



OFFICIAL BASEBALL NATIONAL BY-LAWS & RULES

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Item	Page
Foreword	2
Rule 1.00 – Name & Objective	3
Rule 2.00 – Membership, Participation & Classifications Of Play	3
Rule 3.00 – Individual Player & Team Eligibility	3
Rule 4.00 – Qualifying Tournaments	5
Rule 5.00 – State Championships	5
Rule 6.00 – World Series	6
Rule 7.00 – Rules of Play	7
Rule 7.01 – Playing Field & Equipment	7
Rule 7.02 – Game Preliminaries	10
Rule 7.03 – Starting & Ending a Game	11
Rule 7.04 – The Batter, Batter Runner & Runner	11
Rule 7.05 – The Pitcher	12
Rule 8.00 – Drafted Leagues & All-Stars	12
Rule 9.00 – Coach Pitch Specific Rules	13
Rule 10.00 – Machine Pitch Specific Rules	13
Rule 11.00 – T-Ball Specific Rules	14
Rule 12.00 – 7U & 8U Kid Pitch Specific Rules	15
Rule 13.00 – Sportsmanship & Ejections	15
Rule 14.00 – Umpires	15
Rule 15.00 – Protests	15
Rule 16.00 – Global Sports Baseball	16
Rule 17.00 – Concussions	16
Rule 18.00 – Items Not Specifically Covered	16

In the event of any conflict in language between any past, present or future printed version of these Official Baseball National By-laws & Rules and the USSSABASEBALL.ORG online version, the USSSABASEBALL.ORG online version shall have priority.

FOREWORD

The USSSA Baseball National Committee has condensed the Official Baseball National By-laws & Rules to give quicker access to any written language pertaining to rules specific to the USSSA Baseball Program. Playing rules not specifically covered herein, shall be governed by The Official Rules of Baseball – National League, as published by Major League Baseball on the MLB.com web site. In the event of any conflict in rule between these Official Baseball National By-laws & Rules and The Official Rules of Baseball – National League, as published by Major League Baseball on the MLB.com web site, these Official Baseball National By-laws & Rules shall govern.

Any reference to a particular gender contained within these Official Baseball National By-laws & Rules such as he, his, himself, man, men, or boy shall be meant to also include she, hers, herself, woman, women, and girl and are to be interpreted as gender neutral.

RULE 1.00 – NAME & OBJECTIVE

- 1.01** This organization shall be known as USSSA Baseball.
- 1.02** The objective of USSSA Baseball shall be to organize and promote youth and adult baseball, to perpetuate the interest and love of the game. To coordinate the providing of an opportunity for teams to compete in league and tournament competition that leads to state championships and world championships in their respective competitive classifications and age divisions.

RULE 2.00 – MEMBERSHIP, PARTICIPATION & CLASSIFICATIONS OF PLAY

- 2.01 Team Membership** – A team registration fee shall be paid seasonally to participate in the USSSA Baseball program. The USSSA Baseball season begins August 1st and concludes July 31st.
- 2.02 Umpire Membership** – An umpire registration fee shall be paid yearly to officiate in the USSSA Baseball program. Included with membership is general liability and accidental medical insurance while officiating in the USSSA Baseball program. In addition, umpires may choose to purchase optional insurance that will cover the umpire during non-USSSA Baseball contests.
- 2.03 League Participation** – In all USSSA Baseball sanctioned leagues, teams shall qualify for State Championships and / or World Series play.
- 2.04 Tournament Participation** – In all USSSA Baseball sanctioned tournaments, teams shall qualify for State Championships and / or World Series play.
- 2.05 Classifications of Play** – The USSSA Baseball program shall offer four (4) classifications of play for tournament teams: Major, AAA, AA, A and two (2) classifications for drafted league play League Team and All-Star Team. The Drafted League and All Star Team classes are different USSSA programs and a player can be frozen to a A, AA, AAA, or Major roster and still participate in those classes within the guidelines sets by the Drafted Team and All Star Team program.
- 2.06** State Directors shall adopt an acceptable method to classify teams within their respective state. State Directors shall have sole authority to classify teams within their respective state and the authority to classify and / or re-classify any team within their respective state during the current season, except when a team classification has been assigned by the USSSA Baseball National Committee.

RULE 3.00 – INDIVIDUAL PLAYER & TEAM ELIGIBILITY

- 3.01 Player Age Eligibility –**
- 3.01.A (Chart 3.01.A-1)** For age divisions 4U – 14U, any player who before May 1st of the current season reaches the listed age restriction in the **BIRTHDAY RESTRICTION** column shall not be eligible to participate at the listed age in the **AGE DIVISION** column and shall be required to play in the next older division.
- 3.01.B** Players may not play up more than two age divisions in ages 4U-14U.
- 3.01.C (Chart 3.01.B-1)** For scholastic divisions 15U – 18U participation is based on age and scholastic grade. Any player that does not meet the listed age restriction in the **BIRTHDAY RESTRICTION** column, must meet the listed grade restriction in the **SCHOLASTIC GRADE** column **AND** the listed age restriction in **MEETS GRADE NOT BIRTHDAY** column. Any player that does not meet **BOTH**, shall be required to play in the next older division.

AGE DIVISION	BIRTHDAY RESTRICTION	AGE DIVISION	BIRTHDAY RESTRICTION
4U	Fifth	10U	Eleventh
5U	Sixth	11U	Twelfth
6U	Seventh	12U	Thirteenth
7U	Eighth	13U	Fourteenth
8U	Ninth	14U	Fifteenth
9U	Tenth		

Chart 3.01.A-1

- 3.02** A player that is found to be illegal due to an age violation during or after a league or tournament game, shall result in the offending team losing the game(s) (if applicable), team and player being ejected from the tournament (if applicable), team being placed last in the standings and forfeiting all awards, points, sponsors travel money, and berths that would have been or have been awarded. The illegal player shall be removed from the offending team's Official Online Roster and additional penalties to player and others may be applied pursuant to USSSA Rule 13.00.

SCHOLASTIC GRADE	BIRTHDAY RESTRICTION	MEETS GRADE NOT BIRTHDAY
15U – Freshman	Sixteenth	Seventeenth
16U – Sophomore	Seventeenth	Eighteenth
17U – Junior	Eighteenth	Nineteenth
18U – Senior	Nineteenth	Twentieth

Chart 3.01.B-1

- 3.03** A player shall be eligible to compete in the USSSA Baseball program as long as he abides by the USSSA Constitution and the Official Baseball National By-laws & Rules when his first name, last name (**no middle names, nick names, shortened names, slang names, initials, prefixes or suffixes are allowed**) and date of birth (in proper format – mm/dd/yyyy) are listed **EXACTLY** as they appear on his original birth certificate, as a member on an eligible team's Official Online Roster. Failure to comply with this rule will result in your team being prohibited from participating in the USSSA. Team credentials will be checked in at the USSSA World Series with photocopies of Original Birth Certificates or Approved USSSA ID. The result of teams in violation of this rule in any event may result in the team forfeiting out of an event.

- 3.04** A player who is in violation of USSSA Constitution or the Official Baseball National By-laws & Rules shall be an illegal player.

- 3.05 Player Roster Eligibility –**
- 3.05.A PRIOR TO BEING QUALIFIED/FROZEN TO AN OFFICIAL ONLINE ROSTER; (Only applies to 14U and below)**
- 3.05.A.1** Players shall be permitted to participate with multiple teams in the same age division.
- 3.05.A.2** Players shall only physically play for one (1) team per day, event, tournament, week or weekend, regardless of age division and / or classification.
- 3.05.B AFTER BEING QUALIFIED/FROZEN TO AN OFFICIAL ONLINE ROSTER; (Only applies to 14U and below)**
- 3.05.B.1** Players shall only appear on one (1) Official Online Roster per age division and shall only participate with such qualified/frozen team (unless previously released pursuant to these rules).
- 3.05.B.2** Players participating in multiple age divisions shall only appear on one (1) Official Online Roster per age division and shall only participate with such qualified/frozen team(s) (unless previously released pursuant to these rules) but shall not participate on any team below the classification of the oldest team in which they participate on.

