



UNITED STATES SPECIALTY  
SPORTS ASSOCIATION

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

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# OFFICIAL BASEBALL NATIONAL BY-LAWS & RULES

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

### **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 rules not specifically covered herein, shall be governed by The Official Rules of Baseball – National League, as published by Major League Baseball on the MLB.com web site. In the event of any conflict in rule between these Official Baseball National By-laws & Rules and The Official Rules of Baseball – National League, as published by Major League Baseball on the MLB.com web site, these Official Baseball National By-laws & Rules shall govern.

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

**RULE 1.00 – NAME & OBJECTIVE**

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

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

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

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

- 3.01 Player Age Eligibility –
  - 3.01.A (Chart 3.01.A-1) For age divisions 4U – 14U, any player who before May 1st of the current season reaches the listed age restriction in the **BIRTHDAY RESTRICTION** column shall not 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(s) (if applicable), team and player being ejected from the tournament (if applicable), team being placed last in the standings and forfeiting all awards, points, sponsors travel money, and berths that would have been or have been awarded. The illegal player shall be removed from the offending team's Official Online Roster and additional penalties to player and others may be applied pursuant to USSSA Rule 13.00.

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

Chart 3.01.B-1

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

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

- 3.05 Player Roster Eligibility –
  - 3.05.A **PRIOR TO BEING FROZEN TO AN OFFICIAL ONLINE ROSTER; (Only applies to 14U and below)**
    - 3.05.A.1 Players shall be permitted to participate with multiple teams in the same age division.
    - 3.05.A.2 Players shall only physically play for one (1) team per day, event, tournament, week or weekend, regardless of age division and / or classification.
  - 3.05.B **AFTER BEING FROZEN TO AN OFFICIAL ONLINE ROSTER; (Only applies to 14U and below)**
    - 3.05.B.1 Players shall only appear on one (1) Official Online Roster per age division and shall only participate with such 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 tournament per weekend regardless of location, age division and/or classification.

- 3.06** Team Eligibility –
- 3.06.A** No team shall be allowed to compete in any USSSA Baseball program (sanctioned league or tournament) without first paying their team registration fee to the Association.
- 3.06.B** All teams shall maintain an Official Online Roster.  
**Rule 3.06.B Comment:** State Directors with the approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball may waive this roster requirement for the traditional "Fall" playing months of August – December.
- 3.06.C** Team rosters for age divisions 4U – 14U shall be composed of not more than twenty-five (25) players.
- 3.06.D** Team rosters for scholastic divisions 15U – 18U shall be composed of not more than forty (40) players.  
**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. 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** 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.2** 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 before a team starts their first game of a tournament. Additional players can only be added to rosters that have openings pursuant to USSSA Rules 3.06.C & 3.06.D.
- 3.08.B** All players added to a frozen Official Online Rosters 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** If Player(s) is listed on two (2) or more rosters, the next youngest age team must be the higher/equal class team.
- 3.08.B.3** Player(s) added to a 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.
- 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.
- 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 – QUALIFYING TOURNAMENTS**

- 4.01** State Directors shall have the authority to amend these National By-laws & Rules to accommodate the needs of the Qualifying Tournament with the approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball.
- 4.02** The State Director or directors appointed by the State Director shall conduct all Qualifying Tournaments to assure that the USSSA Baseball National By-laws & Rules are being followed at all times.
- 4.03** Amounts to be charged as entry fees for Qualifying Tournaments shall be at the discretion of the State Director.
- 4.04** The quantity of awards to be presented for Qualifying Tournaments shall be at the discretion of the State Director.
- 4.05** Each State Director shall adopt an acceptable system to qualifying teams for State Championship and / or World Series participation. Sanctioned league participation may be included in such a system is so desired.
- 4.06** No Qualifying Tournament shall be considered as sanctioned by the Association if all applicable fees and registrations are not paid to the Association within seventy-two (72) hours after completion of the tournament.
- 4.07** Only USSSA licensed baseballs shall be used in Qualifying Tournament play.
- 4.08** Each State Director with approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball shall set refund policies.
- 4.09** 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. Once advanced to the next tie breaker criteria, do not return to a previous criteria.

