



**UNITED STATES SPECIALTY  
SPORTS ASSOCIATION**

**OFFICIAL BASEBALL  
NATIONAL BY-LAWS & RULES**

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Don DeDonatis.....CEO / Executive Director  
Jim Swint.....Assistant Executive Director  
Danny Brown.....Assistant Executive Director  
Rick Fortuna.....Executive Vice President of Baseball Operations  
Joey Odom.....Executive Vice President of Baseball  
Don DeDonatis III.....Executive Vice President of Baseball  
Wally Fortuna.....Vice President of Baseball  
Frank Griffin.....Vice President of Baseball  
Travis Leming.....Vice President of Baseball  
Scotty Mobley.....Vice President of Baseball  
Matt Trebuchon.....Vice President of Baseball  
George Gonzales.....Vice President of International Baseball  
Bob Egr.....Vice President of Global Sports Baseball

**UNITED STATES SPECIALTY SPORTS ASSOCIATION**  
611 Line Drive, Kissimmee, FL 34744  
Telephone: (321) 697-3636 • Facsimile: (321) 697-3647  
National Website: [www.usssa.com](http://www.usssa.com)  
Baseball Website: [www.usssabaseball.org](http://www.usssabaseball.org)  
Email: [webmaster@usssa.com](mailto:webmaster@usssa.com)

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# OFFICIAL BASEBALL NATIONAL BY-LAWS & RULES

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Item	Page
Forward	3
Amendments & Changes	3
Rule 1.00 – Name & Objective	4
Rule 2.00 – Membership, Participation & Classifications Of Play	4
Rule 3.00 – Individual Player & Team Eligibility	4
Rule 4.00 – Drafted Leagues & All-Stars	6
Rule 5.00 – Qualifying Tournaments	7
Rule 6.00 – State Championships	7
Rule 7.00 – World Series	7
Rule 8.00 – Rules of Play	8
Rule 8.01 – Playing Field & Equipment	8
Rule 8.02 – Game Preliminaries	9
Rule 8.03 – Starting & Ending a Game	10
Rule 8.04 – The Batter, Batter Runner & Runner	10
Rule 8.05 – The Pitcher	11
Rule 8.06 – Coach Pitch Specific Rules	12
Rule 8.07 – Machine Pitch Specific Rules	13
Rule 8.08 – T-Ball Specific Rules	13
Rule 8.09 – 7U & 8U Kid Pitch Specific Rules	14
Rule 8.10 – 9U Drafted League Specific Rules	14
Rule 9.00 – Umpires	14
Rule 10.00 – Official Scorer	15
Rule 11.00 – Sportsmanship & Ejections	15
Rule 12.00 – Protests	16
Rule 13.00 – Acts of Disbarment / Suspension	16
Rule 14.00 – Global Sports Baseball	17
Rule 15.00 – Items Not Specifically Covered	17

## FORWARD

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

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

## AMENDMENTS & CHANGES

Item	Page	Subject
3.05	4	Player Roster Eligibility –.....
3.05.A	4	<b>PRIOR TO BEING FROZEN TO AN OFFICIAL ONLINE ROSTER;</b> .....
3.05.A.1	4	Players shall be permitted to participate with multiple teams in the same age division.....
3.05.A.2	4	Players shall be permitted to participate with multiple teams in multiple age divisions but...
3.05.A.3	4	Players shall only physically play for one (1) team per day, event, tournament, week or....
3.05.B	4	<b>SUBSEQUENT OF BEING FROZEN TO AN OFFICIAL ONLINE ROSTER;</b> .....
3.05.B.1	4	Players shall only appear on one (1) Official Online Roster per age division and shall.....
3.05.B.2	4	Players participating in multiple age divisions shall only appear on one (1) Official.....
3.05.B.3	4	Players shall only physically play for one (1) team per day, event, tournament, week or....
3.06.B Comment	5	State Directors with approval of the Association’s Executive Vice President of Baseball....
3.06.G	5	State Directors shall have the authority to approve or reject all players contained on a.....
8.04.B	11	At any time, the offensive team may use a courtesy runner for the pitcher and catcher of...
8.04.B Comment	11	The re-entry status of the courtesy runner, pitcher and catcher shall not be affected by.....
8.05.C.1	11	<b>ONE DAY MAXIMUM TO PITCH THE NEXT DAY:</b> The maximum number of innings a....
8.05.C.1 Example	11	In the 7U – 14U age divisions, a player may legally pitch a maximum of three (3) innings...
8.05.C.2	11	<b>ONE DAY MAXIMUM:</b> The maximum number of innings a player can legally pitch in on....
8.05.C.2 Example	11	In the 7U – 12U age divisions, a player may legally pitch a maximum of six (6) innings.....
8.05.C.3	11	<b>THREE DAY MAXIMUM:</b> The maximum number of innings a player can legally pitch in....
8.05.C.3 Example	11	In the 7U – 14U age divisions, a player may legally pitch a maximum of eight (8) innings...
8.05.C.4	11	<b>MANDATORY DAYS OF REST;</b> .....
8.05.C.4(a)	11	A player that pitches more than three (3) innings in one day <b>MUST</b> rest the next day.....
8.05.C.4(b)	11	A player that pitches eight (8) innings in two (2) consecutive days <b>MUST</b> rest the next.....
8.08.C.4(c)	12	A player that pitches eight (8) innings in three (3) consecutive days <b>MUST</b> rest the next.....
8.08.C.4(d)	12	A player that pitches three (3) consecutive days (regardless of total innings pitched).....
11.01	15	All players, coaches, managers, sponsors and spectators are expected to conduct.....
11.02	15	Any player, coach, manager, sponsor or spectator whose conduct is unbecoming or.....
11.03	16	Any player, coach, manager, sponsor or spectator leaving their position on base, in the....
11.04	16	Any coach, manager, sponsor or spectator ejected from a game shall immediately.....
11.05	16	Any player ejected from a game shall either immediately remove himself from the vicinity...
11.06	16	All persons ejected may be asked to leave the park and / or venue at the discretion of.....
11.07	16	Abusive language or cursing shall not be tolerated under any circumstances and shall....
11.08	16	Throwing of equipment shall result in an automatic ejection.....
11.09	16	If necessary, a team may be forced to forfeit a game and / or be removed from the.....
11.10	16	As these rules indicate, the matter of disorderly conduct shall be taken seriously.....
14.02.C	17	Teams participating in the Elite World Series are ineligible for the Global Sports Baseball...

**AMENDMENTS & CHANGES ARE HIGHLIGHTED**

**RULE 1.00 – NAME & OBJECTIVE**

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

**RULE 2.00 – MEMBERSHIP, PARTICIPATION & CLASSIFICATIONS OF PLAY**

- 2.01 Team Membership – A team registration fee shall be paid seasonally to participate in the USSSA Baseball program. The USSSA Baseball season begins August 1st and concludes July 31st.
- 2.02 Umpire Membership – An umpire registration fee shall be paid yearly to officiate in the USSSA Baseball program. Included with membership is general liability and accidental medical insurance while officiating in the USSSA Baseball program. In addition, umpires may choose to purchase optional insurance that will cover the umpire during non-USSSA Baseball contests.
- 2.03 League Participation – In all USSSA Baseball sanctioned leagues, teams shall qualify for State Championships and / or World Series play.
- 2.04 Tournament Participation – In all USSSA Baseball sanctioned tournaments, teams shall qualify for State Championships and / or World Series play.
- 2.05 Classifications of Play – The USSSA Baseball program shall offer four (5) classifications of play: Major, AAA, AA, A & All-Star.
- 2.06 State Directors shall adopt an acceptable method to classify teams within their respective state. State Directors shall have sole authority to classify teams within their respective state and the authority to classify and / or re-classify any team within their respective state during the current season, except when a team classification has been assigned by the USSSA Baseball National Committee.

**RULE 3.00 – INDIVIDUAL PLAYER & TEAM ELIGIBILITY**

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

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

Chart 3.01.A-1

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

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

Chart 3.01.B-1

- 3.03 A player shall be eligible to compete in the USSSA Baseball program as long as he abides by the USSSA Constitution and the Official Baseball National By-laws & Rules when his first name, last name (no middle names, nick names, shortened names, slang names, initials, prefixes or suffixes are allowed) and date of birth (in proper format – mm/dd/yyyy) are listed **EXACTLY** as they appear on his original birth certificate, as a member on an eligible team’s Official Online Roster.
- 3.04 A player who is in violation of USSSA Constitution or the Official Baseball National By-laws & Rules shall be an illegal player.

