authority to set aside decisions made by the other umpire within the limits or scope of his respective duties as outlined in these rules.
- D. Under no circumstances shall either umpire seek to revise a decision made by his associate, nor shall either umpire criticize or interfere with the duties of his associate, unless asked by him to do so.
- E. An umpire may consult with his associate(s) at any time he desires to do so or when requested to do so by a manager. However, the final decision shall rest with the umpire whose exclusive authority it was to make the decision and who requested the opinion of the other umpire(s).
- F. If different decisions should be made on one play by different umpires, the umpire-in-chief shall call all umpires into consultation, with no other person present. After consultation, the umpire-in-chief shall determine which decision shall prevail, based on which umpire was in the best position and which decision was most likely to be correct. Play shall then proceed as if only one decision had been made.
- G. The umpires shall declare the batter or base runner safe or out without waiting for an appeal for such decision, in all cases where such player is safe or out in accordance with this set of rules.

**EFFECT** Sec. 2. G. Unless appealed to, an umpire does not call a player out for having left a base too soon on a fly ball caught, failing to touch the base as required, batting out of order, or making an attempted start to go to second base, or after the batter-runner has crossed first base, as provided in these rules. No appeal will be considered or allowed after a next pitch is made to a batter, or during a suspension of PLAY, when "TIME" is in effect.

**H.** Umpires must make any necessary, pertinent and proper report in writing after a game when requested and where a verbal report is not considered sufficient.

**I.** The duties of an umpire do not include the filing of a protest for either team, although the umpire is required to defend any decision protested, when requested.

**Sec. 3. EITHER THE PLATE OR BASE UMPIRE SHALL HAVE EQUAL AUTHORITY TO:**

- A. Call illegal pitcher's actions or unfairly delivered pitches.
- B. Call a base runner out for leaving a base too soon.
- C. Remove a manager, coach, player or team follower for violating these rules.
- D. Call "TIME" when played should be suspended.
- E. Ordering field lights turned on.

**Sec. 4. SPECIFIC DUTIES OF THE UMPIRE-IN-CHIEF:**

- A.** He shall have full responsibility for the proper conduct of the game.
- B.** He shall take his initial position behind the catcher's position.
- C.** He shall call each pitch not hit a ball or strike.
- D.** He shall by agreement with, and in cooperation with, the base umpire: call plays, batted balls fair or foul, illegally batted balls and legal or illegally caught balls.

**EFFECT** Sec. 4. D. On plays which necessitate the base umpire leaving the infield, the plate umpire shall move out and assume the duties of the base umpire that are normally required such as runners tagging the bases, obstructions, interferences, etc.

- E.** He shall determine and declare whether:
  - 1.** A batter bats illegally.
  - 2.** A batter bunts or chops the pitched ball downward.
  - 3.** A fly ball is an infield or outfield fly.
  - 4.** A batted ball touches the person of the batter.
  - 5.** A batter strikes at the pitch.
- F.** He shall render base decisions in the following instances:
  - 1.** On plays on the base runner at home plate.
  - 2.** On an appeal, decide whether a base runner leaves third base too soon on a caught fly ball.
  - 3.** If there is more than one runner on base, take the plays and make the decision on the runner nearest the home plate, during plays on runners.
  - 4.** With only two umpires working, and there is a batted ball, go to third base for any subsequent decision at that base, after initial decision in the inning.

**EFFECT** Sec. 4. F. Plays at the home plate are always to receive first considerations; however, while the base umpire normally makes the **FIRST DECISION** at first, second or third if the **FIRST DECISION** or **PLAY** is made to either first or second base, the plate umpire should position himself to make all subsequent decisions at third base.

- G.** When a **TIME LIMIT** has been set prior to the game starting time, announce this fact before the game is started, and state the time set to end the game. The scorekeeper keeps this time and total playing time of games.
- H.** Check with the official scorer, advising that official to have managers advise the scorer about the official batting order and any subsequent substitutions made.

I. Should a dispute arise during or immediately following the game, assist the scorer to arrive at a correct decision and the score.

J. He alone shall have the authority to declare a game forfeited.

**Sec. 5. SPECIFIC DUTIES OF THE BASE UMPIRES:**

A. He shall take such positions on the playing field which will give him the best angles and positions for using his judgment in rendering base decisions. This will be in agreement with and cooperation of the umpire-in-chief. Whenever there are any runners on base, he must position himself even with second base or outside the diamond.

B. When a ball is batted, he normally should render all FIRST decision to be made at any base, and then position himself to make all decisions at first and second base, as well as third base, should situations dictate the plate umpire remain or return to home plate.

C. He shall assist and cooperate with the plate umpire at all times in every way to assure that all plays receive a proper and correct decision, and that the playing field is fully observed during the playing of the game.

D. He may and should be required to go into the outfield to call certain outfield decisions, when the plate umpire would be at a great disadvantage making the call. Some of these plays would involve a trapped ball catch, fly ball hitting or clearing a fence, a legal catch when a fielder runs or falls into a fence or obstruction and drops the ball because of such collision, and other plays, especially when light conditions are not the best.

**Sec. 6. RESPONSIBILITIES OF AN UMPIRE ASSIGNED TO OFFICIATE BY HIMSELF** extends to all parts of the field, his duties and jurisdiction encompasses all those duties normally covered when more than one umpire is assigned. While normally stationing himself behind the catcher to call balls and strikes and moving out on batted balls, he may and shall take any position on the field which will in his judgment enable him to best discharge his various miscellaneous duties.

**Sec. 7. UMPIRES CANNOT BE CHANGED DURING THE PLAYING OF A GAME** unless they become incapacitated due to any injury or illness.

**Sec. 8. UMPIRE'S JUDGMENT DECISIONS MAY NOT BE APPEALED** on grounds that he was not correct:

A. On a decision involving a ball or strike.

B. That a batted ball was fair or foul.

C. That base runner was safe or out.

D. When a game is called for darkness, rain, panic, or other logical reasons.

EFFECT Sec. 8. A-D. No decision shall be reversed by the umpire, involving his judgment, except if he is convinced he was in error. This could come from consulting another umpire working with him, as a result of his own requested conference.

**Sec. 9. UMPIRES SHALL ENFORCE ALL THESE RULES:**

**A.** All rules governing the playing of the game are to be followed to the letter with no deviations from the rule permitted.

EFFECT Sec. 9. A. After a warning by an umpire, the umpire should remove the offender from the game, if the offense is repeated. For major offense, remove offender at once.

**B.** Each umpire has AUTHORITY to rule on any point or situation, not specifically covered in these rules.

EFFECT Sec. 9. B. Umpires should not necessarily penalize an entire team because of the actions of one or more individuals. The violators are to be removed from the game.

**C.** Umpires may refuse to impose a penalty for a violation when the impositions of such a penalty would benefit the offending team.