#### **RULE 5.00 – STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS**

- 5.01** State Directors shall have the authority to amend these National By-laws & Rules to accommodate the needs of the State Championships with the approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball.
- 5.02** The State Director or directors appointed by the State Director shall conduct all State Championships to assure that the USSSA Baseball National By-laws & Rules are being followed at all times.
- 5.03** Teams are permitted to participate in multiple "Level 1" State Championships but shall only be awarded "Level 1" State Championship points for the first (earliest) State Championship in which the team participates. Teams participating in subsequent "Level 1" State Championships shall be awarded "Qualifying Tournament" points. Teams shall only participate in their respective (home) state's "Level 1" State Championship(s).
- 5.04** Teams are permitted to participate in multiple "Level 2" State Championships and shall be awarded "Level 2" State Championship points for 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.
- 5.05** Official Online Roster composition for State Championship participation:
- 5.05.A** Major Classification – A team's Official Online Roster shall be composed of at least 50% state residents from the state in which the state championship is being played.
- 5.05.B** AAA, AA, A & All-Star Classifications – A team's Official Online Roster shall be composed of at least 50% state residents from the state in which the state championship is being played. Non-residential players must reside in a contiguous state.
- 5.06** Amounts to be charged as entry fees for State Championships shall be at the discretion of the State Director.
- 5.07** The quantity of awards to be presented for State Championships shall be at the discretion of the State Director.
- 5.08** Each State Director shall adopt an acceptable system for qualifying teams for World Series participation. Sanctioned league participation may be included in such system is so desired.
- 5.09** No State Championship shall be considered as sanctioned by the Association if all applicable fees and registrations are not paid to the Association within seventy-two (72) hours after completion of the tournament.
- 5.10** Only USSSA licensed baseballs shall be used in State Championship play.
- 5.11** Each State Director with approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball shall set refund policies.
- 5.12** State Championships shall be scheduled to provide each team at least two games of participation. This can be changed at the site of the tournament, by the Tournament Director with approval of the State Director after the starting date of the tournament has begun and it is determined that it would not be feasible to attempt to continue the original format due to weather conditions or other acts of God. A substitute format shall be implemented.
- 5.13** Pool Play / Tie Breaker Criteria: **(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. Once advanced to the next tie breaker criteria, do not return to a previous criteria.

#### **RULE 6.00 – WORLD SERIES**

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

- 6.02** The Tournament Director shall have the authority to amend these National By-laws & Rules to accommodate the needs of the World Series with the approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball.
- 6.03** All teams receiving berths to World Series shall participate in their (home) state's State Championship provided such a State Championship is played. Failure to participate in the State Championship if played shall result in forfeiture of the World Series berth. Also another requirement set forth by the state director must be followed. It is the managers responsibility to verify all requirements to play in a World Series with their respective State Director. State Directors shall have the authority to waive this rule with approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball.
- 6.04** State Directors shall approve all entries 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.
- 6.05** When a team has qualified to compete in a World Series and for some legitimate reason cannot compete, the State Director or directors appointed by the State Director may select the next team in line to take their place or may select a substitute plan to award the berth.
- 6.06** A deadline for accepting entries in World Series shall be set by the USSSA Baseball National Committee.
- 6.07** A team shall participate in the highest classification World Series in which it wins (is awarded) a berth unless the team is re-classified by the State Director or USSSA Baseball National Committee.
- 6.08** A team may participate in a higher age division World Series but shall participate at or above the team's current classification.  
**Rule 6.08 Example:** A 10U AAA team can participate up in the 11U AAA or 11U Major World Series but cannot participate down in the 11U AA World Series.
- 6.09** Only USSSA licensed baseballs shall be used in World Series play.
- 6.10** Any team in a World Series that forfeits a pool-play game shall not be eligible for championship play regardless of record.
- 6.11** USSSA prohibits the visual display of any non-USSSA association, alliance, federation, organization or union name, badge, crest, emblem, insignia, motif, sign or symbol anywhere on the uniform, such as but not limited to the temporary or permanent affixing of a patch or logo.
- 6.12** Pool Play / Tie Breaker Criteria: **(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. Once advanced to the next tie breaker criteria; do not return to a previous criteria.
- 1) Winning Percentage – Descending
  - 2) Number Wins – Descending
  - 3) Number Loses – Ascending
  - 4) Tied Teams (vs. each other) Winning Pct – Descending
  - 5) Avg Points Allowed – Ascending
  - 6) Avg Run Differential with a maximum of (8) – Descending
  - 7) USSSA Points – Descending
  - 8) Date Team Entered USSSA Database

