USSSA
SLOWPITCH
USSSA
STADIUM
U.S. PATENT #
5,664,744
CHINA
CH
RULES AND REGULATIONS
2015

2015 Official Slow Pitch Rule Book and National By-laws

Official Slow Pitch Softball Rules Adopted, Published and Distributed by

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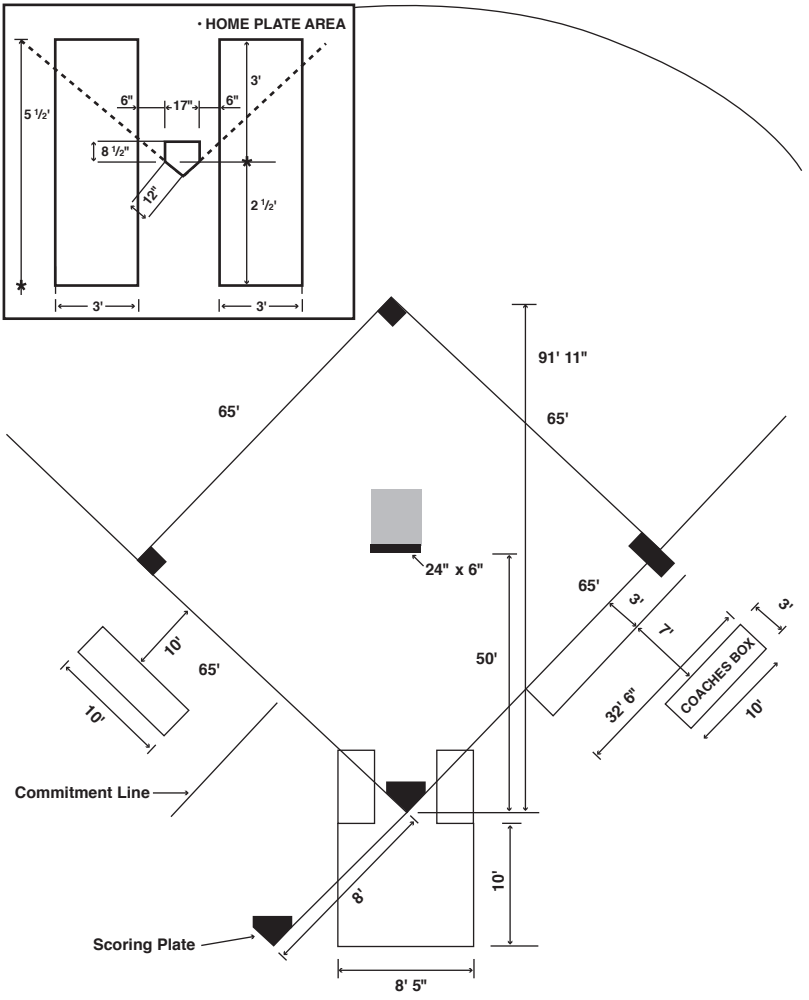
IF AN UNUSUAL OR DISPUTED PLAY OCCURS IN A GAME
describe the incident in detail and email Rick Robertson at rick.robertson@usssa.com for an answer or interpretation.
Should you wish to have an OFFICIAL RULE BOOK, contact USSSA at 800-741-3014 to order. Rule Books are $5.00 each plus shipping.

OFFICIAL USSSA
STANDARD PLAYING FIELD DIMENSIONS



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

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

USSSA SLOW PITCH SOFTBALL

The Slow Pitch Softball Game
Official Playing Rules

11 Inch and 12 Inch Games
Copyright USSSA 1968-2015

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

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

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

RULE 1. THE PLAYING FIELD

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

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

A. In 12 inch the radius distance is 300 feet for men.

B. In Women's Class "A" and "B," the radius distance will be a minimum of 275 feet to a maximum of 325 feet distance for National or World Tournament play. Temporary fences cannot be used if a permanent outfield fence is present.

C. In Women's Class "C" and "D," the radius distance will be a minimum of 250 feet to a maximum of 325 feet fence distance for Regional, National, or World Tournament play.

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

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

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

Example: To figure the distance from home plate to 2nd base for 70 foot bases you multiply 70x70x2 which equals 9800 and then the square root of 9800 which equals 98.99 or 98 feet 11 inches.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

RULE 2. EQUIPMENT

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

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

A. Material. THE BAT may be made of hard wood of one piece, or laminated from sections of hard wood bonded together with adhesive in such a way that the grain directions of all the pieces are essentially parallel to the length of the bat. THE BAT may also be made of aluminum or other metals, fiberglass, graphite or composite materials.

B. Construction. The bat may be made in pieces from different materials but must have a closed barrel end, a handle and a taper. The bat may be modular with interchangeable parts, subject to additional safety and tampering requirements as set forth in the standard USSSA Bat Licensing Agreement. The knob portion must be welded or mechanically attached to the bat. Only USSSA approved bats, USSSA approved weighted bats or USSSA approved bat weigh attachments, may be used by the on deck batter while loosening up on the field.

C. Official Softball. Authorized bat manufacturers shall mark their products with the words "Official Softball".

D. Other Criteria for Legal USSSA Bats. Bats will be legal for USSSA sanctioned play only if the bat is manufactured by an approved USSSA bat manufacturer on the USSSA approved bat manufacturer list (kept by USSSA and published and made available by means including, but not limited to, the USSSA website) and has the new USSSA mark (kept by USSSA and published and made available by means including, but not limited to, the USSSA website) on the taper of the bat. Wood bats made on the approved USSSA bat manufacturer list shall be legal without regard to this section D.2.

E. 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.

EI. 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.

F. 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.

G. 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 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.

H. 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.

I. 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 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.

J. 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.

K. 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.

L. 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. **NOTE:** The bat shall not have exposed rivets, pins, rough or sharp edges, or any form of exterior fastener that would present a hazard. Bats shall be free of rattles, dents, burrs and cracks.

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 baseball or softball 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 1.20 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 graphic 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.

M. 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 cannot 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 under sections E and/or EI will be suspended from all USSSA activities for life.

N. 1. League directors may change USSSA Rules in very limited circumstances, where in the league director's discretion and judgment such a rule change is in the clear best interests of the league, its players, and USSSA. Such league rule changes, however, cannot reduce the right of USSSA Licensees to have their products allowed in USSSA play or allow non-licensed bats or balls to be use in USSSA sanctioned play.

2. Any material league rule change under this Rule , however, must within a reasonable time period be sent by the league director who is authorizing the change to the USSSA Board of Directors or a Committee designated by the Board at sprules@usssa.com and to the appropriate State Director, each of which may, in their discretion, overrule any USSSA league rule changes.

3. For at least 2015, league directors of recreational only (non-competitive) USSSA leagues may in their sole discretion allow all USSSA marked 1.20 BPF bats for such recreational only leagues, provided such leagues are viligent in removing from league play Worn/Abused/Damaged or Foreign Substance bats as is required by Rule 2 **(a).** This grandfathering of old USSSA mark 1.20 BPF bats is not required, but is allowed in the discretion of the recreational league director.

Sec. 3 **A**. **THE OFFICIAL BALL** to be used shall be of a spherical design with a smooth surface. The center or core of the ball shall be of a material and design traditionally used to make softballs or other materials or design as approved by the USSSA. The cover shall be of horsehide, cowhide or other material approved by the USSSA and shall be cemented to the core and stitched with cotton, linen or nylon or any other material approved by the USSSA. A molded cover ball or a molded ball without a separate cover, or a multiple layer core design or multiple material core design, may be approved by the discretion of the USSSA on a case by case basis. The thread shall be in either flat seam or concealed stitch type which gives a flat surface. The stitch color must be blue. The internal composition of the core and the material of the cover must be clearly printed on the ball and the words "Official Slow Pitch Softball" must be clearly printed on the ball.

Note: The performance of a softball by reducing the temperature below that of game conditions is unsportsmanlike conduct.

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

➔ **1.** **<u>Size and weight</u>:** The completed 12" ball shall have a circumference of 12" +/- 1/8" and weigh 6.4 ounces +/- 0.2 oz. The seam shall have not less than 88 stitches in each cover, or 88 simulated stitches in molded cover balls. The completed 11" ball shall be 11" +/- 1/8" in circumference and weigh 5.85 ounces +/- 0.2 ounces and shall otherwise be proportional to the 12" ball.