- 3.05 Player Roster Eligibility –
  - 3.05.A **PRIOR TO BEING FROZEN TO AN OFFICIAL ONLINE ROSTER;**
    - 3.05.A.1 Players shall be permitted to participate with multiple teams in the same age division.
    - 3.05.A.2 Players shall be permitted to participate with multiple teams in multiple age divisions but shall not participate on any team below the classification of the oldest team in which they participate.
    - 3.05.A.3 Players shall only physically play for one (1) team per day, event, tournament, week or weekend, regardless of age division and / or classification.
  - 3.05.B **AFTER BEING FROZEN TO AN OFFICIAL ONLINE ROSTER;**
    - 3.05.B.1 Players shall only appear on one (1) Official Online Roster per age division and shall only participate with such frozen team (unless previously released pursuant to these rules).
    - 3.05.B.2 Players participating in multiple age divisions shall only appear on one (1) Official Online Roster per age division and shall only participate with such frozen team(s) (unless previously released pursuant to these rules) but shall not participate on any team below the classification of the oldest team in which they participate on.
    - 3.05.B.3 Players shall only physically play for one (1) team per day, event, tournament, week or weekend, regardless of age division and / or classification.

- 3.06 Team Eligibility –
  - 3.06.A No team shall be allowed to compete in any USSSA Baseball program (sanctioned league or tournament) without first paying their team registration fee to the Association.

- 3.06.B** All teams shall maintain an Official Online Roster.  
**Rule 3.06.B Comment:** State Directors with the approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball may waive this roster requirement for the traditional "Fall" playing months of August – December.
- 3.06.C** Team rosters for age divisions 4U – 14U shall be composed of not more than twenty-five (25) players.
- 3.06.D** Team rosters for scholastic divisions 15U – 18U shall be composed of not more than twenty-five (25) players.  
**Rule 3.06.D Comment:** If applicable, coaches or managers shall be included on an Official Online Roster to be eligible to play.
- 3.06.E** A team's "home" state shall be determined by the home residency of fifty-one percent (51%) or the majority (whichever is greater) of the players on the team's Official Online Roster.
- 3.06.F** The team manager shall be responsible for all aspects of eligibility of the players and the information of the players contained on the team's Official Online Roster pursuant to these rules. This includes but is not limited to; age eligibility, classifications of teams the players may participate on in other age divisions, classifications of previous teams the players may have participated on, legal names of the players, and correct dates of birth of the players.  
**Rule 3.06.F Comment:** A player's first name, last name (no middle names, nick names, shortened names, slang names, initials, prefixes or suffixes are allowed) and date of birth (in proper format – mm/dd/yyyy) **MUST** be listed **EXACTLY** as they appear on his original birth certificate pursuant to USSSA Rule 3.03.
- 3.06.F.1** The intentional or unintentional act of adding ineligible players to the team's Official Online Roster shall be grounds for team manager suspension.
- 3.06.F.2** The intentional or unintentional act of incorrectly spelling a player's name on the team's Official Online Roster shall be grounds for team manager suspension.
- 3.06.F.3** The intentional or unintentional act of incorrectly entering a player's date-of-birth on the team's Official Online Roster shall be grounds for team manager suspension.
- 3.06.G** State Directors shall have the authority to approve or reject all players contained on a team's Official Online Roster. Such authority is to include player additions and / or releases prior to and subsequent of being frozen except when a player addition or release has been approved by the USSSA Baseball National Committee. State Director approval of a team's Official Online Roster shall not release the team manager of his responsibilities pursuant to these rules.
- 3.07** How A Team Qualifies (Roster Frozen) –
- 3.07.A** When a team qualifies (is awarded a berth for a State Championship and / or World Series);
- 3.07.A.1** Prior to April 1st of the current season (whether the team accepts the berth or not), the team's Official Online Roster shall become frozen on April 1st regardless of the date the roster is physically frozen in the USSSA online system.  
**Rule 3.07.A.1 Comment:** State Directors with the approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball may option to freeze Official Online Rosters of qualified teams on a date earlier than April 1st of the current season.
- 3.07.A.2** After April 1st of the current season (whether the team accepts the berth or not), the team's Official Online Roster shall become frozen immediately at the qualifying event regardless of the date the roster is physically frozen in the USSSA online system.
- 3.07.A.3** At a Super NIT event (whether the team accepts the berth or not), the team's Official Online Roster shall become frozen immediately at the Super NIT event regardless of the date the Super NIT event is played or the date the roster is physically frozen in the USSSA online system.
- 3.07.B** When a team qualifies all players on the team's Official Online Roster become frozen to the qualified team (unless released pursuant to these rules) and shall be bound to the qualified team up to and including the teams respective State Championship and / or World Series. No player shall appear on any other team's frozen or unfrozen Official Online Roster within the same age division regardless of classification.
- 3.08** Qualified Team Roster Additions & Releases –
- 3.08.A** Team managers shall be allowed to add a maximum of three (3) players to their frozen Official Online Roster. Players may be added as late as seventy-two (72) hours prior to the start of the World Series. Additional players can only be added to rosters that have openings pursuant to USSSA Rules 3.06.C & 3.06.D.
- 3.08.B** All players added to a frozen Official Online Roster must meet the following requirements:
- 3.08.B.1** Player(s) cannot be on another frozen Official Online Roster in the same age division regardless of classification.
- 3.08.B.2** Player(s) must not have played on a team with a frozen Official Online Roster of higher classification regardless of age division.
- 3.08.B.3** Player(s) must not have appeared on any roster two (2) classifications higher during the current season regardless of age division.
- 3.08.B.4** Player(s) added to a frozen Official Online Roster in the AAA, AA, A & All-Star classifications must have a traceable playing history within the USSSA online system for the current or previous season.  
**Rule 3.08 Comment:** When a team adds a player(s) and such added player(s) becomes injured, ill or decides not to participate for any reason, an additional replacement player(s) is not permitted.
- 3.08.C** There shall be no limit to the number of players team managers may release from their frozen Official Online Roster. A player released from a team's frozen Official Online Roster shall be prohibited from returning to that team during the current season.
- 3.09** Disbanded Teams –
- 3.09.A** A team with a frozen Official Online Roster listing less than nine (9) players, which has used all options for additions shall be automatically disbanded and shall forfeit all points and / or berths awarded.
- 3.09.B** If a disbanded team chooses to reform, it does so as a new team and;
- 3.09.B.1** The team manager shall re-register for the current season pursuant to USSSA Rule 3.06.A.

- 3.09.B.2 The team manager shall be bound by all roster and eligibility rules contained within these National By-laws & Rules.
- 3.09.B.3 The team shall be required to re-qualify.
- 3.09.C Any player(s) joining a team from a previously disbanded team shall be bound to the disbanded team's classification regardless of age division.
- 3.10 In age divisions 4U – 14U, all players participating in USSSA Baseball tournament play shall have photocopies of their original birth certificate in the possession of their team manager at all times. Upon protest, failure to have a photocopy of the original birth certificate immediately available upon demand shall result in the offending team losing the game, being ejected from the tournament, being placed last in the standings and forfeiting all awards, points, sponsors travel money, and tournament berths that would have been awarded at the tournament.
- 3.11 In scholastic divisions 15U – 18U, all players participating in USSSA Baseball tournament play shall have photocopies of their original birth certificate and if applicable, photocopies of their original current scholastic report card in the possession of the team manager at all times. Upon protest, failure to have a photocopy of the original birth certificate and if applicable, photocopy of the original current scholastic report card immediately available upon demand shall result in the offending team losing the game, being ejected from the tournament, being placed last in the standings and forfeiting all awards, points, sponsors travel money, and tournament berths that would have been awarded at the tournament.
- 3.12 Area Directors, Executive Board Members, Executive Committee Members, Local Directors, National Committee Members, National Directors, State Directors or Tournament Directors shall not be eligible to participate in the program as a team manager, team coach, team sponsor, umpire or player without approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball.

