



**UNITED STATES SPECIALTY  
SPORTS ASSOCIATION**

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

**August 1, 2007**

**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)

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	Vice President of Baseball Operations
Frank Griffin	Drafted League Program Director
Sean Dowers	Regional Director / National Committee Member
Bob Egr	Regional Director / National Committee Member
Wally Fortuna	Regional Director / National Committee Member
Travis Leming	Regional Director / National Committee Member
Don Mason	Regional Director / National Committee Member
Ron Mathis	Regional Director / National Committee Member
Terry Schadler	Regional Director / National Committee Member
Matt Trebuchon	Regional Director / National Committee Member

No part of the Official Baseball National By-laws & Rules may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, recording or any information storage and retrieval system now known or to be invented, without expressed written permission from the United States Specialty Sports Association.

Copyright © 2007  
UNITED STATES SPECIALTY SPORTS ASSOCIATION  
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

**In the event of a conflict in language between any printed versions of the Official Baseball National By-laws & Rules and the [usssabaseball.org](http://usssabaseball.org) on-line version, the on-line version shall take priority.**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Rule 1.00 – Name & Objective	3
Rule 2.00 – Membership & Participation	3
Rule 3.00 – Team & Individual Player Eligibility	3
Rule 4.00 – Qualifying Tournaments	6
Rule 5.00 – State Championships	6
Rule 6.00 – World Series	7
Rule 7.00 – Acts of Disbarment	8
Rule 8.00 – Rules of Play	9
8.01 – Objective of the Game	9
8.02 – The Playing Field & Equipment	9
8.03 – Game Preliminaries	10
8.04 – Playing Rules	11
8.05 – Pitching Rules & Regulations	12
8.06 – 7U & 8U Kid Pitch Specific Rules of Play	14
8.07 – Coach Pitch Specific Rules of Play	14
8.08 – Machine Pitch Specific Rules of Play	15
8.09 – T-Ball Specific Rules of Play	16
Rule 9.00 – Umpires	16
Rule 10.00 – Official Scorer	16
Rule 11.00 – Sportsmanship	16
Rule 12.00 – Ejections	17
Rule 13.00 – Protests	17
Rule 14.00 – “A” Classification Drafted League Program	17
Rule 15.00 – Drafted League All-Star Program	18
Rule 16.00 – Items Not Specifically Covered	18

Any reference to a particular gender contained within these Official Baseball National By-laws & Rules such as he, his, him or himself shall be meant to also include she, hers, her or herself 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 is 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

- 2.01 Team Membership – An annual registration fee shall be charged to participate in the USSSA Baseball program. Team membership must be paid seasonally. The season for USSSA Baseball is August 1st - July 31st.
- 2.02 Umpire Membership – Each umpire must pay a yearly membership fee. In addition to USSSA membership, each umpire may elect to purchase an optional insurance plan that will cover the umpire during non-USSSA Baseball contests.
- 2.03 League Participation – In all USSSA Baseball sanctioned leagues, teams will qualify for State Championships and / or World Series play.
- 2.04 Tournament Participation – In all USSSA Baseball sanctioned tournaments, teams will qualify for State Championships and / or World Series play.
- 2.05 Classifications of Play – USSSA Baseball will offer the following classifications of play: Major, AAA, AA, A & All-Star. The main criteria for classifying teams shall be the overall offensive and defensive strength and experience of the team. The A & All-Star classification teams are defined by the method of establishment (see Rule 14.00 & 15.00).

## RULE 3.00 – TEAM & INDIVIDUAL PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

- 3.01 No team shall be allowed to compete in any USSSA Baseball sanctioned league or tournament play without first paying their annual team registration fee to the Association.
- 3.02 Team rosters for ages 14U & younger must be composed of not more than twenty (20) eligible players. **Team rosters for ages 15U & older must be composed of not more than twenty-five (25) eligible players.**
- Rule 3.02 Comment:** If applicable, coaches or managers must be included on the team's roster to be eligible to play.
- 3.03 The cut-off date for adding players to a team roster shall be in accordance with these By-laws & Rules.
- 3.04 Each State Director will adopt an acceptable method to classify teams. Each State Director has sole authority to classify teams within their respective state. A State Director has the authority to classify and / or re-classify any team during the current season, except when the USSSA Baseball National Committee has assigned a classification to the team.
- 3.05 A teams "home" state is determined by the home residency of fifty-one (51) percent or the majority (whichever is greater) of the players on the team's Official On-Line Roster.
- 3.06 Age Eligibility:
- 3.06.A For age based divisions 4U – 14U (see Chart 3.06 Figure 1), any player who before May 1st of the current season reaches the listed birthday in Column "B" is not eligible to participate in the listed age division in Column "A" and must play in the next older division.

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

**Chart 3.06 Figure 1**

- 3.06.B For scholastic (grade) based divisions 14U – 18U (see Chart 3.06 Figure 2), participation is based on age and scholastic grade. Any player that does not meet the listed birthday in Column "B", must meet the listed grade restriction in column "A" **AND** the listed age restriction in Column "C". Any player that does not meet **BOTH** must play in the next older division. 14U scholastic is for state level school based programs only.