EFFECT Sec. 9. C. As an example, a catcher's obstruction with the batter would result in a delay call.

**D.** Umpires should work together and cooperate in every effort to assure correct decisions and fair rulings.

EFFECT Sec. 9. D. This applies in all situations, such as sharply hit balls down the foul lines, tag plays on the batter-runner, batted ball hitting base runner, runner leaving any base too soon, or trap type catches; darkness or other weather conditions, players stalling or hastening the game or the pitcher and batter continuing to try to annoy the other excessively. Other times include plate umpire watching the runner at first base or other base, when more than one runner is on base for leaving too soon, or the plate umpire following a batted ball down the right field line, while observing the runners at first base, when the base umpire is in his proper position out near second base, when the ball was batted. Base umpire should adjust to cover third base as well as second base when the plate umpire is delayed in getting to the best position. On other cooperation positions, the base umpire should be prepared to cover home plate, if and when the plate umpire gets trapped at third base while properly covering a play.

**Sec. 10. SUSPENSIONS OF PLAY:**

**A.** The umpire may suspend play when in his judgment, at any situation or condition, justifies such action.

**B. WHEN IN THE OPINION OF THE UMPIRE ALL IMMEDIATE PLAY RESULTING FROM A BATTED BALL IS APPARENTLY COMPLETED, HE SHALL CALL "TIME."**

EFFECT Sec. 10. B. It is not necessary to return the ball to the pitcher, after a batted ball, to stop the base runners from advancing. When the base runners have ceased trying to move forward, or trying for the next advanced base, because the fielders have the live ball ahead of or in such a position, so that the runners have stopped their advance. the umpire shall call "TIME": especially when working the game as a SINGLE UMPIRE. In this case, the base runner, even though he is off his base, must then return to stay on the base which he has last touched and must remain on his base until he can legally leave the base.

C. Play shall be suspended whenever the umpire leaves his proper position to brush the plate, or to perform other duties not directly connected with the calling of decisions.

D. The umpire shall suspend play whenever a batter or pitcher steps out of position for a legitimate reason; the umpire should not permit either to continually repeat this action.

E. The umpire shall not give a call or signal for "TIME" when a batter steps out of position after a pitcher has started his delivery motions.

F. In case of injury or some incident, unforeseen before a batter hits a FAIR BALL, "TIME" shall not be called with the ball in play until all plays in progress have been completed, or the base runners have stopped at their bases.

G. Umpires shall not suspend play for any reason, during live ball actions, at the request of players, coaches, or managers until all probable actions have been completed.

**Sec. 11. THE GREATEST UMPIRES KNOW THE RULES, HUSTLE WHILE COVERING EACH PLAY AND ARE ABLE TO HANDLE DIFFICULT SITUATIONS WITH EASE AND DIPLOMACY.**

## **RULE 11.**

### **MEN'S CLASS "B," "C," "D," AND "E" PROGRAMS**

**Sec. 1.** A. Only one Major Player from the Major Players List will be allowed on a Men's Class "B" Team roster.

B. Any Player whose name appears on a Major Players List shall not be allowed to play at the Men's Class "C," "D," or "E" level.

C. Any player whose name appears on the USSSA Watch List shall not be allowed to play at the Men's Class, "C," "D" or "E" level.

**Sec. 2.** In the Men's Class "B," "C," "D," and "E" Programs, a minimum of 9 players can start a game. However, an out shall be declared when the 10th position in the lineup is scheduled to bat. A 10th player may be added to the 10th position any time before the end of a game. Any team that starts a game with 10, 11 or 12 players may drop to the minimum of 9 players to finish the game. All vacant spot(s) in the lineup will be declared an out every time that lineup position is due to bat. If a team starts with 9, 10 or 11 players they are not allowed to add the 11th or 12th player at a later time. Any player that leaves the game for any reason

may not return to the game. **(This does not apply to normal re-entry and substitution)** Exception: A player who has left the game under the blood rule may return.

**Note:** The defensive team may walk the preceding batter or multiple batters to get to the position or positions in the lineup that is an out due to having started with 9 players or having dropped to 9, 10 or 11 players. There are no base appeals allowed when this results in the third out of the inning.

**Sec. 3.** In the Men's Class "B" and "C" Program, the Tournament Director has the option of permitting the following: On a fair fly ball hit over the fence for a home run, the batter and all base runners are credited with a score. The batter and any runner on base do not need to advance and touch the bases. They should go directly to the dugout area. This would eliminate any baserunning appeals. This includes the four base error.

**Sec. 4.** All playing rules not specifically covered in Rule 11 of this book shall be governed by other rules as outlined in Rules 1 through 10 of the USSSA Rule Book.

## **RULE 12. WOMEN'S PROGRAM**

**Sec. 1.** In the Women's Program a minimum of 9 players can start a game. However an out shall be declared when the 10th position in the lineup is scheduled to bat. A 10th player may be added to the 10th position any time before the end of a game. Any team that starts a game with 10, 11 or 12 players may drop to the minimum of 9 players to finish the game. All vacant spot(s) in the lineup will be declared an out every time that lineup position is due to bat. If a team starts with 9, 10 or 11 players they are not allowed to add the 11th or 12th player at a later time. Any player that leaves the game for any reason may not return to the game. **(This does not apply to normal re-entry and substitution)** Exception: A player who has left the game under the blood rule may return.

**Note:** The defensive team may walk the preceding batter or multiple batters to get to the position or positions in the lineup that is an out due to having started with 9 players or having dropped to 9, 10 or 11 players. There are no base appeals allowed when this results in the third out of the inning.

**Sec. 2.** All playing rules not specifically covered in Rule 12 of this book shall be governed by other rules as outlined in Rules 1 through 10 of this USSSA Rule Book.

## **RULE 13. MIXED TEAM RULES**

**Sec. 1.** Five male and five female players must be in the lineup at all times (six and six if A.H. is used). Any five male and any five female players must play defense. Exception: A minimum of 9 players can start a game. However, there must always be five females players in the lineup. An out shall be declared for this vacant 10th position in the lineup when that position is scheduled to bat. A 10th player may be added in the 10th position of the lineup at any time before the end of the game. That added player must be male.

**Sec. 2.** The 11-inch softball will be used when a female is batting and a 12-inch softball will be used when a male is batting. It is an appeal play when the wrong ball is pitched to a

batter. If the appeal is allowed, then the batter returns to bat with the same ball and strike count he/she had at the time of the pitch. Also, any base runners must return to the base occupied at the time of pitch.

**Sec. 3.** In the Mixed Program, teams starting with 12 players may drop down to 11 or 10 players but cannot have more males than females in the line-up. For example, if a female player is removed from the line-up, the male player following her in the line-up must be removed. All vacant spots in the line-up will be declared an out every time that position in the line-up is due to bat. If a team starts with 9 or 10 players, they are not allowed to add the 11th or 12th player at a later time. Any player that leaves the game for any reason may not return to the game. **(This does not apply to normal re-entry and substitution)** Exception: A player who has left the game under the blood rule may return.