2. **<u>Name, Logo, COR, and Compression 12" Balls</u>**

a. There shall be no COR or compression information written on the ball, marketing materials or packaging

b. **12" Classic M Ball:**

i. shall have an optic yellow cover

ii. shall have "USSSA CLASSIC M" in 1/8" letters and the USSSA logo with a 1-1/8" diameter;

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

iv. shall have a COR of 40 or less under the ASTM test used under the USSSA Softball Ball License Agreement and

v. shall have a compression of 325 pounds or less under the ASTM test used under the USSSA Softball Ball License Agreement.

c. 12" Stadium M Ball:

i. shall have an optic yellow cover

ii. shall have "USSSA STADIUM" in 1/8" letters and the USSSA logo with a 1-1/8" diameter

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

iv. shall have a COR of 47 or less under the ASTM test used under the USSSA Softball Ball License Agreement and

v. shall have a compression of 450 pounds or less under the ASTM test used under the USSSA Softball Ball License Agreement.

vi. shall be used only in the Men's Major Program

d. 12" Classic Plus Ball:

i. shall have an optic yellow cover

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

iii. shall have lettering and logo in red and the stitching shall be blue and logo shall be applied to be indelible. Manufacturers, however, may have their name and logo in any color.

iv. shall have a COR up to .52 or less under the ASTM test used under the USSSA Softball License Agreement and

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

e. 11" Classic W Ball:

i. shall have an optic yellow cover

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

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

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

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

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

B. 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 in Rule 2 Section 1 above.

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

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

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

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

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

NOTE: A safety base is optional. The safety base shall be 15 inches by 30 inches and not more than 3 inches high. The safety base should be positioned such that the white portion is located where first base would normally be (in fair territory) and the colored portion (red or orange) should be in foul territory. Any batted ball hitting the white portion should be fair and any ball hitting the red or orange portion should be foul. On the initial throw to first base from the infield or outfield, the batter-runner **MUST TOUCH** the red or orange portion of the base

but not the white. If legally appealed by the defense during a live ball situation, the runner will be called out. The defensive player **MUST** always touch the white portion. This rule is in effect only on the initial play at first base. This does not include:

1. Returning to the base after over running,

2. Running on a base hit to the outfield (runner may touch the red or white part) or

3. Re-tag to advance on a fly ball.

4. On any attempt to force the batter runner out at first base on the initial throw that pulls the defense off of first base into foul ground, the defense and the batter may use either the white or colored portion of the base.

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

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

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

B. Multicolored gloves are legal.

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

Sec. 10. **Any player may wear a MASK.**

EFFECT Sec. 10 TO PREVENT INJURY it is strongly recommended that all protective equipment be worn.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sec. 13. PROTECTIVE GEAR: As a general rule, USSSA continues its long standing policy of permitting players to determine the use of protective equipment when they deem 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.

RULE 3. DEFINITIONS

ALTERED BALL is one that 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 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, removing 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 phys-

ically changing the bat (other than by hitting the bat at game condition swing speeds against a USSSA approved ball traveling at game condition speeds).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

BATTER refers to the offensive player who takes a position in the Batter's Box with a 0-0 count. The batter walks on 3 balls and is out on 2 strikes.

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

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

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

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

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

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

CALLED GAME is one that the Umpire-In-Chief terminates play for any reason.

CATCH (LEGAL) is the act of a fielder getting the ball in flight (refer to: **IN FLIGHT**) securely in possession in his hand or glove and firmly holding it, provided he does not use his cap, protector, a pocket or other part of his uniform or the glove not in its normal position on

the hand to stop or catch the ball. It is not a catch, however, if simultaneously or immediately following his contact with the ball, he collides with a wall, a fence, another person or if he falls down and, as a result of any such collision, drops the ball. To establish the validity of the catch, the fielder shall hold the ball long enough so the umpire is convinced he had complete control of the ball and any release of the ball by him was voluntary and intentional. Dropping the ball while attempting to throw it shall not invalidate the catch.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

> **A.** Offensive interference – When a player interferes with or impedes or confuses a defensive player while he is attempting to make a play. This can occur by either physical or vocal actions.
>
> **B.** Spectator interference – Occurs when a person not engaged in the game touches a live batted or thrown ball which could prevent a blocked ball to occur or when a person not engaged in the game physically interferes with a player's opportunities.

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

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

LINE DRIVE is a fly ball that is batted sharply and directly into the playing field.

NOTE: A line drive should never be considered an infield fly.

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

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

OBSTRUCTION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

ROSTER – In all National and World Tournament play, a team shall not exceed 20 players.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

RULE 4. THE GAME

Sec. 1. **THE CHOICE OF FIRST OR LAST BAT** in the inning shall be decided by a double toss of a coin, unless otherwise stated in the rules of the organization under which the schedule of games is to be played. In tournament play, in the championship game, the undefeated team gets the choice of home or visitor. If the tournament goes to an "if" game, it would revert back to a toss of a coin.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

F. Flip/Flop Rule—All Programs: In the inning when the run rule for that particular program is exceeded and the home team is losing, the home team will remain at bat and become the visiting team. If the team (new visiting team) does not score enough runs to reduce the run difference below the run rule, the game is over. If they reduce the run difference to below the run rule then the new home team will

bat. If they subsequently score enough runs to exceed the run rule, the game will be over; if they do not, the game will continue under that format. If the situation reverses, the teams would flip/flop again. **NOTE:** In Men's C-D National Invitational Tournaments, when a D team plays another D team, the Men's C run rule and flip/flop rule will apply.

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

Run Rule and when to Flip/Flop: All Programs

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

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

A. The total number of runs scored legally when the game is called at the end of any completed inning after three shall be the score.

B. When the team second at bat has equaled or scored more runs during any uncompleted inning after three, the runs are all counted and the score is either tied or one team wins.

C. If the team second at bat has not scored more runs, or does not score as many or more runs in the half of the uncompleted inning to tie or win the game, the game reverts to the last inning that was fully completed.

Sec. 5. **ONE RUN SHALL BE SCORED** each time a base runner legally touches first, second, third and home bases before the third out of an inning, unless the third out is the result of a force out or the batter-runner is out before reaching first base. Base runners may advance and a run may score only on a legally batted ball, on a play, on an overthrow or on an error resulting from plays that started with, and immediately follow the batted ball or when the bases are full, so that runners are forced to move up, or advance, by reason of the batter being awarded first base by the umpire in accordance with these rules.

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

A. The batter-runner being put out legally before touching first base.

B. A base runner forced out at any base.

C. A base runner being called out for leaving a base too soon on a pitched ball.

D. A preceding base runner being called out for failure to touch a base.

E. The batter-runner being called out for carrying his bat to first base or beyond.

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

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

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

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

EFFECT Sec. 8. A.

1. Any time the batter is ruled out because of an over-the-fence home run in excess of the limit, the ball is dead and no runners can advance.

2. Any fair fly ball touched by a defensive player which then goes over the fence in fair territory will be declared a four base award and is not to be included in the total of over the fence home runs.

3. A home run will be charged for any untouched fair fly ball hit over the fence in fair territory, whether or not runs score.

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

Men's Class B	**6**
Men's Class C	**4**
Men's Class D	**2**
Men's Class E	**0**
Women's Class A	**Unlimited**
Women's Class B	**Unlimited**
Women's Class C	**3**
Women's Class D	**0**
Mixed Major Male	**8**
Mixed Major Female	**Unlimited**
Mixed C Male	**4**
Mixed C Female	**4**
Mixed D Male	**2**
Mixed D Female	**2**
Mixed E Female	**0**
Mixed E Male	**0**

B. The following home run limits will be used in Men's B-C National Invitational Tournaments: when a Men's B Team plays another Men's B Team, the B home run rule will be used. When a Men's B Team plays a Men's C Team, the home run limit will be 6 home runs per game, per team. When a Men's C Team plays another Men's C Team, the home run limit will be 4 home runs per game, per team.

C. The following home run limits will be used in Men's C-D National Invitational Tournaments: when a Men's C Team plays another Men's C Team, the C home run rule will be used. When a Men's C Team plays a Men's D Team, the home run limit will be 4 home runs per game, per team. When a Men's D Team plays another Men's D Team, the home run limit will be 2 home runs per game, per team.

D. In the Men's Class "E" and Mixed "E" Programs, any batter who hits an untouched fair fly ball over the fence in fair territory will be declared out and it will be an inning ending out. Each subsequent time that position in the lineup is due to bat, the batter shall automatically be declared out. The player shall remain in the game for defensive purposes only. This applies to any substitute in that batting position. If the player appears in the batter's box after hitting a home run, he shall be ejected from the game and the team must continue short-handed.

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

E. The following home run limits will be used in Men's Open National Invitational Tournaments: when a Men's B team plays any other team, the B home run rule (6) will be used. When a Men's C, Men's D, or Men's E team is playing any team classified as Men's C, Men's D, or Men's E, the home run limit will be 4 home runs per game, per team.

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

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

B. If after a game has begun, a team refuses to play or resume play as directed by the umpire.

C. If a team uses tactics noticeably designed to delay or hasten the playing of a game.

D. If an ejected player does not leave the field immediately when ordered to do so.

E. If for any reason a team does not have the designated number of players to begin or continue the game.

F. If, after a warning by the umpire, any one of these rules is willfully violated.

G. State Programs may adopt a grace period before a forfeit is declared in a tournament.

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

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

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

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

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

A. Conditions governing acceptance of protests during playing of a game.

1. Based on an umpire's judgment such as whether a batted ball was fair or foul, a pitched ball was a ball or strike, a base runner was safe or out, or when any other situation is completely within the umpire's scope to make the decision, is not to be accepted for consideration.

2. Based on alleged misinterpretation or application of the playing rules should be accepted for consideration and decision.