- 3.05.B.3** Players shall only physically play for one (1) team per tournament per weekend regardless of location, age division and/or classification.
- 3.06** Team Eligibility –
- 3.06.A** No team shall be allowed to compete in any USSSA Baseball program (sanctioned league or tournament) without first paying their team registration fee to the Association.
- 3.06.B** All teams shall maintain an Official Online Roster.
Rule 3.06.B Comment: State Directors with the approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball may waive this roster requirement for the traditional "Fall" playing months of August – December.
- 3.06.C** Team rosters for age divisions 4U – 14U shall be composed of not more than twenty-five (25) players.
- 3.06.D** Team rosters for scholastic divisions 15U – 18U shall be composed of not more than forty (40) players.
- 3.06.E** A team's "home" state shall be determined by the home residency of fifty-one percent (51%) or the majority (whichever is greater) of the players on the team's Official Online Roster.
- 3.06.F** The team manager shall be responsible for all aspects of eligibility of the players and the information of the players contained on the team's Official Online Roster pursuant to these rules. This includes but is not limited to: age eligibility, classifications of teams the players may participate on in other age divisions, classifications of previous teams the players may have participated on, legal names of the players, and correct dates of birth of the players. A player's first name, last name (no middle names, nick names, shortened names, slang names, initials, prefixes or suffixes are allowed) and date of birth (in proper format – mm/dd/yyyy) **MUST** be listed **EXACTLY** as they appear on his original birth certificate pursuant to USSSA Rule 3.03.
- 3.06.F.1** The intentional or unintentional act of adding ineligible players to the team's Official Online Roster shall be grounds for team manager suspension.
- 3.06.F.2** The intentional or unintentional act of incorrectly spelling a player's name on the team's Official Online Roster shall be grounds for team manager suspension.
- 3.06.F.3** The intentional or unintentional act of incorrectly entering a player's date-of-birth on the team's Official Online Roster shall be grounds for team manager suspension.
- 3.06.G** State Directors shall have the authority to approve or reject all players contained on a team's Official Online Roster. Such authority is to include player additions and / or releases prior to and subsequent of being frozen except when a player addition or release has been approved by the USSSA Baseball National Committee. State Director approval of a team's Official Online Roster shall not release the team manager of his responsibilities pursuant to these rules.
- 3.07** How A Team Qualifies (Roster Qualified/Frozen) –
- 3.07.A** When a team qualifies (is awarded a berth for a State Championship and / or World Series);
- 3.07.A.1** After April 1st of the current season (whether the team accepts the berth or not), the team's Official Online Roster shall become qualified/frozen immediately at the qualifying event regardless of the date the roster is physically frozen in the USSSA online system.
- 3.07.A.2** At a Super NIT event (whether the team accepts the berth or not), the team's Official Online Roster shall become qualified/frozen immediately at the Super NIT event regardless of the date the Super NIT event is played or the date the roster is physically frozen in the USSSA online system.
- 3.07.B** When a team qualifies all players on the team's Official Online Roster become qualified/frozen to the qualified team (unless released pursuant to these rules) and shall be bound to the qualified team up to and including the teams respective State Championship and / or World Series. No player shall appear on any other team's qualified/frozen or unqualified/unfrozen Official Online Roster within the same age division regardless of classification.
- 3.07.C** **Qualified/Frozen Definition: A team becomes qualified/frozen after earning a berth to post season play at an event. The team can become qualified/frozen from a berth which automatically passes down to them from a higher seed which is already qualified/frozen. Pass down berths are done automatically and can not be declined. Once a team is qualified/frozen, the team may drop players but they may only add 3 new players to their roster during the remainder of the season. Teams may not re-add players that they dropped after they were qualified/frozen.**
- 3.08** Qualified Team Roster Additions & Releases –
- 3.08.A** Team managers shall be allowed to add a maximum of three (3) players to their frozen Official Online Roster. Players may be added before a team starts their first game of a tournament. Additional players can only be added to rosters that have openings pursuant to USSSA Rules 3.06.C & 3.06.D.
- 3.08.B** All players added to a qualified/frozen Official Online Roster must meet the following requirements:
- 3.08.B.1** Player(s) cannot be on another qualified/frozen Official Online Roster in the same age division regardless of classification. Player can also never have been qualified/frozen to a higher classification team during this season on a team of equal or greater age.
- 3.08.B.2** If Player(s) is listed on two (2) or more rosters, the next youngest age team must be the higher/equal class team.
- 3.08.B.3** Player(s) added to a qualified/frozen Official Online Roster in the AAA, AA, A & All-Star classifications must have a traceable playing history within the USSSA online system for the current or previous season. Any players added to your roster may cause your team's classification to be changed. If you have a question about adding players from other classes or ages, please contact your state office to insure you don't affect your team's current classification.
- 3.08.C** There shall be no limit to the number of players team managers may release from their qualified/frozen Official Online Roster. A player released from a team's frozen Official Online Roster shall be prohibited from returning to that team during the current season.
- 3.09** Special Qualified Team Roster Addition(s) –
- 3.09.A** Teams participating in the DeMarini Elite World Series and / or Louisville Slugger Championship ONLY shall be allowed to add one (1) additional player to their frozen Official Online Roster for participation in the DeMarini Elite World Series and / or Louisville Slugger Championship.

- 3.09.A1** Such additional player shall not appear on an Official Online Roster of any other team participating in the DeMarini Elite World Series and / or Louisville Slugger Championship regardless of age division.
- 3.09.A2** Such additional player shall not participate with the team in any capacity in any sanctioned event prior to the DeMarini Elite World Series and / or Louisville Slugger Championship.
- 3.09.B** Teams participating in the National Youth Championships ONLY shall be allowed to add one (1) additional player to their frozen DeMarini Elite World Series and / or Louisville Slugger Championship Official Online Roster for participation in the National Youth Championships.
- 3.09.B.1** Such additional player shall not appear on an Official Online Roster of any other team participating in the National Youth Championships regardless of age division.
- 3.09.B.2** Such additional player shall not participate with the team in any capacity in any sanctioned event prior to the National Youth Championships.

Rule 3.09 Comment: Such additional player(s) can only be added to rosters that have openings pursuant to these rules.

- 3.10** Disbanded Teams –
 - 3.10.A** A team with a qualified/frozen Official Online Roster listing less than nine (9) players, which has used all options for additions shall be automatically disbanded and shall forfeit all points and / or berths awarded.
 - 3.10.B** If a disbanded team chooses to reform, it does so as a new team and;
 - 3.09.B.1** The team manager shall re-register for the current season pursuant to USSSA Rule 3.06.A.
 - 3.09.B.2** The team manager shall be bound by all roster and eligibility rules contained within these National By-laws & Rules.
 - 3.09.B.3** The team shall be required to re-qualify.
 - 3.10.C** Any player(s) joining a team from a previously disbanded team shall be bound to the disbanded team's classification.
- 3.11** In age divisions 4U – 14U, all players participating in USSSA Baseball tournament play shall have photocopies of their original birth certificate in the possession of their team manager at all times. Upon protest, failure to have a photocopy of the original birth certificate immediately available upon demand shall result in the offending team losing the game, being ejected from the tournament, being placed last in the standings and forfeiting all awards, points, sponsors travel money, and tournament berths that would have been awarded at the tournament.
- 3.12** In scholastic divisions 15U – 18U, all players participating in USSSA Baseball tournament play shall have photocopies of their original birth certificate and if applicable, photocopies of their original current scholastic report card in the possession of the team manager at all times. Upon protest, failure to have a photocopy of the original birth certificate and if applicable, photocopy of the original current scholastic report card immediately available upon demand shall result in the offending team losing the game, being ejected from the tournament, being placed last in the standings and forfeiting all awards, points, sponsors travel money, and tournament berths that would have been awarded at the tournament.
- 3.13** Area Directors, Executive Board Members, Executive Committee Members, Local Directors, National Committee Members, National Directors, State Directors or Tournament Directors shall not be eligible to participate in the program as a team manager, team coach, team sponsor, umpire or player without approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball.

RULE 4.00 – QUALIFYING TOURNAMENTS

- 4.01** State Directors shall have the authority to amend these National By-laws & Rules to accommodate the needs of the Qualifying Tournament with the approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball.
- 4.02** The State Director or directors appointed by the State Director shall conduct all Qualifying Tournaments to assure that the USSSA Baseball National By-laws & Rules are being followed at all times.
- 4.03** Amounts to be charged as entry fees for Qualifying Tournaments shall be at the discretion of the State Director.
- 4.04** The quantity of awards to be presented for Qualifying Tournaments shall be at the discretion of the State Director.
- 4.05** Each State Director shall adopt an acceptable system to qualifying teams for State Championship and / or World Series participation. Sanctioned league participation may be included in such a system is so desired.
- 4.06** No Qualifying Tournament shall be considered as sanctioned by the Association if all applicable fees and registrations are not paid to the Association within seventy-two (72) hours after completion of the tournament.
- 4.07** Only USSSA licensed baseballs shall be used in Qualifying Tournament play.
- 4.08** Each State Director with approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball shall set refund policies.
- 4.09** Teams may on accumulate points from one event per weekend.
- 4.10** Pool Play / Tie Breaker Criteria: Once advanced to the next tie breaker criteria; do not return to a previous criteria.
 - 1) Winning Percentage – Descending
 - 2) Number Wins – Descending
 - 3) Number Loses – Ascending
 - 4) Tied Teams (vs. each other) Winning Pct – Descending (more than 2 teams tied, skip this tie breaker)
 - 5) Avg Points Allowed – Ascending
 - 6) Avg Run Differential with a maximum of (8) – Descending
 - 7) USSSA Points – Descending
 - 8) Date Team Entered USSSA Database
 - Once advanced past one tie breaker, you don't go back to a previous tie breaker.

RULE 5.00 – STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

- 5.01** State Directors shall have the authority to amend these National By-laws & Rules to accommodate the needs of the State Championships with the approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball.
- 5.02** The State Director or directors appointed by the State Director shall conduct all State Championships to assure that the USSSA Baseball National By-laws & Rules are being followed at all times.

