OFFICIAL BASEBALL NATIONAL BY-LAWS & RULES

Edition Dated: August 1, 2025

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Revised 11/23/2025.

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FOREWORD

Playing rules not specifically covered herein shall be governed by The Official MLB Rules of Baseball – National League. If any conflict in rules between these Official USSSA Baseball National By-laws & Rules and The Official MLB Rules of Baseball – National League, these Official USSSA Baseball National By-laws & Rules shall govern. In the event of any conflict in language between any printed version of these Official USSSA Baseball National By-laws & Rules and the usssabaseball.org online version, the usssabaseball.org online version shall govern.

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 will begin the second (2nd) Tuesday in August.

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 shall 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 an A, AA, AAA, or Major roster and still participate in those classes within the guidelines set 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

~~As of 12/01/2023,~~ **In all ages, there will be a limit of 3 Grade Exception players per team.**

3.01 **Age Based with Grade Exceptions Divisions:**

4U Division
Players who turn 5 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are in Pre-Kindergarten-4. Also, any player turning 6 prior to August 1 will not be eligible. Players who are 4u are eligible for this division regardless of their grade.

5U Division
Players who turn 6 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are in Pre-Kindergarten. Also, any player turning 7 prior to August 1 will not be eligible. Players who are 5u are eligible for this division regardless of their grade.

6U Division
Players who turn 7 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are in Kindergarten. Also, any player turning 8 prior to August 1 will not be eligible. Players who are 6u are eligible for this division regardless of their grade.

7U Division
Players who turn 8 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are in the 1st grade. Also, any player turning 9 prior to August 1 will not be eligible. Players who are 7u are eligible for this division regardless of their grade.

8U Division
Players who turn 9 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are in the 2nd grade. Also, any player turning 10 prior to August 1 will not be eligible. Players who are 8u are eligible for this division regardless of their grade.

9U Division
Players who turn 10 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are in the 3rd grade. Also, any player turning 11 prior to August 1 will not be eligible. Players who are 9u are eligible for this division regardless of their grade.

10U Division
Players who turn 11 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are in the 4th grade. Also, any player turning 12 prior to August 1 will not be eligible. Players who are 10u are eligible for this division regardless of their grade.

11U Division
Players who turn 12 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are in the 5th grade. Also, any player turning 13 prior to August 1 will not be eligible. Players who are 11u are eligible for this division regardless of their grade.

12U Division
Players who turn 13 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are in the 6th grade. Also, any player turning 14 prior to August 1 will not be eligible. Players who are 12u are eligible for this division regardless of their grade.

13U Division
Players who turn 14 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are in the 7th grade. Also, any player turning 15 prior to August 1 will not be eligible. Players who are 13u are eligible for this division regardless of their grade.

14U Division
Players who turn 15 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are in the 8th grade. Also, any player turning 16 prior to August 1 will not be eligible. Players who are 14u eligible are eligible for this division regardless of grade.

15U Division
Players who turn 16 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are a freshman in High School. Also, any player turning 17 prior to August 1 will not be eligible. Players who are 15u are eligible for this division regardless of their grade.

16U Division
Players who turn 17 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are a sophomore in High School. Also, any player turning 18 prior to August 1 will not be eligible. Players who are 16u are eligible for this division regardless of their grade.

17U Division
Players who turn 18 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are a junior in High School. Also, any player turning 19 prior to August 1 will not be eligible. Players who are 17u are eligible for this division regardless of their grade.

18U Division
Players who turn 19 prior to May 1 of the current season are not eligible unless they are a senior in High School. Also, any player turning 20 prior to August 1 will not be eligible. Players who are 18u are eligible for this division regardless of their grade.

3.01.A In divisions 4U – 18U, all players participating in USSSA Baseball tournament play shall have photocopies or digital copies of their original birth certificate in the possession of their team manager at all times. Upon protest, failure to have a photocopy or a digital copy of the original birth certificate immediately available upon demand shall result in the offending team losing the game(s), being ejected from the tournament, being placed last in the standings and forfeiting all awards, points, sponsors travel money, and berths that would have been or have been awarded.

3.01.B All grade-based players must have a copy, or digital copy of their birth certificate, current report card, or official school ID with grade, or any official government document stating the grade.

3.01.C Home Schooled players are not eligible to use a grade exception unless the Home School, Online School, Charter School, etc. has a physical location where students attend classes.

3.02 A player that is found to be illegal due to an age or grade violation during or after a league or tournament game, shall result in the offending team losing the game(s) team and player being ejected from the tournament, 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 may be applied to the illegal player and / or team manager / coaches.

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 shall result in your team being prohibited from participating in USSSA.

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

3.04.A A team with a player found to be illegal due to age, grade, or class violation, anytime during the USSSA event, will be deemed ineligible. The team **WILL** be disqualified and put in last place. The manager could face suspension.