3. The intention to protest a rule must be made known by the manager or captain of the protesting team to the umpire immediately and before the next legal pitch, intentional walk, illegal pitcher action or before all fielders have left fair territory. This is to enable all concerned, that is, umpires, scorekeepers and the opposing team to take notice of the exact conditions prevailing on the field at the time of the protest. The umpire receiving the protest shall immediately notify all concerned, including the public announcer.

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

Note: See exception in Article III, Sec. 12 of the USSSA By-Laws pertaining to photo requirement.

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

Note: See exception in Article III, Sec. 12 of the USSSA By-Laws pertaining to photo requirement.

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

> **1.** Allow the Director to inspect the bat and reach an initial conclusion on whether or not the bat may be altered. If, after making an inspection, the Director in his discretion decides that the bat may be altered, the suspected offending owner and/or user will be subject to Rule 7, Sec. 2. B. and may:

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

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

2. Withhold the bat from inspection and accept a two year (up to lifetime for a second time offender) suspension from USSSA play with no right of appeal.

7. Any rule protests must be made before the next legal pitch, intentional walk, illegal pitcher action, or before all fielders have left fair territory.

B. In the absence of a league rule fixing a time limit, protests that arise, other than during the playing of the game must be filed within a reasonable time. Forty-eight hours from the end of a game is suggested as maximum time limit for filing a written protest.

1. A formal protest should contain the following information:

a. The date, time and place of the game.

b. Names of the umpires and scorekeeper.

c. The rule and section of the Official Rules, or local league rules, or adopted general rules under which the protest is being filed.

d. The decision and/or conditions surrounding the cause for the protest.

e. All essential facts involved in the matter of the protest.

2. The decision made on a protested game may result in:

a. The protest is found invalid and game's score stands as played.

b. Protest allowed, game resumed at point of protest, as a suspended game.

c. Protest allowed, game forfeited in favor of the team not at fault.

C. Highly technical protests and those which could, or did not have any effect on the playing of the game, or the final results, should be discouraged or disallowed.

RULE 5. THE PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTES

Sec. 1. **A TEAM** shall consist of at least ten players, whose positions shall be designated as: (1) pitcher, (2) catcher, (3) first basemen, (4) second basemen, (5) third basemen, (6) shortstop, (7) left fielder, (8) center fielder, (9) right fielder, (10) short fielder (usually left center) and may have (11 or 12) additional hitters. (See Rule 5. Sec. 6). Some programs can start and/or finish the game with nine players; see Rules 11 through 13 for these programs.

A. Other than the pitcher and catcher, players in the field may be stationed anywhere they choose on fair ground as each pitch is made.

B. The pitcher, in delivering the ball, must be in legal position at the pitcher's plate or in the pitching area.

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

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

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

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

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

1. If the batter, when he takes his place in the batter's box.

2. If a fielder, when he takes the place of the fielder substituted for.

3. If a runner, when he takes the base runner's place on the base he was holding.

4. If a pitcher, when he occupies the pitcher's plate and delivers a practice pitch.

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

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

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

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

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

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

A. If treatment can be administered in a reasonable amount of time, the individual would not have to leave the game. The amount of time is determined by the umpire's judgment.

B. If excessive time is involved, the re-entry rule would apply to players.

C. If there is an excessive amount of blood on the uniform or if a bandage becomes blood soaked, in the judgment of the umpire, the uniform/bandage must be changed before the individual may participate.

NOTE: See suggested Communicable Disease Procedure on page **60**

D. A player who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion or balance problems), shall be immediately removed from the game and shall not return to play that day until cleared in writing by an appropriate health care professional.

NOTE: See USSSA policy regarding Federal, State and Local Law Concussions on page **61**

Sec. 5. RE-ENTRY:

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

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

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

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

EFFECT Sec. 5.B.

1. If an improper re-entry is discovered by the defense while the player is playing offensively, the following penalties will be enforced:

A. If the improper re-entry is discovered while he is at bat, player is ejected and a proper substitute assumes any accumulated balls and strikes.

B. If the improper re-entry is discovered after he has completed his time at bat, but before a pitch has been made to a succeeding batter, he is called out, and the player is ejected from the game. All base runners, if they have advanced, must return to the base occupied at the time the improper re-entry took a position in the batter's box.

C. If the improper re-entry is not discovered until a pitch is made to the next batter or the improper re-entry enters as a substitute runner, the player is ejected. All play that occurred while the improper re-entry was in the game will stand.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sec. 9. The Managers/Coaches of a USSSA Registered Slow Pitch Softball Team and the umpires of a USSSA Sanctioned Slow Pitch Softball game/tournament shall not allow anyone other than a Participant, Manager, Coach, Trainer or Sponsor to be in the dugout, bench or the field of play during a sanctioned USSSA Slow Pitch Softball game/tournament. Managers, Coaches, Trainers and Sponsors, unless otherwise approved by the State Director must be at least 18 years of age.

EFFECT Sec. 9: The first violation of this rule shall be a warning by the umpire. The second violation or refusal to heed the warning issued on the first violation shall be an immediate forfeiture of the game.

Sec. 10. MANAGERS, COACHES, PLAYERS, SUBSTITUTES, TRAINERS or other team members or occupants of the bench, SHALL NOT, from any place including coaches' boxes:

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

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

EFFECT Sec. 10 A-B. Players violating sections A or B above can be ejected from the game without warning.

C. Argue balls and strikes calls.

D. Be outside of the vicinity of the coaches boxes or the designated dugout (bench) area if not a batter, base runner, on-deck batter, or one of the ten players on defense.

E. Commit any act that could be considered unsportsmanlike conduct.

F. Carelessly throw a bat.

EFFECT Sec. 10. C-F. For a first offense, the violator may be warned that to repeat the offense will cause prompt ejection from the game. All flagrant offenses (including a first offense) shall cause the offender to be immediately removed from the game and playing area. An ejected player must leave the park immediately and take no further part in the game, remaining away from his team's bench or bullpen.

Sec. 11. WHEN TEAM MEMBERS continue to harass the umpire from the bench, and he is unable to detect the offenders, the umpire shall first give warnings, and then if repeated, tell the manager to send all substitutes out of sight of the field, while giving the manager the privilege of sending for as many substitute players as he may need, as he needs them to finish the game.

RULE 6. PITCHING RULE

Sec. 1. AT NO TIME during the progress of the game shall the pitcher be allowed to use tape or any other substance, including a glove, upon the pitching hand or fingers; nor shall

any foreign substance be applied to the ball, provided that, under supervision and control of the umpire, a bag containing powdered resin may be used to dry the hands.

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

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

A. The pitcher may pitch from the pitching plate or from the pitching area, an area the width of the plate and up to six (6) feet behind the pitcher's plate.

B. Preliminary to pitching, the pitcher shall take a position with his/her pivot foot firmly on the ground and in contact with the pitching plate or pitching area. The pivot foot must be in contact with the pitcher's plate or pitching area when the pitched ball is released.

C. The other foot (free foot) has no restriction on position and may be placed on, in front of, to the rear of, or to the side of the pitcher's plate or pitching area. After taking the initial position, the pitcher may take more than one step with the free foot, in any direction of his choice, provided that it is taken prior to, simultaneously with or during the actions of delivering the pitched ball.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sec. 5. TYPE OF PITCH PERMITTED.

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

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

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

EFFECT Sec. 5. A-C. The speed of the pitch and height of the pitched ball are left entirely to the judgment of the umpire (**NOTE**: For sake of uniformity in decisions, any doubtful pitch should be ruled as an unfairly delivered pitch). The umpire shall warn a pitcher who delivers a pitch with EXCESSIVE SPEED that repeating such EXCESSIVE SPEED PITCH will cause the pitcher's removal from the pitcher's position for the remainder of the game. A pitch that does not arc the full 3 feet as required (flat level pitch) may not be an EXCESSIVE SPEED PITCH, but merely an unfairly delivered pitch.

Sec. 6. THE CATCHER MUST:

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

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

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

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

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

A. The pitcher pitches during a dead ball interval.

B. A base runner is called out for leaving a base too soon.

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

Sec. 9. UNFAIRLY DELIVERED PITCHED BALLS INCLUDE:

A. Any pitched ball that does not conform to all requirements of a fairly delivered pitched ball.

B. All pitches made by the pitcher when not conforming to pitching restrictions.

C. Delivering a pitch from other than the pitcher's plate or pitching area and pitcher's position.

D. A quick-return pitch.

E. The pitcher failing to face home plate on delivery of the pitch.

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

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

Sec. 10. ILLEGAL PITCHER'S ACTIONS INCLUDE:

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

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

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

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

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

EFFECT: Sec. 12.

A. The defensive team can have only one attempted appeal per runner.

B. No runner may advance on an appeal play after time has been called.

C. No runner is out if he steps off the base during an appeal.

D. When a ball is thrown into a dead ball area, the team forfeits their right for a second appeal on any runner.

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

RULE 7. BATTING

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

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

A. The batting order thus submitted must be followed throughout the game, unless a substitute replaces a player. When this occurs, the substitute must take the turn in the regular order at bat of the player he replaces.

B. Each player of the side at bat shall become the batter and enter the batter's box in the order in which his name appears on the score sheet.

C. The first batter in each following inning shall be the batter whose name follows that of the player who last completed a turn at bat in the preceding inning.