## **RULE 7.00 – RULES OF PLAY**

### **7.01** Playing Field & Equipment –

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

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

**7.01.E** **The official bat** shall be round in cross section, straight in length and measure not more than 36 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 for small barrel bats and not more than 2 and ¾ inches for big barrel bats 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.

**Penalty: First Offense** - If the umpire discovers that the bat does not conform to USSSA Rule 7.01.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 and/or ejection from the game. If the umpire discovers that a bat has been used to put a ball in play and before the next legal pitch, the defensive team will have the choice of the result of play or the batter being called out and all runners returning to the base occupied before the pitch. **Second Offense** – If a team is found in violation of this rule a second time, then the manager will be ejected in addition to the First Offense penalty.

**7.01.E.1** 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'        | 46'               | 180'                | 210'                  |
| 10U               | 65'        | 46'               | 180'                | 210'                  |
| 11U               | 70'        | 50'               | 230'                | 275'                  |
| 12U               | 70'        | 50'               | 230'                | 275'                  |
| 13U               | 80'        | 54'               | 275'                | 300'                  |
| 14U (57/85)       | 85'        | 57'               | 275'                | 300'                  |
| 14U (60/90) – 18U | 90'        | 60' 6"            | 320'                | 375'                  |

Chart 7.01.A-1

- 7.01.F Uniforms**
- 7.01.F.1 Shoes** - In age divisions 4U – 12U, non-metal cleats must be worn. In age divisions 13U – 18U, traditional metal baseball spikes may be worn.
- 7.01.F.2** Protests on uniforms shall not be allowed. It shall be the League / Tournament Director's responsibility regarding uniform legality. Violation of the uniform rules shall result in the violator being allowed to immediately conform or be removed from the game. Managers and coaches may wear athletic type shorts.
- 7.01.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. In age divisions 4U – 12U, the catcher's helmet shall fully cover both ears.
- 7.01.H** All offensive players shall use a double ear-flap batting helmet whenever at bat, on deck, on base or any other time outside of the dugout and the ball is live and in play. Bat/ball boys are not allowed  
**Rule 7.01.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.
- 7.01.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.
- 7.01.J** Manufacturers who plan innovative changes in baseball equipment for future play should submit same to the USSSA Baseball National Committee prior to production.
- 7.02 Game Preliminaries –**
- 7.02.A** A flip of a coin between the two teams shall determine the home team for each pool play game, championship game and "if" game. The highest seeded team will be the home team for bracket play games.  
**Rule 7.02.A Comment:** For league play, a system to predetermine the home team is acceptable.
- 7.02.B** In League, Qualifying Tournament and State Championship play, time limits may be used with approval of the League / Tournament / State Director.
- 7.02.C** In World Series play, time limits may be used in pool play and consolation bracket games with approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball.
- 7.02.D** Approved Team Line-ups:
- 7.02.D.1** Teams may bat a nine (9) player line-up, ten (10) player line-up using an Extra Hitter (EH) or continuous line-up of all present, eligible, uniformed players. Such line-up must be declared before the start of the game and used the entire game.
- 7.02.D.1(a)** If a team uses a line-up that contains substitute players, all starting players may be removed and re-enter the game once, but must re-enter in their original position in the batting order. Non-starters are not allowed to re-enter. When a starter re-enters, the player in the starter's batting position in the batting order must be removed from the game and is ineligible for the remainder of the game.
- 7.02.D.1(b)** If a team uses a line-up that contains ten (10) players, the player in the Extra Hitter position, while not actually playing a defensive position, will be treated as such for substitution purposes.
- 7.02.D.1(c)** If a team uses a continuous line-up, all players other than the nine (9) defensive position players are Extra Hitters and may move freely in defensive positions with the exception of the pitching position. Any player(s) arriving after the game has begun, shall be added to the bottom of the batting line-up. When using the continuous lineup and a player has to leave the game for any reason, that position in the line-up becomes an out when that at bat comes around.