- 5.03** Teams are permitted to participate in multiple “Level 1” State Championships but shall only be awarded “Level 1” State Championship points for the first (earliest) State Championship in which the team participates. Teams participating in subsequent “Level 1” State Championships shall be awarded “Qualifying Tournament” points. Teams shall only participate in their respective (home) state’s “Level 1” State Championship(s).
- 5.04** Teams are permitted to participate in multiple “Level 2” State Championships and shall be awarded “Level 2” State Championship points for one “Level 2” State Championships in which the team participates. Teams will receive qualifier points for any others they participate in. Teams shall be permitted to cross state boundaries to participate in “Level 2” State Championships if allowed by the host state.
- 5.05** Official Online Roster composition for State Championship participation:
- 5.05.A** Major Classification – A team’s Official Online Roster shall be composed of at least 50% state residents from the state in which the state championship is being played.
- 5.05.B** AAA, AA, A & All-Star Classifications – A team’s Official Online Roster shall be composed of at least 50% state residents from the state in which the state championship is being played. Non-residential players must reside in a contiguous state.
- 5.06** Amounts to be charged as entry fees for State Championships shall be at the discretion of the State Director.
- 5.07** The quantity of awards to be presented for State Championships shall be at the discretion of the State Director.
- 5.08** Each State Director shall adopt an acceptable system for qualifying teams for World Series participation. Sanctioned league participation may be included in such system is so desired.
- 5.09** No State Championship shall be considered as sanctioned by the Association if all applicable fees and registrations are not paid to the Association within seventy-two (72) hours after completion of the tournament.
- 5.10** Only USSSA licensed baseballs shall be used in State Championship play.
- 5.11** Each State Director with approval of the Association’s Executive Vice President of Baseball shall set refund policies.
- 5.12** State Championships 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 with approval of the State Director after the starting date of the tournament has begun and it is determined that it would not be feasible to attempt to continue the original format due to weather conditions or other acts of God. A substitute format shall be implemented.
- 5.13** Pool Play / Tie Breaker Criteria: Once advanced to the next tie breaker criteria; do not return to a previous criteria.
- 1) Winning Percentage – Descending
 - 2) Number Wins – Descending
 - 3) Number Loses – Ascending
 - 4) Tied Teams (vs. each other) Winning Pct – Descending (more than 2 teams tied, skip this tie breaker)
 - 5) Avg Points Allowed – Ascending
 - 6) Avg Run Differential with a maximum of (8) – Descending
 - 7) USSSA Points – Descending
 - 8) Date Team Entered USSSA Database
 - Once advanced past one tie breaker, you don’t go back to a previous tie breaker.

RULE 6.00 – WORLD SERIES

- 6.01** World Series play shall be under the jurisdiction of the USSSA Baseball National Committee. The Association’s Executive Vice President of Baseball shall appoint a duly qualified person to serve as Tournament Director. The 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 duties, shall report directly to the Association’s Executive Vice President of Baseball.
- 6.02** The Tournament Director shall have the authority to amend these National By-laws & Rules to accommodate the needs of the World Series with the approval of the Association’s Executive Vice President of Baseball.
- 6.03** All teams receiving berths to World Series shall participate in their (home) state’s State Championship provided such a State Championship is played. Failure to participate in the State Championship if played shall result in forfeiture of the World Series berth. Also another requirement set forth by the state director must be followed. It is the managers responsibility to verify all requirements to play in a World Series with their respective State Director. State Directors shall have the authority to waive this rule with approval of the Association’s Executive Vice President of Baseball.
- 6.04** State Directors shall approve all entries entering World Series. If the State Director position is vacant, the Association’s Executive Vice President of Baseball or his designee shall give such approval. A properly completed electronic transmittal shall accompany each entry for World Series participation. State Directors shall not issue an electronic transmittal for teams from another state.
- 6.05** When a team has qualified to compete in a World Series and for some legitimate reason cannot compete, the State Director or directors appointed by the State Director may select the next team in line to take their place or may select a substitute plan to award the berth.
- 6.06** A deadline for accepting entries in World Series shall be set by the USSSA Baseball National Committee.
- 6.07** A team shall participate in the highest classification World Series in which it wins (is awarded) a berth unless the team is re-classified by the State Director or USSSA Baseball National Committee.
- 6.08** A team may participate in a higher age division World Series but shall participate at or above the team’s current classification.
Rule 6.08 Example: A 10U AAA team can participate up in the 11U AAA or 11U Major World Series but cannot participate down in the 11U AA World Series.
- 6.09** Only USSSA licensed baseballs shall be used in World Series play.
- 6.10** Any team in a World Series that forfeits a pool-play game shall not be eligible for championship play regardless of record.
- 6.11** USSSA prohibits the visual display of any non-USSSA association, alliance, federation, organization or union name, badge, crest, emblem, insignia, motif, sign or symbol anywhere on the uniform, such as but not limited to the temporary or permanent affixing of a patch or logo.
- 6.12** Pool Play / Tie Breaker Criteria: Once advanced to the next tie breaker criteria; do not return to a previous criteria.
- 1) Winning Percentage – Descending
 - 2) Number Wins – Descending

- 3) Number Loses – Ascending
 - 4) Tied Teams (vs. each other) Winning Pct – Descending (more than 2 teams tied, skip this tie breaker)
 - 5) Avg Points Allowed – Ascending
 - 6) Avg Run Differential with a maximum of (8) – Descending
 - 7) USSSA Points – Descending
 - 8) Date Team Entered USSSA Database
- Once advanced past one tie breaker, you don't go back to a previous tie breaker.

RULE 7.00 – RULES OF PLAY

7.01 Playing Field & Equipment –

7.01.A (Chart 7.01.A-1) The playing field shall be laid out according to the recommended dimensions contained within these rules.

7.01.B For details on field layout including recommended direction of play, fair and foul territory requirements, infield and outfield grades, pitcher's mound height and slope, batter's and catcher's box dimensions, and base and home plate size and construction should be referred to the Official Rules of Baseball as published by Major League Baseball on MLB.com.

7.01.C Bats -

7.01.C.1 All bats must be permanently stamped with the new USSSA Mark, be a legal BBCor bat or be made of wood by a licensed USSSA manufacturer.

EFFECTIVE January 1, 2012, 15U and Above Division of Play (15U – 18U scholastic divisions). All bats for scholastic divisions 15U – 18U must conform to the NFHS (National Federation of High School Association) bat limitations including a length to weight ratio no greater than negative three (-3) ounces. These bats must be made by an approved USSSA licensed manufacturer AND

- i) Must be NHSF approved with the appropriate BBCOR certification mark, OR
- ii) Be a Wood Bat.

The new USSSA mark can be found in the Baseball Tab of the USSSA Website.

7.01.C.2. Altered Bat Director Inspection and Suspension. A USSSA Director may at any time ask to inspect a bat that has been brought into the location of a USSSA sanctioned event or any other USSSA facility. The owner and/or user may either:

1. Withhold the bat from inspection and accept an immediate two year (automatic life for second time offenders under EI and/or E) suspension from USSSA sanctioned activities with no right to appeal; or,
2. Allow the Director to inspect the bat and reach a conclusion as to whether or not the bat might be altered.

7.01.C.E.I. Altered Bat Determination by Altered Bat Committee Chairman or Manufacturer. If, after making the inspection of a potential altered bat, the Director in his discretion decides that the bat might be an altered bat, the suspected offending owner and/or user and may either:

1. Withhold the bat from further examination by the USSSA Altered Bat Committee Chairman or Manufacturer of the bat and accept an immediate two year (up to life for second time offenders under sections E and/or EI) suspension from USSSA sanctioned activities with no right to appeal; or
2. Allow the Director to send the bat to the USSSA Altered Bat Committee Chairman and/or Manufacturer of the bat for a determination as to whether or not the bat is altered. If the Manufacturer or the USSSA Altered Bat Committee Chairman determines that the bat has been altered, the Altered Bat Committee Chairman in consultation with the Director who inspected the bat at the USSSA facility may suspend a first time offender for up to five (5) years from USSSA play. For a second time offender under E and/or EI, any such suspension will be for to life.

7.01.C.3. Ownership and Knowledge of Bat Being Altered. The responsibility for knowing whether a bat is altered is that of the users and the owner of the bat. If an individual uses an altered bat in USSSA sanctioned play or is the owner of an altered bat that is brought into a USSSA facility, the suspensions under this Rule 2, Section 1 will be imposed without regard to what the individual actually knew about the altered bat. An individual must know that his bat is not an altered bat, if he brings it into a USSSA facility or used it in a USSSA sanctioned activity. If not, the individual can be suspended from USSSA activities for using or owning an altered bat. The fact that the individual did not know that the bat was altered is not a factor in imposing the suspension. The only question is whether the bat is altered or whether the owner/user has refused to let the bat be examined to determine if it is altered. After the Director, Altered Bat Committee and Manufacturer examination of a bat to determine if it is altered have all been completed, or upon the decision of the owner/user to not allow further inspection of the bat under E or EI, above, the bat shall be returned to the owner. If no one claims to be the owner, USSSA shall retain the bat. Once the bat has been returned to the owner, no appeal can be made with respect to whether the bat is altered or not.