**Note:** The defensive team may walk the preceding batter or multiple batters to get to the position or positions in the lineup that is an out due to having started with 9 players or having dropped to 11 or 10 players. There are no base appeals allowed when this results in the third out of the inning.

Male and female players must alternate in the batting order. Note: If a team starts with 9 players, a female player must occupy the first position in the batting order.

**Sec. 4.** When a male batter receives a base on balls or intentional walk, he will be awarded first and second base with the next female batter having the option to walk or bat.

**NOTE:** If the next female chooses to walk, it is not considered an intentional walk for the purpose of making an appeal.

**Sec. 5.** The Mixed Program shall feature four divisions that will be called Mixed Major, C, D and E.

- A.** Teams or individuals not reclassified by the By-Laws will be classified by their respective State Director.
- B.** A Mixed Major Team shall be allowed two male players whose names appear on the Association's Major Players List.
- C.** Mixed Class C, D or E Teams shall not be allowed to have any male players whose name appears on the USSSA Major Players List or who competed during the season on a Men's "A" Teams or higher.

**Sec. 6.** In the Mixed program, the Tournament Director has the option of permitting the following: On a fair fly ball hit over the fence for a home run, the batter and all base runners are credited with a score. The batter and any runner on base does not need to advance and touch the bases. They should go directly to the dugout area. This would eliminate any base running appeals. This includes the four base error.

**Sec. 7.** All playing rules not specifically covered in Rule 13 in this book shall be governed by the other rules in Rules 1 through 10 in this book.

## COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PROCEDURES

While risk of one athlete infecting another with HIV/AIDS during competition is close to non-existent there is a remote risk that other blood borne infectious diseases can be transmitted. For example Hepatitis B can be present in blood as well as in other body fluids. Procedures for reducing the potential for transmission of these infectious agents should not be limited to the following:

1. The bleeding must be stopped, the open wound covered, and if there is an excessive amount of blood on the uniform, it must be changed before the athlete may participate.
2. Routine use of gloves or other precautions to prevent skin and mucous-membrane exposure when contact with blood or other body fluids is anticipated.
3. Immediately wash hands and other skin surfaces if contaminated (in contact) with blood or other body fluids. Wash hands immediately after removing gloves.
4. Clean all blood contaminated surfaces and equipment with a solution made from proper dilution of household bleach (CDC recommends 1-100) or other disinfectants before competition resumes.
5. Practice proper disposal procedures to prevent injuries caused by needles, scalpels, and other sharp instruments or devices.
6. Although saliva has not been implicated in HIV transmission, to minimize the need for emergency mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, mouthpieces, resuscitation bags or other ventilation devices should be available for use.
7. Athletic trainers/coaches with bleeding or oozing skin conditions should refrain from all direct athletic care until the condition is resolved.
8. Contaminated towels should be properly disposed of/disinfected.
9. Follow acceptable guidelines in the immediate control of bleeding and when handling bloody dressings, mouth guards, and other articles containing body fluids.

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## UNITED STATES SPECIALTY SPORTS ASSOCIATION

### USSSA SLOW PITCH NATIONAL BY-LAWS

**NOTE:** Use of the word “he” in this publication is intended to include both the masculine and feminine genders unless otherwise noted.

#### ARTICLE I - ORGANIZATION

“USSSA Slow Pitch Softball” shall be a sports division of the United States Specialty Sports Association and shall be governed by the Constitution of the United States Specialty Sports Association, By-Laws of USSSA Slow Pitch Softball, the USSSA Slow Pitch Softball Rule Book, Directives, and Policies as issued from the Association’s National Headquarters.

#### ARTICLE II - TEAM ELIGIBILITY

**Sec. 1.** This Association shall be for amateur Slow Pitch players to compete as a team under an adopted set of administrative rules and playing rules.

**Sec. 2.** No team shall be allowed to compete in USSSA sanctioned leagues or tournaments without paying their national and state team registration fees to the Association.

**Sec. 3.** A team must be composed of not more than 20 eligible players. Coaches or managers must be included in the 20 in order to be eligible to play.

**Sec. 4.** When a member of a team is called into the military, he may be replaced by any other eligible player. Players returning from active military service may be added to a team’s eligible roster, provided the number of eligible players on the team’s roster does not exceed the total number allowed at any one time.

**Sec. 5.** The cut-off date for adding players to a team roster shall be in accordance with rules set forth in these By-Laws.

**Sec. 6.** (a) All teams that wish to compete in out-of-state tournaments sanctioned by the USSSA must register and be classified by their home State Director.

- (b) A Tournament Director shall not accept an out-of-state team unless:
1. The team has a roster online;
  2. He contacts the team's home State Director to establish proper team classification;
  3. He collects a team registration fee if the team is not registered;
  4. He either registers the team online and forwards the registration fee to USSSA or the State Director, as appropriate; or he forwards the registration fee to the State Director to register the team.

Tournament Directors in violation of this rule shall be subject to sanction by the Association and the tournament which violated this rule shall not be considered sanctioned by the Association and the awarding of any advancement berth may not be honored.

- Sec. 7.** (a) Each year the Major Player National Committee, with the assistance of State Directors, shall compile a list of male players who will be classified as Major Players or Watch List Players. The list shall be completed by December 1st of each year and shall be posted on the Association's official website. Such posting on the official website shall constitute a notice to players, managers, and sponsors as to whom the Major Players are for the new season.
- (b) Any player whose name appears on the Major Players List or Watch List shall have the right to appeal the listing to the Major Player National Committee. Any such appeal must be made prior to April 1st.

**Sec. 8.** A State Director has the authority to reclassify any team during the current season except when a team has been reclassified by the By-Laws or the National Classification Committee. Note: National Classification Committee has final authority on classification of all teams.

- Sec. 9.** (a) Teams reclassified by the By-Laws must participate in their new classification for a period of one (1) year. Teams that fail to participate the following year will remain at the new classification until such time as they participate and meet the requirements below. (**Note:** Any team reclassified by the By-Laws with four (4) or more players from the previous year's roster must participate in their new classification for a period of one (1) year; however, teams reclassified by the By-Laws may make an appeal to be reinstated to its former classification only after the team has played a minimum of four (4) tournaments for the Men's, Women's, and Specialty Programs, and two (2) tournaments for the Mixed Program. Such an appeal can only be made between June 1 and July 1 and must be submitted on proper form, except the Mixed Program, which is no later than October 1st. For the Men's and Women's Program, the appeal must be made jointly to the State Director, applicable National Program Director, Vice President and Assistant Executive Director. If the team is part of a specialty Program, the appeal must be made jointly to the State Director and applicable Program Director or applicable Vice President if there is no Program Director and Assistant Executive Director. In the event the State Director and the Vice President is the same person, then the applicable Executive Vice President will become involved in the place of the Vice President. A decision on all appeals must be ren-

dered within 10 days. Copies of the appeal decisions must be forwarded to USSSA National Headquarters within 5 days after the decision is made.