### **RULE 4.00 – DRAFTED LEAGUES & ALL-STAR**

- 4.01 The Drafted League Program gives traditional league based teams the opportunity to compete amongst teams formed by a similar system. Drafted League is a playing level for actual drafted league teams from USSSA Sanctioned Leagues. Age divisions shall include 5U – 18U.
  - 4.01.A Leagues that conform to the below guidelines and register one hundred percent (100%) of their league teams shall be allowed to participate. State Directors may sanction others with the approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball.
    - 4.01.A.1 Leagues shall have an approved draft system that shall include no more than four (4) protected / frozen players per team previous to the draft.
    - 4.01.A.2 Leagues shall submit their complete rules, by-laws, and schedules for approval.
    - 4.01.A.3 A league shall consist of a minimum eight (8) game schedule.
    - 4.01.A.4 Eligible players shall compete in a minimum of seventy five percent (75%) of the scheduled league games.
  - 4.01.B State Directors shall set guidelines for teams to qualify for the Drafted League State Championship and World Series.
- 4.02 The All-Star program gives traditional league based All-Star teams the opportunity to compete amongst All-Star teams formed by a similar system. All-Stars is a playing level for actual All-Star teams formed from USSSA Sanctioned Drafted Leagues. Players shall be permitted to participate with an All-Star team and an A, AA, AAA or Major team pursuant to USSSA Rule 3.00. Age divisions shall include 5U – 18U.
  - 4.02.A Leagues shall conform to all the requirements pursuant to USSSA Rules 4.01.A.1 – 4.01.A.4.
    - 4.02.A.1 All-Star teams may be chosen by any method.
    - 4.02.A.2 Leagues may have multiple All-Star teams in any age division.
    - 4.02.A.3 The League President (or Highest Officer) shall submit an official roster to the State Director for approval.
    - 4.02.A.4 Only State Directors shall register and enter an Official Online Roster for All-Star teams.
    - 4.02.A.5 National All-Star Division:
      - 4.02.A.5(a) All-Star team players shall not have participated on a team of higher classification than AA (i.e.; AAA, Major) between January 1st and April 1st of the current year.  
**Rule 4.02.A.5(a) Comment:** Any player that has participated on a AAA or Major team between January 1st and April 1st of the current year is ineligible for National All-Star Division play but may be eligible for American All-Star Division play pursuant to these rules.
      - 4.02.A.5(b) All-Star teams shall have no more than three (3) players on their roster that have participated on a AA team after April 1st.
      - 4.02.A.5(c) All-Star teams shall not begin playing together as a team before Memorial Day weekend.  
**Rule 4.02.A.5(c) Approved Ruling:** Memorial Day weekend is defined as starting at 12:00 P.M., the calendar Friday before Memorial Day as observed by the United States Federal Government.
    - 4.02.A.6 American All-Star Division:
      - 4.02.A.6(a) All-Star teams that do not meet the requirements pursuant to USSSA Rule 4.02.A.5 but meet the requirements pursuant to USSSA Rule 4.02.A.6 shall be eligible for American All-Star Division play.
      - 4.02.A.6(b) All-Star teams entering tournaments that do not make must participate in the highest classification the team would otherwise be eligible (i.e.; AA, AAA, Major).
  - 4.02.B State Directors may adopt guidelines for two (2) divisions of play on the state level with the approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball.

**4.02.C** State Directors shall set guidelines for teams to qualify for the All-Star State Championship and World Series.

### **RULE 5.00 – QUALIFYING TOURNAMENTS**

- 5.01** State Directors shall have the authority to amend these National By-laws & Rules to accommodate the needs of the Qualifying Tournament with the approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball.
- 5.02** The State Director or directors appointed by the State Director shall conduct all Qualifying Tournaments to assure that the USSSA Baseball National By-laws & Rules are being followed at all times.
- 5.03** Amounts to be charged as entry fees for Qualifying Tournaments shall be at the discretion of the State Director.
- 5.04** The quantity of awards to be presented for Qualifying Tournaments shall be at the discretion of the State Director.
- 5.05** Each State Director shall adopt an acceptable system to qualifying teams for State Championship and / or World Series participation. Sanctioned league participation may be included in such a system is so desired.
- 5.06** No Qualifying Tournament shall be considered as sanctioned by the Association if all applicable fees and registrations are not paid to the Association within seventy-two (72) hours after completion of the tournament.
- 5.07** Only USSSA licensed baseballs shall be used in Qualifying Tournament play.
- 5.08** No change to a team's roster shall be allowed after the team has begun play in its first game during a Qualifying Tournament.
- 5.09** Each State Director with approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball shall set refund policies.
- 5.10** Pool Play / Tie Breaker Criteria: **(1)** Head to Head, **(2)** Runs Allowed (Versus All Teams Played Not Just Tied Teams), **(3)** Run Differential (Maximum +/- 8 Runs Per Game.), **(4)** USSSA Point System, **(5)** Coin Flip.
- Rule 5.10 Comment:** Once advanced to the next tie breaker criteria, do not return to a previous criteria.

### **RULE 6.00 – STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS**

- 6.01** State Directors shall have the authority to amend these National By-laws & Rules to accommodate the needs of the State Championships with the approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball.
- 6.02** The State Director or directors appointed by the State Director shall conduct all State Championships to assure that the USSSA Baseball National By-laws & Rules are being followed at all times.
- 6.03** Teams are permitted to participate in multiple "Level 1" State Championships but shall only be awarded "Level 1" State Championship points for the first (earliest) State Championship in which the team participates. Teams participating in subsequent "Level 1" State Championships shall be awarded "Qualifying Tournament" points. Teams shall only participate in their respective (home) state's "Level 1" State Championship(s).
- 6.04** Teams are permitted to participate in multiple "Level 2" State Championships and shall be awarded "Level 2" State Championship points for each "Level 2" State Championships in which the team participates. Teams shall be permitted to cross state boundaries to participate in "Level 2" State Championships if allowed by the host state.
- 6.05** Official Online Roster composition for State Championship participation:
- 6.05.A** Major Classification – A team's Official Online Roster shall be composed of at least 50% state residents from the state in which the state championship is being played.
- 6.05.B** AAA, AA, A & All-Star Classifications – A team's Official Online Roster shall be composed of at least 50% state residents from the state in which the state championship is being played. Non-residential players must reside in a contiguous state.
- 6.06** Amounts to be charged as entry fees for State Championships shall be at the discretion of the State Director.
- 6.07** The quantity of awards to be presented for State Championships shall be at the discretion of the State Director.
- 6.08** Each State Director shall adopt an acceptable system for qualifying teams for World Series participation. Sanctioned league participation may be included in such system is so desired.
- 6.09** No State Championship shall be considered as sanctioned by the Association if all applicable fees and registrations are not paid to the Association within seventy-two (72) hours after completion of the tournament.
- 6.10** Only USSSA licensed baseballs shall be used in State Championship play.
- 6.11** No change to a team's Official Online Roster will be allowed after the team has begun play in its first game during a State Championship.
- 6.12** Each State Director with approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball shall set refund policies.
- 6.13** State Championships shall be scheduled to provide each team at least two games of participation. This can be changed at the site of the tournament, by the Tournament Director with approval of the State Director after the starting date of the tournament has begun and it is determined that it would not be feasible to attempt to continue the original format due to weather conditions or other acts of God. A substitute format shall be implemented.
- 6.14** Pool Play / Tie Breaker Criteria: **(1)** Head to Head, **(2)** Runs Allowed (Versus All Teams Played Not Just Tied Teams), **(3)** Run Differential (Maximum +/- 8 Runs Per Game.), **(4)** USSSA Point System, **(5)** Coin Flip.
- Rule 6.14 Comment:** Once advanced to the next tie breaker criteria, do not return to a previous criteria.

### **RULE 7.00 – WORLD SERIES**

- 7.01** World Series play shall be under the jurisdiction of the USSSA Baseball National Committee. The Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball shall appoint a duly qualified person to serve as Tournament Director. The Tournament Director shall supervise the event and be responsible for insuring that the tournament is run according to all rules, procedures, and terms of the written contract and to insure that the event is run according to all rules and regulations of the Association. The Tournament Director, in carrying out his duties, shall report directly to the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball.
- 7.02** The Tournament Director shall have the authority to amend these National By-laws & Rules to accommodate the needs of the World Series with the approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball.

- 7.03** All teams receiving berths to World Series shall participate in their (home) state's State Championship provided such a State Championship is played. Failure to participate in the State Championship if played shall result in forfeiture of the World Series berth.  
**Rule 7.03 Comment:** State Directors shall have the authority to waive this rule with approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball.
- 7.04** State Directors shall approve all entries and Official Online Rosters of teams entering World Series. If the State Director position is vacant, the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball or his designee shall give such approval. A properly completed electronic transmittal shall accompany each entry for World Series participation. State Directors shall not issue an electronic transmittal for teams from another state.
- 7.05** When a team has qualified to compete in a World Series and for some legitimate reason cannot compete, the State Director or directors appointed by the State Director may select the next team in line to take their place or may select a substitute plan to award the berth.
- 7.06** A deadline for accepting entries in World Series shall be set by the USSSA Baseball National Committee.
- 7.07** A team shall participate in the highest classification World Series in which it wins (is awarded) a berth unless the team is reclassified by the State Director or USSSA Baseball National Committee.
- 7.08** A team may participate in a higher age division World Series but shall participate at or above the team's current classification.  
**Rule 7.08 Example:** A 10U AAA team can participate up in the 11U AAA or 11U Major World Series but cannot participate down in the 11U AA World Series.
- 7.09** Only USSSA licensed baseballs shall be used in World Series play.
- 7.10** Any team in a World Series that forfeits a pool-play game by virtue of not having enough players to start a game or resume a game after suspension, shall not be eligible for championship play regardless of record.
- 7.11** USSSA prohibits the visual display of any non-USSSA association, alliance, federation, organization or union name, badge, crest, emblem, insignia, motif, sign or symbol anywhere on the uniform, such as but not limited to the temporary or permanent affixing of a patch or logo.
- 7.12** Pool Play / Tie Breaker Criteria: **(1)** Head to Head, **(2)** Runs Allowed (Versus All Teams Played Not Just Tied Teams), **(3)** Run Differential (Maximum +/- 8 Runs Per Game.), **(4)** USSSA Point System, **(5)** Coin Flip.  
**Rule 7.12 Comment:** Once advanced to the next tie breaker criteria, do not return to a previous criteria.