7.01.C.4. Investigation Cooperation. Any coach, manager, player or other person who fails to cooperate in the investigation by USSSA of a potential or actual altered bat shall be subject to an unsportsmanlike conduct suspension. A

AGE DIVISION	BASE PATHS	PITCHING DISTANCE	FENCE AT FOUL LINES	FENCE AT CENTER FIELD
4U	55'	N/A	140'	175'
5U	55'	N/A	140'	175'
6U	55'	N/A	140'	175'
7U	60'	40'	160'	185'
8U	60'	40'	160'	185'
9U	65'	46'	180'	210'
10U	65'	46'	180'	210'
11U	70'	50'	230'	275'
12U	70'	50'	230'	275'
13U	80'	54'	275'	300'
14U (54/80)	80'	54'	275'	300'
14U (57/85)	85'	57'	275'	300'
14U (60/90) – 18U	90'	60' 6"	320'	375'

Chart 7.01.A-1

manager or coach of a team that has more than one of his team's bats determined to be altered (or not allowed to be inspected upon request for an altered bat inspection under E and/or EI, above) shall be subject to an unsportsmanlike conduct suspension.

7.01.C.5. Awards and Coach Suspensions If an owner/user chooses to submit a suspected altered bat to the USSSA Altered Bat Committee or the Manufacturer no awards will be given to the team until the bat is determined not to be altered. 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 and the listed manager and coaches may be suspended for unsportsmanlike conduct.

7.01.C.6. Participation in, Profits from, or Encouraging the Altering of USSSA Marked Bats. Any one who participates in, profits from, or encourages the altering of USSSA marked bats shall be suspended indefinitely from all USSSA activities, until the offending party has satisfied all requests of the USSSA Altered Bat Committee with respect to his altered bat activities including but not limited to publicly swearing under penalties of perjury to never again participate in, profit from, or encourage the altering of USSSA marked bats. Violation of such an oath shall result in permanent suspension from all USSSA activities.

7.01.C.7. Compression Testing. Failure of a USSSA approved compression testing device test shall result in the offending bat being removed from play for the duration of the tournament or league game, not longer without the permission of the owner/user—such as in the case of an allowed USSSA altered bat determination under section EI. Multiple failures of such USSSA compression testing may in the discretion of USSSA be viewed as unsportsmanlike conduct of the owner/user, coaches, manager and team.

7.01.C.8. Custom Bats. No approved manufacturer may make a custom USSSA bat for a player or a team. All USSSA marked bats made by a USSSA approved manufacturer must be available to the public for purchase. Individualized graphics (such as a team name, different color, player name or number only changes for a team or player), however, do not constitute custom bats for purposes of this section K.

7.01.C.9. Worn/Abused/Damaged/Foreign Substance Bats Not Allowed in USSSA Sanctioned Play.

1. No bat is legal for USSSA sanctioned play, if it is damaged in any way. Damaged bats include those with damage to the knob or end cap, those which have loose knobs or end caps, and those with cracks or dents in the bat material. For example, if the end cap is in any way loose or appears damaged, the bat should be removed from play for being a damaged bat. If an end plug has come out or the knob has come off, the only way that such bat is legal in USSSA play, is if the knob or end cap is replaced by the manufacturer. Replacement by anyone else results in an altered bat with potential suspension for the owner/user of the bat.
2. No bat is legal for USSSA sanctioned play, if any of the graphics of the bat have worn off. For example, even if the only graphics that have worn off are not Key Graphic Information and are only items such as the patent no., a manufacturer logo, or the approval mark of another association, the bat should be removed from play for being too worn.
3. No bat is legal for USSSA sanctioned play, if the paint has been worn through and the actual bat material is showing. For example, if at the end of the barrel next to the taper where there are no graphics the bat paint is worn off and the underlying bat material is exposed, that bat should be removed from play for being too worn.
4. No bat is legal for USSSA sanctioned play, if there is a foreign substance on the barrel or taper of a bat. Foreign substances included among other substances, pine tar, stick-em type products and even dirt or mud, but only if the substance adds to the thickness of the barrel or covers Key Graphic Information such as the USSSA 1.15 BPF mark, the serial number of the bat, the model or manufacturer name, official softball, etc.. Players are responsible for their equipment and must clean such substances off of their bats so that the substance does not add to the thickness of the bat or obscure any Key Graphics Information about the bat. For example, while bats will surely get dirt on them under normal use and may have pine tar added to the grip, if the dirt or pine tar obscures Key Graphic Information or adds to the thickness of the bat, such bats cannot be used in USSSA play until the dirt or pine tar has been removed to the extent necessary to make all such Key Graphic Information readable and the bat not have increased thickness. If Key Graphic Information about a bat cannot be read, the bat should not be used in USSSA play.
5. If any removed bat under these section L rules is brought back into play at any USSSA sanctioned event at any time, the owner and user of such bat may be suspended for up to one year for unsportsmanlike conduct. And if the foreign substance or the wear/abuse/damage is apparent enough that the batter should have been aware of it, the batter may be so suspended for bringing such a bat into the batters box without having been warned in advance. Players are responsible for their equipment and must not use equipment that is even potentially illegal for use in USSSA sanctioned play.
6. In addition to the player being suspended for unsportsmanlike conduct, coaches of youth teams may also be so suspended when their players attempt to bat with such bats. Also, coaches of adult teams which have multiple offenses under this rule may also be so suspended for failing to have his team follow USSSA equipment rules. Please be reminded that unsportsmanlike conduct can result in a game or tournament suspension in the discretion of the umpire or tournament director and up to a year suspension in the discretion of the state director.

7.01.C.10. Youth Player Altered Bats. The parents or legal guardians of a youth player suspended under section E and/or EI shall be suspended for life from all USSSA sanctioned activities. As such, the player even after his suspension has ended under E and/or EI. can not participate in USSSA sanctioned activities until the player is 18 years old. In addition to any other penalties under this rule 2.1, any coach or manager of a youth team that has more than one suspension imposed on his players in connection with sections E and/or EI. will be suspended from all USSSA activities for life.

7.01.C.11. Altered Bat. An "Altered Bat" is a bat 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 addition of graphics, painting, repainting, removal of bat material or paint by any means including but not limited to

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 altering a bat would be changing or replacing manufacturers' markings or replacing the handle of a bat with a new handle.. Replacing the grip, adding tape or adding a build up to the handle is not considered altering a bat.
4. The bat has been subjected to pressure in a manner that exceeds that of striking the bat at game speed swing speed against a USSSA approved ball traveling at game speeds. Such pressure would include, but is not limited to, compressing the bat, rolling the bat, vicing the bat or hitting the bat against an object such as a tree or pole. The bat has in any other way had its on field performance improved by physically changing the bat (other than by hitting the bat at game condition swing speeds against a USSSA approved ball traveling at game condition speeds).

Penalty for using illegal bats:

First Offense - If the umpire discovers that the bat does not conform to USSSA Rule 7.01.C until a time during or after which the bat has been used in play, it shall not be grounds for declaring the batter out and/or ejection from the game. If the umpire discovers that a bat has been used to put a ball in play and before the next legal pitch, the defensive team will have the choice of the result of play or the batter being called out and all runners returning to the base occupied before the pitch.

Second Offense – If a team is found in violation of this rule a second time, then the manager will be ejected in addition to the First Offense penalty.

7.01.C.12. Protective Gear. As a general rule, USSSA continues its long standing policy of permitting players to determine the use of the protective equipment when they deem it appropriate. Game conditions (temperature, equipment, rain, wind, visibility, field conditions, humidity, etc.) vary greatly from game to game and from field to field. In addition, the relative and absolute experience and skill levels of teams and players will vary from player to player and from team to team. Thus, USSSA encourages players to utilize any protective equipment that they deem appropriate. Such protective gear will be allowed in USSSA sanctioned play, unless by rule or by director/umpire ruling that such protective gear is disallowed as unsafe or as providing an unfair competitive advantage.

7.01D Altered Balls.

An Altered Ball is one which has had its physical structure changed in any way, including (but not limited to) balls that have been frozen, micro-waved, heated, melted, cooled, recovered, re-stitched, surface modified to be rougher or softer, etc. Altered Balls and the potential of a ball being altered and those suspected of altering, owning or using an altered ball (or determined to have altered, owned or used an Altered Ball) shall be viewed as falling under the same rules in place above for Altered bats, above.

7.01.E Uniforms

7.01.F.1 Shoes - In age divisions 4U – 12U, non-metal cleats must be worn. In age divisions 13U – 18U, traditional metal baseball spikes may be worn.

7.01.F.2 Protests on uniforms shall not be allowed. It shall be the League / Tournament Director's responsibility regarding uniform legality. Violation of the uniform rules shall result in the violator being allowed to immediately conform or be removed from the game. Managers and coaches may wear athletic type shorts.