(b) Teams not reclassified by the By-Laws that want to appeal their classification may do so between **December 1** and March 1 and/or June 1 and July 1. Teams reclassified by appeal between **December 1** and March 1 may be reclassified by the State Director after the team plays four (4) USSSA sanctioned tournaments or June 1, whichever occurs first. Teams appealing between June 1 and July 1 must have played in four (4) USSSA sanctioned tournaments. Appeals must be filled out on an official USSSA appeal form and submitted to the Division Vice President. The appeal will be reviewed by Division Vice President, Executive Vice President and Assistant Executive Director.

(c) Exception: Teams reclassified by the By-Laws, with extenuating circumstances, may appeal their new classification between **December 1** and March 1. Respective State Director, National Program Director, respective Vice President and Executive Vice President and Assistant Executive Director.

**Sec. 10.** If a Men's Class "B," "C," "D," or "E" Team has any combination of (four) 4 or more players who meet the following criteria, the team must participate in the new classification for a period of 1 year with the same restriction as outlined in Sec.9 above.

(a) Players from any combination of teams moved up within the same classification. For example, Team One, Team Two and Team Three have been reclassified by the USSSA By-Laws from Class "D" to "C". A team comprised of 2 players from Team One and 1 player from Team Two and 1 player from Team Three must participate in Class "C" or higher for a period of one (1) year.

(b) Players from any combination of teams moved up within the same classification, plus players from the previous season of the same or higher classification of the team's new classification. For example, Team One and Team Two have been reclassified by the USSSA By-Laws from Class "E" to "D". A team comprised of 2 players from Team One plus 1 player from Team Two plus 1 player who played "D" the previous season would be required to participate in Class "D" or higher for a period of one (1) year. Or a team comprised of 1 player from Team One plus 3 players who played "D" the previous season would be required to participate in Class "D" or higher for a period of one (1) year.

**Sec. 11.** Male team rosters shall include only male players and female team rosters shall include only female players.

**Sec 12.** All playing rules incorporated into the Adult Program shall automatically be extended to include specialty programs of that gender.

## **ARTICLE III - INDIVIDUAL PLAYER ELIGIBILITY**

**Sec. 1.** A player is eligible to compete in the USSSA program as long as he abides by the USSSA Constitution, By-Laws, and Playing Rules, when listed as a member of an eligible team.

**Sec. 2.** The method to be used to classify a player as a participant in all programs will be governed by rules made within a State and the USSSA Constitution and By-Laws.

**Sec. 3.** A player shall not compete in any sanctioned tournament of the Association with more than one team during the same tournament.

**Sec. 4.** A Tournament Director may not manage, coach, participate as a player or umpire in any tournament in which he serves as a Tournament Director.

**Sec. 5.** (a) When a team qualifies for a State, National or World Tournament, including the World Series, the team roster will be frozen whether a team accepts the berth or not. The team roster becomes frozen immediately at the qualifying event. Players will be bound to this qualified team up to and including the team's respective State, National or World Tournament, including the World Series. A team may decline a National or World Tournament berth that is passed down. The team manager shall be allowed to add only six (6) players to the qualified team's roster. One of the six (6) players must be added prior to May 1st; one must be added prior to June 1st, and one must be added prior to July 1st. Other roster additions may be added as late as 72 hours prior to the start of the State, National or World Tournament. In case of an emergency, State Directors may authorize these additions within 72 hours of a championship event. Such additional players can only be added to rosters that have openings to allow for such add-ons.

(b) A team manager may release up to six (6) players from his team's qualified frozen roster. A team manager may replace a released player with an add-on. No player will be allowed to be released from a qualified team's roster anytime after a team's first National Tournament. **NOTE:** teams advancing to World Tournament play may release players after their National Tournament in order to make room on their roster for player additions as specified in Sec. 5 (a). Players released after National Tournament play may not be added to another team's roster.

(c) Exception to Sec. 5. (a) and (b) above as follows:

1. Teams advancing to the Men's Major World Series may add players as specified in these By-Laws as outlined in Article VI, Sec. 2.
2. In the Mixed Program, teams may release players as late as 72 hours prior to the Mixed World Tournament. Players released 72 hours prior to the Mixed World Tournament may be added to another team's roster.

(d) All players added to qualified frozen rosters must meet the following requirements:

1. Players cannot be on another qualified team's roster within the same program.

**NOTE:** A qualified team's roster remains frozen until the conclusion of the highest possible tournament in that team's respective program. For example: In the Men's Class "A," "B," "C," "D," and "E" Programs, a qualified team's roster is frozen until the conclusion of all championship play in the Men's Program.

2. Players who are added to a roster of a qualified team must not have played for a team of higher classification during the current season within the same program.

3. All roster additions must be approved by the State Director, or in his absence, the Vice President.

(e) Any exceptions to Article III, Sec. 5 above must be approved by the respective State Director and the appropriate Vice President.

**Sec. 6.** Any player that is released from a qualified team's roster cannot return to that team during the current season. A player may be released from only one qualified roster during the current season. Note: If a team applies for and is granted the status of disbandment (see Article III, Sec. 7), this shall not count against a player as a release.

**Sec. 7.** A team with a frozen roster with less than ten players which has used all options for additions and releases may apply for status of disbandment with the State Director. If approval is given, the team forfeits all berths and sponsor travel monies earned. A disbanded team may not reform with more than 9 players. Teams may not apply for disbandment after August 1st. A mixed team may not apply after September 15th.

**Note:** Teams with frozen rosters that break up or that are not advancing to championship play may also apply for disbandment.

**Sec. 8.** A player who is in violation of the Association's Constitution, By-Laws and/or official playing rules and regulations shall be considered an ineligible player.

**Sec. 9.** Anytime during the game or after, if the Tournament Director discovers an ineligible player, he has the authority to apply penalties as described in the USSSA Constitution, By-Laws, and Rule Book.

**Sec. 10.** Anytime during a tournament game or after, or after the completion of a tournament, if an ineligible player is discovered up to one year from the tournament date, penalties may be applied as described in the USSSA Constitution, By-Laws and Rule Book.

**Sec. 11.** All sections under Article III shall apply to sanctioned USSSA leagues if the league offers a National or World Tournament berth.

**Sec. 12.** Anyone who is a State Director, National Director or National Officer of the Association shall not be eligible to participate in the program as a player, team manager or team sponsor in tournament play unless approval is given by the next higher level of authority.