## **RULE 8.00 – RULES OF PLAY**

### **8.01** Playing Field & Equipment –

**8.01.A** **(Chart 8.01.A-1)** The playing field shall be laid out according to the recommended dimensions contained within these rules.

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

**8.01.C** The pitcher's plate shall be a rectangular slab of whitened rubber set in the ground that measures eighteen (18) inches by four (4) inches for age divisions 4U – 12U and twenty four (24) inches by six (6) inches for age divisions 13U – 18U.

**8.01.D** The official ball shall be a sphere formed by yarn wound around a small core of cork, rubber or similar material, covered with two stripes of white horsehide or cowhide, tightly stitched together. It shall weigh not less than five (5) nor more than five and one fourth (5 1/4) ounces avoirdupois. It shall measure not less than nine (9) nor more than nine and one fourth (9 1/4) inches in circumference and shall be licensed by the Association and permanently stamped with the USSSA logo.

**8.01.E** The official bat shall be round in cross section for its entire length, straight from end to end for its entire length and smooth surfaced in the hitting area. The maximum diameter shall not exceed two and three fourths (2 3/4) inches and the maximum length shall not exceed thirty-six (36) inches. The bat shall be constructed of wood, aluminum, or any other material or combination of materials unless such materials or combinations of materials are specifically disapproved by USSSA. Such disapproval shall be the sole discretion of USSSA and may be made without notice. Any material to improve the grip may be used for a distance not to exceed eighteen (18) inches from the handle end. Any such material or substance, which extends past the eighteen (18) inch limitation, shall cause the bat to be removed from the game.

**Rule 8.01.E Comment:** If the umpire discovers that the bat does not conform to USSSA Rule 8.01.E until a time during or after which the bat has been used in play, it shall not be grounds for declaring the batter out, or ejection from the game.

**8.01.E.1** All bats for age division 4U – 14U that exceed the 1.15 BPF (Bat Performance Factor) as defined for baseball bats by ASTM Standards, may be disapproved by USSSA. Such disapproval shall be the sole discretion of USSSA and may be made without notice.

**8.01.E.2** All bats for scholastic divisions 15U – 18U must conform to the NFHS (National Federation of High School Association) bat limitations including a length to weight ratio no greater than negative three (-3) ounces.

AGE DIVISION	BASE PATHS	PITCHING DISTANCE	FENCE AT FOUL LINES	FENCE AT CENTER FIELD
4U	55'	N/A	140'	175'
5U	55'	N/A	140'	175'
6U	55'	N/A	140'	175'
7U	60'	40'	160'	185'
8U	60'	40'	160'	185'
9U	65'	44'	180'	210'
10U	65'	46'	180'	210'
11U	70'	50'	230'	275'
12U	70'	50'	230'	275'
13U	80'	54'	275'	300'
14U (54/80)	80'	54'	275'	300'
14U (60/90) – 18U	90'	60' 6"	320'	375'

Chart 8.01.A-1

- 8.01.F** All players shall be fully uniformed, which includes baseball pants, socks, baseball cap, shoes and team jerseys with numbers that are non-duplicating and at least three (3) inches in height. No player shall wear ragged, frayed or slit sleeves and no player shall attach to his uniform tape or other material of a different color from his uniform. No part of the uniform shall include a pattern that imitates or suggests the shape of a baseball. Glass buttons and polished metal shall not be used on a uniform. No player shall attach anything to the heel or toe of his shoe other than the ordinary shoe plate or toe plate. Shoes with pointed spikes similar to golf or track shoes shall not be worn in any division of play.
- 8.01.F.1** In age divisions 4U – 12U, non-metal cleats must be worn.
- 8.01.F.2** In age divisions 13U – 18U, traditional metal baseball spikes may be worn.
- Rule 8.01.F Comment:** Protests on uniforms shall not be allowed. It shall be the League / Tournament Director's responsibility regarding uniform legality. Violation of the uniform rules shall result in the violator being allowed to immediately conform or be removed from the game. Managers and coaches may wear athletic type shorts.
- 8.01.G** The catcher shall wear all appropriate protective gear including a catcher's helmet with facemask and either a built in extended throat guard or a separately attached throat guard, chest protector, shin and / or leg guards, and protective cup.
- Rule 8.01.G Comment:** In age divisions 4U – 12U, the catcher's helmet shall fully cover both ears.
- 8.01.H** All offensive players shall use a double ear-flap batting helmet whenever at bat, on deck, on base or any other time outside of the dugout and the ball is live and in play. All bat / ball boys must wear a double earflap batting helmet when outside the dugout.
- Rule 8.01.H Comment:** If the umpire observes any violation of these rules, he shall direct the violation to be corrected. If the violation is not immediately corrected, in the umpire's judgment, the umpire shall eject the offender from the game.
- 8.01.I** Playing equipment including but not limited to the baseballs, bases, bats, catcher's gloves and mitts, first baseman's gloves and mitts, infielders and outfielders gloves and mitts, protective helmets, and uniforms as detailed in the provisions of this rule, shall not contain any undue commercialization of the product. Designations by the manufacturer on any such equipment shall be in good taste as to the size and content of the manufacturer's logo or the brand name.
- 8.01.J** Manufacturers who plan innovative changes in baseball equipment for future play should submit same to the USSSA Baseball National Committee prior to production.
- 8.02** Game Preliminaries –
- 8.02.A** A flip of a coin between the two teams shall determine the home team for each pool play game, championship game and "if" game. The highest seeded team will be the home team for bracket play games.
- Rule 8.02.A Comment:** For league play, a system to predetermine the home team is acceptable.
- 8.02.B** In League, Qualifying Tournament and State Championship play, time limits may be used with approval of the League / Tournament / State Director.
- 8.02.C** In World Series play, time limits may be used in pool play and consolation bracket games with approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball.
- 8.02.D** Approved Team Line-ups:
- 8.02.D.1** Teams may bat a nine (9) player line-up, ten (10) player line-up using an Extra Hitter (EH) or continuous line-up of all present, eligible, uniformed players. Such line-up must be declared before the start of the game and used the entire game.
- 8.02.D.1(a)** If a team uses a line-up that contains substitute players, all starting players may be removed and re-enter the game once, but must re-enter in their original position in the batting order. Non-starters are not allowed to re-enter. When a starter re-enters, the player in the starter's batting position in the batting order must be removed from the game and is ineligible for the remainder of the game.
- Rule 8.02.D.1(a) Approved Ruling:** Baker is batting 2nd. In the fourth inning Charles enters the game in the 2nd batting position, removing Baker from the game. In the sixth inning Baker re-enters the game but must replace Charles so as to remain in the 2nd batting position. Charles is ineligible for the remainder of the game.
- 8.02.D.1(b)** If a team uses a line-up that contains ten (10) players, the player in the Extra Hitter position, while not actually playing a defensive position, will be treated as such for substitution purposes.
- Rule 8.02.D.1(b) Approved Ruling:** Baker is the Extra Hitter and batting 2nd. Charles is the catcher and batting 3rd. Baker can become the catcher and Charles the Extra Hitter. Both players would remain in their original batting position in the batting order. When using the Extra Hitter, all players in the line-up may move freely in defensive positions with the exception of the pitching position.
- 8.02.D.1(c)** If a team uses a continuous line-up, all players other than the nine (9) defensive position players are Extra Hitters and may move freely in defensive positions with the exception of the pitching position.
- Rule 8.02.D.1(c) Approved Ruling:** Any player(s) arriving after the game has begun, shall be added to the bottom of the batting line-up.
- 8.02.E** In scholastic divisions 15U – 18U, if the Extra Hitter (EH) is not be utilized, then the Designated Hitter (DH) may be utilized in accordance with the NFHS (National Federation of High School Association) baseball rules.
- 8.02.E.1** A Designated Hitter may be (not mandatory) selected for any one starting player and all subsequent substitutes for that player in the game.
- 8.02.E.2** A starting defensive player cannot be listed as the Designated Hitter in the starting line-up.