7.01.F The catcher shall wear all appropriate protective gear including a catcher's helmet with facemask and either a built in extended throat guard or a separately attached throat guard, chest protector, shin and / or leg guards, and protective cup. In age divisions 4U – 12U, the catcher's helmet shall fully cover both ears.

7.01.G All offensive players shall use a double ear-flap batting helmet whenever at bat, on deck, on base or any other time outside of the dugout and the ball is live and in play. Bat/ball boys are not allowed

7.01.H Playing equipment including but not limited to the baseballs, bases, bats, catcher's gloves and mitts, first baseman's gloves and mitts, infielders and outfielders gloves and mitts, protective helmets, and uniforms as detailed in the provisions of this rule, shall not contain any undue commercialization of the product. Designations by the manufacturer on any such equipment shall be in good taste as to the size and content of the manufacturer's logo or the brand name.

7.01.I Manufacturers who plan innovative changes in baseball equipment for future play should submit same to the USSSA Baseball National Committee prior to production.

7.02 Game Preliminaries –

7.02.A A flip of a coin between the two teams shall determine the home team for each pool play game if not designated prior to play and the "if" game in championship play. The highest seeded team will be the home team for bracket play games in single elimination brackets. In double elimination brackets, the highest seeded team will be the home team until the championship game. In the championship game, the team in the winners bracket will be the home team and a coin toss will determine the home team for the if game.

7.02.B In League, Qualifying Tournament and State Championship play, time limits may be used with approval of the League / Tournament / State Director.

7.02.C In World Series play, time limits may be used in pool play and consolation bracket games with approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball.

7.02.D Approved Team Line-ups:

7.02.D.1 Teams may bat a nine (9) player line-up, ten (10) player line-up using an Extra Hitter (EH) or continuous line-up of all present, eligible, uniformed players. Such line-up must be declared before the start of the game and used the entire game.

7.02.D.1(a) If a team uses a line-up that contains substitute players, all starting players may be removed and re-enter the game once, but must re-enter in their original position in the

batting order. Non-starters are not allowed to re-enter. When a starter re-enters, the player in the starter's batting position in the batting order must be removed from the game and is ineligible for the remainder of the game.

7.02.D.1(b) If a team uses a line-up that contains ten (10) players, the player in the Extra Hitter position, while not actually playing a defensive position, will be treated as such for substitution purposes.

7.02.D.1(c) If a team uses a continuous line-up, all players other than the nine (9) defensive position players are Extra Hitters and may move freely in defensive positions with the exception of the pitching position. Any player(s) arriving after the game has begun, shall be added to the bottom of the batting line-up. When using the continuous lineup and a player has to leave the game for any reason, that position in the line-up becomes an out when that at bat comes around.

7.02.E In scholastic divisions 15U – 18U, if the Extra Hitter (EH) is not be utilized, then the Designated Hitter (DH) may be utilized in accordance with the NFHS (National Federation of High School Association) baseball rules.

7.02.E.1 A Designated Hitter may be (not mandatory) selected for any one starting player and all subsequent substitutes for that player in the game.

7.02.E.2 A starting defensive player cannot be listed as the Designated Hitter in the starting line-up.

7.02.E.3 A Designated Hitter for said player shall be selected prior to the start of the game, and his name shall be included on the line-up.

7.02.E.4 Failure to declare a Designated Hitter prior to the game precludes the use of a DH in the game.

7.02.E.5 If a pinch hitter or pinch runner for the Designated Hitter is used, that player becomes the new DH.

7.02.E.6 The player who was the Designated Hitter may re-enter pursuant to USSSA Rule 7.02.D.1(a).

7.02.E.7 A Designated Hitter and the player for whom the DH is batting are locked into the batting order. No multiple substitutions may be made that will alter the batting order.

7.02.E.8 The role of the Designated Hitter is terminated for the remainder of the game when:

7.02.E.8(a) The defensive player, or any previous defensive player for whom the Designated Hitter batted, subsequently bats, pinch-hits, or runs for the DH;

7.02.E.8(b) The Designated Hitter or any previous DH assumes a defensive position.

7.02.F Teams may play an official game with an eight (8) player line-up. If a team plays with an eight (8) player line-up, an out shall be declared for the ninth (9th) position in the batting line-up each turn at bat. A ninth (9th) player and all subsequent players may be added to the bottom of the batting line-up as soon as they become available.

7.02.G A team may continue a game with a minimum of eight (8) eligible players.

7.03 Starting and Ending a Game –

7.03.A A regulation game consists of six (6) innings for age divisions 4U – 12U and seven (7) innings for age divisions 13U – 18U, unless the game is:

7.03.A.1 Extended because the score is tied after the completion of the regulation number of innings, in which case, play shall continue until the visiting team has scored more total runs than the home team at the end of a completed inning, or the home team scores the winning run in an uncompleted inning; or

7.03.A.2 Shortened because the home team needs none of its half of the last inning or only a fraction of it to win; or

7.03.A.3 Shortened because an imposed Time Limit expires; or

7.03.A.4 Shortened because any applicable part of USSSA Rule 7.03.B has been met; or

7.03.A.5 Shortened because any applicable part of USSSA Rule 7.03.C has been met.

7.03.B (Chart 7.03.B-1) An imposed Mercy (run) Rule shall be used to complete a

regulation game when one team's margin of lead is greater than or equal to the listed run differential in the corresponding listed start inning. In enforcing this rule, the home team shall not bat if they are winning and the mercy requirement is met prior to the bottom half of the listed inning. Similarly, if the home team is batting and meets the mercy requirement in the bottom half of a listed inning the home team shall cease batting and the game shall end.

7.03.C If a game is called due to rain, weather, light failure or other acts of God and cannot be resumed, it is a regulation game if:

7.03.C.1 For a scheduled six (6) inning game, if three (3) innings have been completed or if the home team has scored more runs in two (2) innings or two and one half (2 1/2) innings than the visiting team has scored in three (3) complete innings or if the home team scores one (1) or more runs in its half (1/2) of the third (3rd) inning to tie the score.

7.03.C.1(a) If a regulation game is called with the score tied and one (1) or more innings has been completed beyond three (3) innings, the score shall revert back to last completed inning, or last completed half (1/2) inning if the home team leads but back no further than the third (3rd) inning. Games that cannot be declared a regulation game by USSSA Rules 7.03.C.1 & 7.03.C.1(a) shall be a suspended game.

7.03.C.2 For a scheduled seven (7) inning game, if four (4) innings have been completed or if the home team has scored more runs in three (3) innings or three and one half (3 1/2) innings than the visiting team has scored in four (4) complete innings or if the home team scores one (1) or more runs in its half (1/2) of the fourth (4th) inning to tie the score.

7.03.C.2(a) If a regulation game is called with the score tied and one (1) or more innings has been completed beyond four (4) innings, the score shall revert back to last completed inning, or last completed half (1/2) inning if the home team leads but back no further than the fourth (4th) inning. Games that cannot be declared a regulation game by USSSA Rules 7.03.C.2 & 7.03.C.2(a) shall be a suspended game.

LENGTH OF GAME	RUN DIFFERENTIAL	START INNING
6 Innings	15	3rd Inning
6 Innings	8	4th Inning
7 Innings	15	3rd Inning
7 Innings	12	4th Inning
7 Innings	8	5th Inning

Chart 7.03.B-1

7.03.D All games that for any reason cannot be declared a regulation game pursuant to USSSA Rule 7.03.C shall be a suspended game. A suspended game when resumed, will resume from the exact point of suspension.

7.04 The Batter, Batter Runner & Runner –

7.04.A An Intentional Walk may be issued upon announcement from either the pitcher or catcher. The four (4) pitches need not be thrown.

7.04.B At any time, the offensive team may use a courtesy runner for the pitcher and catcher of record the previous inning on defense. The courtesy runner must be a player not presently in the line-up. If no players not presently in the line-up are available, the courtesy runner shall be the player making the last batted out. The re-entry status of the courtesy runner, pitcher, and catcher shall not be affected by this rule. If at any time, a courtesy runner is determined to be ineligible, a proper replacement pursuant to these rules (if available) will be used without penalty.

7.04.C Whenever a tag play is evident, a runner must slide or seek to avoid contact with the fielder and / or catcher. Attempting to jump, leap, or dive over the fielder and / or catcher is not interpreted as seeking to avoid contact. Malicious contact shall supersede all obstruction penalties.

Rule 7.04.C Penalty: The runner shall be called out and may be ejected from the game at the umpire's discretion.

7.05 The Pitcher –

7.05.A Leagues and tournaments shall adopt the following rules pertaining to the visit of the manager or a coach to the pitcher. This rule limits the number of visits a manager or a coach may make to any pitcher in any one (1) inning;

7.05.A.1 A second (2nd) visit to the same pitcher in the same inning will cause this pitcher's automatic removal from the pitching position;

7.05.A.2 The manager or a coach is prohibited from making a second (2nd) visit to the mound while the same batter is at bat, but

7.05.A.3 If a pinch-hitter is substituted for this batter, the manager or a coach may make a second (2nd) visit to the mound, but must remove the pitcher. A manager or a coach is considered to have concluded his visit to the mound when he leaves the eighteen (18) foot circle surrounding the pitcher's rubber.