- 7.02.E** In scholastic divisions 15U – 18U, if the Extra Hitter (EH) is not be utilized, then the Designated Hitter (DH) may be utilized in accordance with the NFHS (National Federation of High School Association) baseball rules.
- 7.02.E.1** A Designated Hitter may be (not mandatory) selected for any one starting player and all subsequent substitutes for that player in the game.
- 7.02.E.2** A starting defensive player cannot be listed as the Designated Hitter in the starting line-up.
- 7.02.E.3** A Designated Hitter for said player shall be selected prior to the start of the game, and his name shall be included on the line-up.
- 7.02.E.4** Failure to declare a Designated Hitter prior to the game precludes the use of a DH in the game.
- 7.02.E.5** If a pinch hitter or pinch runner for the Designated Hitter is used, that player becomes the new DH.
- 7.02.E.6** The player who was the Designated Hitter may re-enter pursuant to USSSA Rule 7.02.D.1(a).
- 7.02.E.7** A Designated Hitter and the player for whom the DH is batting are locked into the batting order. No multiple substitutions may be made that will alter the batting order.
- 7.02.E.8** The role of the Designated Hitter is terminated for the remainder of the game when:
- 7.02.E.8(a)** The defensive player, or any previous defensive player for whom the Designated Hitter batted, subsequently bats, pinch-hits, or runs for the DH;
- 7.02.E.8(b)** The Designated Hitter or any previous DH assumes a defensive position.
- 7.02.F** Teams may play an official game with an eight (8) player line-up. If a team plays with an eight (8) player line-up, an out shall be declared for the ninth (9th) position in the batting line-up each turn at bat. A ninth (9th) player and all subsequent players may be added to the bottom of the batting line-up as soon as they become available.
- 7.02.G** A team may continue a game with a minimum of eight (8) eligible players.
- 7.03 Starting and Ending a Game –**
- 7.03.A** A regulation game consists of six (6) innings for age divisions 4U – 12U and seven (7) innings for age divisions 13U – 18U, unless the game is:

- 7.03.A.1 Extended because the score is tied after the completion of the regulation number of innings, in which case, play shall continue until the visiting team has scored more total runs than the home team at the end of a completed inning, or the home team scores the winning run in an uncompleted inning; or
- 7.03.A.2 Shortened because the home team needs none of its half of the last inning or only a fraction of it to win; or
- 7.03.A.3 Shortened because an imposed Time Limit expires; or
- 7.03.A.4 Shortened because any applicable part of USSSA Rule 7.03.B has been met; or
- 7.03.A.5 Shortened because any applicable part of USSSA Rule 7.03.C has been met.

**7.03.B (Chart 7.03.B-1)** An imposed Mercy (run) Rule shall be used to complete a regulation game when one team's margin of lead is greater than or equal to the listed run differential in the corresponding listed start inning. In enforcing this rule, the home team shall not bat if they are winning and the mercy requirement is met prior to the bottom half of the listed inning. Similarly, if the home team is batting and meets the mercy requirement in the bottom half of a listed inning the home team shall cease batting and the game shall end.

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

Chart 7.03.B-1

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

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

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

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

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

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

**7.04** The Batter, Batter Runner & Runner –

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

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

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

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

**Rule 7.04.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.

**7.05** The Pitcher –

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

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

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

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

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

**7.05.C(Chart 7.05.C-1)** The end of the day for the pitching limitation rules is the time of day or night when the ballpark is 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 7.03.C.1(a) & 7.03.C.2(a), shall be a suspended game. Suspended games, when resumed (the next day or another day), shall count as being played on two different days. The outs recorded during the portion of the game played prior to suspension shall count as being played on the regularly scheduled day and the outs recorded during the portion of the game played once resumed, shall count as being played on the resumed day.