**Sec. 13.** All players participating in adult USSSA tournament play shall have photo ID available. Failure to do so will result in **Rule 4, Sec. 11-A 4-5** of the USSSA Rule Book to be applied. The offending team loses the game, is ejected from the tournament, placed last in the standings and forfeits all awards, sponsor travel money and tournament berths that would have been awarded at the tournament. **EXCEPTION:** If the loss incurred by the offending team was its first lost of the tournament and if the player(s) in question can subsequently furnish a valid photo ID prior to their next scheduled game, the offending team may remain in the tournament.

## ARTICLE IV

### STATE AND INVITATIONAL TOURNAMENTS

- Sec. 1.** The State or Area Director shall conduct all tournaments within his defined area or assure himself that proper administration is being effected at all times.
- Sec. 2.** No team will be allowed to compete in any State or Invitational Tournament unless they are registered with the Association.
- Sec. 3.** A team can only participate in a State Tournament in its respective program and class in one state during a season. For example, a Men's Class "A" team can only participate in one Men's Class "A" State Tournament, a Men's Class "B" can only participate in one Men's Class "B" State Tournament.
- Sec. 4.** Amounts to be charged as entry fees for such tournaments shall be left up to the discretion of the respective State or Area Director.
- Sec. 5.** The number of trophies and awards and amount of travel monies to be awarded will be left up to the discretion of the State Director or a Vice President.
- Sec. 6.** (a) It shall be left up to each State to decide on an acceptable method to control team rosters and classifications of all programs.
- (b) The main criteria for classifying teams is the overall strength of the team offensively and defensively regardless of whether the team has any home run hitters. Example: Depending on the strength of the offense and defense, a team with no home run hitters may be classified Major, "A," "B," "C," "D," or "E."
- (c) The classification of all teams that are not moved up by the Association's National By-Laws will be determined by the appropriate State Director or National Classification Committee. Teams are not exempt from being classified by their State Director or National Classification Committee according to the overall strength of the team simply because a national reclassification by-law does not affect their team. Note: The National Classification Committee has final authority on classification of all teams.
- Sec. 7.** Each State or Area Director shall adopt an acceptable system to be used for qualifying teams for State and National Tournaments. Established league participation may be included in such a system if so desired.
- Sec. 8.** All State Champions shall automatically qualify themselves for next year's State Tournament provided they register with the Association.
- Sec. 9.** No tournament shall be considered as sanctioned by the Association if all applicable fees and registrations are not promptly paid to the Association.
- Sec. 10.** (a) Only USSSA approved softballs can be used in State and Invitational Tournaments. Such approval will be made by the Association's Board of Directors.
- (b) All USSSA registered or sanctioned leagues, that are played on facilities that are covered under the USSSA Liability Insurance Policy as an additional named insured must use at all times a USSSA approved licensed softball.

**Sec. 11.** State Tournaments shall be scheduled to provide each team at least two games of participation. This can be changed at the site of the tournament, by the Tournament Director, after the starting date of the tournament has begun and it is determined that it would not be feasible to attempt to continue on the double loss plan due to weather conditions or other acts of God. A substitute plan will be decided upon at the tournament site. NOTE: This substitute plan may include using the One Pitch Rule.

**Sec. 12.** Refund of tournament entry fees for any USSSA sanctioned tournament will be made only under the following conditions. Request for refund must be made in writing prior to the published tournament cut-off date for acceptance of entries. Such requests must be sent by certified mail, return receipt requested to the Tournament Director. The U.S. Postal mark will be considered as date of refund request. Immediately upon receipt of such request, the tournament director will forward check to cover the fee previously paid. Tournament Directors shall not be compelled to make refunds after the published tournament cut-off date regardless of circumstances.

**Sec. 13.** If a division does not hold a particular National Tournament, then no state within that division can hold a State Tournament in that same particular classification on Labor Day weekend.

**Sec. 14.** No change to a team's roster will be allowed after the team has begun play in its first game during a tournament.

## **ARTICLE V - NATIONAL, NATIONAL INVITATIONAL, OR WORLD TOURNAMENTS**

**Sec. 1.** All playing fields used in National, National Invitational, or World Tournaments must meet the specifications as outlined in the Official Rule Book. All playing fields must have outfield fences. Any field with outfield fences located closer to, or farther from, home plate than what the Official USSSA Rule Book specifies must be approved in advance by the Association's Executive Director or appropriate Executive Vice President.

**Sec. 2.** USSSA licensed softballs displaying the USSSA approval or USSSA logo must be used in National, National Invitational or World Tournaments. Approval of softballs to be used in the USSSA program must be made by executing an Official Licensing and Royalty Agreement prepared by the Association's General Counsel and signed by the Association's Executive Director.

**Sec. 3.** National, National Invitational and World Tournament play shall be under the jurisdiction of the Association's Executive Director. A Tournament Director shall supervise the event and be responsible for insuring that the tournament is run according to all rules, procedures and terms of the written contract and to insure that the event is run according to all rules and regulations of the Association. The Tournament Director in carrying out his or her duties shall report directly to the Association's Executive Director, Assistant Executive Director, Executive Vice President or Vice President, as appropriate. An Executive Vice President or Vice President of the division that is hosting the tournament may act, when called upon, as a liaison officer between the host tournament sponsor and the Association's Executive Director or Assistant Executive Director.

- Sec. 4.** (a) National, National Invitational or World Tournaments with twelve or more entries may not be canceled for lack of participation.
- (b) If a tournament is canceled for lack of participation, no USSSA tournament of the same classification may be held at that location on that date.
- (c) In all Mixed and Women's NIT tournaments with less than six teams, the Tournament Director has the option to run the event without trophies, with one umpire and/or without scorekeepers. Teams must be notified by the Tournament Director in advance of these changes and given the option to play or withdraw.
- (d) National Invitational Tournaments requesting cancellation must do so by notifying the appropriate Executive Vice President within 24 hours of the cutoff date.
- (e) National and World Tournaments requesting cancellation must do so by notifying the Executive Director within 24 hours of the cutoff date.

**Sec. 5.** Amounts to be charged as team entry fees for National or World Tournaments will be decided upon by Association's Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall also decide what percentage of the entry fee shall go to the National Treasury.

**Sec. 6.** Teams participating in the National or World Tournaments, including the World Series, must compete within their respective classifications for championship play. For example: A Men's Class "C" team must participate in the Men's Class "C" National Tournament to be eligible for the Men's Class "C" World Tournament.

**EXCEPTION (a):** If a National Tournament of a higher classification is held on a different date, a team may play in that event. However, it must also play in its respective National Tournament.

**EXCEPTION (b):** Men's "A" World Tournament and Men's Major World Series.

**Sec. 7.** Teams participating in National or World Tournaments, including the World Series, must be completely uniformed within the following guidelines:

(a) World Series teams must wear similar uniforms. This includes caps, jerseys, long pants or shorts and leggings. Whether long pants or shorts are worn, all team members must wear similar uniforms. In the Women's and Mixed World Series, caps are optional; however, when worn, they must be similar. In the Mixed World Series, long or short pants are optional; however, when worn, long pants and/or short pants shall be similar.