3.04.B A player found to be playing on multiple teams in the same weekend, anytime during the USSSA event, both teams **WILL** be disqualified and put in last place. The player, parents and managers could face suspension.

3.04.C An ineligible player is any player not listed on the official online roster (when rosters are required), a player with an incorrect birthday, or a player with name listed incorrectly on the official online roster. All players must be listed on a team's online roster correctly prior to their first game or prior to the event's deadline to add players. Penalty: Any ineligible player **MAY** cause the team to be disqualified and put in last place. Each case will be looked at by the team's State Director to determine if the player is ineligible.

3.05 **Player Roster Eligibility:**

3.05.A Players shall only appear on one (1) Official Online Roster.

3.05.B Players shall only physically play for one (1) team per day, event, tournament, week, or weekend, regardless of location, venue, age division and / or classification.

3.05.C Once a player has been rostered for the season, they may not be added to a team with lower classification in the same age group or younger age group without state director approval.

3.05.D Once a player is released from a roster, they may not be added back to that roster without state director approval.

3.06 **Guest Player**

3.06.A Teams that earn a berth with Guest Players on their roster will be deemed qualified. The Guest Players will NOT be frozen to the team's roster, only players on their permanent roster will be considered for freezing at the appropriate time.

3.06.B Guest Player Application System will be disabled for an event 3 hours prior to the Start Date of the event based on Eastern Standard Time.

3.06.C Players that are NOT on a current season USSSA roster will NOT be eligible as a Guest Player. Anyone that is not on a current USSSA roster simply can be added to your team roster to be eligible as long as the player's classification does not change your team's classification.

3.06.D Guest Players are only eligible to participate as a Guest Player for one team at a time. Players will be blocked from being used as a Guest Player for an additional team for the duration of their guest playing event (Start Date to End Date).

3.06.E If a Guest Player's original team registers for an event after being approved as a guest player, the player will be deleted as a guest player and the Original Team will be required to de-activate the player before the player can be used as a guest player.

3.06.F If the Pick-Up Team moves divisions and moves to a division that would deem the Guest Player illegal, the player will be removed.

3.06.G For leagues, teams are allowed unlimited numbers of guest players. Players who guest play in leagues can also guest play in tournaments with overlapping dates.

3.06.H From the beginning of the season to December 31st teams can add unlimited Guest Players per weekend or per event.

3.06.I From January 1st to the end of the season Guest players will be limited to 3 per weekend or per event.

3.06.J From the start of the Fall Season until December 31, teams may use unlimited guest players per weekend or per event.

3.06.K Guest Player eligibility is determined by the age and class of the event the team is playing in. See link below for more information. http://usssa.com/baseball/bb-guest-player-help-documents

3.07 **Individual Events**

3.07.A There are no roster protests in individual events (IND), except for age eligibility.

3.07.B There is no limit to the number of grade-based exceptions on any team entered into an individual Event. (IND)

3.08 **Team Eligibility:**

3.08.A No team shall be allowed to compete in any USSSA Baseball program without first paying their team registration fee to the Association.

3.08.B All teams shall maintain an Official Online Roster.
Rule 3.08.B Comment: State Directors with the approval of the National Director of Baseball Operations may waive this roster requirement for the traditional "Fall" playing months of August 1 – December 31.

3.08.C Team rosters for age divisions 4U – 14U shall be composed of not more than twenty-five (25) players.

3.08.D Team rosters for scholastic divisions 15U – 18U shall be composed of not more than forty (40) players.

3.08.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.

3.08.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 previous teams the players may have participated on, legal names of the players, and correct dates of birth of the players.

3.08.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 and disqualification of the team.

3.08.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 and disqualification of the team.

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3.08.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 and disqualification of the team.

3.08.G State Directors shall have the authority to approve or reject all players contained on a team's Official Online Roster State Director approval of a team's Official Online Roster shall not release the team manager of his responsibilities pursuant to these rules.

3.08.H An all-girls team can request roster exemptions from the National Director of Baseball Operations.

3.08 In divisions 4U – 14U a player can only participate on a team up to 2 years older (Example: a 10U player can be on a 11U or 12U team)

3.10 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 National Director of Baseball Operations.

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 National Director of Baseball Operations.

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 All players must be listed on the team's online roster before the start of the first game of all tournaments of any stature.

4.09 Each State Director with approval of the National Director of Baseball Operations shall set refund policies.

4.10 Teams may only accumulate points from one event per weekend.

4.11 Pool Play / Tie Breaker Criteria: Once advanced to subsequent tie breaker criteria, do not return to a previous criterion.

These Tie Breakers will be for all events: Qualifying, State and World Series.

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. Runs Allowed – Ascending
6) Avg. Run Differential with a maximum of (8) – Descending
7) USSSA Points – Descending
8) Date Team Entered USSSA Database
9) Coin Flip

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 National Director of Baseball Operations.