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

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

**Rule 7.05.C.1 Example:** In the 7U – 14U age divisions, a player may legally pitch a maximum of three (3) innings in one (1) day and still legally pitch the next day. If the player pitches three and one-third (3 1/3) or more innings in one (1) day, the player 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 7.05.C-1

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Rule 7.05.C.7 Exception:** Exceeding the maximum innings allowed in the case of a double or triple play shall not be counted against the pitcher.

**Rule 7.05.C.7 Penalty:** It shall be the responsibility of each team manager to challenge pitching violations by notifying the Umpire-in-Chief and then filing a Protest with the League / Tournament Director. A protest may be filed at any point after the pitcher in violation records an out beyond his legal limit **AND** while the pitcher in violation is in the game and in the pitching position. If such violation is the last recorded out of the game, the protest **MUST** be filed prior to the umpires and the protesting team leaving the field of play. Any violation of USSSA Rules 7.05.C.1 – 7.05.C.7 shall result in immediate forfeiture of the game. If such violation occurs during Pool-Play, the team in violation of the rule may not advance to the championship bracket regardless of record.

**RULE 8.00 – DRAFTED LEAGUES & ALL-STARS**

**8.01 The Drafted League Program** gives traditional league based teams the opportunity to compete amongst teams formed by a similar system. Drafted League is a playing level for actual drafted league teams from USSSA Sanctioned Leagues. Age divisions shall include 5U – 18U.

**8.01.A** Leagues that conform to the below guidelines and register one hundred percent (100%) of their league teams shall be allowed to participate. State Directors may sanction others with the approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball.

**8.01.A.1** Leagues shall have an approved draft system that shall include no more than four (4) protected / frozen players per team previous to the draft.

**8.01.A.2** Leagues shall submit their complete rules, by-laws, and schedules for approval.

**8.01.A.3** A league shall consist of a minimum eight (8) game schedule.

**8.01.A.4** Eligible players shall compete in a minimum of seventy five percent (75%) of the scheduled league games.

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

**8.02 The All-Star Program** gives traditional league based All-Star teams the opportunity to compete amongst All-Star teams formed by a similar system. All-Stars is a playing level for actual All-Star teams formed from USSSA Sanctioned Drafted Leagues. Players

shall be permitted to participate with an All-Star team and an A, AA, AAA or Major team pursuant to USSSA Rule 3.00. Age divisions shall include 5U – 18U.

**8.02.A** Leagues shall conform to all the requirements pursuant to USSSA Rules 8.01.A.1 – 8.01.A.4.

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

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

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

**4.02.A.4** Only State Directors shall register and enter an Official Online Roster for All-Star teams.

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

**8.02.A.5(a)** All-Star team players shall not have participated on a team of higher classification than AA (i.e.; AAA, Major) after January 1st of the current year. Any player that has participated on a AAA or Major team between January 1st of the current year is ineligible for National All-Star Division play but may be eligible for American All-Star Division play pursuant to these rules.

**8.02.A.5(b)** All-Star teams shall have no more than three (3) players on their roster that have participated on a AA team after April 1st.

**8.02.A.5(c)** All-Star teams shall not begin playing together as a team before Memorial Day weekend. Memorial Day weekend is defined as starting at 12:00 P.M., the calendar Friday before Memorial Day as observed by the United States Federal Government.

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

**8.02.A.6(a)** All-Star teams that do not meet the requirements pursuant to USSSA Rule 8.02.A.5 but meet the requirements pursuant to USSSA Rule 8.02.A.6 shall be eligible for American All-Star Division play.

**8.02.A.6(b)** All-Star teams entering tournaments that do not make must participate in the highest classification the team would otherwise be eligible (i.e.; AA, AAA, Major).

**8.02.B** State Directors may adopt guidelines for two (2) divisions of play on the state level with the approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball.