COLUMN A AGE – GRADE DIVISION	COLUMN B BIRTHDAY	COLUMN C MEETS GRADE NOT BIRTHDAY
14U – Pre-Freshman	Fifteenth	Sixteenth
15U – HS Freshman	Sixteenth	Seventeenth
16U – HS Sophomore	Seventeenth	Eighteenth
17U – HS Junior	Eighteenth	Nineteenth

18U – HS Senior	Nineteenth	Twentieth
Chart 3.06 Figure 2		

- 3.07** A player is 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 name is listed **AS IT APPEARS ON HIS BIRTH CERTIFICATE**, as a member on an eligible team's Official On-Line Roster. **Full first and last names will be used.**
- 3.08** A Tournament Director may not manage, coach, participate as a player or umpire in any tournament in which he serves as a Tournament Director without approval from the next highest in authority.
- 3.09** When a team qualifies (wins a berth) for a State Championship or World Series, the team's Official On-Line Roster will be frozen, whether the team accepts the berth or not.
- 3.09.A** The team's Official On-Line Roster becomes frozen immediately at the qualifying event, **regardless of the date the roster is physically frozen in the USSSA online system.** Players will be bound to this frozen team up to and including this team's respective State Championship or World Series. A player cannot legally be on any other team's Official On-Line Roster within the same age division regardless of classification.
- 3.09.B** If a team is offered a berth that is passed down, the team has the option of accepting or declining the berth. If a team accepts a berth that is passed down, the team's Official On-Line Roster is frozen immediately at the qualifying event, **regardless of the date the roster is physically frozen in the USSSA online system.** Players will be bound to this frozen team up to and including this team's respective State Championship or World Series. A player cannot legally be on any other team's Official On-Line Roster within the same age division regardless of classification. If a team declines a berth that is passed down, the team roster is not frozen.
- 3.09.C** Team managers shall be allowed to add a maximum of three (3) players to their frozen team's Official On-Line 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 to allow for such add-ons.
- 3.09.D** Team managers shall be allowed to release a maximum of three (3) players from their frozen team's Official On-Line Roster.
- 3.09.E** A team manager cannot replace a released player with an add-on player.
- 3.09.F** All players added to a frozen team's Official On-Line Rosters must meet the following requirements:
- 3.09.F.1** Player(s) cannot be on another frozen team's Official On-Line Roster in the same age division regardless of classification.
- 3.09.F.2** Player(s) must not have played for a frozen team at a higher classification.
- 3.09.F.3** **Player(s) added to a frozen team's Official On-Line Roster in the AAA, AA, A & All-Star classifications must have a traceable playing history within the USSSA online system for the current season or the previous season.**
- 3.09.F.4** **A player that is frozen on a Major Class team can only move to another Major Class team regardless of age.**
- 3.09.F.5** The State Director has authority to approve or reject all Official On-Line Roster additions.
- 3.10** The team's manager is responsible for all aspects of the eligibility of the players on his team and that they meet the Bylaws & Rules set forth, including player additions. This includes but is not limited to; age eligibility and classifications of previous teams the player(s) may have participated on. Managers are responsible for all information included on their team's Official On-Line Roster. Managers found adding ineligible players to their team's Official On-Line Roster and playing such ineligible players will be suspended. Altering the spelling of or name of or initials of a player's name or a player's date-of-birth, intentionally or not, does not excuse the manager. State Director's approval of a team roster does not release the manager of these responsibilities. **Rule 3.11 Comment: A player's first and last names and date of birth must be listed on a team's Official On-Line Roster as it appears on the player's Birth Certificate, see Rule 3.07.**
- 3.11** A player that is released from a frozen team's Official On-Line Roster cannot return to that team during the current season.
- 3.12** A team with a frozen Official On-Line Roster with less than nine (9) players, which has used all options for additions and releases, may apply for status of disbandment with the State Director. If approval is given, the team forfeits all berths and sponsor travel monies earned. A team may not disband after May 1st of the current season. A disbanded team may not reform (regardless of team name, management, coaching staff or sponsor) with more than six (6) players from its previously frozen Official On-Line Roster. Players from a frozen disband team are still bound to their classification of play regardless of age division.
- 3.13** A player who is in violation of the Association's Constitution and / or Official Baseball National By-laws & Rules shall be considered an illegal player.
- 3.14** Anytime during or after a tournament game, or after the completion of a tournament, if an illegal player is discovered up to one year from the tournament date, penalties may be applied.
- 3.15** If a player is found to be an illegal player due to an age violation and is discovered during a game or tournament, this will result in the offending team losing the game and / or being ejected from the tournament, being placed last

in the standings and forfeiting all awards, sponsors travel money, and tournament berths that would have been awarded at the tournament. Other penalties may apply.