(b) All Girl's Youth, Boy's Youth, Mixed Youth, Corporate Class "A," and Men's "A" teams must wear similar uniforms. This includes jerseys, long pants or shorts and leggings. Whether long pants or shorts are worn, all team members must wear similar uniforms. Caps are optional; however, when worn, they must be similar.

(c) All Men's Class "B" and "C" and Women's "A," "B," "C," and "D" teams must wear similar uniforms. This includes the same color and style jerseys, with or without the team sponsor's name. Long pants and/or shorts may be worn. Leggings, when worn, must be similar on all team members. Caps are optional; however, when worn, they must be similar.

(d) All Church, Corporate “B,” Union Local, and Men’s Military Varsity “A” and “B” teams must wear similar uniforms. This includes same color and style jerseys, with or without the team or sponsor’s name. Long pants or shorts and leggings, when worn, must be similar on all team members. Caps are optional; however, when worn, they must be similar.

(e) All Men’s Class “D” and “E,” Mixed, Hispanic, Law Enforcement, Men’s Military Intramural, Women’s Military, and Black American teams must wear similar uniforms.

(f) In all programs non-duplicating numbers will be required at National and World Tournaments. The numbers must be a minimum of 3 inches in size and clearly visible.

(g) Shoes and under jerseys, regardless of color and style will be permitted as long as they meet USSSA Rule Book specifications. Protests on uniforms will not be allowed. It shall be the Tournament Director’s responsibility to determine uniform legality.

(h) Violation of the uniform rule will result in the violator being allowed to conform or be removed from the game.

**Sec. 8.** Teams may become eligible to participate in National or World Tournaments as follows:

(a) USSSA registered teams that qualify in State or Area Programs through whatever system is established.

**Sec. 9.** All teams receiving berths to National or World Tournaments must play in their home state’s State Tournament, provided such a State Tournament is held. Failure to play in the State Tournament, if held, will result in forfeiture of the National or World berth. This section is considered as optional. A State Director has the option of using or not using this regulation. Teams may be exempt from participating in the State Tournament with written permission from the appropriate Executive Vice President or Vice President.

**Sec. 10.** No team will be allowed to compete in a National or World Tournament unless they are registered with the Association.

**Sec. 11.** All entry forms and team rosters of teams entering National or World Tournaments must be approved by applicable State Directors. If a state does not have a State Director, then such approval can be given by the Vice President. A properly completed letter of transmittal form must accompany each entry fee and entry form for National or World Tournaments. State Directors may not issue a letter of transmittal for teams from another state.

**Sec. 12.** When a team that has qualified to compete in a National or World Tournament for some legitimate reason cannot compete, the State Director may select the next team in line to take their place or may select a substitute plan to award the berth.

**Sec. 13.** (a) The winner of all Men’s and Women’s National or World Tournaments with 25 or more teams will automatically be required to compete the following year in the next highest classification.

(b) The winner of the Men’s Class “A” World Tournament will receive an automatic berth to the Men’s Major World Series the following year provided

the team plays in at least two Major NIT's.

(c) All Men's "B," "C," "D," and "E" and Women's "B," "C," and "D" teams who receive a berth to the World Tournament must participate in the appropriate National Tournament, if held. Failure to play will result in the forfeiture of the berth. Teams may be exempt from participating in the National Tournament with written permission from the appropriate Executive Vice President or Vice President.

(d) The top six finishing teams in the Recreational Division of the Black American World Tournaments must compete the following year in the Competitive Division of the Black American Programs.

(e) The top 3 finishing teams in the Recreation Division of the Hispanic World Tournament must compete the following year in the Competitive Division of the Hispanic Program.

(f) The top ten (10) percent of the finishing teams in Men's Class "C", "D", and "E," Women's Class "D" and Mixed Class "D" and "E" World Tournaments must compete the following year in a higher classification. **NOTE:** This includes teams that are tied with teams finishing in the top 10 percent in order of their finish. All percentages are rounded up. **EXCEPTION: Tournaments with fewer than 25 teams are exempt.**

(g) Paragraphs (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f) and (g), also apply to teams that change their team name or sponsorship.

(h) Any Women's State Champion outside the continental U.S. will receive a direct berth into their World Tournament. They will have the option of playing in the National Tournament, if held.

(i) The winner of all Church Competitive and Recreational National Tournaments with 16 or more teams from their classification will automatically be required to compete the following year in the next higher classification.

**Sec. 14.** No change to a team's roster will be allowed after the team has begun play in its first game during a tournament.

**Sec. 15.** A deadline for accepting entries in National or World Tournaments shall be set by the Tournament Director and approved by the Executive Director, Assistant Executive Director or Executive Vice-President.

**Sec. 16.** National and World Tournaments shall be scheduled to provide each team at least two games of participation. This can be changed at the site of the tournament by the Tournament Director after the starting date of the tournament has begun and it is determined that it would be feasible to attempt to continue on the double-loss play due to weather conditions or other acts of God. A substitute plan will be decided at that time keeping in mind what would be best for out of town teams. Note: This substitute plan may involve using the One-Pitch Rule. The Boys and Girls Youth World Series shall guarantee each team four games. Each team will have a two game minimum in pool play followed by a double elimination tournament with seeding based on the pool play games.

**Sec. 17.** The Association shall reserve the right to operate a souvenir booth at any National or World Tournament. All profits realized from the operation of such a booth shall go to the Association.

**Sec. 18.** Teams that qualify for a National or World berth prior to June 1st must submit their entry fee for the National or World tournament by June 1st. Teams that qualify after June 1st must submit their entry fee within two weeks after receiving their berth. The entry fee must be paid to the State Director. In the event the state has no State Director, then the entry fee may be paid to an Executive Vice President. In the event that the entry fee is not submitted by the deadline, then the team will forfeit their berth and it will be awarded to the next finishing team from the tournament where the berth was originally awarded.

**Sec. 19.** States may not conduct a tournament of the same classifications, on the same days, within a 400 mile radius of a National Invitational Tournament if it is open to teams outside of its own State. This does not apply to Men's "B," "C," "D," and "E" National Invitational Tournaments.

- (a) Any such tournament in violation of this rule shall not be considered sanctioned by the Association and the awarding of any advancement berth will not be honored.
- (b) Directors in violation of this rule shall be subject to sanction by the Association.
- (c) Any exception must be approved by the appropriate Division Vice-President or Executive Vice-President.

**Sec. 20.** Players, coaches and managers participating in National, World or World Series Tournaments cannot be charged any additional fees to gain admission to said playing site. Coaches and managers in Youth World Tournaments and Youth NIT's are limited to three passes. Players, coaches and managers participating in selected National Invitational tournaments may be charged admission fees with the permission of the appropriate Division Vice President or Executive Vice President.