7.05.B A player removed from the pitching position (starting pitcher or subsequent relief pitcher) may not return to the pitching position for the remainder of the game. The defensive team may correct this rules infraction at any time by substituting a legal pitcher without penalty. If an illegal pitcher is permitted to pitch, any pitch or play that results is legal. The rule violation should be caught by the umpire or the offensive team and immediately corrected. If the violating pitcher has legal innings remaining, the violation is deemed an improper substitution and is corrected without penalty. If the violating pitcher has no legal innings remaining, it's deemed a pitching limitations violation pursuant to USSSA Rule 7.05.C.7.

7.05.C (Chart 7.05.C-1) The end of the day for the pitching limitation rules is the time of day or night when the ballpark is shut down and the teams go home for the night break. Games that for any reason extend past midnight (12:00 AM) or start late at night, past midnight (12:00 AM) and are completed before the teams take the night break, will count as being played on the scheduled day. A game not completed before the night break pursuant to USSSA Rules 7.03.C.1(a) & 7.03.C.2(a), shall be a suspended game. Suspended games, when resumed (the next day or another day), shall count as being played on two different days. The outs recorded during the portion of the game played prior to suspension shall count as being played on the regularly scheduled day and the outs recorded during the portion of the game played once resumed, shall count as being played on the resumed day.

7.05.C.1 ONE DAY MAXIMUM TO PITCH THE NEXT DAY: The maximum number of innings a player can legally pitch in one (1) day and still pitch the next day.

Rule 7.05.C.1 Example: In the 7U – 14U age divisions, a player may legally pitch a maximum of three (3) innings in one (1) day and still legally pitch the next day. If the player pitches three and one-third (3 1/3) or more innings in one (1) day, the player cannot legally pitch the next day.

AGE DIVISION	ONE DAY MAXIMUM TO PITCH THE NEXT DAY	ONE DAY MAXIMUM	THREE DAY MAXIMUM
7U – 12U	3	6	8
13U – 14U	3	7	8
15U – 18U	UNLIMITED	UNLIMITED	UNLIMITED

Chart 7.05.C-1

7.05.C.2 ONE DAY MAXIMUM: The maximum number of innings a player can legally pitch in one (1) day.

Rule 7.05.C.2 Example: In the 7U – 12U age divisions, a player may legally pitch a maximum of six (6) innings in one (1) day. The player would be ineligible to pitch the next day. Similarly, in the 13U – 14U age divisions, a player may legally pitch a maximum of seven (7) innings in one (1) day. The player would be ineligible to legally pitch the next day.

7.05.C.3 THREE DAY MAXIMUM: The maximum number of innings a player can legally pitch in three (3) consecutive days.

Rule 7.05.C.3 Example: In the 7U – 14U age divisions, a player may legally pitch a maximum of eight (8) innings in three (3) consecutive days. This is to be interpreted as a player may legally pitch any combination of innings to equal eight (8) innings in two (2) days as long as the player doesn't pitch more than three (3) innings the first (1st) day. Similarly, as a player may legally pitch any combination of innings to equal eight (8) innings in three (3) days as long as the player doesn't pitch more than three (3) innings the first (1st) or second (2nd) days.

7.05.C.4 MANDATORY DAYS OF REST;

7.05.C.4(a) A player that pitches more than three (3) innings in one day **MUST** rest the next day.

7.05.C.4(b) A player that pitches eight (8) innings in two (2) consecutive days **MUST** rest the next day.

7.05.C.4(c) A player that pitches three (3) consecutive days (regardless of total quantity of innings pitched) **MUST** rest the next day.

- 7.05.C.5** For all cumulative totals in this rule, one (1) out equals one-third (1/3) of an inning, two (2) outs equals two-thirds (2/3) of an inning and three (3) outs equals one (1) full inning. A pitcher that pitches in a game and records no outs is not charged with any innings pitched.
- 7.05.C.6** Outs recorded during a game that ends in forfeit shall count towards a pitchers' innings limits.
- 7.05.C.7** For purposes of pitching limitations rules, a pitcher is in violation of the rule if he records any out above the legal pitching limits pursuant to these rules.
Rule 7.05.C.7 Exception: Exceeding the maximum innings allowed in the case of a double or triple play shall not be counted against the pitcher.
Rule 7.05.C.7 Penalty: It shall be the responsibility of each team manager to challenge pitching violations by notifying the Umpire-in-Chief and then filing a Protest with the League / Tournament Director. A protest may be filed at any point after the pitcher in violation records an out beyond his legal limit **AND** while the pitcher in violation is in the game and in the pitching position. If such violation is the last recorded out of the game, the protest **MUST** be filed prior to the umpires and the protesting team leaving the field of play. Any violation of USSSA Rules 7.05.C.1 – 7.05.C.7 shall result in immediate forfeiture of the game. If such violation occurs during Pool-Play, the team in violation of the rule may not advance to the championship bracket regardless of record.
- 7.05.D** It is a balk if the pitcher, while touching his plate, feints a throw to first or third base and fails to complete the throw: Pitchers may still feint a throw to second.

RULE 8.00 – DRAFTED LEAGUES & ALL-STARS

- 8.01 The Drafted League Program** gives traditional league based teams the opportunity to compete amongst teams formed by a similar system. Drafted League is a playing level for actual drafted league teams from USSSA Sanctioned Leagues. Age divisions shall include 5U – 18U.
 - 8.01.A** Leagues that conform to the below guidelines and register one hundred percent (100%) of their league teams shall be allowed to participate. State Directors may sanction others with the approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball.
 - 8.01.A.1** Leagues shall have an approved draft system that shall include no more than four (4) protected / frozen players per team previous to the draft.
 - 8.01.A.2** Leagues shall submit their complete rules, by-laws, and schedules for approval.
 - 8.01.A.3** A league shall consist of a minimum eight (8) game schedule.
 - 8.01.A.4** Eligible players shall compete in a minimum of seventy five percent (75%) of the scheduled league games.
 - 8.01.B** State Directors shall set guidelines for teams to qualify for the Drafted League State Championship and World Series.
- 8.02 The All-Star Program** gives traditional league based All-Star teams the opportunity to compete amongst All-Star teams formed by a similar system. All-Stars is a playing level for actual All-Star teams formed from USSSA Sanctioned Drafted Leagues. Players shall be permitted to participate with an All-Star team and an A, AA, AAA or Major team pursuant to USSSA Rule 3.00. Age divisions shall include 5U – 18U.
 - 8.02.A** Leagues shall conform to all the requirements pursuant to USSSA Rules 8.01.A.1 – 8.01.A.4.
 - 8.02.A.1** All-Star teams may be chosen by any method.
 - 8.02.A.2** Leagues may have multiple All-Star teams in any age division.
 - 8.02.A.3** The League President (or Highest Officer) shall submit an official roster to the State Director for approval.
 - 4.02.A.4** Only State Directors shall register and enter an Official Online Roster for All-Star teams.
 - 4.02.A.5** National All-Star Division:
 - 8.02.A.5(a)** All-Star team players shall not have participated on a team of higher classification than AA (i.e.; AAA, Major) after January 1st of the current year. Any player that has participated on a AAA or Major team after January 1st of the current year is ineligible for National All-Star Division play but may be eligible for American All-Star Division play pursuant to these rules.
 - 8.02.A.5(b)** All-Star teams shall have no more than three (3) players on their roster that have participated on a AA team after April 1st.
 - 8.02.A.5(c)** All-Star teams shall not begin playing together as a team before Memorial Day weekend. Memorial Day weekend is defined as starting at 12:00 P.M., the calendar Friday before Memorial Day as observed by the United States Federal Government.
 - 8.02.A.6** American All-Star Division:
 - 8.02.A.6(a)** All-Star teams that do not meet the requirements pursuant to USSSA Rule 8.02.A.5 but meet the requirements pursuant to USSSA Rule 8.02.A.6 shall be eligible for American All-Star Division play.
 - 8.02.A.6(b)** All-Star teams entering tournaments that do not make must participate in the highest classification the team would otherwise be eligible (i.e.; AA, AAA, Major).
 - 8.02.B** State Directors may adopt guidelines for two (2) divisions of play on the state level with the approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball.
 - 8.02.C** State Directors shall set guidelines for teams to qualify for the All-Star State Championship and World Series.
- 8.03 9U Drafted League Specific Rules (League Rules Only – Not All-Stars)**
 - 8.03.A** A batter is automatically out on a dropped / missed third (3rd) strike by the catcher.
 - 8.03.B** Runners shall not lead-off but may advance at their own risk (steal) once a pitched ball is released by the pitcher. When a runner tries to advance prior to the pitched ball being released by the pitcher, the following shall apply:
Rule 8.03.B Approved Ruling: If the runner advances safely, the umpire shall call "Time" and the runner shall return to the base last legally occupied at the time of the pitch. If the runner is called out, the call shall stand and the runner is out. If the ball is hit, the defensive team shall have the option of the result of the play or a no pitch.