D. A batter completes a time at bat when he has either been put out or has become a base runner.

E. When a third out of an inning is made before the batter can complete his turn at bat, the same batter will be the first batter in the next inning and all previous called balls and strikes will be canceled.

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

1. If an incorrect batter is discovered before he completes his turn at bat, the correct batter may take his proper place, assuming any accumulated balls and strikes.

2. If the mistake is discovered after the incorrect batter has completed the turn at bat and before a pitch has been made to a succeeding batter, the batter who should have batted is called out. All base runners, if they have advanced, must return to the base occupied at the time the incorrect batter took a position in the batter's box. The next batter is the player whose name follows that of the batter called out for failure to bat. This may even be carried over to the first batter of the next inning, if the appealed out was the third out.

3. If the mistake was not discovered until a pitch is made to the next batter, the turn at bat of the incorrect batter is then legal. All bases advanced or runs scored are counted, the next following batter shall be the one whose name follows that of the incorrect batter who just finished a time at bat. No one is called out for failure to bat and players missing their turn at bat have lost that turn and do not bat again until reached in the regular batter rotation.

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

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

Sec. 2. THE BATTER IS OUT IF:

A. He bats illegally. (Refer to RULE 3.)

B. He hits the ball with an illegal or altered bat. The umpire must discover this illegal action before the next pitch, either by observation or because of an appeal from the defensive team.

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

C. He bunts or chops the ball deliberately downward (either fair or foul).

D. He has a second strike.

Note: The batter is out on 2 strikes and walks on 3 balls.

1. He hits first foul after one strike, then the ball is dead.

E. He steps across the plate with the pitcher in pitching position.

F. He intentionally interferes with the catcher attempting a play.

G. Any member of his team interferes with a fielder attempting to make a play on a foul fly ball.

H. He hits a fair fly ball or line drive that an infielder intentionally drops, with a runner on first, runner on first and second, first, second and third, or on first and third with less than two outs. **NOTE**: A trapped ball that hits the ground is never ruled intentionally dropped.

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

I. He hits a fly ball that is legally caught.

J. He hits an infield fly, with runners on first and second, or on first, second and third bases with less than two out.

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

1. If a declared infield fly falls to the ground untouched and bounces foul before passing first or third bases, it is a foul ball.

2. If a fly ball falls to the ground untouched outside the foul lines then bounces fair, before reaching first or third bases it is an infield fly.

3. **NOTE**: Umpire should always call "INFIELD FLY– IF FAIR" to protect himself.

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

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

EFFECT Sec. 3. A. An umpire should not let the batter's position, either in the front part, or the rear of the batter's box, be of influence in calling strikes. Each pitch should be adjudged

according to the height of any part of the ball as it is crossing only above or over any part of the home plate. Any individual who repeatedly argues balls and strikes will be ejected.

1. The strike zone is only that part, or any part of the area, over home plate that is lower than the top of the batter's highest shoulder, or higher than the bottom of his FRONT KNEE.

B. For each pitch struck at and missed by the batter.

C. For a batted ball striking the batter, while he is in the batter's box with no strikes.

D. For each foul tip. The batter is out if this is the second strike.

E. For a foul ball not caught on the fly with no strikes.

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

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

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

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

A. The pitched ball does not enter the strike zone.

B. The ball strikes the ground before passing completely across home plate, or any part of the plate.

C. A pitched ball strikes any part of home plate.

D. Any unfairly delivered pitch is made and not struck at.

E. There is an illegal pitcher action.

F. A pitched ball is not released within 5 seconds from the time the pitcher has the ball and the batter has taken his position in the batter's box.

G. The catcher fails to return each pitch that is not hit directly to the Pitcher.

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

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

EFFECT Sec. 5.

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

2. A fair or foul ball shall be judged according to the position of the ball, relative to FOUL LINES including the FOUL POLE, and not whether the fielder is on or over the fair or foul territory at the time the ball is first touched.

3. When a batted ball passes out of the field over a fence the umpire shall declare it fair or foul, according to position of the ball, as it leaves the playing field.

4. When a batted ball hits any object including a fielder and is ruled a fair ball under the rules, it is always treated as a fair ball regardless of what happens to the ball or where it may go.

5. A fly ball falling beyond first or third base is judged at point of first contact.

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

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

1. It is a strike unless the batter already has one strike.

2. A foul fly may be caught, thus putting the runners in jeopardy. (Refer to 7-2D for exception).

3. A foul ball not caught is a dead ball, and the runners must return to their bases.

RULE 8. BASERUNNING

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sec. 3. THE BATTER IS AWARDED FIRST BASE:

A. When three balls are called by the umpire.

Note: The batter walks on 3 balls and is out on 2 strikes.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

I. When a coach runs in the direction of home plate or any other base, on or near a baseline, while the fielder is attempting to make a play on a batted ball or on a thrown ball, and thereby draws a throw in his direction.

J. When a base runner is attempting to score and the next batter or other team members interfere with the attempted play.

K. When a member of the offensive team or their equipment causes a blocked ball.

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

L. When anyone other than another runner physically assists him while the ball is in play.

M. When, while the ball is in play, he is legally touched with the ball in the hands of a fielder while not in contact with a base.

N. When, on a force out, a fielder tags him with the ball (while on or off a base) or holds the ball on the base to which the base runner is forced to advance before the base runner can reach the base.

O. When running toward any base, he runs more than 3 feet from a direct line between a base and the base he is trying for to avoid being tagged with the ball in the hands of a fielder.

P. When a base runner PHYSICALLY PASSES a preceding runner before that runner has been put out.

Q. When a base runner fails to attempt to advance and goes into dead ball territory.

R. When he positions himself behind, and not in contact with, the base to get a running start.

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

S. When a base runner fails to return to touch the base to which he is entitled when play is resumed after any suspension of play caused by a dead ball situation, if the fielder legally holds the ball on that base.

T. When a base runner leaves his base to advance to the next base before a fly ball has been touched or touches some object, provided that if the fly ball is caught

and returned to a fielder and legally held on the base left, or if a fielder touches the runner with the ball before the runner returns to retouch his original base.

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

1. Unless there are two outs, this status of a following runner is not affected by a preceding runner's violation or failure to comply.

2. If, on appeal, a preceding runner is the THIRD OUT no following runner shall be allowed to score.

3. If, the appealed out is the THIRD OUT, and is the result of a force out, neither the preceding nor following runners shall score.

4. If the appealed out is the third out and is the result of the batter-runner not touching first base, preceding runners shall not score.

5. On any appealed play not a force out, all runners in advance of runner being appealed out who touch home plate legally before actual physical completion of the THIRD APPEALED OUT in any inning, shall be counted. Succeeding runners cannot score.

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

V. Whenever the catcher or any fielder clearly has the ball and is waiting to tag the runner, the runner must slide or attempt to avoid contact. If, in the umpire's judgment, the runner deliberately and forcefully runs into the defensive player, the runner is declared out and shall be ejected from the game. The ball is declared dead and all other runners must return to the last base touched at the time of the collision.

NOTE: The catcher or any fielder may not block the pathway of the runner unless he has possession of the ball or is in the act of fielding a batted ball or taking a proper position to receive a thrown ball (thrown ball must already be in flight)

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

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

EFFECT Sec. 6. A.

1. The umpire shall call "TIME" when base runners cease to try to advance, because the fielders have the ball ahead of them and all immediate play is apparently completed.

2. Base runners must return to the last base touched and entitled to, immediately when play is stopped in accordance with the above stipulations, they are to remain until able to leave this base legally on the next pitched ball.

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

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

D. When a live thrown ball strikes the person of an umpire or base runner.

E. When a fair batted ball or a live thrown ball accidentally strikes a coach.

F. When another base runner physically passes a preceding base runner.

G. When a preceding base runner fails to touch a base as required.

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

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

EFFECT Sec. 6. H.

1. On a fair batted ball, or a ball over foul ground in a situation that might become a fair ball, all base runners are entitled to advance 3 bases from the time of the pitch.

2. On a thrown ball all base runners are entitled to advance 2 bases.

3. In each case, the runners may advance further at their own risk, being in jeopardy after reaching the awarded bases. **NOTE**: If, in the opinion of the umpire, a fair batted ball would have cleared the outfield fence if not interfered with, the batter shall be awarded a home run.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

G. When an accident or incident occurs that prevents a base runner from proceeding to a base to which he is entitled, as on a home run or other awarded base, a sub-

stitute runner shall be permitted to take his place when a play is resumed so to complete the play.

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

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

A. While the ball is in play, he fails to touch each base in legal order before attempting to make the next base. Either the batter-runner at first base, or any other runner forced to advance because the batter became a base runner, is considered as a force out, should an appeal be made.

B. After reaching first base, the batter-runner's momentum causes him to overrun or over slide first base; the batter-runner makes an attempt to start toward second base before returning to retouch first base.

C. After dislodging in a base, the runner attempts to continue to the next base.

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

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

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

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

1. Base runners are in jeopardy until they return to their bases, in order to comply with the several sections of these rules, when the ball is live.

2. No base runner may return to a preceding base after the ball has been declared dead if the base runner touches any succeeding base, or after a following runner has scored.