## **ARTICLE VI - WORLD SERIES CHAMPIONSHIP PLAY OFF**

**Sec. 1.** In the event the Association holds a World Series Championship play-off to determine a true World Champion then it shall be the duty of the Association's Board of Directors to establish all rules and procedures to govern such an event. Finalizing and announcing plans to hold such an event should be made at the Annual Meeting of the Association.

**Sec. 2.** Any Men's teams, with the exception of teams that have nine or more players on their roster whose names appear on the Major Players List that qualifies for the World Series will be allowed to strengthen their team by adding three additional players to their roster. These World Series additions can only be made during the period of one week following Labor Day. A manager may release up to three players in order to make room for the additions. Maximum number of players shall still remain at 20.

**Sec. 3.** When a team qualifies for the World Series, its roster must be forwarded from the Tournament Director to the USSSA National Headquarters within 72 hours. Any roster changes thereafter will be governed by National Headquarters in accordance with the By-Laws.

**Sec. 4.** Any team that qualifies for the World Series must confirm their entry into the World Series by signing a letter of intent. The signed letter of intent must be returned to the USSSA Executive Director by a date specified by the Executive Director.

## **ARTICLE VII - OFFICIAL PLAYING RULES**

**Sec. 1.** The National Slow Pitch Umpire-In-Chief shall serve as the chairman of the Playing Rules Committee and the Playing Rules interpreter of the USSSA softball program.

**Sec. 2.** The Official Playing Rules Committee shall consist of the National Slow Pitch Umpire-In-Chief and all Assistant National Slow Pitch Umpires-In-Chief.

**Sec. 3.** It shall be a responsibility of the Playing Rules Committee to make recommendations for changes in the playing rules of the Association. Any eligible voting delegate may submit a rule change. All changes in playing rules must have the approval of the USSSA Softball National Committee and the USSSA softball voting delegates present at the Annual National Meeting of the Association. EXCEPTION: An emergency change in the playing rules may be made by a three-fourths majority vote of the eligible voting members at such times as deemed necessary by the Board of Directors. Rules approved shall be effective immediately.

**Sec. 4.** Playing rule changes may be submitted either by September 1st, or at the National Meeting. Playing rule changes submitted prior to the National Meeting must be submitted to the Executive Director. The Executive Director shall then provide each voting delegate with properly submitted rule changes at least 30 days prior to the National Meeting. Playing rule changes submitted prior to the National Meeting shall require a majority vote of the eligible voting delegates. Playing rule changes submitted at the National Meeting shall require a three-fourths vote of the eligible voting delegates.

**Sec. 5.** The Association's Official Rule Book shall be used in all games played under the jurisdiction and administration of the Association.

**Sec. 6.** Any special ground rules believed necessary shall be prepared in written form and made available to all participants, i.e., umpires, teams, scorekeepers, sports writers, announcers and other persons who are part of the tournament management. These adopted rules will be considered in the same manner as the rules in the Rule Book.

## **ARTICLE VIII - UMPIRES**

**Sec. 1.** An Assistant National Slow Pitch Umpire-In-Chief shall be appointed on an as needed basis in the softball program. Each Assistant National Slow Pitch Umpire-In-Chief shall be a member of the Slow Pitch Softball National Playing Rules Committee; he shall assist the National Umpire-In-Chief in answering inquiries pertaining to rule interpretations. He shall, upon request, conduct umpire's clinics. He shall take an active part in planning and assisting the National Umpire-In-Chief in conducting National Umpire Clinics. He shall assist the National Umpire-In-Chief in the selection of out-of-state umpires to officiate in National and World Tournaments.

**Sec. 2.** An Assistant National Slow Pitch Umpires-In-Chief shall be recommended by the National Slow Pitch Umpire-In-Chief and approved by the Board of Directors.

**Sec. 3.** An Assistant National Slow Pitch Umpire-In-Chief may be allowed to hold other positions within the Association provided such positions do not interfere in any way with performing the duties of Assistant National Slow Pitch Umpire-In-Chief.

**Sec. 4.** An Assistant National Slow Pitch Umpire-In-Chief may be terminated from his position, at any time, for failure to perform his duties, insubordination or other justifiable reasons by action taken by the National Slow Pitch Umpire-In-Chief and the Board of Directors.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### **SLOW PITCH MEETING VOTING PROCEDURE**

**Section 1.** All voting during Slow Pitch Open Meetings of the Association will be done in the following manner:

(a) Voting of all slow pitch matters will require a roll call of the various eligible voters. Such roll call votes shall be cast in a verbal manner.

(b) The eligible voters (who are entitled to cast one vote) are as follows:

Executive Director

All Assistant Executive Directors

All Executive Vice Presidents

All Slow Pitch Vice Presidents

All National Chief Officials, All Slow Pitch National Chief Officials

All Slow Pitch Assistant National Chief Officials

All Slow Pitch National Program Chairpersons

All State Directors (see paragraph {d} below)

(c) In the absence of the State Director, the Area Directors present must decide who will act as their voting delegate. All State or Area Directors who are voting delegates must have been appointed as Directors as of July 1st of the current year and approved by the Executive Director. USSSA national Headquarters as of July 1st must have recorded such appointments.

(d) If a State Director is also a National Director, member of the Board of Directors, or holds the position of Vice President, then no other vote may be cast from his respective state.

**Section 2.** The following affirmative voting requirements are necessary for passing of voting items:

(a) Slow Pitch Softball Rule Changes Properly Submitted Prior to the Convention – Majority Vote

(b) Slow Pitch Softball Rule Changes Submitted at the Convention – 3/4 Majority Vote

# **ACTS OF DISBARMENT**

## **Excerpted from Article XVII in USSSA Constitution**

### **Section 1.** Acts of disbarment include:

- (a) Physical attack on a sports official or other tournament official or Association Officer during a game or immediately following a game, played under the administration of the Association.
- (b) Player, coach, manager or sponsor threatening a sports official, tournament official, Association Director or Association Officer.
- (c) Any Officer, Director, sports official, player, coach, manager or sponsor fighting, using unsportsmanlike conduct or abusive tactics, derogatory or unbecoming acts that are detrimental and not in the best interests of the USSSA and USSSA league and tournament play.
- (d) Any owner or user of an altered bat who fails to cooperate with the USSSA in identifying the user or owner of an altered bat.
- (e) Any player who returns a bat to play that has been removed from play by the USSSA Directors or umpires.
- (f) Destruction of property or the abuse of hotel property or failure to pay hotel or motel bills.
- (g) Except as otherwise provided, paying or receiving compensation in consideration of participation in sports competition. This shall apply to a player, team or sponsor.
- (h) Receiving money directly or indirectly by capitalizing on athletic ability, athletic prominence or fame in sports competition except that a player or team may use his/her, or its name and likeness to advertise, recommend or promote the sale of sporting goods equipment or other goods and services if it is done pursuant to a Registered Personal Services Contract.
- (i) By knowingly competing with or against ineligible or suspended players.
- (j) By participating in or permitting a fraud to be perpetrated.
- (k) Any official of the Association who refuses to submit funds to the Association that are due to the Association.
- (l) Competing under an assumed name.
- (m) Submitting a check for any reason that can not be negotiated for payment.
- (n) Failure to arrive after entering a National or World Tournament unless reasonable advance notice is given.
- (o) Purposely using false information to hurt the Association.
- (p) An ineligible player may be suspended for one year.
- (q) Violating the contract rights granted to any individual by the Association under its Constitution. The penalty for violation of this paragraph shall be immediate suspension from any activities of the Association.