- 8.02.E.3** A Designated Hitter for said player shall be selected prior to the start of the game, and his name shall be included on the line-up.
- 8.02.E.4** Failure to declare a Designated Hitter prior to the game precludes the use of a DH in the game.
- 8.02.E.5** If a pinch hitter or pinch runner for the Designated Hitter is used, that player becomes the new DH.
- 8.02.E.6** The player who was the Designated Hitter may re-enter pursuant to USSSA Rule 8.02.D.1(a).
- 8.02.E.7** A Designated Hitter and the player for whom the DH is batting are locked into the batting order. No multiple substitutions may be made that will alter the batting order.
- 8.02.E.8** The role of the Designated Hitter is terminated for the remainder of the game when:
  - 8.02.E.8(a)** The defensive player, or any previous defensive player for whom the Designated Hitter batted, subsequently bats, pinch-hits, or runs for the DH;
  - 8.02.E.8(b)** The Designated Hitter or any previous DH assumes a defensive position.

**8.02.F** Teams may play an official game with an eight (8) player line-up. If a team plays with an eight (8) player line-up, an out shall be declared for the ninth (9th) position in the batting line-up each turn at bat.

**Rule 8.02.F Approved Ruling:** A ninth (9th) player and all subsequent players may be added to the bottom of the batting line-up as soon as they become available.

**8.02.G** A team may continue a game with a minimum of eight (8) eligible players. A player who has left a game for any reason cannot return to the game.

**8.02.G.1** If the player leaving the game is a runner and no legal substitutes are available, the runner is declared out.

**Rule 8.02.G.1 Exception:** If the player is leaving the game for Communicable Disease Procedure reasons, the player whom recorded the previous out assumes the runners position on base.

**8.02.G.2** When a player who has left the game is scheduled to bat and no legal substitutes are available, an out shall be declared for each turn at bat.

**Rule 8.02.G.2 Exception:** If the player left the game for Communicable Disease Procedure reasons, the players turn in the batting order shall be omitted for the remainder of the game without penalty.

**8.03** Starting and Ending a Game –

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

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

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

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

**8.03.A.4** Shortened because any applicable part of USSSA Rule 8.03.B has been met; or

**8.03.A.5** Shortened because any applicable part of USSSA Rule 8.03.C has been met.

**8.03.B** **(Chart 8.03.B-1)** An imposed Mercy (run) Rule shall be used to complete a regulation game when one team's margin of lead is greater than or equal to the listed run differential in the corresponding listed start inning.

**Rule 8.03.B Comment:** In enforcing this rule, the home team shall not bat if they are winning and the mercy requirement is met prior to the bottom half of the listed inning. Similarly, if the home team is batting and meets the mercy requirement in the bottom half of a listed inning the home team shall cease batting and the game shall end.

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

Chart 8.03.B-1

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

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

**8.03.C.1(a)** If a regulation game is called with the score tied and one (1) or more innings has been completed beyond three (3) innings, the score shall revert back to last completed inning, or last completed half (1/2) inning if the home team leads but back no further than the third (3rd) inning.

**Rule 8.03.C.1 Comment:** Games that cannot be declared a regulation game by USSSA Rules 8.03.C.1 & 8.03.C.1(a) shall be a suspended game.

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

**8.03.C.2(a)** If a regulation game is called with the score tied and one (1) or more innings has been completed beyond four (4) innings, the score shall revert back to last completed inning, or last completed half (1/2) inning if the home team leads but back no further than the fourth (4th) inning.

**Rule 8.03.C.2 Comment:** Games that cannot be declared a regulation game by USSSA Rules 8.03.C.2 & 8.03.C.2(a) shall be a suspended game.

**8.03.D** All games that for any reason cannot be declared a regulation game pursuant to USSSA Rule 8.03.C shall be a suspended game. A suspended game when resumed, will resume from the exact point of suspension.

**8.04** The Batter, Batter Runner & Runner –

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

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

**Rule 8.04.B Comment:** The re-entry status of the courtesy runner, pitcher, and catcher shall not be affected by this rule. If at any time, a courtesy runner is determined to be ineligible, a proper replacement pursuant to these rules (if available) will be used without penalty.

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

**Rule 8.04.C Penalty:** The runner shall be called out and may be ejected from the game at the umpire's discretion.

**Rule 8.04.C Comment:** When enforcing this rule, the umpire should judge the runner's intent. If the umpire feels that the contact was unintentional, then the runner should only be declared out. If the umpire feels that the contact was intentional and / or malicious, then the runner should be declared out and ejected.

**8.05** The Pitcher –

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

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

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

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

**8.05.B** A player removed from the pitching position (starting pitcher or subsequent relief pitcher) may not return to the pitching position for the remainder of the game. The defensive team may correct this rules infraction at any time by substituting a legal pitcher without penalty. If an illegal pitcher is permitted to pitch, any pitch or play that results is legal. The rule violation should be caught by the umpire or the offensive team and immediately corrected.

**Rule 8.05.B Comment:** If the violating pitcher has legal innings remaining, the violation is deemed an improper substitution and is corrected without penalty.

**Rule 8.05.B Penalty:** If the violating pitcher has no legal innings remaining, it's deemed a pitching limitations violation pursuant to USSSA Rule 8.05.C.7.

**8.05.C(Chart 8.05.C-1)** The end of the day for the pitching limitation rules is the time of day or night when the ballpark is shutdown and the teams go home for the night break. Games that for any reason extend past midnight (12:00 AM) or start late at night, past midnight (12:00 AM) and are completed before the teams take the night break, will count as being played on the scheduled day. A game not completed before the night break pursuant to USSSA Rules 8.03.C.1(a) & 8.03.C.2(a), shall be a suspended game. Suspended games, when resumed (the next day or another day), shall count as being played on two different days. The outs recorded during the portion of the game played prior to suspension shall count as being played on the regularly scheduled day and the outs recorded during the portion of the game played once resumed, shall count as being played on the resumed day.

**8.05.C.1 ONE DAY MAXIMUM TO PITCH THE**

**THE NEXT DAY:** The maximum number of innings a player can legally pitch in one (1) day and still pitch the next day.

**Rule 8.05.C.1 Example:** In the 7U – 14U age divisions, a player may legally pitch a maximum of three (3) innings in one (1) day and still legally pitch the next day. If the player pitches three and one-third (3 1/3) or more innings in one (1) day, the player can not legally pitch the next day.

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

Chart 8.05.C-1

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

**Rule 8.05.C.2 Example:** In the 7U – 12U age divisions, a player may legally pitch a maximum of six (6) innings in one (1) day. The player would be ineligible to pitch the next day. Similarly, in the 13U – 14U age divisions, a player may legally pitch a maximum of seven (7) innings in one (1) day. The player would be ineligible to legally pitch the next day.

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

**Rule 8.05.C.3 Example:** In the 7U – 14U age divisions, a player may legally pitch a maximum of eight (8) innings in three (3) consecutive days. This is to be interpreted as a player may legally pitch any combination of innings to equal eight (8) innings in two (2) days as long as the player doesn't pitch more than three (3) innings the first (1st) day. Similarly, as a player may legally pitch any combination of innings to equal eight (8) innings in three (3) days as long as the player doesn't pitch more than three (3) innings the first (1st) or second (2nd) days.

**8.05.C.4 MANDATORY DAYS OF REST;**

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

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

**8.08.C.4(c)** A player that pitches eight (8) innings in three (3) consecutive days **MUST** rest the next day.

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

**8.05.C.5** For all cumulative totals in this rule, one (1) out equals one-third (1/3) of an inning, two (2) outs equals two-thirds (2/3) of an inning and three (3) outs equals one (1) full inning. A pitcher that pitches in a game and records no outs is not charged with any innings pitched.

**8.05.C.6** Outs recorded during a game that ends in forfeit shall count towards a pitchers' innings limits.

**8.05.C.7** For purposes of pitching limitations rules, a pitcher is in violation of the rule if he records any out above the legal pitching limits pursuant to these rules.

**Rule 8.05.C.7 Exception:** Exceeding the maximum innings allowed in the case of a double or triple play shall not be counted against the pitcher.

**Rule 8.05.C.7 Penalty:** It shall be the responsibility of each team manager to challenge pitching violations by notifying the Umpire-in-Chief and then filing a Protest with the League / Tournament Director. A protest may be filed at any point after the pitcher in violation records an out beyond his legal limit **AND** while the pitcher in violation is in the game and in the pitching position. If such violation is the last recorded out of the game, the protest **MUST** be filed prior to the umpires and the protesting team leaving the field of play. Any violation of USSSA Rules 8.05.C.1 – 8.05.C.7 shall result in immediate forfeiture of the game. If such violation occurs during Pool-Play, the team in violation of the rule may not advance to the championship bracket regardless of record.

**8.05.D** **General Statement Concerning Balks:** Umpires should bear in mind that the purpose of the balk rule is to prevent the pitcher from deliberately deceiving the base runner. If there is doubt in the umpire's mind, the "intent" of the pitcher should govern. However, certain specifics should be borne in mind: (A) Straddling the pitcher's rubber without the ball is to be interpreted as intent to deceive and ruled a balk. (B) With a runner on first (1st) base, the pitcher may make a complete turn, without hesitating toward first (1st) base and throw to second (2nd) base. This is not to be interpreted as throwing to an unoccupied base. (C) In age divisions 9U & 10U, pitchers should be allowed some leniency in regards to balks. Pitchers should be called for all major violations and warned for minor violations that do not affect the outcome of a play. (D) In age divisions 11U – 18U, balks shall be strictly enforced without warning.