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 shall 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, or the majority (whichever is greater) of the players on the team's official online roster.

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, or the majority (whichever is greater) of the players on the team's official online roster.

5.06 To Qualify for the state tournaments, teams must play in a minimum of 3 sanctioned USSSA events or be approved by their State Director.

5.07 Teams can add up to 3 guest players. In accordance with Rule 3.06.

5.08 Amounts to be charged as entry fees for State Championships shall be at the discretion of the State Director. All A, AA, AAA & Major State Tournaments must be entered and paid for online at USSSA.com.

5.09 The quantity of awards to be presented for State Championships shall be at the discretion of the State Director.

5.10 Each State Director shall adopt an acceptable system for qualifying teams for World Series participation.

5.11 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.

5.12 Only USSSA licensed baseballs shall be used in State Championship play.

5.13 Each State Director with approval of the National Director of Baseball Operations shall set refund policies.

5.14 State Championships shall be scheduled to provide each team at least two games of participation. This format can be changed because of weather conditions or other acts by the Tournament Director with approval of the State Director.

RULE 6.00 – WORLD SERIES

6.01 World Series play shall be under the jurisdiction of the USSSA Baseball National Committee. The National Director of Baseball Operations shall appoint a duly qualified person to serve as Tournament Director.

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 National Director of Baseball Operations.

6.03 All teams receiving berths to the World Series shall participate in their (home) state's Spring/Summer 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. Other requirements can be set forth by the state director and must be followed. It is the manager's responsibility to verify all requirements to play in a World Series with their respective State Director.

6.04 State Directors shall approve all entries entering the World Series. If the State Director position is vacant, the National Director of Baseball Operations or his designee shall give such approval. All World Series must be entered and paid for online at USSSA.com.

6.05 A deadline for accepting entries in the World Series shall be set by the USSSA Baseball National Committee.

6.06 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.

6.07 A team may participate in a higher age division World Series but shall participate at or above the team's current classification.
Rule 6.07 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.

6.08 Teams can add up to 3 guest players. In accordance with Rule 3.06.

6.09 Only USSSA licensed baseballs shall be used in World Series play.

6.10 USSSA prohibits the visual display of any non-USSSA association's logo anywhere on the uniform.

RULE 7.00 – RULES OF PLAY

7.01 **Playing Field, Equipment & Safety:**

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

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. Safety bases are allowed to be used when available.

DIVISION OF PLAY	BASE PATHS	PITCHING DISTANCE	FENCE AT	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 (54/80)	90'	54'	275'	300'
13U (60/90)	90'	60' 6"	320'	375'
14U (54/80)	80'	54'	275'	300'
14U (57/95)	85'	57'	275'	300'
14U (60/90)	90'	60' 6"	320'	375'
Scholastic	90'	60' 6"	320'	375'

Chart 7.01.A-1

7.01.C All bats for age divisions 14U and younger must be permanently stamped with the new USSSA 1.15 BPF Mark **(Chart 7.01.C)**, or BBCOR.50 Certified Mark or made of wood and manufactured by a licensed USSSA manufacturer.

7.01.C.1 All 13U players must use a maximum drop 8 (-8) bat with the official USSSA 1.15 BPF Mark permanently stamped.

7.01.C.1(a) In Elite World Series, 13 Majors must use drop 5 (-5). BBCOR or wood bats only.

**** Starting 1/1/2020 ****
In 14U, -3(BBCOR) is the National Standard.
Please note that all players must use a -3 (BBCOR) or wood bat unless the state the event is participating in has adopted the -5 exception. The only exception to this is if a state has opted into allowing -5 events.

7.01.C.2 All 14u players must use a maximum drop 5 (-5) bat with the official USSSA 1.15 BPF Mark Permanently stamped.

7.01.C.2 (a) In all Select Super NIT's, Super NIT's & Elite World Series, 14 Majors must use BBCOR or wood bats only.



Chart 7.01.C

7.01.C.3 All bats for scholastic divisions (High School Events) must conform to the National Federation of High School Associations (NFHS) bat standards including a length to weight ratio no greater than negative three (-3) ounces. These bats must be permanently stamped with the BBCOR.50 Certified Mark or made of wood and manufactured by a licensed USSSA manufacturer.

Rule 7.01.C Penalty: **(First Offense) –** If the Umpire discovers that a 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 shall have the choice of the result of play or the batter being called out and all runners returning to the base occupied at the time of the pitch. **(Second Offense)–**If a team is found in violation of this rule a second time, then the manager shall be ejected in addition to the First Offense penalty.

7.01.D Any bat permanently stamped with the official USA Baseball logo is legal to use in any USSSA baseball event, except were BBCOR is required. In all 13U Events all Players and all Teams must use a max drop of 8 (-8). In all 14U Events all Players and all Teams must use a max drop 5 (-5) bat.