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

**8.03** **9U Drafted League Specific Rules (League Rules Only – Not All-Stars)**

**8.03.A** A batter is automatically out on a dropped / missed third (3rd) strike by the catcher.

**8.03.B** Runners shall not lead-off but may advance at their own risk (steal) once a pitched ball is released by the pitcher. When a runner tries to advance prior to the pitched ball being released by the pitcher, the following shall apply:

**Rule 8.03.B Approved Ruling:** If the runner advances safely, the umpire shall call "Time" and the runner shall return to the base last legally occupied at the time of the pitch. If the runner is called out, the call shall stand and the runner is out. If the ball is hit, the defensive team shall have the option of the result of the play or a no pitch.

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

**RULE 9.00 – COACH PITCH SPECIFIC RULES**

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

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

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

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

**9.04.A** The pitching coach shall keep one foot on or straddle the pitcher's line.

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

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

**Rule 9.04.C Penalty:** If a coach violates this rule after the ball is pitched, obstruction will be called.

**Rule 9.04.C Additional Penalty:** If a coach violates this rule before the ball is pitched, First Offense: Warning; Second Offense: Removal of coach as the pitcher for the remainder of the game.

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

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

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

**Rule 9.07 Penalty:** The play continues. After the play has ended, the offensive team has the option of taking the result of the play or no-pitch.

**Rule 9.07 Additional Penalty:** First Offense: Warning; Second Offense: Removal of player from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.

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

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

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

- 9.10.A** Teams may start a game with eight (8) players. The ninth (9th) & tenth (10th) positions in the batting order will be declared an out each turn at bat.  
**Rule 9.10.A Approved Ruling:** A ninth (9th) & tenth (10th) player and all subsequent players may be added to the bottom of the batting line-up as soon as they become available.
- 9.11** Teams may use free substitution on defense but the batting order shall remain the same.
- 9.12** Bunting shall not be allowed.
- 9.13** The batter shall receive a maximum of six (6) pitches or three (3) swinging strikes.  
**Rule 9.06.M Comment:** A batter that has received less than six (6) pitches and has a count of two (2) swinging strikes shall have his turn at bat extended on foul balls up to the six (6) pitch limit.
- 9.14** A player may only be Intentionally Walked once per game by announcement from the defensive team.
- 9.15** Runners shall not lead-off or steal bases. A runner is out for leaving the base before the ball is hit or reaches home plate.
- 9.16** A courtesy runner for catcher of record only the previous inning may be used. The courtesy runner shall be the player that made the previous out. If no outs have been recorded in the game, the courtesy runner shall be the previous batter not on base. If the team batting has not played defense yet and a courtesy runner is used for a player, the player that was run for must assume the catching position the next inning. This scenario only applies in the first inning for the visiting team.
- 9.17** A team may score a maximum of seven (7) runs per inning, including the last inning or record three (3) outs.
- 9.18** Umpires shall call "Time" after every play and declare the ball dead. "Time" shall be called as soon as the lead runner is not attempting to advance. "Time" does not have to be called by the defense for the purpose of this rule.  
**Rule 9.18 Comment:** When a runner stands off a base and "jukes" or "feints" back and forth, this is to be interpreted as "not attempting to advance" and "Time" shall be called.
- 9.19** When a batted ball hits the Pitching Coach, the following shall apply:
- 9.19.A** If in the umpire's judgment, the coach did not make a legitimate attempt to avoid contact, the batter is declared out and no runners shall advance.
- 9.19B** If in the umpire's judgment, the coach did make a legitimate attempt to avoid contact, the ball becomes dead and a no-pitch is declared.