**8.06** Coach Pitch Specific Rules –

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

**8.06.B** Safety Arc: There shall be a thirty (30) foot arc drawn from first (1st) baseline to third (3rd) baseline in front of home plate. Infielders must stay behind this line until the ball is hit.

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

**8.06.D** Pitcher's Line: There shall be a line drawn from the pitcher's circle to the fair ball arc.

**8.06.D.1** The pitching coach shall keep one foot on or straddle the pitcher's line.

**8.06.D.2** The pitching coach shall not verbally or physically coach while in the pitching position

**8.06.D.3** The pitching coach shall position himself as not to be an obstruction to the defensive team on any possible play once the ball has been hit.

**Rule 8.06.D Penalty:** If a coach violates this rule after the ball is pitched, obstruction will be called.

**Rule 8.06.D Additional Penalty:** If a coach violates this rule before the ball is pitched, First Offense: Warning; Second Offense: Removal of coach as the pitcher for the remainder of the game.

**8.06.E** The catcher shall receive the pitch in the catcher's box in a normal baseball manner. If in the umpire's judgment, the catcher is not receiving the ball in a normal baseball manner, there will be a warning issued. If the act continues after the warning, the offending teams' manager will be ejected.

**8.06.F** Ten (10) defensive players shall play in the field with four (4) outfielders. The fourth (4th) outfielder shall not assume an infield position. All outfielders shall stay behind the baselines.

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

**Rule 8.06.G Penalty:** The play continues. After the play has ended, the offensive team has the option of taking the result of the play or no-pitch.

**Rule 8.06.G Additional Penalty:** First Offense: Warning; Second Offense: Removal of player from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.

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

**8.06.I** The Infield Fly Rule shall not be in effect at any time.

**8.06.J** The batting order shall constitute all present players on the team roster at the beginning of the game. Late arrivals shall be inserted at the bottom of the batting order. All players on the roster shall bat before returning to the top of the batting order.

**8.06.J.1** Teams may start a game with eight (8) players. The ninth (9th) & tenth (10th) positions in the batting order will be declared an out each turn at bat.

**Rule 8.06.J.1 Approved Ruling:** A ninth (9th) & tenth (10th) player and all subsequent players may be added to the bottom of the batting line-up as soon as they become available.

**8.06.K** Teams may use free substitution on defense but the batting order shall remain the same.

**8.06.L** Bunting shall not be allowed.

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

**Rule 8.06.M Comment:** A batter that has received less than six (6) pitches and has a count of two (2) swinging strikes shall have his turn at bat extended on foul balls up to the six (6) pitch limit.

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

- 8.06.O** Runners shall not lead-off or steal bases. A runner is out for leaving the base before the ball is hit or reaches home plate.
- 8.06.P** A courtesy runner for catcher of record only the previous inning may be used. The courtesy runner shall be the player that made the previous out. If no outs have been recorded in the game, the courtesy runner shall be the previous batter not on base.
- 8.06.Q** A team may score a maximum of seven (7) runs per inning, including the last inning or record three (3) outs.
- 8.06.R** Umpires shall call "Time" after every play and declare the ball dead. "Time" shall be called as soon as the lead runner is not attempting to advance. "Time" does not have to be called by the defense for the purpose of this rule.  
**Rule 8.06.R Comment:** When a runner stands off a base and "jukes" or "feints" back and forth, this is to be interpreted as "not attempting to advance" and "Time" shall be called.
- 8.06.S** When a batted ball hits the Pitching Coach, the following shall apply:  
**8.06.S.1** If in the umpire's judgment, the coach did not make a legitimate attempt to avoid contact, the batter is declared out and no runners shall advance.  
**8.06.S.2** If in the umpire's judgment, the coach did make a legitimate attempt to avoid contact, the ball becomes dead and a no-pitch is declared.
- 8.07** Machine Pitch Specific Rules –
- 8.07.A** Fair Ball Arc: There shall be a twenty (20) foot arc drawn from first (1st) baseline to third (3rd) baseline in front of home plate. A batted ball must go past this line to be a fair ball.
- 8.07.B** Safety Arc: There shall be a thirty (30) foot arc drawn from first (1st) baseline to third (3rd) baseline in front of home plate. Infielders must stay behind this line until the ball is hit.
- 8.07.C** Pitching Circle: There shall be a ten (10) foot diameter circle with the front edge set at forty-two (42) feet from the rear point of home plate.
- 8.07.D** Pitching Machine: The front leg(s) shall be set at a distance of forty-two (42) feet from the rear point of home plate.
- 8.07.E** Recommended pitching machine speeds:  
**8.07.E.1** 36 M.P.H. – 39 M.P.H. for the 7U age division.  
**8.07.E.2** 39 M.P.H. – 42 M.P.H. for the 8U age division.
- 8.07.F** Ten (10) defensive players shall play in the field with four (4) outfielders. The fourth (4th) outfielder shall not assume an infield position. All outfielders shall stay behind the baselines.
- 8.07.G** The defensive player listed as pitcher shall not leave the pitching circle until the ball is hit.  
**Rule 8.07.G Penalty:** The play continues. After the play has ended, the offensive team has the option of taking the result of the play or no-pitch.  
**Rule 8.07.G Additional Penalty:** First Offense: Warning; Second Offense: Removal of player from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.
- 8.07.H** Defensive coaches shall not be allowed on the field of play and shall coach from the dugout.
- 8.07.I** The Infield Fly Rule shall not be in effect at any time.
- 8.07.J** The batting order shall constitute all present players on the team roster at the beginning of the game. Late arrivals shall be inserted at the bottom of the batting order. All players on the roster shall bat before returning to the top of the batting order.  
**8.07.J.1** Teams may start a game with eight (8) players. The ninth (9th) & tenth (10th) positions in the batting order will be declared an out each turn at bat.  
**Rule 8.07.J.1 Approved Ruling:** A ninth (9th) & tenth (10th) player and all subsequent players may be added to the bottom of the batting line-up as soon as they become available.
- 8.07.K** Teams may use free substitution on defense but the batting order shall remain the same.
- 8.07.L** Teams may bunt a maximum of two (2) times per inning.  
**8.07.L.1** Fake bunts shall be prohibited. A batter that "shows" bunt is committed to an attempt to bunt or take the pitch.  
**Rule 8.07.L.1 Penalty:** A batter who swings after "showing" bunt shall be called out and no runners may advance.
- 8.07.M** The batter shall receive a maximum of six (6) pitches or three (3) swinging strikes.  
**Rule 8.07.M Comment:** A batter that has received less than six (6) pitches and has a count of two (2) swinging strikes shall have his turn at bat extended on foul balls up to the six (6) pitch limit.
- 8.07.N** A player may only be Intentionally Walked once per game by announcement from the defensive team.
- 8.07.O** Runners shall not lead-off or steal bases. A runner is out for leaving the base before the ball is hit or reaches home plate.
- 8.07.P** A courtesy runner for catcher of record only the previous inning may be used. The courtesy runner shall be the player that made the previous out. If no outs have been recorded in the game, the courtesy runner shall be the previous batter not on base.
- 8.07.Q** A team may score a maximum of seven (7) runs per inning, including the last inning or record three (3) outs.
- 8.07.R** Umpires shall call "Time" after every play and declare the ball dead. "Time" shall be called as soon as the lead runner is not attempting to advance. "Time" does not have to be called by the defense for the purpose of this rule.  
**Rule 8.07.R Comment:** When a runner stands off a base and "jukes" or "feints" back and forth, this is to be interpreted as "not attempting to advance" and "Time" shall be called.
- 8.07.S** When a batted ball hits the pitching machine, the ball is dead, the batter is awarded first (1st) base and all runners shall advance one (1) base.
- 8.08** T-Ball Specific Rules –
- 8.08.A** Fair Ball Arc: There shall be a twenty (20) foot arc drawn from first (1st) baseline to third (3rd) baseline in front of home plate. A batted ball must go past this line to be fair.
- 8.08.B** Safety Arc: There shall be a thirty (30) foot arc drawn from (1st) baseline to third (3rd) baseline in front of home plate. Infielders must stay behind this line until the ball is hit.