7.01.E 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 gear.

7.01.F In age divisions 4U – 12U, non-metal cleats shall be worn. In age divisions 13U and older, traditional metal baseball spikes shall be permitted.

7.01.G 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.
Rule 7.01.G Comment: In all age divisions 14u and below, the catcher's helmet shall fully cover both ears.

7.01.H 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.

7.01.I **Special Protective Gear:** USSSA continues its long-standing policy of permitting players to determine the use of the protective equipment when they deem it appropriate.

7.01.J Bat / ball boys / girls under the age of eighteen (18) shall not be permitted.

7.01.K All Playing equipment shall not contain undue commercialization of the product.

7.01.L **The Ball.** USSSA licensed baseballs must have a USSSA Mark, must weigh between 5 and 5.25 ounces, must have a circumference of between 8.95 and 9.25 inches, have a COR of between .5 and .555 and have an ASTM standard compression of between 200 and 350 pounds. Molded balls without a traditional cover will be allowed in USSSA play but will require at least 6 weeks of field testing by USSSA and written approval of USSSA in advance of applying the USSSA Mark to such balls, which written approval may add additional performance/design requirements not otherwise applicable to other USSSA licensed balls.

7.01.M The use of **one way** Electronic Signaling devices are permitted to be worn by all players.

7.01.N **Forfeits** - If a team forfeits for an illegal age or classed player, the team will be removed from the event and put in last place.

7.01.N.1 If a team forfeits for a pitching violation in pool play, the game is forfeited, and the team will be the last seed based on teams with the same record for bracket play.

7.01.N.2 The violating pitcher will not be allowed to pitch for the remainder of the event.

7.01.N.3 If a team forfeits for a roster violation, the team "MAY" be allowed to remain in the event if the player would have been eligible to be legally added under the current roster and guest player rules. If the team remains in the event, the player and manager will be ejected for the remainder of the event. If the player would not have been eligible to be rostered on the team as a guest player or full-time player, the team will be removed from the event.

7.01.N.4 If a team forfeits in a winner's bracket game, they will be moved to the loser's bracket.

7.01.N.5 If a team forfeits in an elimination game, they will be removed from the event.

7.01.N.6 Anytime a team is discovered to have committed a pitching violation, the team manager will be removed from the complex for the remainder of the event. This penalty is enforced regardless if a protest was made.

7.01.N.7 All forfeits other than pitching must be approved by the National Director of Baseball.

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. The highest seeded team shall be the home team for bracket play games in single elimination brackets. In double elimination brackets, the highest seeded team shall be the home team until the championship game. In the championship game, the team in the winner's bracket shall be the home team and a coin toss shall 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 National Director of Baseball Operations.

7.02.D Approved Team Line-ups:

7.02.D.1 Teams may bat a nine (9) player line-up, or a nine (9) player line-up with a Designated Hitter (DH), or a ten (10) player line-up with an Extra Hitter (EH), or a 10-player line-up up with a DH and EH, or a 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. A Designated Hitter (DH) can be used for ages 9u thru14u.

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 has free defensive substitution.

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 **Designated Hitter playing rules:**

7.02.E.1 The DH can bat for any defensive player (not just the pitcher, as in some leagues).

7.02.E.2 The DH would normally bat for one player and any of that player's substitutes on defense for the original player.

7.02.E.3 The DH must be listed next to or under the player he is batting for in the lineup.

7.02.E.4 The DH and the player he is batting for are both locked into the same batting slot, neither of these two players can ever bat in another batting position.

7.02.E.5 If the DH enters the game on defense, the player he was batting for must come out of the game.

7.02.E.6 A replaced DH can re-enter the game one time since he was considered a starter. The defensive player being hit for can also re-enter the game one time if subbed for. Both must always stay in the same batting spot.

7.02.E.7 The DH role for a team is terminated for the rest of the game if:

7.02.E.7(a) A replaced DH re-enters the game on defense (the acting DH is disqualified from further participation.

7.02.E.7(b) The player for whom the DH was batting pinch hits or pinch runs for the DH.

7.02.E.7(c) The DH assumes a defensive position.

7.02.F In Scholastic divisions (15U-18U), if the Extra Hitter (EH) is not utilized, then the Designated Hitter (DH) may be utilized in accordance with the National Federation of High School Associations (NFHS) rules.

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

7.02.I USSSA will be adopting the MLB no shift rule.

7.02.J Any coach coaching a base must either be 18 years of age or wear a protective helmet. Only adults will be allowed to be pitching coaches in Machine Pitch or Coach Pitch events.

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 and older, 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.

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.

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.

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

7.03.A.6 Pool play games can end in a tie if the time limit is up or a complete game has been played.

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 start of 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.