**Section 2.** (a) Any USSSA Officer or Director that violates any Articles of the Constitution, By-Laws, Rule Book, Directives, Procedures and Association Policies may be suspended.

(b) Any USSSA Officer, Director or Chief Official that fails to submit fees and/or information due the Association within 14 days of receipt thereof by that Officer or Director may be suspended.

(c) Any USSSA Officer, Director, a sports official or participant that is suspended for any reason, shall not be allowed to participate in any capacity within the Association until the suspension has been lifted.

**Section 3.** Only State Directors, Vice Presidents, Executive Vice Presidents and Assistant Executive Directors have the authority to issue disbarments for a period of one year from the time of the incident. Any offense that occurs may be acted upon by the State Director in the state in which the offense occurred. Should the State Director not take action, he or she shall submit the incident to the player or team's home State Director to be acted upon. Any disbarment beyond the one year suspension shall be ruled upon by the Association's Board of Directors or Disbarment Committee anytime it convenes. In order for such action to be effective, reasonable notice (at least 30 days) shall be given to the offending person before the convening of the Board of Directors or Disbarment Committee. Such notice shall be deemed sufficient if sent by registered mail to the address of the offending party last on file with the USSSA National Office or the USSSA State Director's Office and contains a written statement of the offense and the length and terms of the requested additional disbarment beyond the one year suspension.

The offending party may appear at the convening of the Board of Directors or Disbarment Committee and give evidence on its behalf as to why the additional suspension or disbarment should not be imposed. The decision of the Board of Directors or Disbarment Committee shall be final and binding and not be the subject of an appealable issue.

**Section 4.** (a) Players or other announced participants, who have been disbarred or declared ineligible, may use the appeal process procedure as set forth in the Constitution, except as limited by the provisions of Section three (3) of this Article.

(b) Any person so disbarred or suspended shall have the right to apply for reinstatement to membership in the Association, on an annual basis, provided he gives the Disbarment Committee, through National Headquarters, 30 days written notice of his intention to so reapply. The Disbarment Committee shall act on such applications at the Annual Meeting of the Association.

**Section 5.** State Officers and Directors have the authority to issue indefinite suspensions for players or other announced participants who fail to meet financial responsibilities to that state's association.

**Section 6.** Tournaments Directors will have the authority to inspect any bat. If, by the discretion of a USSSA Director, the bat has been altered, the suspected offending owner and/or user will be ejected from the league game or tournament in accordance with Rule 7. Sec. 2.B of the Official USSSA Slow Pitch Rule Book.

**Section 7.** Tournament Directors have the authority to eject a player or team anytime during a tournament.

**Section 8.** All reports of suspension must be in writing and submitted to the USSSA National Headquarters within five days of the suspension. Copies of such suspensions shall be sent to the party against whom it is directed.

## **APPEAL PROCESS PROCEDURE**

### **Excerpted from Article XVIII in USSSA Constitution**

#### **Section 1. Definition of Appealable Issue**

An appealable issue shall be a complaint or dispute relative to:

- (a) Any sanction imposed against an Assistant Chief Official, a State or Area Director in violation of the Association's Constitution, Sports Program By-Laws, Rule Books, Directives, and Policies.
- (b) Any act of disbarment.
- (c) Any other acts of a team or individual member of the Association which may require adverse action to be taken by any executive member of the Association.

#### **Section 2. Policy**

All stages of the appeal shall be in writing on appropriate forms supplied by the Association and no substitution thereof shall be utilized.

In such writing, the appellant (i.e., the person appealing) must specify on the appropriate form the specific relief he expects to obtain through use of the procedure.

Failure by the appellant to comply with all substantial procedural requirements of the appeal process procedure without just cause will terminate the right to further appeal.

Failure of the Association to comply with all substantial procedural requirements of the appeal procedure without just cause will, at the option of the appellant, advance the appellant to the next step in the appeal process.

Failure of the Association, without just cause, to comply with all substantial procedural requirements of the final step of the appeal procedure shall result in a decision in favor of the appellant.

In those instances where an appeal is to an individual whose title is concurrent with the title of the person being appealed to in any given step of the appeal procedure, then that step shall be avoided and the next step shall be instituted automatically; however, the initial appeal must always be made within 15 days after the occurrence.

Where conflict of interest relative to the parties hearing any given step is suggested or obvious, the Executive Director shall designate members of the Association to hear that step of the appeal process.

#### **Section 3. Procedure**

**First Step** - Appropriate Executive Vice President or Vice President:

Within 15 days after the occurrence or condition giving rise to appeal, the person or team affected must present the appeal in writing to the appropriate Executive Vice President or Vice President.

Within 10 days of such presentation the Executive Vice President or Vice President shall give its reply in writing to the individual or team with respect to the appeal or shall advise the appellant that additional time for such decision is needed in which case a decision must be given the appellant within 30 days.

**Second Step - Appropriate Executive Vice President:**

If a satisfactory resolution is not reached at the first step, the appellant may so indicate on the appeal process form and submit the appeal to the Appropriate Assistant Executive Director within 15 days.

Within 10 days of such presentation the Assistant Executive Director shall give its reply in writing to the appellant.

**Third Step -** If a satisfactory resolution is not reached at the second step, the appellant may submit the appeal to the Executive Director of the Association. Submission to the third step must occur within 10 days unless there is mutual agreement for an extension. The appellant has the choice to submit the appeal in writing or request a hearing. The expense of travel to such hearing shall be paid by the appellant. Each side may have legal counsel and/or witnesses in attendance. The Executive Director shall render a written reply to the appellant within 10 days following the hearing. This step is final and a decision therefore is non-appealable.

The site of the third step hearing shall be chosen at the discretion of the Executive Director of the Association. The Executive Director shall have the option of appointing a panel of disinterested parties to hear the third step; however, the Executive Director shall be chairman of said panel.

The Executive Director in consultation with the General Counsel shall have the authority to establish rules, policies, and procedures for the third step hearing which shall be provided to the appellant or his counsel within 30 days of the hearing.

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