- 8.08.C** Pitching Plate: The pitching plate shall be located at forty-two (42) feet from the front edge of the pitching plate to the back point of home plate.
- 8.08.D** The catcher shall wear a dual ear-flap catcher's helmet with mask.
- 8.08.E** Ten (10) defensive players shall play in the field with four (4) outfielders. The fourth (4th) outfielder shall not assume an infield position. All outfielders shall stay behind the baselines.
- 8.08.F** The defensive player listed as pitcher shall stay in contact with the pitchers' plate until the ball is hit.  
**Rule 8.08.F Penalty:** The play continues. After the play has ended, the offensive team has the option of taking the result of the play or no-pitch.  
**Rule 8.08.F Additional Penalty:** First Offense: Warning; Second Offense: Removal of player from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.
- 8.08.G** Defensive coaches shall not allowed on the field of play and shall coach from the dugout.
- 8.08.H** The Infield Fly Rule shall not be in effect at any time.
- 8.08.I** The batting order shall constitute all present players on the team roster at the beginning of the game. Late arrivals shall be inserted at the bottom of the batting order. All players on the roster shall bat before returning to the top of the batting order.  
**8.08.I.1** Teams may start a game with eight (8) players. The ninth (9th) & tenth (10th) positions in the batting order will be declared an out each turn at bat.  
**Rule 8.08.I.1 Approved Ruling:** A ninth (9th) & tenth (10th) player and all subsequent players may be added to the bottom of the batting line-up as soon as they become available.
- 8.08.J** Teams may use free substitution on defense but the batting order shall remain the same.
- 8.08.K** Bunting shall not be allowed.
- 8.08.L** A batter shall receive a maximum of three (3) swings to put the ball in play or be called out. No additional swings shall be awarded on foul balls.
- 8.08.M** A player may only be Intentionally Walked once per game by announcement from the defensive team.
- 8.08.N** Runners shall not lead-off or steal bases. A runner is out for leaving the base before the ball is hit.
- 8.08.O** A team may score a maximum of seven (7) runs per inning, including the last inning or record three (3) outs.
- 8.08.P** Umpires shall call "Time" after every play and declare the ball dead. "Time" shall be called as soon as the lead runner is not attempting to advance. "Time" does not have to be called by the defense for the purpose of this rule.  
**Rule 8.08.P Comment:** When a runner stands off a base and "jukes" or "feints" back and forth, this is to be interpreted as "not attempting to advance" and "Time" shall be called.
- 8.08.Q** The ball shall measure not less than eight and one quarter (8 1/4) nor more than eight and one half (8 1/2) inches in circumference.
- 8.09** 7U & 8U Kid Pitch Specific Rules –
- 8.09.A** Nine (9) defensive players shall play in the field.
- 8.09.B** Balk rules shall not apply.
- 8.09.C** A batter is automatically out on a dropped / missed third (3rd) strike by the catcher.
- 8.09.D** Runners shall not advance when the pitcher is on the pitching rubber with the ball in his possession and the catcher is in position to receive a pitch.  
**Rule 8.09.D Comment:** Runners may advance on a batted ball hit to the pitcher and when "Time" has not been called.
- 8.09.E** Runners shall not lead-off but may advance at their own risk (steal) once a pitched ball has passed home plate. When a runner tries to advance prior to the pitched ball passing home plate, the following shall apply:  
**Rule 8.09.E Approved Ruling:** If the runner advances safely, the umpire shall call "Time" and the runner shall return to the base last legally occupied at the time of the pitch. If the runner is called out, the call shall stand and the runner is out. If the ball is hit, the defensive team shall have the option of the result of the play or a no pitch.
- 8.09.F** Runners shall not advance from third (3rd) base to home unless the runner is batted home or forced by a base on balls, hit batsman, or award from the umpire. Runners shall not advance from third (3rd) base to home on passed balls, wild pitches or dropped / missed third (3rd) strikes by the catcher.
- 8.10** 9U Drafted League Specific Rules –
- 8.10.A** A batter is automatically out on a dropped / missed third (3rd) strike by the catcher.
- 8.10.B** Runners shall not lead-off but may advance at their own risk (steal) once a pitched ball is released by the pitcher. When a runner tries to advance prior to the pitched ball being released by the pitcher, the following shall apply:  
**Rule 8.10.B Approved Ruling:** If the runner advances safely, the umpire shall call "Time" and the runner shall return to the base last legally occupied at the time of the pitch. If the runner is called out, the call shall stand and the runner is out. If the ball is hit, the defensive team shall have the option of the result of the play or a no pitch.
- 8.10.C** Runners shall not advance from third (3rd) base to home unless the runner is batted home or forced by a base on balls, hit batsman, or award from the umpire or if the defensive team attempts a play on the runner legally occupying third (3rd) base. Runners shall not advance from third (3rd) base to home on passed balls, wild pitches or dropped / missed third (3rd) strikes by the catcher.

## **RULE 9.00 – UMPIRES**

- 9.01** All leagues and tournaments played under the jurisdiction and administration of USSSA Baseball shall utilize umpires who are registered with the Association.
- 9.02** One (1) or more umpires will be assigned to officiate each game.
- 9.03** The umpires shall be responsible for the conduct of the game in accordance with these rules and for maintaining discipline and order on the playing field during the game.
- 9.04** Each umpire is the representative of USSSA Baseball, and is authorized and required to enforce the rules of the Association.

- 9.04.A** Each umpire has authority to order a player, coach, manager, sponsor or spectator to do or refrain from doing anything, which affects the administering of these rules, and to enforce the prescribed penalties.
- 9.04.B** Each umpire has authority to disqualify any player, coach or manager for objecting to decisions or for unsportsmanlike conduct or language, and to eject such disqualified person from the playing field.
- 9.04.C** Each umpire has authority at his discretion to eject from the playing field any person whose duties permit his presence on the field and any spectator or other person not authorized to be on the field.
- 9.05** Any umpire's decision which involves judgment, such as, but not limited to, whether a batted ball is fair or foul, whether a pitch is a strike or a ball, or whether a runner is safe or out, is final. No player, coach or manager shall object to any such judgment decisions.
- Rule 9.05 Comment:** Players leaving their position in the field or on base, or managers or coaches leaving the bench or coaches box, to argue balls and strikes shall not be permitted. They should be warned if they start for the plate to protest the call. If they continue, they will be ejected from the game.
- 9.06** If there is reasonable doubt that any umpire's decision may be in conflict with the rules, the manager may appeal the decision and ask that a correct ruling be made. Such appeal shall be made only to the umpire who made the protested decision.
- 9.07** If a decision is appealed, the umpire making the decision may ask another umpire for information before making a final decision. No umpire shall criticize, seek to reverse or interfere with another umpire's decision unless asked to do so by the umpire making it.
- Rule 9.07 Comment:** The manager or the catcher may request the plate umpire to ask his partner for help on a half swing when the plate umpire calls the pitch a ball, but not when the pitch is called a strike. The manager may not complain that the umpire made an improper call, but only that he did not ask his partner for help. Field umpires must be alerted to the request from the plate umpire and quickly respond. Managers may not protest the call of a ball or strike on the pretense they are asking for information about a half swing. Appeals on a half swing may be made only on the call of ball and when asked to appeal, the home plate umpire must refer to a base umpire for his judgment on the half swing. Should the base umpire call the pitch a strike, the strike call shall prevail. Base runners must be alert to the possibility that the base umpire on appeal from the plate umpire may reverse the call of a ball to the call of a strike, in which event the runner is in jeopardy of being out by the catcher's throw. Also, a catcher must be alert in a base stealing situation if a ball call is reversed to a strike by the base umpire upon appeal from the plate umpire. The ball is in play on appeal on a half swing. If the manager comes out to argue with an umpire and if after being warned he persists in arguing, he can be ejected as he is now arguing over balls and strikes.
- 9.08** Immediately following a game, the umpire shall report to the league / tournament officials all violations of rules and other incidents worthy of comment, including the disqualification of any player, coach or manager and the reasons therefore.
- 9.09** **General Statement Concerning Umpires:** Umpires should not indulge in conversation with players, coaches, managers, sponsors or spectators. Keep your uniform in good, clean condition and your shoes shined. Be active, alert and courteous. When you enter the field your sole duty is to umpire a baseball game as the representative of USSSA Baseball. Keep the game moving as a baseball game is often helped along by energetic and earnest work of the umpires. You are the only official representative of USSSA Baseball on the field. It is often a trying position which requires the exercise of much patience and good judgment, but do not forget that the first essential in working out of a bad situation is to keep your own temper under control. You no doubt are going to make mistakes, but never attempt to "EVEN UP" after having made one. Make all decisions as you see them. Keep your eye everlastingly on the ball while it is in play as it is more vital to know just where a fly ball fell, or a thrown ball finished up, than whether or not a runner missed a base. Do not call plays too quickly, or turn away too fast when a fielder is throwing to complete a double play. Watch for dropped balls after you have called a man out. Do not come running with your arm up or down, denoting out or safe, wait until the play is completed before making any arm motions. Never make a call on the move, stop and set your self. A play is naught until the umpire calls it! Each umpire crew should work out a simple set of signals, so the proper umpire can always right a manifestly wrong decision when convinced he has made an error. If you're sure you got the play correct do not be stampeded by appeals to "ASK FOR HELP", if not, ask one of your crewmembers but do not carry this to extremes. Be alert and get your own plays but always remember...the first requisite is to get the call correct! Umpire dignity is important but never as important as being right. The single most important rule for umpires is always "BE IN POSITION TO SEE EVERY PLAY". Even though your decision may be 100% right, players, coaches, managers, sponsors and spectators still question it if they feel you were not in the proper position to see the play clearly and definitely. Finally, be courteous, impartial and firm, and so compel respect from all.