LENGTH OF GAME	RUN DIFFERENTIAL	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.C If a game is called due to rain, Weather, light failure, or other acts of Nature and cannot be resumed it is a regulation game if:

7.03.C.1 For a six (6) inning game, if three (3) innings have been played or if the home team has scored more runs after two and one half (2 1/2) innings the game shall be declared a complete game.

7.03.C.1(a) In bracket play if a game is tied after 4 or more innings, the score will revert back to the previous inning. If still tied, the game will be a suspended game.

7.03.C.2 For a seven (7) inning game, if four (4) innings have been played or if the home team has scored more runs after three and one half (3 1/2) innings the game shall be declared a complete game.

7.03.C.1(a) In bracket play if a game is tied after 5 or more innings, the score will revert to the previous inning. If still tied, the game will be a suspended game.

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, shall 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 without throwing pitches.

7.04.B **7.04.B.1** At any time, the offensive team may use a courtesy runner for the pitcher and catcher of record from the previous inning on defense. The courtesy runner must be a player not presently in the line-up. If there are no substitute players available, the courtesy runner shall be the player making the last batted out.

7.04.B.2 If the Pitcher or Catcher get out prior to an out being recorded in the 1st inning, and there are no substitute players the curtesy runner shall be the batter furthest from coming back up to bat in the line-up that is not the Pitcher or Catcher of record. In all other innings, the courtesy runner is the last batted out and if no outs have been recorded, it will be the last out from the previous inning.

7.04.B.3 The re-entry status of the courtesy runner, pitcher, and catcher shall not be affected by this rule. If at any time while the courtesy runner is still on base, if determined to be ineligible, a proper replacement pursuant to these rules shall 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. Malicious contact shall supersede all obstruction penalties. Malicious contact is solely up to the discretion of the Umpire.
Rule 7.04.C Penalty: The runner shall be called out and may be ejected from the game at the discretion of the Umpires.

7.04.D A runner who jumps over a player will be called out whether or not contact is made with the defensive player.

7.04.E A dead ball appeal can be appealed directly to the umpire, without the Pitcher throwing to the appealed base. Only one dead ball appeal is allowed on any play.

7.04.F Feinting/Faking a bunt and swinging away is allowed in all ages 9 and up.

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7.05 The Pitcher:

7.05.A 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. B.7.

7.05.B **(Chart 7.05.B-1)** The end of the day for the purpose of this rule shall be 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, shall count as being played on the scheduled day. A game not completed before the night break pursuant to USSSA Rules 7.03.D 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.B.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.B.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	ONE DAY MAXIMUM	THREE DAY MAXIMUM
7U – 12U	3	6	8
Scholastic 13U – 14U	3	7	8
Scholastic 15U – 18U	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited

Chart 7.05.B-1

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

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

7.05.B.4 **MANDATORY DAYS OF REST:**

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

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

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

7.05.B.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.B.6 Outs recorded during a game that ends in forfeit shall count towards a pitchers' innings limits.

7.05.B.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 for the purpose of this rule but shall be counted towards the pitcher's limits with regards to the eligibility to pitch the next day, etc.

7.05.B.8 It shall be the responsibility of each team to challenge pitching violations by notifying the Umpire and then filing a Protest with the League / Tournament Director. A protest may be filed at any point after the pitcher in violation records any out beyond his legal limit AND while the pitcher in violation is in the game as the pitcher of record. 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.

Rule 7.05.B.1 – 7.05.B.7 Penalty: Any violation shall result in immediate forfeiture of the game.

7.05.B.9 Pitch Counts may be used in Major Events with the approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball Operations.

7.05.C Pitching mound visits will remain 2 coaches visits per inning, with the second coaches visit to the same pitcher in the same inning resulting in a pitching change.

7.05.D A Pitcher shall pitch to one batter, until the batter is put out, or reaches 1st base, or the inning is over. A pitcher that starts an inning must pitch to the first batter until the batter is put out or reaches 1st base. USSSA will NOT be using the MLB mandatory batter limits.

7.05.D.1 If the pitcher is injured it is up to the discretion of the umpire if the pitcher needs to pitch to the batter or not.

7.05.E USSSA will not be adopting the MLB pitch clock rule.

7.05.F USSSA will not be adopting the Pitchers Disengagement rule.

RULE 8.00 – COACH PITCH SPECIFIC RULES

8.01 **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.

8.02 **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.

8.03 **Pitching Circle:** There shall be a ten (10) foot diameter circle with the front edge at forty-two (42) feet from the rear point of home plate.

8.04 **Pitcher's Line:** There shall be a line drawn from the pitcher's circle to the safety arc.

8.04.A The pitching coach shall keep one foot on or straddle the pitcher's line. The Coach can pitch anywhere in between the 30' Safety Arc and the 42' Pitching Circle.

8.04.B The pitching coach shall not verbally or physically coach while in the pitching position.

8.04.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 8.04.C Penalty: If a coach violates this rule after the ball is pitched, obstruction shall be called.