- 8.03.C** If a Runner stops on third base during a play and occupies that base during a pitch, runners shall not advance from third (3rd) base to home unless the runner is batted home or forced home by a base on balls, hit batsman, or award from the umpire or if the defensive team attempts a play on the runner legally occupying third base. Runners shall not advance from third (3rd) base to home on passed balls, wild pitches or dropped / missed third (3rd) strikes by the catcher.

RULE 9.00 – COACH PITCH SPECIFIC RULES

- 9.01** Fair Ball Arc: There shall be a twenty (20) foot arc drawn from first (1st) baseline to third (3rd) baseline in front of home plate. A batted ball must go past this line to be a fair ball.
- 9.02** Safety Arc: There shall be a thirty (30) foot arc drawn from first (1st) baseline to third (3rd) baseline in front of home plate. Infielders must stay behind this line until the ball is hit.
- 9.03** Pitching Circle: There shall be a ten (10) foot diameter circle with the front edge set at forty-two (42) feet from the rear point of home plate.
- 9.04** Pitcher's Line: There shall be a line drawn from the pitcher's circle to the safety arc.
- 9.04.A** The pitching coach shall keep one foot on or straddle the pitcher's line.
- 9.04.B** The pitching coach shall not verbally or physically coach while in the pitching position
- 9.04.C** The pitching coach shall position himself as not to be an obstruction to the defensive team on any possible play once the ball has been hit.
- Rule 9.04.C Penalty:** If a coach violates this rule after the ball is pitched, obstruction will be called.
- Rule 9.04.C Additional Penalty:** If a coach violates this rule before the ball is pitched, First Offense: Warning; Second Offense: Removal of coach as the pitcher for the remainder of the game.
- 9.05** The catcher shall receive the pitch in the catcher's box in a normal baseball manner. If in the umpire's judgment, the catcher is not receiving the ball in a normal baseball manner, there will be a warning issued. If the act continues after the warning, the offending teams' manager will be ejected.
- 9.06** Ten (10) defensive players shall play in the field with four (4) outfielders. The fourth (4th) outfielder shall not assume an infield position. All outfielders shall stay behind the baselines.
- 9.07** The defensive player listed as pitcher shall not leave the pitching circle until the ball is hit.
- Rule 9.07 Penalty:** The play continues. After the play has ended, the offensive team has the option of taking the result of the play or no-pitch.
- Rule 9.07 Additional Penalty:** First Offense: Warning; Second Offense: Removal of player from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.
- 9.08** Defensive coaches shall not be allowed on the field of play and shall coach from the dugout.
- 9.09** The Infield Fly Rule shall not be in effect at any time.
- 9.10** The batting order shall constitute all present players on the team roster at the beginning of the game. Late arrivals shall be inserted at the bottom of the batting order. All players on the roster shall bat before returning to the top of the batting order.
- 9.10.A** Teams may start a game with eight (8) players. The ninth (9th) & tenth (10th) positions in the batting order will be declared an out each turn at bat.
- Rule 9.10.A Approved Ruling:** A ninth (9th) & tenth (10th) player and all subsequent players may be added to the bottom of the batting line-up as soon as they become available.
- 9.11** Teams may use free substitution on defense but the batting order shall remain the same.
- 9.12** Bunting shall not be allowed.
- 9.13** The batter shall receive a maximum of six (6) pitches or three (3) swinging strikes.
- Rule 9.06.M Comment:** A batter that has received less than six (6) pitches and has a count of two (2) swinging strikes shall have his turn at bat extended on foul balls up to the six (6) pitch limit.
- 9.14** A player may only be Intentionally Walked once per game by announcement from the defensive team.
- 9.15** Runners shall not lead-off or steal bases. A runner is out for leaving the base before the ball is hit or reaches home plate.
- 9.16** A courtesy runner for catcher of record only the previous inning may be used. The courtesy runner shall be the player that made the previous out. If no outs have been recorded in the game, the courtesy runner shall be the previous batter not on base. If the team batting has not played defense yet and a courtesy runner is used for a player, the player that was run for must assume the catching position the next inning. This scenario only applies in the first inning for the visiting team.
- 9.17** A team may score a maximum of seven (7) runs per inning, including the last inning or record three (3) outs.
- 9.18** Umpires shall call "Time" after every play and declare the ball dead. "Time" shall be called as soon as the all runners are not attempting to advance. "Time" does not have to be called by the defense for the purpose of this rule.
- Rule 9.18 Comment:** When a runner stands off a base and "jukes" or "feints" back and forth, this is to be interpreted as "not attempting to advance" and "Time" shall be called.
- 9.19** When a batted ball hits the Pitching Coach, the following shall apply:
- 9.19.A** If in the umpire's judgment, the coach did not make a legitimate attempt to avoid contact, the batter is declared out and no runners shall advance.
- 9.19B** If in the umpire's judgment, the coach did make a legitimate attempt to avoid contact, the ball becomes dead and a no-pitch is declared.
- 9.20** The Pitching Coach must be an adult.

RULE 10.00 – MACHINE PITCH SPECIFIC RULES

- 10.01** Fair Ball Arc: There shall be a twenty (20) foot arc drawn from first (1st) baseline to third (3rd) baseline in front of home plate. A batted ball must go past this line to be a fair ball (this includes a ball that is legally bunted).

- 10.02** Safety Arc: There shall be a thirty (30) foot arc drawn from first (1st) baseline to third (3rd) baseline in front of home plate. Infielders must stay behind this line until the ball is hit.
- 10.03** Pitching Circle: There shall be a ten (10) foot diameter circle with the front edge set at forty-two (42) feet from the rear point of home plate.
- 10.04** Pitching Machine: The front leg(s) shall be set at a distance of forty-two (42) feet from the rear point of home plate.
- 10.05** Recommended pitching machine speeds:
10.05.A 36 M.P.H. – 39 M.P.H. out of the machine for the 7U age division.
10.05.B 39 M.P.H. – 42 M.P.H. out of the machine for the 8U age division.
- 10.06** Ten (10) defensive players shall play in the field with four (4) outfielders. The fourth (4th) outfielder shall not assume an infield position. All outfielders shall stay behind the baselines.
- 10.07** The defensive player listed as pitcher shall not leave the pitching circle until the ball is hit.
Rule 10.07 Penalty: The play continues. After the play has ended, the offensive team has the option of taking the result of the play or no-pitch.
Rule 10.07 Additional Penalty: First Offense: Warning; Second Offense: Removal of player from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.
- 10.08** Defensive coaches shall not allowed on the field of play and shall coach from the dugout.
- 10.08** The Infield Fly Rule shall not be in effect at any time.
- 10.08** The batting order shall constitute all present players on the team roster at the beginning of the game. Late arrivals shall be inserted at the bottom of the batting order. All players on the roster shall bat before returning to the top of the batting order.
10.08.A Teams may start a game with eight (8) players. The ninth (9th) & tenth (10th) positions in the batting order will be declared an out each turn at bat.
Rule 10.08.A Approved Ruling: A ninth (9th) & tenth (10th) player and all subsequent players may be added to the bottom of the batting line-up as soon as they become available.
- 10.09** Teams may use free substitution on defense but the batting order shall remain the same.
- 10.09** Teams may bunt a maximum of two (2) times per inning.
10.09.A Fake bunts shall be prohibited. A batter that “shows” bunt is committed to an attempt to bunt or take the pitch.
Rule 10.09.A Penalty: A batter who swings after “showing” bunt shall be called out and no runners may advance.
- 10.10** The batter shall receive a maximum of six (6) pitches or three (3) swinging strikes.
Rule 10.10 Comment: A batter that has received less than six (6) pitches and has a count of two (2) swinging strikes shall have his turn at bat extended on foul balls up to the six (6) pitch limit.
- 10.11** A player may only be Intentionally Walked once per game by announcement from the defensive team.
- 10.12** Runners shall not lead-off or steal bases. A runner is out for leaving the base before the ball is hit or reaches home plate.
- 10.13** A courtesy runner for catcher of record only the previous inning may be used. The courtesy runner shall be the player that made the previous out. If no outs have been recorded in the game, the courtesy runner shall be the previous batter not on base. If the team batting has not played defense yet and a courtesy runner is used for a player, the player that was run for must assume the catching position the next inning. This scenario only applies in the first inning for the visiting team.
- 10.14** A team may score a maximum of seven (7) runs per inning, including the last inning or record three (3) outs.
- 10.15** Umpires shall call “Time” after every play and declare the ball dead. “Time” shall be called as soon as all runners are not attempting to advance. “Time” does not have to be called by the defense for the purpose of this rule.
Rule 10.15 Comment: When a runner stands off a base and “jukes” or “feints” back and forth, this is to be interpreted as “not attempting to advance” and “Time” shall be called.
- 10.16** When a batted ball hits the pitching machine, the ball is dead, the batter is awarded first (1st) base and all runners shall advance one (1) base.
- 10.20** The Pitching Coach must be an adult.