## **RULE 10.00 – OFFICIAL SCORER**

- 10.01** The official scorer shall observe the game from a position in or near the press box.
- Rule 10.01 Comment:** The official scorer shall not publicly cheer for a particular team from the press box area.
- 10.02** The official scorer shall have sole authority to make all decisions involving judgment, such as whether a batter's advance to first base is the result of a hit or an error.
- 10.03** The official scorer shall record the official game start time announced by the umpire-in-chief.
- 10.04** The official scorer shall report the final score and if applicable, complete signed pitching records / affidavits for both teams to league / tournament officials immediately following each game.

## **RULE 11.00 – SPORTSMANSHIP & EJECTIONS**

- 11.01** All players, coaches, managers, sponsors and spectators are expected to conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner at all times.
- 11.02** Any player, coach, manager, sponsor or spectator whose conduct is unbecoming or abusive shall at a minimum be reprimanded with a warning. If warranted, the offending party shall be ejected from the game at the discretion of the Umpires and / or the League / Tournament Director.

- 11.03** Any player, coach, manager, sponsor or spectator leaving their position or base, in the field, on the bench, in the dugout area or grandstands to participate in a fight, brawl or altercation shall be immediately ejected from the game and may be barred / suspended pursuant to USSSA Rule 13.00.
- 11.04** Any coach, manager, sponsor or spectator ejected from a game shall immediately remove himself from the vicinity of the playing field and / or grandstands for the remainder of the game. Additional penalties may be assessed at the discretion of the League / Tournament Director.
- 11.05** Any player ejected from a game shall either immediately remove himself from the vicinity of the playing field for the remainder of the game or be confined to the dugout area for the remainder of the game at the discretion of the League / Tournament Director.
- 11.06** All persons ejected may be asked to leave the park and / or venue at the discretion of the League / Tournament Director.
- 11.07** Abusive language or cursing shall not be tolerated under any circumstances and shall result in an automatic ejection.
- 11.08** Throwing of equipment shall result in an automatic ejection.
- 11.09** If necessary, a team may be forced to forfeit a game and / or be removed from the league / tournament.
- 11.10** As these rules indicate, the matter of disorderly conduct shall be taken seriously. The leagues / tournaments your team will be participating in will include some of the finest baseball teams in the world. The level of competition will be high and at times fierce. Because of this, please remind all players, coaches, managers, sponsors and spectators to be extra aware of good sportsmanship.

## **RULE 12.00 – PROTESTS**

- 12.01** Umpires will work to settle all situations on the field. Protests will be allowed for age and pitching violations or rule interpretations only. Protests must be declared to the Umpire-in-Chief and then to the League / Tournament Director before the next pitch following the dispute. If a call to be protested is the last recorded out of a game or on a game ending play, the protest **MUST** be filed prior to the umpires and the protesting team leaving the field of play. No protest will be allowed following the game. League / Tournament officials will rule on all protests and their decisions shall be final.
- 12.02** The Protest fee is \$100.00 cash. The fee shall be returned only if the protest is upheld.  
**Rule 12.02 Comment:** Leagues may develop their own method of fee structure, recording and settling protests.

## **RULE 13.00 – ACTS OF DISBARMENT / SUSPENSION**

- 13.01** Acts of disbarment / suspension include:
  - 13.01.A** Physical attack on an umpire, tournament official, Association Director or Association Officer during a game or immediately following a game, played under the administration of the Association.
  - 13.01.B** Players, coaches, managers, or sponsors threatening an umpire, tournament official, Association Director or Association Officer.
  - 13.01.C** Any players, coaches, manager, sponsor, director or officer fighting, using unsportsmanlike conduct or abusive tactics or derogatory or unbecoming acts that could be detrimental to the Association and not in the best interests of USSSA Baseball.
  - 13.01.D** Destruction of property or the abuse of hotel / motel property or failure to pay hotel / motel bills.
  - 13.01.E** Participating in a tournament in which cash prizes are offered.  
**Rule 13.01.E Comment:** A cash prize is defined as a prize or prizes in cash or in merchandise that is easily converted into cash that is awarded to players or teams based on the final standings of a tournament or other competition. A player or team may receive reimbursement for actual expenses incurred, as long as the amount of the reimbursement is not dependent on the final standings of the event. These acts shall apply to an individual player as well as a team or sponsor.
  - 13.01.F** Paying or receiving compensation in consideration of participating in baseball competition. These acts shall apply to an individual player as well as a team or sponsor.
  - 13.01.G** Receiving money directly or indirectly by capitalizing on athletic ability, athletic prominence, or athletic fame in baseball except that a player or team may use his name and likeness to advertise, recommend, or promote the sale of baseball sporting goods equipment or other goods or services if it is done pursuant to a registered personal services contract.
  - 13.01.H** By knowingly competing with or against illegal or barred / suspended player, coach or manager.
  - 13.01.I** By participating in or permitting a fraud to be perpetuated.
  - 13.01.J** Any official of the Association who refuses to submit funds to the Association that is due the Association.
  - 13.01.K** Competing under an assumed name, altered (miss-spelled) name, and / or date of birth.
  - 13.01.L** Submitting a check, for any reason, that cannot be negotiated for payment.
  - 13.01.M** Failure to appear after entering a State Championship and / or World Series unless reasonable advance notice is given. The USSSA Baseball National Committee shall determine what "reasonable advance notice" is.
  - 13.01.N** Purposely using false information to damage, harm, hurt, impair or mar the Association.
  - 13.01.O** An illegal player as defined by these National By-laws & Rules may be barred / suspended for one year.
  - 13.01.P** Violating the contract rights granted to any individual by the Association under its constitution. The penalty for violation of this paragraph shall be immediate disbarment / suspension from any activities of the Association.
- 13.02** Only State Directors and / or the USSSA Baseball National Committee, have the authority to issue disbarments / suspensions for a period of one year from the time of the incident. The State Director in the state in which the offense occurred may act upon any offense that occurs as described in USSSA Rule 13.00. Should the State Director not take action, he shall submit the incident to the player or team's home State Director to be acted upon. The USSSA Baseball National Committee shall rule upon any disbarment / suspension beyond one (1) year, anytime it convenes. In order for such action to be effective, reasonable notice, at least thirty (30) days shall be given to the offending person before the convening of the USSSA Baseball National 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 Baseball State Director's office; and contains a written statement of the offense and the length and terms of the requested additional disbarment / suspension beyond one (1) year suspension.
- 13.03** The offending party may appear at the convening of the USSSA Baseball National Committee and give evidence on his behalf as to why the additional disbarment / suspension should not be imposed. The decision of the USSSA Baseball National Committee shall be final and binding and is not subject to appeal.
- 13.04** Players or other announced participants, who have been disbarred / suspended or declared illegal, may use the appeal process procedure set forth in the constitution, except as limited by the provisions of USSSA Rule 13.03.
- 13.05** Any person so disbarred / suspended shall have the right to apply for reinstatement to membership in the Association, on an annual basis, provided the person gives the National Committee, through National Headquarters, thirty (30) days written notice if his intention to so reapply. The USSSA Baseball National Committee shall act on such applications at its annual meeting.
- 13.06** State Directors and Officers have the authority to issue indefinite disbarments / suspensions for players, teams, and other announced participants who fail to meet financial responsibilities to that state's association.
- 13.07** All reports of disbarment / suspension must be in writing and submitted to USSSA National Headquarters within five (5) days of the disbarment / suspension. Copies of such disbarments / suspensions shall also be sent to the party against whom it is directed.
- 13.08** Tournament Directors have the authority to eject a player or team at anytime during a tournament.
- 13.09** Any USSSA Baseball Director or Officer that violates any articles of the Association's constitution or USSSA Baseball National By-laws & Rules may be disbarred / suspended.
- 13.10** Any USSSA Baseball Director or Officer that fails to submit fees and / or information due the Association within fourteen (14) days of receipt thereof by the Director or Officer may be disbarred / suspended.
- 13.11** Any USSSA Baseball Director, Officer, Umpire, or participant that is disbarred / suspended for any reason, shall not be allowed to participate in any capacity within USSSA until such disbarment / suspension has been lifted.

### ***RULE 14.00 – GLOBAL SPORTS BASEBALL***

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

### ***RULE 15.00 – ITEMS NOT SPECIFICALLY COVERED***

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