Rule 8.04.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.

8.05 **Pitching Coach:** The Pitching Coach shall be an adult at least eighteen (18) years of age.

8.06 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 shall be a warning issued. If the act continues after the warning, the offending teams' manager shall be ejected.

8.07 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 baseline.

8.08 The defensive player listed as pitcher shall not leave the pitching circle until the ball is hit.

Rule 8.08 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 8.08 Additional Penalty: First Offense: Warning; Second Offense: Removal of player from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.

8.09 Defensive coaches shall not be allowed on the field of play and shall coach from the dugout.

8.10 The Infield Fly Rule shall not be in effect at any time.

8.11 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.

8.11.A Teams may start a game with eight (8) players. The ninth (9th) & tenth (10th) positions in the batting order shall be declared an out each turn at bat.

Rule 8.11.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.

8.12 Teams may use free substitution on defense, but the batting order shall remain the same.

8.13 Bunting shall not be allowed.

8.14 The batter shall receive a maximum of six (6) pitches or three (3) swinging strikes. (The bat is extended if the last pitch is hit foul)

8.15 A player may only be intentionally Walked once per game by announcement from the defensive team.

8.16 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.

8.17 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.

8.18 A team may score a maximum of seven (7) runs per inning.

8.19 The game is over, when the opposing team is mathematically eliminated from scoring enough runs to win or tie the game. (Run Rules still apply)

8.20 Umpires shall call "Time" after every play and declare the ball dead. "Time" shall be called as soon as all the runners are not attempting to advance. "Time" does not have to be called by the defense for the purpose of this rule.

Rule 8.20 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.

8.21 When a batted ball hits the Pitching Coach, the following shall apply:

8.21.A If in the Umpire's judgment, the coach did not make a legitimate attempt to avoid contact, the batter in declared out and no runners shall advance.

8.21.B 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.

RULE 9.00 – MACHINE 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 (this includes a ball that is legally bunted).

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 at forty-two (42) feet from the rear point of home plate.

9.04 **Pitching Machine:** The front leg(s) shall be set at a distance of forty-two (42) feet from the rear point of home plate.

9.05 **Recommended pitching machine speeds:**

9.05.A 36 M.P.H. – 39 M.P.H. out of the machine for the 7U age division.

9.05.B 39 M.P.H. – 42 M.P.H. out of the machine for the 8U age division.

9.06 **Pitching Machine Operator:** The Pitching Machine operator shall be an adult at least eighteen (18) years of age.

9.07 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 baseline.

9.08 The defensive player listed as pitcher shall not leave the pitching circle until the ball is hit.

Rule 9.08 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 9.08 Additional Penalty: First Offense: Warning; Second Offense: Removal of player from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.

9.09 Defensive coaches shall not be allowed on the field of play and shall coach from the dugout.

9.10 The Infield Fly Rule shall not be in effect at any time.

9.11 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.

9.11.A Teams may start a game with eight (8) players. The ninth (9th) & tenth (10th) positions in the batting order shall be declared an out each turn at bat.

Rule 9.11.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.

9.12 Teams may use free substitution on defense, but the batting order shall remain the same.

9.13 Teams may bunt a maximum of two (2) times per inning.

9.13.A Fake bunts shall be prohibited. A batter that "shows" bunt is committed to an attempt to bunt or take the pitch.

Rule 9.13.A Penalty: A batter who swings after "showing" bunt shall be called out and no runners may advance.

9.14 The batter shall receive a maximum of six (6) pitches or three (3) swinging strikes.

9.15 A player may only be Intentionally Walked once per game by announcement from the defensive team.

9.16 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.

9.17 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.

9.18 A team may score a maximum of seven (7) runs per inning.

9.19 The game is over, when the opposing team is mathematically eliminated from scoring enough runs to win or tie the game. (Run Rules still apply)

9.20 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 9.20 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.

9.21 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.

RULE 10.00 – T-BALL 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 fair.

10.02 **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.

10.03 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.

10.04 **Ball:** The ball shall either be as described in 7.01.K or the ball shall measure not less than eight-one quarter (8 1/4) nor more than eight -one half (8 1/2) inches in circumference.

10.05 The catcher shall wear a dual ear-flap catcher's helmet with mask.

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 baseline.

10.07 The defensive player listed as pitcher shall stay in contact with the pitchers' plate 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 be allowed on the field of play and shall coach from the dugout.

10.09 The Infield Fly Rule shall not be in effect at any time.

10.10 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.

10.10.A Teams may start a game with eight (8) players. The ninth (9th) & tenth (10th) positions in the batting order shall be declared an out each turn at bat.

Rule 10.10.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.

10.11 Teams may use free substitution on defense, but the batting order shall remain the same.

10.12 Bunting shall not be allowed.

10.13 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.