3. No base runner may return to retouch a missed base, after a following runner has scored.

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

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

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

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

D. A base runner returning to a base to retag a base on a fly ball caught and thrown by a fielder to any base. If the ball is thrown by a fielder into the restricted area, the base runner shall be awarded the base he must retouch, plus one base. Since the base runner is required to regain the base he first occupied, he is awarded that base and only one more.

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

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

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

A. When any foul ball is not legally caught.

B. When any illegally batted ball occurs.

C. When a proper batter is out on appeal for failing to bat in order.

D. When an offensive player is called out for interference.

E. When an umpire or base runner is struck by a fair batted ball, before it touches a fielder or passes any fielder other than the Pitcher.

F. When time out is called by the umpire.

EFFECT Sec 10. A-F.

1. The ball is immediately dead.

2. Base runners may be forced to advance if the batter is credited with a hit as per "E" above, thus awarded first base, thereby forcing other runners to advance.

3. Base runners need not touch intervening bases when required to return.

4. Base runners must be allowed sufficient time to return when required.

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

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

EFFECT Sec. 11.

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

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

Sec. 12. BASE RUNNERS ARE NOT OUT:

A. When a batter-runner overruns or over slides first base and immediately returns to that base.

B. When a base runner is required to return to a base and is not given sufficient time to return.

C. When a base runner is touched with the ball not securely held by a fielder.

D. When a defensive team does not attempt an appeal play until after a next pitch is made

E. When a base runner holds his base until a fly ball is touched, and then attempts to advance.

F. When a base runner runs outside a baseline, and behind a fielder attempting to field a batted ball.

G. When a base runner runs outside the baseline, other than to avoid a fielder attempting to tag him with the ball.

H. When a base runner is hit by a batted ball that has passed or touched a fielder.

I. When a base runner makes contact with a fielder, not entitled to field the ball, when more than one fielder is attempting to field a batted ball.

J. When a base runner sliding into a base dislodges it from its proper position.

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

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

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

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

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

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

RULE 9. BALL IN PLAY AND BALL DEAD

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

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

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

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

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

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

C. When the batter hits the pitched ball legally.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

O. When a base runner must return to a base in reverse order while the ball is live and in play.

P. When a base runner is called out for passing a preceding runner.

Q. When a base runner acquires the right to a base by legally touching it before being put out.

R. When a base is dislodged while base runners are progressing around the bases.

S. When a base runner is called out for being out of the baselines.

T. When a base runner is forced or tagged out.

U. When an appeal play is involved or enforced.

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

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

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

A. When no pitch is declared.

B. When an illegal pitcher's action is declared.

C. When a base runner is called out for leaving a base too soon on a pitched ball.

D. After each pitched ball and strike not batted.

E. When a pitched ball touches any part of a batter's person.

F. When a batter bats illegally, or hits the ball with an illegal or altered bat.

G. When a batter deliberately BUNTS or CHOPS THE BALL DOWNWARD.

H. When the batter is hit by his own-batted ball, either fair or foul.

I. When a foul ball is not caught in the air.

J. When a batter steps completely across the plate, with the pitcher on the pitcher's plate or in the pitching area.

K. Intentionally dropped fair fly ball or line drive, by an infielder. (See 7-2H)

L. When the batter hits a first foul after one strike. (See 7-2D)

M. When an offensive team member or their equipment causes a blocked ball.

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

N. When an offensive team member causes interference.

O. When the base runner deliberately crashes into a defensive player who is waiting to make a tag.

P. When a base runner is off a base and is hit with a fair-batted ball before the ball is touched by or passes through the infielders.

Q. When a blocked ball occurs.

R. When the ball gets outside the established limits of the playing field.

S. When a coach intentionally interferes with a batted or live-thrown ball.

T. When a ball is caught with an illegal glove in any manner.

U. When a spectator or other person not in the game causes interference.

V. When a batted ball hits an umpire before the ball is touched by, or passes through the infielder, the batter is awarded first base. No base runners may advance except to make room for the batter-runner.

W. When "TIME" is called for any reason by the umpire.

X. When there is obstruction on the batter, which is enforced.

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

RULE 10. UMPIRES

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

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

Sec. 2. GENERAL INFORMATION AND REGULATIONS FOR UMPIRES:

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

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

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

C. Neither umpire has the authority to set aside decisions made by the other umpire within the limits or scope of his respective duties as outlined in these rules.

D. Under no circumstances shall either umpire seek to revise a decision made by his associate, nor shall either umpire criticize or interfere with the duties of his associate, unless asked by him to do so.

E. An umpire may consult with his associate at any time he desires to do so or when requested to do so by a manager. However, the final decision shall rest with the umpire whose exclusive authority it was to make the decision and who requested the opinion of the other umpires.

F. If different decisions should be made on one play by different umpires, the Umpire-In-Chief shall call all umpires into consultation, with no other person present. After consultation, the Umpire-In-Chief shall determine which decision shall prevail, based on which umpire was in the best position and which decision was most likely to be correct. Play shall then proceed as if only one decision had been made.

G. The umpires shall declare the batter or base runner safe or out without waiting for an appeal for such decision, in all cases where such player is safe or out in accordance with this set of rules.

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

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

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

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

A. Call illegal pitcher's actions or unfairly delivered pitches.

B. Call a base runner out for leaving a base too soon.

C. Remove a manager, coach, player or team follower for violating these rules.

D. Call "TIME" when play should be suspended.

E. Ordering field lights turned on.

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

A. He shall have full responsibility for the proper conduct of the game.

B. He shall take his initial position behind the catcher.

C. He shall call each pitch not hit a ball or strike.

D. He shall by agreement with, and in cooperation with, the base umpire: call plays, batted balls fair or foul, illegally batted balls and legal or illegally caught balls.

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

E. He shall determine and declare whether:

1. A batter bats illegally.

2. A batter bunts or chops the pitched ball downward.

3. A fly ball is an infield or outfield fly.

4. A batted ball touches the person of the batter.

5. A batter strikes at the pitch.

F. He shall render base decisions in the following instances:

1. On plays on the base runner at home plate.

2. On an appeal, decide whether a base runner leaves third base too soon on a caught fly ball.

3. If there is more than one runner on base, take the plays and make the decision on the runner nearest the home plate, during plays on runners.

4. With only two umpires working, and there is a batted ball, go to third base for any subsequent decision at that base, after initial decision in the inning.

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

G. When a TIME LIMIT has been set prior to the game starting time, announce this fact before the game is started, and state the time set to end the game. The scorekeeper keeps this time and total playing time of games.

H. Check with the official scorer, advising that official to have managers advise the scorer about the official batting order and any subsequent substitutions made.

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

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

Sec. 5. SPECIFIC DUTIES OF THE BASE UMPIRES:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A. On a decision involving a ball or strike.

B. That a batted ball was fair or foul.

C. That base runner was safe or out.

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

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

Sec. 9. UMPIRES SHALL ENFORCE ALL THESE RULES:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sec. 10. SUSPENSIONS OF PLAY:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

RULE 11. MEN'S CLASS "B," "C," "D," AND "E" PROGRAMS

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

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

Sec. 2. In the Men's Class "B", "C" and "D" Program, the Tournament Director has the option of permitting the following: on a fair fly ball hit over the fence for a home run, the batter and all base runners are credited with a score. The batter and any runner on base do not need to advance and touch the bases. They should go directly to the dugout area. This would eliminate any baserunning appeals. This includes the four base award.

Sec. 3. All playing rules not specifically covered in Rule 11 of this book shall be governed by other rules as outlined in Rules 1 through 10 of the USSSA Rule Book.

RULE 12. WOMEN'S PROGRAM

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

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

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

RULE 13. MIXED TEAM RULES

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

Sec. 2. An 11-inch softball will be used when a female is batting and a 12-inch softball will be used when a male is batting. It is an appeal play when the wrong ball is pitched to a batter. If the appeal is allowed, then the batter returns to bat with the same ball and strike count he/she had at the time of the pitch. Also, any base runners must return to the base occupied at the time of pitch.

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

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

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

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

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

Sec. 5. In the Mixed program, the Tournament Director has the option of permitting the following: On a fair fly ball hit over the fence for a home run, the batter and all base runners are credited with a score. The batter and any runner on base does not need to advance and touch the bases. They should go directly to the dugout area. This would eliminate any base running appeals. This includes the four base award.

Sec.6. All playing rules not specifically covered in Rule 13 in this book shall be governed by the other rules in Rules 1 through 10 in this book.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PROCEDURES

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

1. The bleeding must be stopped, the open wound covered, and if there is an excessive amount of blood on the uniform, it must be changed before the athlete may participate.

2. Routine use of gloves or other precautions to prevent skin and mucous-membrane exposure when contact with blood or other body fluids is anticipated.

3. Immediately wash hands and other skin surfaces if contaminated (in contact) with blood or other body fluids. Wash hands immediately after removing gloves.

4. Clean all blood contaminated surfaces and equipment with a solution made from proper dilution of household bleach (CDC recommends 1-100) or other disinfectants before competition resumes.

5. Practice proper disposal procedures to prevent injuries caused by needles, scalpels, and other sharp instruments or devices.