## **RULE 10.00 – MACHINE PITCH SPECIFIC RULES**

- 10.01** Fair Ball Arc: There shall be a twenty (20) foot arc drawn from first (1st) baseline to third (3rd) baseline in front of home plate. A batted ball must go past this line to be a fair ball.
- 10.02** Safety Arc: There shall be a thirty (30) foot arc drawn from first (1st) baseline to third (3rd) baseline in front of home plate. Infielders must stay behind this line until the ball is hit.
- 10.03** Pitching Circle: There shall be a ten (10) foot diameter circle with the front edge set at forty-two (42) feet from the rear point of home plate.
- 10.04** Pitching Machine: The front leg(s) shall be set at a distance of forty-two (42) feet from the rear point of home plate.
- 10.05** Recommended pitching machine speeds:  
**10.05.A** 36 M.P.H. – 39 M.P.H. out of the machine for the 7U age division.  
**10.05.B** 39 M.P.H. – 42 M.P.H. out of the machine for the 8U age division.
- 10.06** Ten (10) defensive players shall play in the field with four (4) outfielders. The fourth (4th) outfielder shall not assume an infield position. All outfielders shall stay behind the baselines.
- 10.07** The defensive player listed as pitcher shall not leave the pitching circle until the ball is hit.  
**Rule 10.07 Penalty:** The play continues. After the play has ended, the offensive team has the option of taking the result of the play or no-pitch.  
**Rule 10.07 Additional Penalty:** First Offense: Warning; Second Offense: Removal of player from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.
- 10.08** Defensive coaches shall not allowed on the field of play and shall coach from the dugout.
- 10.08** The Infield Fly Rule shall not be in effect at any time.
- 10.08** The batting order shall constitute all present players on the team roster at the beginning of the game. Late arrivals shall be inserted at the bottom of the batting order. All players on the roster shall bat before returning to the top of the batting order.  
**10.08.A** Teams may start a game with eight (8) players. The ninth (9th) & tenth (10th) positions in the batting order will be declared an out each turn at bat.  
**Rule 10.08.A Approved Ruling:** A ninth (9th) & tenth (10th) player and all subsequent players may be added to the bottom of the batting line-up as soon as they become available.
- 10.09** Teams may use free substitution on defense but the batting order shall remain the same.
- 10.09** Teams may bunt a maximum of two (2) times per inning.  
**10.09.A** Fake bunts shall be prohibited. A batter that "shows" bunt is committed to an attempt to bunt or take the pitch.  
**Rule 10.09.A Penalty:** A batter who swings after "showing" bunt shall be called out and no runners may advance.
- 10.10** The batter shall receive a maximum of six (6) pitches or three (3) swinging strikes.  
**Rule 10.10 Comment:** A batter that has received less than six (6) pitches and has a count of two (2) swinging strikes shall have his turn at bat extended on foul balls up to the six (6) pitch limit.
- 10.11** A player may only be Intentionally Walked once per game by announcement from the defensive team.
- 10.12** Runners shall not lead-off or steal bases. A runner is out for leaving the base before the ball is hit or reaches home plate.
- 10.13** A courtesy runner for catcher of record only the previous inning may be used. The courtesy runner shall be the player that made the previous out. If no outs have been recorded in the game, the courtesy runner shall be the previous batter not on base. If the team batting has not played defense yet and a courtesy runner is used for a player, the player

that was run for must assume the catching position the next inning. This scenario only applies in the first inning for the visiting team.

- 10.14 A team may score a maximum of seven (7) runs per inning, including the last inning or record three (3) outs.
- 10.15 Umpires shall call "Time" after every play and declare the ball dead. "Time" shall be called as soon as the lead runner is not attempting to advance. "Time" does not have to be called by the defense for the purpose of this rule.  
**Rule 10.15 Comment:** When a runner stands off a base and "jukes" or "feints" back and forth, this is to be interpreted as "not attempting to advance" and "Time" shall be called.
- 10.16 When a batted ball hits the pitching machine, the ball is dead, the batter is awarded first (1st) base and all runners shall advance one (1) base.