10.14 A player may only be Intentionally Walked once per game by announcement from the defensive team.

10.15 Runners shall not lead-off or steal bases. A runner is out for leaving the base before the ball is hit.

10.16 A team may score a maximum of seven (7) runs per inning, including the last inning or record three (3) outs.

10.17 The game is over, when the opposing team is mathematically eliminated from scoring enough runs to win or tie the game. (Run Rules still apply)

10.18 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 10.18 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.

RULE 11.00 – 7U & 8U KID PITCH RULES

11.01 Nine (9) defensive players shall play in the field.

11.02 Balk rules shall not apply.

11.03 A batter shall be automatically out on a dropped / missed third (3rd) strike by the catcher.

11.04 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.

11.05 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 11.04 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.

11.06 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 12.00 – DRAFTED LEAGUES & ALL-STAR PROGRAMS

12.01 **Drafted League Program:** Drafted League is a playing level for actual drafted league teams from USSSA Sanctioned Leagues. Age divisions shall include 5U – 18U.

12.01.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 National Director of Baseball Operations.

12.01.A.1 A league shall consist of a minimum eight (8) game schedule.

12.01.A.2 Eligible players shall compete in a minimum of seventy-five percent (75%) of the scheduled league games.

12.01.B State Directors shall set guidelines for teams to qualify for the Drafted League State Championship and World Series.

12.02 **All-Star Program:** All-Star 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.

12.02.A Leagues shall conform to all the requirements pursuant to USSSA Rules 12.01.A.1 – 12.01. A.4.

12.02.A.1 All-Star teams may be chosen by any method.

12.02.A.2 Leagues may have multiple All-Star teams in any age division.

12.02.A.3 The League President (or Highest Officer) shall submit an official roster to the State Director for approval.

12.02.A.4 Only State Directors shall register and approve all Official Online Roster for All-Star teams.

12.02.A.5 **National All-Star Division:**

12.02.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.

12.02.A.5(b) All-Star teams can have an unlimited number of players that have played at the AA level during the current season.

12.02.A.5(c) Any All-Star team that accumulates points prior to May 1, may be subject to those points not being used for seeding purposes in all post-season events. This will be at the discretion of the Tournament Director and National Director of Baseball Operations. All points will be used when calculating tie breakers for pool standings.

12.02.A.6 **American All-Star Division:**

12.02.A.6(a) All-Star teams that do not meet the requirements pursuant to USSSA Rule 12.02.A.5 but meet the requirements pursuant to USSSA Rule 12.02.A.6 shall be eligible for American All-Star Division play.

12.02.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).

12.02.A.7 **All-Star World Series:** No players that participate at the Major level after Jan 1 of the current season will be allowed.

12.02.B State Directors shall set guidelines for teams to qualify for the All-Star State Championship and World Series.

RULE 13.00 – SAFETY RULES

13.01 **FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL CONCUSSION LAWS:**

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 official/umpire/referee has received a suspected concussion (or has been struck in the head area with any significant force), a USSSA official/umpire/referee or director will have that person removed from the playing field of any USSSA sanctioned event. Without a written medical written 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 officials/umpires/referees, the medical written consent form must be presented to the Tournament Director and retained permanently by the USSSA State Director. For participants and coaches/managers, the medical written medical consent form must be presented to the Team Manager and

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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 official/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.
In the event of severe head trauma in a USSSA sanctioned activity, the injured person will not be moved, and an ambulance will be called, unless otherwise directed by a qualified medical professional. The parent or guardian of the injured person, however, will not be bound by this protocol and may choose a different approach consistent with their legal rights as the parent or guardian.

13.02 ALTERED BATS:

13.02.C.1 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:

13.02.C.1(a) Withhold the bat from inspection and accept an immediate two-year (automatic lifetime for second time offenders pursuant to USSSA Rule 13.02.C.1 and / or 13.02.C.2) suspension from USSSA sanctioned activities with no right to appeal; or,

13.02.C.1(b) Allow the Director to inspect the bat and reach a conclusion as to whether or not the bat might be altered.

13.02.C.2 Altered Bat Determination by USSSA National Baseball 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:

13.02.C.2(a) Withhold the bat from further examination by the USSSA National Baseball Committee Chairman or Manufacturer and accept an immediate two-year (up to lifetime for second time offenders pursuant to USSSA Rules 13.02.C.1 and / or 13.02.C.2) suspension from USSSA sanctioned activities with no right to appeal; or

13.02.C.2(b) Allow the Director to send the bat to the USSSA National Baseball Committee Chairman and / or Manufacturer for a determination as to whether or not the bat is altered. If the Manufacturer or the USSSA National Baseball Committee Chairman determines that the bat has been altered, USSSA National Baseball 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 pursuant to USSSA Rules 13.02.C.1 and / or 13.02.C.2, any such suspension shall be lifetime.