6. Although saliva has not been implicated in HIV transmission, to minimize the need for emergency mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, mouthpieces, resuscitation bags or other ventilation devices should be available for use.

7. Athletic trainers/coaches with bleeding or oozing skin conditions should refrain from all direct athletic care until the condition is resolved.

8. Contaminated towels should be properly disposed of/disinfected.

9. Follow acceptable guidelines in the immediate control of bleeding and when handling bloody dressings, mouth guards, and other articles containing body fluids.

USSSA POLICY 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 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 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.

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USSSA SLOW PITCH
NATIONAL BY-LAWS

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

ARTICLE I - ORGANIZATION

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

ARTICLE II - TEAM ELIGIBILITY

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

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

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

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

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

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

(b) A Tournament Director shall not accept an out-of-state team unless:

1. The team has a roster online;

2. He contacts the team's home State Director to establish proper team classification;

3. He collects a team registration fee if the team is not registered;

4. He either registers the team online and forwards the registration fee to USSSA or the State Director, as appropriate; or he forwards the registration fee to the State Director to register the team.

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

Sec. 7. Male team rosters shall include only male players and female team rosters shall include only female players.

Sec 8. All playing rules incorporated into the Adult Program shall automatically be extended to include specialty programs of that gender.

ARTICLE III – TEAM CLASSIFICATIONS

Sec. 1. **Teams and individuals will be classified either by the Association's National By-Laws or by their respective State Director.**

Sec. 2. **(a)** Teams not classified by the Association's National By-Laws will be classified by their respective State Director. State Directors will decide on an acceptable method to control team rosters and classifications of all programs.

(b) The main criteria for classifying teams is the overall strength of the team offensively and defensively regardless of whether the team has any home run hitters. Example: Depending on the strength of the offense and defense, a team with no home run hitters may be classified Major, "A," "B," "C," "D," or "E."

(c) The classification of all teams that are not moved up by the Association's National By-Laws will be determined by the appropriate State Director or National Classification Committee. Teams are not exempt from being classified by their State Director or National Classification Committee according to the overall strength of the team simply because a national reclassification by-law does not affect their team. Note: The National Classification Committee has final authority on classification of all teams.

Sec. 3. A State Director has the authority to reclassify any team during the current season except when a team has been reclassified by the By-Laws or the National Classification Committee. Note: National Classification Committee has final authority on classification of all teams.

Sec. 4. **(a)** The winner of all Men's and Women's National or World Tournaments with 25 or more teams will automatically be required to compete the following year in the next highest classification.

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

(c) The top three (3) finishing teams in the Recreational Division of the Black American World Tournaments must compete the following year in the Competitive Division of the Black American Programs.

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

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

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

Sec. 5. **(a)** Teams reclassified by the By-Laws must participate in their new classification for a period of one (1) year. Teams that fail to participate the following year will remain at the new classification until such time as they participate and meet the requirements below. **Note:** Any team reclassified by the By-Laws with four (4) or more players from the previous year's roster (Mixed teams are permitted a maximum of two (2) males and two (2) females) must participate in their new classification for a period of one (1) year; however, teams reclassified by the By-Laws may make an appeal to be reinstated to its former classification only after the team has played a minimum of four (4) tournaments for the Men's and Specialty Programs, and two (2) tournaments for the Women's and Mixed Program. Such an appeal can only be made between June 1 and July 1 and must be submitted on proper form, except the Mixed Program, which is no later than October 1st. For the Men's and Women's Program, the appeal must be made jointly to the State Director, applicable National Program Director, Vice President and Assistant Executive Director. If the team is part of a Specialty Program, the appeal must be made jointly to the State Director and applicable Program Director (or applicable Vice President if there is no Program Director) and Assistant Executive Director. In the event the State Director and the Vice President is the same person, then the applicable Executive Vice President will become involved in the place of the Vice President. A decision on all appeals must be rendered within 10 days. Copies of the appeal decisions must be forwarded to USSSA National Headquarters within 5 days after the decision is made.

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

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

Sec. 6. If a Men's Class "B," "C," "D," or "E" team has any combination of four (4) or more players who meet the following criteria, the team must participate in the new classification for a period of 1 year with the same restriction as outlined in Sec.9 above.

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

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

ARTICLE IV - INDIVIDUAL PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

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

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

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

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

Sec. 5. **(a)** When a team qualifies for a State, National or World Tournament, including the World Series, the team roster will be frozen whether a team accepts the berth or not. The team roster becomes frozen immediately at the qualifying event. Players will be bound to this qualified team up to and including the conclusion of the team's respective State, National or World Tournament, including the World Series. A team may decline a National or World Tournament berth that is passed down. The team manager shall be allowed to add only six (6) players to the qualified team's roster. One of the six (6) players must be added prior to July 1st; one must be added prior to August 1st, and one must be added prior to September 1st. Other roster additions may be added as late as 72 hours prior to the start of the State, National or World Tournament. In case of an emergency, State Directors may authorize these additions within 72 hours of a championship event. Such additional players can only be added to rosters that have openings to allow for such add-ons. EXCEPTION: After the completion of National Tournament play, or after September 1st if the National Tournament is not held, teams that are advancing to World Tournaments may add up to two additional players to their roster provided they meet the criteria specified in Sec. 5 (b) below.

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

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

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

2. Players who are added to a roster of a qualified team must not have played for a team of higher classification during the current season within the same program. **EXCEPTION:** A State Director can approve a player dropping one classification. Players dropping more than one classification (e. g. class B to D) must have State Director and Vice President approval (see letter f).

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

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

(d) Any player that is released from a qualified team's roster cannot return to that team during the current season. A player may be released from only one qualified roster during the current season. Note: If a team applies for and is granted the status

of disbandment (see Article IV, Sec. 6), this shall not count against a player as a release.

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

1. Teams advancing to the Men's Major World Series may add players as specified in these By-Laws as outlined in Article VI, Sec. 2.

2. In the Mixed Program, teams may release players as late as 72 hours prior to the Mixed World Tournament. Players released 72 hours prior to the Mixed World Tournament may be added to another team's roster.

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

Sec. 6. A team with a frozen roster with less than ten players which has used all options for additions and releases may apply for status of disbandment with the State Director. If approval is given, the team forfeits all berths and sponsor travel monies earned. A disbanded team may not reform with more than 9 players. Teams may not apply for disbandment after August 1st. A mixed team may not apply after September 15th.

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

Sec. 7. **(a)** Each year the Major Player National Committee, with the assistance of State Directors, shall compile a list of male players who will be classified as Major Players or Watch List Players. The list shall be completed by December 1st of each year and shall be posted on the Association's official website. Such posting on the official website shall constitute a notice to players, managers, and sponsors as to whom the Major Players are for the new season.

(b) Any player whose name appears on the Major Players List or Watch List shall have the right to appeal the listing to the Major Player National Committee. Any such appeal must be made prior to April 1st.

Sec. 8. **A.** Only one Major Player from the Major Players List will be allowed on a Men's Class "B" Team roster.

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

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

Sec. 9. The Mixed Program shall feature four Divisions that will be called Mixed Major, C, D and E.

A. Teams or individuals not reclassified by the By-Laws will be classified by their respective State Director.

B. A Mixed Major team shall be allowed any number of male players whose names appears on the Association's Major Player List.

C. Mixed Class C, D or E teams shall not be allowed to have any male players whose name appears on the USSSA Major Players List, USSSA Major Players Watch List or who competed during the season in a Men's "A" team or higher.

D. Mixed D teams shall not be allowed to have any players who played on Men's or Women's B teams or higher during the current season. Mixed D teams will be allowed to have three (3) players who played on Men's or Women's C teams during the current season (this could be three male or three female players or any combination thereof, but only a total of three players). **Note:** Any exceptions must be approved by the State Director and Division Vice-President.

E. Mixed Class E Teams shall not be allowed to have any players who played on Men's or Women's C teams or higher during the current season. **Note:** Any exceptions must be approved by the State Director and Division Vice –President.

Sec. 10. A player who is in violation of the Association's Constitution, By-Laws and/or official playing rules and regulations shall be considered an ineligible player.

Sec. 11. Anytime during the game or after, if the Tournament Director discovers an ineligible player, he has the authority to apply penalties as described in the USSSA Constitution, By-Laws, and Rule Book.

Sec. 13. Anytime during a tournament game or after, or after the completion of a tournament, if an ineligible player is discovered up to one year from the tournament date, penalties may be applied as described in the USSSA Constitution, By-Laws, and Rule Book.

Sec. 14. All sections under Article III shall apply to sanctioned USSSA leagues if the league offers a National or World Tournament berth.

Sec. 15. Anyone who is a State Director, National Director, or National Officer of the Association shall not be eligible to participate in the program as a player, team manager or team sponsor in tournament play unless approval is given by the next higher level of authority.

Sec. 16. All players participating in adult USSSA tournament play shall have photo ID available. Failure to do so will result in **Rule 4, Sec. 11-A 4-5** of the USSSA Rule Book to be applied. The offending team loses the game, is ejected from the tournament, placed last in the standings and forfeits all awards, sponsor travel money, and tournament berths that would have been awarded at the tournament. **EXCEPTION:** If the loss incurred by the offending team was its first loss of the tournament and if the player(s) in question can subsequently furnish a valid photo ID prior to their next scheduled game, the offending team may remain in the tournament.