## **RULE 11.00 – T-BALL SPECIFIC RULES**

- 11.01 Fair Ball Arc: There shall be a twenty (20) foot arc drawn from first (1st) baseline to third (3rd) baseline in front of home plate. A batted ball must go past this line to be fair.
- 11.02 Safety Arc: There shall be a thirty (30) foot arc drawn from (1st) baseline to third (3rd) baseline in front of home plate. Infielders must stay behind this line until the ball is hit.
- 11.03 Pitching Plate: The pitching plate shall be located at forty-two (42) feet from the front edge of the pitching plate to the back point of home plate.
- 11.04 The catcher shall wear a dual ear-flap catcher's helmet with mask.
- 11.05 Ten (10) defensive players shall play in the field with four (4) outfielders. The fourth (4th) outfielder shall not assume an infield position. All outfielders shall stay behind the baselines.
- 11.06 The defensive player listed as pitcher shall stay in contact with the pitchers' plate until the ball is hit.  
**Rule 11.06 Penalty:** The play continues. After the play has ended, the offensive team has the option of taking the result of the play or no-pitch.  
**Rule 11.06 Additional Penalty:** First Offense: Warning; Second Offense: Removal of player from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.
- 11.07 Defensive coaches shall not allowed on the field of play and shall coach from the dugout.
- 11.08 The Infield Fly Rule shall not be in effect at any time.
- 11.09 The batting order shall constitute all present players on the team roster at the beginning of the game. Late arrivals shall be inserted at the bottom of the batting order. All players on the roster shall bat before returning to the top of the batting order.
- 11.09.A Teams may start a game with eight (8) players. The ninth (9th) & tenth (10th) positions in the batting order will be declared an out each turn at bat.  
**Rule 11.09.A Approved Ruling:** A ninth (9th) & tenth (10th) player and all subsequent players may be added to the bottom of the batting line-up as soon as they become available.
- 11.10 Teams may use free substitution on defense but the batting order shall remain the same.
- 11.12 Bunting shall not be allowed.
- 11.13 A batter shall receive a maximum of three (3) swings to put the ball in play or be called out. No additional swings shall be awarded on foul balls.
- 11.14 A player may only be Intentionally Walked once per game by announcement from the defensive team.
- 11.15 Runners shall not lead-off or steal bases. A runner is out for leaving the base before the ball is hit.
- 11.16 A team may score a maximum of seven (7) runs per inning, including the last inning or record three (3) outs.
- 11.17 Umpires shall call "Time" after every play and declare the ball dead. "Time" shall be called as soon as the lead runner is not attempting to advance. "Time" does not have to be called by the defense for the purpose of this rule.  
**Rule 11.17 Comment:** When a runner stands off a base and "jukes" or "feints" back and forth, this is to be interpreted as "not attempting to advance" and "Time" shall be called.
- 11.18 The ball shall measure not less than eight and one quarter (8 1/4) nor more than eight and one half (8 1/2) inches in circumference.

## **RULE 12.00 – 7U & 8U KID PITCH RULES**

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

## **RULE 13.00 – SPORTSMANSHIP & EJECTIONS**

- 13.01 All players, coaches, managers, sponsors and spectators are expected to conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner at all times.
- 13.02 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.

- 13.03** Any player, coach, manager, sponsor or spectator leaving their position or base, in the field, on the bench, in the dugout area or grandstands to participate in a fight, brawl or altercation shall be immediately ejected from the game and may be disbarred / suspended pursuant to USSSA Rule 13.00.
- 13.04** Any coach, manager, sponsor or spectator ejected from a game shall immediately remove himself from the vicinity of the playing field and / or grandstands for the remainder of the game. Additional penalties may be assessed at the discretion of the League / Tournament Director.
- 13.05** 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.
- 13.06** All persons ejected may be asked to leave the park and / or venue at the discretion of the League / Tournament Director.
- 13.07** Abusive language or cursing shall not be tolerated under any circumstances and shall result in an automatic ejection.
- 13.08** Throwing of equipment shall result in an automatic ejection.
- 13.09** If necessary, a team may be forced to forfeit a game and / or be removed from the league / tournament.
- 13.10** 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 14.00 – UMPIRES***

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

### ***RULE 15.00 – PROTESTS***

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

**Rule 15.02 Comment:** Leagues may develop their own method of fee structure, recording and settling protests.

### ***RULE 16.00 – GLOBAL SPORTS BASEBALL***

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

### ***RULE 17.00 – ITEMS NOT SPECIFICALLY COVERED***

- 17.01** 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.