13.02.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 pursuant to USSSA Rules 13.02.C.1 and / or 13.02.C.2 shall 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, USSSA National Baseball Committee Chairman 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 pursuant to USSSA Rules 13.02.C.1 and / or 13.02.C.2, 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.

13.02.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 may be subject to an unsportsmanlike conduct suspension. A 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 pursuant to USSSA Rules 13.02.C.1 and / or 13.02.C.2, may be subject to an unsportsmanlike conduct suspension.

13.02.C.5 Awards and Coach Suspensions: If an owner / user chooses to submit a suspected altered bat to the USSSA National Baseball Committee or Manufacturer no awards may 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 shall be given, and the team shall be placed last in the standings and the listed manager and coaches may be suspended for unsportsmanlike conduct.

13.02.C.6 Participation in, Profits from, or Encouraging the Altering of USSSA Marked Bats: Anyone 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.

13.02.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 but no longer without the permission of the owner / user – such as in the case of an allowed USSSA altered bat determination pursuant to USSSA Rule 13.02.C.1 and / or 13.02.C.2. 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.

13.02.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 rule.

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

13.02.C.9(a) 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.

13.02.C.9(b) 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.

13.02.C.9(c) 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.

13.02.C.9(d) 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 shall 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.

13.02.C.9(e) If any removed bat pursuant to USSSA Rule 13.02.C.9 is brought back into play at any USSSA sanctioned event an any time, the owner and user of such bat may be suspended for up to one year for unsportsmanlike conduct. And if the worn / abused / damaged / foreign substance 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 batter's 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.

13.02.C.9(f) 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.

13.02.C.10 Youth Player Altered Bats: The parents or legal guardians of a youth player suspended pursuant to USSSA Rules 13.02.C.1 and / or 13.02.C.2 may be suspended for any time period, including life, from all USSSA sanctioned activities. If both parents are suspended, the player even after his suspension has ended pursuant to USSSA Rules 13.02.C.1 and/or13.02.C.2 cannot participate in USSSA sanctioned activites until the suspension of one of the players' parents has also ended or until the player reaches the age of eighteen (18) years old. In addition to any other penalties pursuant to USSSA Rules, any coach or manager of a youth team that has more than one suspension imposed on his players in connection with USSSA Rules 13.02.C.1 and /or 13.02.C.2 may be suspended from all USSSA activities for any time period, including life.

13.02.C.11 Altered Bat: An "Altered Bat" is a bat that has had its physical structure changed, including, but not limited to:

13.02.C.11(a) 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.

13.02.C.11(b) The bat has had the plug, or the knob removed / replaced or changed in any way.

13.02.C.11(c) 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.

13.02.C.11(d) 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).

13.02.C.11 (e) Nothing besides a substance or material (bat grip) to improve the grip of a bat may be added to a bat. Sensors and other technology applications may not be used on a bat during a game.

RULE 14.00 – SPORTSMANSHIP & EJECTIONS

14.01 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.

14.02 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.

14.03 Any coach, manager, sponsor, or spectator ejected from a game shall immediately remove themselves 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 them self 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.

14.04 If necessary, a team may be forced to forfeit a game and / or be removed from the league / tournament.

14.05 USSSA reserves the right to deny admission to or eject any person/team who USSSA, in its sole discretion, determines poses a risk to the health and safety of other participants, officials, or spectators and/or whose conduct violates any applicable code of conduct, or whose conduct is otherwise disruptive or disorderly.

RULE 15.00 – UMPIRES

15.01 All leagues and tournaments played under the jurisdiction and administration of USSSA Baseball shall utilize Umpires who are registered with the Association.

15.02 The minimum age to umpire tournaments will be 15 years of age or the minimum age mandated by the local state they are calling in. The minimum age to umpire in a league program will be determined by the local league.

RULE 16.00 – PROTESTS

16.01 Umpires shall work to settle all situations on the field. Protests shall be allowed for age and pitching violations or rule interpretations only. Uniform numbers cannot be protested. 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 shall be allowed following the game. League / Tournament officials shall rule on all protests and their decisions shall be final.

16.02 The Protest fee shall be $100.00 CASH. The fee shall be returned only if the protest is upheld. Leagues may develop their own fee structure and methods of recording and settling protests.

RULE 17.00 – TOBACCO & TOBACCO RELATED PRODUCTS

18.01 The use of ANY tobacco or any electronic smoking devices such as e-cigarettes, vape pens or atomizers shall be prohibited by all participants (including but not limited to players, manager, coaches, umpires) within the confines of the playing field and dugouts. Local facilities may have stricter policies prohibiting tobacco from facility and parking areas. These policies, if any, shall be recognized and enforced during USSSA events.

RULE 18.00 – ITEMS NOT SPECIFICALLY COVERED

19.01 Items not specifically covered shall be referred to the USSSA Baseball State Director with guidance from the National Director of Baseball Operations.

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