ARTICLE V
STATE AND INVITATIONAL TOURNAMENTS

Sec. 1. The State or Area Director shall conduct all tournaments within his defined area or assure himself that proper administration is being effected at all times.

Sec. 2. A team can only participate in a State Tournament in its respective program and class in one state during a season. For example, a Men's Class "A" team can only participate in one Men's Class "A" State Tournament, a Men's Class "B" can only participate in one Men's Class "B" State Tournament. Teams may play in a maximum of three State Tournaments (one in the same class and two in a higher class). **EXCEPTION:** Teams may play in State Tournaments outside of their respective state only with the joint approval of the team's State Director and the host State Director.

Sec. 3. Amounts to be charged as entry fees for such tournaments shall be left up to the discretion of the respective State or Area Director.

Sec. 4. The number of trophies and awards and amount of travel monies to be awarded will be left up to the discretion of the State Director or a Vice President.

Sec. 5. Each State or Area Director shall adopt an acceptable system to be used for qualifying teams for State and National Tournaments. Established league participation may be included in such a system if so desired.

Sec. 6. All State Champions shall automatically qualify themselves for next year's State Tournament provided they register with the Association.

Sec. 7. **(a)** Only USSSA-approved softballs can be used in State and Invitational Tournaments. Such approval will be made by the Association's Board of Directors.

(b) USSSA-registered or sanctioned leagues, that are played on facilities that are covered under the USSSA Liability Insurance Policy as an additional named insured must at all times use a USSSA-approved licensed softball.

Sec. 8. State Tournaments shall be scheduled to provide each team at least two games of participation. This can be changed at the site of the tournament, by the Tournament Director, after the start of the tournament and it is determined that it would not be feasible to attempt to continue on the double-loss plan due to weather conditions or other acts of God. A substitute plan will be decided upon at the tournament site. **NOTE:** This substitute plan may include using the One-Pitch Rule.

Sec. 9. Tournament Directors shall not be compelled to make refunds after the published tournament cut-off date regardless of circumstances.

Sec. 10. No change to a team's roster will be allowed after the team has begun play in its first game during a tournament.

ARTICLE VI - NATIONAL, NATIONAL INVITATIONAL,OR WORLD TOURNAMENTS

Sec. 1. All playing fields used in National, National Invitational, or World Tournaments must meet the specifications as outlined in the Official Rule Book. All playing fields must have outfield fences. Any field with outfield fences located closer to, or farther from, home

plate than what the Official USSSA Rule Book specifies must be approved in advance by the Association's Executive Director or appropriate Executive Vice President.

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

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

Sec. 4. **(a)** National, National Invitational or World Tournaments with twelve or more entries may not be canceled for lack of participation.

(b) If a tournament is canceled for lack of participation, no USSSA tournament of the same classification may be held at that location on that date.

(c) In all Mixed and Women's NIT tournaments with less than six teams, the Tournament Director has the option to run the event without trophies, with one umpire and/or without scorekeepers. Teams must be notified by the Tournament Director in advance of these changes and given the option to play or withdraw.

(d) National Invitational Tournaments requesting cancellation must do so by notifying the appropriate Executive Vice President within 24 hours of the cutoff date.

(e) National and World Tournaments requesting cancellation must do so by notifying the Executive Director within 24 hours of the cutoff date.

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

Sec. 6. Teams participating in the National or World Tournaments, including the World Series, must compete within their respective classifications for championship play. For example: A Men's Class "C" team must participate in the Men's Class "C" National Tournament to be eligible for the Men's Class "C" World Tournament. **NOTE:** Teams qualified for a Men's B, C, D or E World Tournament may play in additional Men's World Tournaments of a higher level, or in a World Tournament of a higher level in lieu of their respective classification.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(g) Shoes and under jerseys, regardless of color and style will be permitted as long as they meet USSSA Rule Book specifications.

(h) Protests on uniforms will not be allowed. It shall be the Tournament Director's responsibility to determine uniform legality. Violation of the uniform rule will result in the violator being allowed to conform or be removed from the game.

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

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

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

Sec. 10. All entry forms and team rosters of teams entering National or World Tournaments must be approved by applicable State Directors. If a state does not have a State Director, then such approval can be given by the Vice President.

Sec. 11. When a team that has qualified to compete in a National or World Tournament for some legitimate reason cannot compete, the State Director may select the next team in line to take their place or may select a substitute plan to award the berth.

Sec. 13. **(a)** The winner of the Men's Class "A" World Tournament will receive an automatic berth to the Men's Major World Series the following year provided the team plays in at least two Major NIT's.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sec. 18. States may not conduct a tournament of the same classification, on the same days, within a 400 mile radius of a National Invitational Tournament if it is open to teams outside of its own State. This does not apply to Men's "B," "C," "D," and "E" National Invitational Tournaments.

(a) Any such tournament in violation of this rule shall not be considered sanctioned by the Association and the awarding of any advancement berth will not be honored.

(b) Directors in violation of this rule shall be subject to sanction by the Association.

(c) Any exception must be approved by the appropriate Division Vice-President or Executive Vice-President.

Sec. 19. Players, coaches and managers participating in National, World or World Series Tournaments, cannot be charged any additional fees to gain admission to said playing site unless permission has been granted by the appropriate Division Vice President, Executive Vice President, or the Executive Director. Coaches and managers in Youth World Tournaments and Youth NIT's are limited to three passes. Players, coaches and managers participating in selected National Invitational Tournaments may be charged admission fees with the permission of the appropriate Division Vice President or Executive Vice President.

ARTICLE VII
WORLD SERIES CHAMPIONSHIP PLAY OFF

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

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

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

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

ARTICLE VIII - OFFICIAL PLAYING RULES

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

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

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

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

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

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

ARTICLE IX - UMPIRES

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

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

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

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

ARTICLE X
SLOW PITCH MEETING VOTING PROCEDURE

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

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

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

Executive Director
All Assistant Executive Directors
All Executive Vice Presidents
All Slow Pitch Vice Presidents
All National Chief Officials, All Slow Pitch National Chief Officials
All Slow Pitch Assistant National Chief Officials
All Slow Pitch National Program Chairpersons
All State Directors (see paragraph (d) below)

(c) In the absence of the State Director, the Area Directors present must decide who will act as their voting delegate. All

(d) State or Area Directors who are voting delegates must have been appointed as Directors as of July 1st of the current year and approved by the Executive Director. USSSA National Headquarters as of July 1st must have recorded such appointments.

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

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

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

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

ACTS OF DISBARMENT

Excerpted from Article XVII in USSSA Constitution

Sec. 1. Anyone that is disbarred/suspended by USSSA under this Article XVII for any reason, shall not be allowed to participate in any capacity within the Association or to enter an USSSA facility until the suspension has ended, unless otherwise provided in the suspension notice.

Sec. 2. Tournament/League Directors and Officials have the authority to eject a player or team anytime during a Tournament/League. Ejections are not suspensions/disbarments and are not appealable.

Sec. 3. The following are Section 3 Acts, which may result in a Section 3 Suspension/Disbarment:

(a) Physically attacking anyone in connection with any USSSA activity.

(b) Anyone threatening a USSSA Officer, Director, Official, Employee, or Independent Contractor

(c) Anyone, in connection with a USSSA activity fighting; using unsportsmanlike conduct; using abusive tactics, derogatory or unbecoming acts that are detrimental or not in the best interests of the USSSA.

(d) Anyone failing to cooperate with the USSSA in identifying the user or owner of an altered bat or in any other matter that might result in a suspension.

(e) Anyone returning a bat to play that has been removed from play by a USSSA Director or Umpire.

(f) Destroying of property or the abuse of hotel property or failure to pay hotel or motel bills in connection with a USSSA activity.

(g) Knowingly competing with or against ineligible or suspended players.

(h) Participating in or permitting a fraud to be perpetrated.

(i) Refusing to submit funds to the Association that are due to the Association.

(j) Competing under an assumed name.

(k) Submitting a check for any reason that can not be negotiated for payment.

(l) Failing to arrive after entering a National or World Tournament unless reasonable advance notice is given.

(m) Using or publishing false or derogatory information to the detriment of USSSA, its Officers, Employees, Directors or Officials.

(n) Participating after being informed that you are suspended/disbarred/ineligible.

(o) Anyone violating any Articles of the Constitution, By-laws, Rule Book, Directives, Procedures, and Association Policies.

(p) Anyone failing to submit information due the Association in a timely manner.

(q) Any Manager, Sports Official, Tournament or League Director that allows anyone other than a Participant, Manager, Coach, Trainer or Sponsor to be in the dugout, bench or field of play during a USSSA Sanctioned Activity and anyone other than a Participant, Manager, Coach, Trainer, Sports Official or Sponsor who is in the dugout, bench or field of play during a USSSA Sanctioned Activity. Managers, Coaches, Trainers and Sponsors must be 18 years of age or older to be allowed in the dugout, bench or field of play during a USSSA Sanctioned Activity.