RULE 11.00 – T-BALL SPECIFIC RULES

- 11.01** Fair Ball Arc: There shall be a twenty (20) foot arc drawn from first (1st) baseline to third (3rd) baseline in front of home plate. A batted ball must go past this line to be fair.
- 11.02** Safety Arc: There shall be a thirty (30) foot arc drawn from (1st) baseline to third (3rd) baseline in front of home plate. Infielders must stay behind this line until the ball is hit.
- 11.03** Pitching Plate: The pitching plate shall be located at forty-two (42) feet from the front edge of the pitching plate to the back point of home plate.
- 11.04** The catcher shall wear a dual ear-flap catcher’s helmet with mask.
- 11.05** Ten (10) defensive players shall play in the field with four (4) outfielders. The fourth (4th) outfielder shall not assume an infield position. All outfielders shall stay behind the baselines.
- 11.06** The defensive player listed as pitcher shall stay in contact with the pitchers’ plate until the ball is hit.
Rule 11.06 Penalty: The play continues. After the play has ended, the offensive team has the option of taking the result of the play or no-pitch.
Rule 11.06 Additional Penalty: First Offense: Warning; Second Offense: Removal of player from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.
- 11.07** Defensive coaches shall not allowed on the field of play and shall coach from the dugout.
- 11.08** The Infield Fly Rule shall not be in effect at any time.
- 11.09** The batting order shall constitute all present players on the team roster at the beginning of the game. Late arrivals shall be inserted at the bottom of the batting order. All players on the roster shall bat before returning to the top of the batting order.

- 11.09.A** Teams may start a game with eight (8) players. The ninth (9th) & tenth (10th) positions in the batting order will be declared an out each turn at bat.
Rule 11.09.A Approved Ruling: A ninth (9th) & tenth (10th) player and all subsequent players may be added to the bottom of the batting line-up as soon as they become available.
- 11.10** Teams may use free substitution on defense but the batting order shall remain the same.
- 11.12** Bunting shall not be allowed.
- 11.13** A batter shall receive a maximum of three (3) swings to put the ball in play or be called out. No additional swings shall be awarded on foul balls.
- 11.14** A player may only be Intentionally Walked once per game by announcement from the defensive team.
- 11.15** Runners shall not lead-off or steal bases. A runner is out for leaving the base before the ball is hit.
- 11.16** A team may score a maximum of seven (7) runs per inning, including the last inning or record three (3) outs.
- 11.17** Umpires shall call "Time" after every play and declare the ball dead. "Time" shall be called as soon as the lead runner is not attempting to advance. "Time" does not have to be called by the defense for the purpose of this rule.
Rule 11.17 Comment: When a runner stands off a base and "jukes" or "feints" back and forth, this is to be interpreted as "not attempting to advance" and "Time" shall be called.
- 11.18** The ball shall measure not less than eight and one quarter (8 1/4) nor more than eight and one half (8 1/2) inches in circumference.

RULE 12.00 – 7U & 8U KID PITCH RULES

- 12.01** Nine (9) defensive players shall play in the field.
- 12.02** Balk rules shall not apply.
- 12.03** A batter is automatically out on a dropped / missed third (3rd) strike by the catcher.
- 12.04** Runners shall not advance when the pitcher is on the pitching rubber with the ball in his possession and the catcher is in position to receive a pitch. On a base on balls, the batter may attempt to steal second prior to the pitcher and catcher coming set at his own risk, but if a runner is on third, he may not advance home even if the defense attempts to throw the runner out at second base.
- 12.05** Runners shall not lead-off but may advance at their own risk (steal) once a pitched ball has passed home plate. When a runner tries to advance prior to the pitched ball passing home plate, the following shall apply:
Rule 12.05 Approved Ruling: If the runner advances safely, the umpire shall call "Time" and the runner shall return to the base last legally occupied at the time of the pitch. If the runner is called out, the call shall stand and the runner is out. If the ball is hit, the defensive team shall have the option of the result of the play or a no pitch.
- 12.06** Runners shall not advance from third (3rd) base to home unless the runner is batted home or forced by a base on balls, hit batsman, or award from the umpire. Runners shall not advance from third (3rd) base to home on passed balls, wild pitches or dropped / missed third (3rd) strikes by the catcher.

RULE 13.00 – SPORTSMANSHIP & TOBACCO

- 13.01** All players, coaches, managers, sponsors and spectators are expected to conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner at all times. The league/tournament director has the authority to remove anyone from the event at any time for unsportsmanlike conduct. Any player, coach, manager, sponsor or spectator whose conduct is unbecoming or abusive shall at a minimum be reprimanded with a warning. If warranted, the offending party shall be ejected from the game at the discretion of the Umpires and / or the League / Tournament Director.
- 13.02** Any tobacco use is prohibited by all participants (including but not limited to players, manager, coaches) within the confines of the playing field and dugouts. Local facilities may have stricter policies prohibiting tobacco from facility and parking areas. These policies will be recognized and enforced during USSSA events.
- 13.03** Any player, coach, manager, sponsor or spectator leaving their position or base, in the field, on the bench, in the dugout area or grandstands to participate in a fight, brawl or altercation shall be immediately ejected from the game and may be disbarred / suspended pursuant to USSSA Rule 13.00.
- 13.04** Any coach, manager, sponsor or spectator ejected from a game shall immediately remove himself from the vicinity of the playing field and / or grandstands for the remainder of the game. Any player ejected from a game shall either immediately remove himself from the vicinity of the playing field for the remainder of the game or be confined to the dugout area for the remainder of the game at the discretion of the League / Tournament Director. Additional penalties may be assessed at the discretion of the League / Tournament Director.
- 13.05** If necessary, a team may be forced to forfeit a game and / or be removed from the league / tournament.

RULE 14.00 – UMPIRES

- 14.01** All leagues and tournaments played under the jurisdiction and administration of USSSA Baseball shall utilize umpires who are registered with the Association.

RULE 15.00 – PROTESTS

- 15.01** Umpires will work to settle all situations on the field. Protests will be allowed for age and pitching violations or rule interpretations only. Protests must be declared to the Umpire-in-Chief and then to the League / Tournament Director before the next pitch following the dispute. If a call to be protested is the last recorded out of a game or on a game ending play, the protest **MUST** be filed prior to the umpires and the protesting team leaving the field of play. No protest will be allowed following the game. League / Tournament officials will rule on all protests and their decisions shall be final.
- 15.02** The Protest fee is \$100.00 cash. The fee shall be returned only if the protest is upheld. Leagues may develop their own method of fee structure, recording and settling protests.

RULE 16.00 – GLOBAL SPORTS BASEBALL

- 16.01** Global Sports Baseball shall be governed pursuant to the rules contained within these Official Baseball National By-laws & Rules unless specifically noted otherwise.
- 16.02** For Global Sports Baseball World Series play **ONLY**, teams shall be allowed the addition of up to two (2) “write-in” players on their Official Roster.
- 16.02.A** Write-in players shall not be entered in the USSSA online system but rather “hand written” on the printable version of the team’s Official Online Roster form.
- 16.02.B** Write-in players are permitted to be frozen to any other classification team and be eligible.

RULE 17.00 – Concussions

- 17.01** USSSA Announcement Re. Federal, State and Local Law Concussions:

USSSA, as a sanctioning body of athletic events, shares the concerns being raised on a national and local level regarding concussions and concussion symptoms in participants, coaches/managers and umpires/referees in USSSA sanctioned activities. USSSA encourages its directors, umpires, coaches, referees, teams, team managers, and all adults involved in youth activities and participants to learn all they can about concussions in athletics and requires each of them and each of the USSSA directors to follow all federal, state and local laws (including concussion training and reaction laws) with regard to athletic competition sanctioned by USSSA. In addition, USSSA has added the following to the rule books of each USSSA sport which does not defer to another organization for its rule book.

Upon becoming aware that a participant or coach/manager of his team has received a suspected concussion (or has been struck in the head area with any significant force), the Team Manager will not allow that person to participate in any USSSA sanctioned event and if occurring during a USSSA sanctioned event, shall have that person removed from the playing field of any USSSA sanctioned event. Upon becoming aware that a participant, coach/manager or umpire/referee has received a suspected concussion (or has been struck in the head area with any significant force), a USSSA umpire/referee or director will have that person removed from the playing field of any USSSA sanctioned event. Without a written medical clearance from a licensed medical doctor to return to play, such persons will not be allowed to return to the USSSA playing field in a USSSA sanctioned event. For umpires/referees, the medical written consent must be presented to the Team Manager and retained permanently by the USSSA State Director. For participants and coaches/managers, the medical written medical consent must be presented to the Team Manager and retained permanently by the Team Manager. Any Team Manager, who allows a coach/manager or participant back on a USSSA sanctioned event playing field without first obtaining the required written consent, may be suspended by the State Director for up to one year and upon request of the State Director, may be suspended for a longer duration by the USSSA disbarment committee. State Directors allowing an umpire/referee back in the field of play without the necessary consent will be subject to being disciplined as determined by the USSSA Board of Directors.

RULE 18.00 – ITEMS NOT SPECIFICALLY COVERED

- 18.01** Items not specifically covered herein including player eligibility shall be referred to the USSSA Baseball State Director with guidance from the Association’s Executive Vice President of Baseball.