(r) Any Sports Official, Tournament Director or League Director, who upon identifying an unacceptable risk to safe play at the site of a USSSA Sanctioned Event allows play to continue prior to removal of that risk to safety.

(s) Anyone wearing USSSA marked Sports Official clothing (including, but not limited to, shirts, pants, shorts, shoes, caps) or protective gear or otherwise holding themselves out as a USSSA Registered Sports Official when officiating or otherwise acting in any capacity for any event other than a USSSA Sanctioned Event.

Sec. 4. Only State Directors, Vice Presidents, Executive Vice Presidents and Assistant Executive Directors have the authority to issue suspensions/disbarments for Section 3 Acts and only for a period of one year from the time of the incident. All reports of suspension must be in writing and submitted to the USSSA National Headquarters within 30 days of the suspension. Copies of such suspensions shall be sent to the party against whom it is directed. Any offense that occurs may be acted upon by the State Director in the state in which the offense occurred. Should the State Director not take action, he or she shall submit the incident to the player or team's home State Director to be acted upon. Any Section 3 Disbarment/Suspension beyond the one year suspension shall be ruled upon by the Association's Board of Directors or Disbarment Committee at anytime it convenes. In order for such action to be effective, reasonable notice (at least 30 days) shall be given to the offending person before the convening of the Board of Directors or Disbarment Committee. Such notice shall be deemed sufficient if sent by registered mail to the address of the offending party last on file with the USSSA National Office or the USSSA State Director's Office (and if none is on file, to the address of the offending parties manager or coach); and contains a written statement of the offense and the length and terms of the requested additional disbarment beyond the one year suspension.

The offending party may prepare a written explanation and provide written evidence for the Board of Directors or Disbarment Committee as to why the additional suspension or disbarment should not be imposed. The decision of the Board of Directors or Disbarment Committee shall be final and binding and not be the subject of an appeal.

Anyone who has competed or does compete (and any related parties) with USSSA may be indefinitely suspended by the Board of Directors. Appeals of these Exception Suspensions may be limited or not allowed as set forth in the USSSA rules, procedures or policies that impose such suspensions.

Sec. 5. The USSSA Board of Directors, the Executive Director, State Officers and Directors have the authority to issue indefinite suspensions for anyone who fails to meet financial or other responsibilities including compliance with USSSA Constitution, By-Laws, Playing Rules, Directives, Policies and Procedures to the Association or its State programs.

Sec. 6. Anyone who has been disbarred/suspended or declared ineligible, may use the appeal process procedure as set forth in the Constitution, except as otherwise limited by the provisions of this Constitution (such limited by provisions including, but not limited to, those found in section 7, below).

Sec. 7. The following Section 7 Acts may result in Section 7 Suspension/Disbarment:

(a) Filing a Law Suit. Any person who files a law suit after December 15, 2007 (or who has previously filed such a suit and such suit has not been resolved prior to December 15, 2007) against the USSSA, any of its Directors, Board Members or affiliates regarding a matter that is in any way associated with the USSSA activities, is suspended permanently from all USSSA activities upon filing of such a law suit. A Person for purposes of this paragraph includes any natural person, the parents or guardians of a natural person who is a minor on behalf of whom a lawsuit is filed, any Entity (including, but not limited to corporations, non profit organizations, partnerships, trusts and limited liability companies) recognized under state or federal law, any beneficial or other owner of an Entity that brings suit under state or federal law and anyone that controls or is part of the group that controls the Entity. To the extent that the terms of this paragraph are unclear or ambiguous, the USSSA Board of Directors in its sole and absolute discretion shall determine their meaning in a way that excludes those who might have participated in any law suit against the USSSA.

In its sole and absolute discretion, the USSSA Board of Directors may commute a suspension under this paragraph, if it is determined in the Board of Directors sole and absolute discretion that there is no reason to believe that the Person will attempt to resolve any future dispute by the hiring of lawyers or the filing of a law suit or that the suspension is in any other way in- appropriate for the best interests of the USSSA.

To the extent that application of this section 7(a) would violate state, local or federal law, this section 7(a) shall not apply.

(b) Threatening to, or using, an Attorney to resolve disputes. Anyone who threatens legal action or the use of a lawyer to address disputes with USSSA may be suspended/disbarred indefinitely under Policies or Procedures which address such acts. There will be no right to appeal from such Suspensions, except as provided under such Policies or Procedures.

(c) Charged with, or convicted of, a violent felony or of a sexual nature involving a minor. Anyone charged with a violent felony or any crime of a sexual nature involving a minor shall be suspended/disbarred until such time as those charges are withdrawn or the person is found innocent of those charges. Anyone

convicted of such crimes shall be suspended/disbarred for life from all USSSA sanctioned activities and facilities. The appeal of such a suspension may be made by use of the Third and Fourth Steps of Article VII, Section 3 Procedures for Appeal.

(d) Involved with using or altering a equipment. Anyone who has a suspension resulting from an altered bat or ball rule may be suspended for life as determined by the USSSA rules and that determination may be made by the Altered Bat Committee, the Altered Bat Committee Chairman, the Executive Director or the Board of Directors. The appeal of such an issue shall be governed by as set forth in the appropriate rule books.

(e) Competing Against USSSA. Anyone who has competed or does compete (and any related parties) with USSSA may be indefinitely suspended by the Board of Directors. Rights of appeal for such suspensions/disbarments shall be governed by the Policy or Procedure which implements this authority to suspend/disbar for those who compete against USSSA.

Sec. 8. The State Director upon learning that a Section 7 Act has resulted in a Section 7 Disbarment/Suspension within his state should in a timely manner report such in writing to the USSSA National Headquarters.

APPEAL PROCESS PROCEDURE

Excerpted from Article XVIII in USSSA Constitution

Sec. 1. Definition of an Appealable Issue

Except where otherwise provided herein, an Appealable Issue shall be:

(a) Any sanction imposed or decision made that negatively impacts the appellant, but only to the extent that it violates the Association's Constitution, By-laws, Playing Rules, Directives, Policies and Procedures.

(b) Any aspect of an act of a Section 3 Act (as defined in Article XVII) resulting in a Section 3 Disbarment/Suspension (as defined in Article XVII), unless otherwise identified as not appealable under the Association's Constitution.

Sec. 2. Appeal Policy for Section 1 Appealable Issue.

All stages of the appeal of an Appealable Issue shall be in writing on appropriate forms supplied by the Association, and no substitution thereof shall be utilized. In such writing, the appellant (i.e., the person appealing) must specify on the appropriate form the specific relief he expects to obtain through use of the appeal procedure. Failure by the appellant to comply with all substantial procedural requirements of the appeal process procedure without just cause will terminate the right to further appeal.

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

all substantial procedural requirements of the final step of the appeal procedure shall result in a continuing right to the final step in the appeal process.

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

Where conflict of interest relative to the parties hearing in any given step exist in the view of the Executive Director or his designee, the Executive Director shall designate members of the Association to hear that step of the appeal process.

Sec. 3. Procedure for Appealable Issue.

First Step – Appropriate Executive Vice President:
Within 15 days after the occurrence or condition giving rise to the appeal, the person or team affected must present the appeal in writing to the appropriate Executive Vice President. Within 15 days of such presentation, the Executive Vice President shall give its reply in writing to the individual or team with respect to the appeal. The 15 day period for the Executive Vice President to reply may be extended for 10 additional days upon written notice from the Executive Director that he will need the additional time.

Second Step – Appropriate Assistant Executive Director:
If a satisfactory resolution is not reached at the first step, the appellant may so indicate on the appeal process form and submit the appeal to the Appropriate Assistant Executive Director within 15 days. Within 15 days of such presentation the Assistant Executive Director shall give its reply in writing to the appellant. The 15 day period for the Assistant Executive Director to reply may be extended for 10 additional days upon written notice from the Assistant Executive Director that he will need the additional time.

Third Step – If a satisfactory resolution is not reached at the second step, the appellant may submit the appeal in writing to the Executive Director of the Association. Submission to the third step must occur within 15 days of the decision in the second step, unless there is mutual agreement for an extension. The Executive Director shall render a written reply to the appellant within 15 days after receipt of the written appeal. If the Executive Director, in his sole discretion, upon receipt of the written appeal and receipt of a request from the appellant for a hearing, determines that a hearing would be advisable, the Executive Director may set a time and place for that hearing with in the following 90 days of such receipt. The expense of travel to such hearing by shall be paid by the appellant. Each side may call witnesses at such a hearing. This step is final and is non-appealable.

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

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

Note: Anyone disbarred/suspended or declared ineligible for a period greater than 5 years shall have the right to apply one time every 5 years for reinstatement to membership in the Association, following the one year anniversary of the suspension, provided he gives the Disbarment Committee, through National Headquarters, 30 days written notice of his intention to so reapply. The Disbarment Committee shall act on such applications at the Annual Meeting of the Association.

Sec. 4. Other actions or issues, such as Section 7 Disbarment/Suspensions (as defined in Article XVII) shall be appealable only as provided in the rules set forth for such issues as found in the appropriate Constitution, By-laws, Playing Rules, Policies or Procedures of the Association.

Notes