- 3.16 If a player is found to be an illegal player due to an age violation after the completion of a tournament, this will result in the offending team being placed last in the standings and forfeiting all awards, sponsors travel money, and tournament berths that have been awarded at the tournament. Other penalties may apply.
- 3.17 In age based divisions 4U – 14U, all players participating in USSSA Baseball tournament play shall have photocopies of their original birth certificate or a USSSA approved ID card in the possession of their team manager. Failure to have a copy of the birth certificate or USSSA approved ID card available upon demand will result in the offending team losing the game, being ejected from the tournament, being placed last in the standings and forfeiting all awards, sponsors travel money, and tournament berths that would have been awarded at the tournament.
- 3.18 In scholastic (grade) based divisions (14U – 18U), a current report card and photocopies of original berth certificate or a USSSA approved ID card shall be in the possession of the team manager. Failure to have a copy of the birth certificate or USSSA approved ID card and / or if applicable, a current report card available upon demand will result in the offending team losing the game, being ejected from the tournament, being placed last in the standings and forfeiting all awards, sponsors travel money, and tournament berths that would have been awarded at the tournament.
- 3.19 A player may participate on multiple teams but only one per age division and only one per event, week or weekend.
- 3.20 Any State Director, National Director, Executive Board Member, or Executive Committee Member shall not be eligible to participate in the program as a player, team manager, or team sponsor in tournament play without approval from the next highest in authority.

## **RULE 4.00 – QUALIFYING TOURNAMENTS**

- 4.01 State Directors have the authority to amend these By-laws & Rules to accommodate the local needs, 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 such tournaments shall be at the discretion of the State Director.
- 4.04 The quantity of awards to be presented for such tournaments shall be at the discretion of the State Director.
- 4.05 Each State Director shall adopt an acceptable system to be used for qualifying teams for State Championship and / or World Series participation. Sanctioned league participation may be included if such a system is so desired.
- 4.06 No 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 can be used in sanctioned events.
- 4.08 No change to a team's roster will be allowed after the team has begun play in its first game during a tournament.
- 4.09 Each State Director with approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball shall set refund policies.
- 4.10 Pool Play Tie Breaker Recommendations:
  - 4.10.A Head to Head
  - 4.10.B Runs Allowed
  - 4.10.C Run Differential (Max +/- 8 Runs Per Game)
  - 4.10.D USSSA Point System
  - 4.10.E Coin Flip

**Rule 4.10 Comment:** Once you advance to the next tiebreaker criteria, you do not return to the previous criteria. Runs are considered amongst all teams in the pool, not just the tied team.

## **RULE 5.00 – STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS**

- 5.01 State Directors have the authority to amend these By-laws & Rules to accommodate the local needs, 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 championship tournaments to assure that the USSSA Baseball National By-laws & Rules are being followed at all times.
- 5.03 A team may participate in multiple Level 1 State Championship tournaments. Teams will only earn Level 1 State Championship tournament points for the first State Championship tournament in which the team participates. Teams participating in subsequent Level 1 State Championship tournaments will earn "Qualifier" points. Teams may only participate in their respective state's Level 1 State Championship tournament(s).
- 5.04 A team may participate in multiple Level 2 State Championship tournaments. Teams will earn Level 2 State Championship tournament points for all Level 2 State Championship tournaments in which the team participates. Teams may cross state boundaries if allowed by the host state.

- 5.05** Roster composition will be as follows:
- 5.05.A** Major Classification – A team’s roster must be composed of at least 50% state residents from the state in which the State Championship Tournament is being played.
  - 5.05.B** AAA & AA Classifications – A team’s roster must be composed of at least 50% state residents from the state in which the State Championship Tournament is being played. Players not residing in the home state must reside in a contiguous state.
  - 5.05.C** A & All-Star Classifications – A team’s roster must be composed by a method as defined in Rule 14.00. In addition, a team’s roster must be composed of at least 50% state residents from the state in which the State Championship Tournament is being played. Players not residing in the home state must reside in a contiguous state.
- 5.06** Amounts to be charged as entry fees for such tournaments shall be at the discretion of the State Director.
- 5.07** The quantity of awards to be presented for such tournaments shall be at the discretion of the State Director.
- 5.08** Each State Director shall adopt an acceptable system to be used for qualifying teams for State Championship and / or World Series participation. Sanctioned league participation may be included if such a system is so desired.
- 5.09** No 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.
- 5.10** Only USSSA licensed baseballs can be used in sanctioned events.
- 5.11** No change to a team’s roster will be allowed after the team has begun play in its first game during a tournament.
- 5.12** Each State Director with approval of the Association’s Executive Vice President of Baseball shall set refund policies.
- 5.13** State tournaments shall be scheduled to provide each team at least two games of participation. This can be changed at the site of the tournament, by the Tournament Director 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 will be implemented.
- 5.14** Pool Play Tie Breaker Recommendations:
- 5.14.A** Head to Head
  - 5.14.B** Runs Allowed
  - 5.14.C** Run Differential (Max +/- 8 Runs Per Game)
  - 5.14.D** USSSA Point System
  - 5.14.E** Coin Flip
- Rule 5.14 Comment:** Once you advance to the next tiebreaker criteria, you do not return to the previous criteria. Runs are considered amongst all teams in the pool not just the tied teams.

## **RULE 6.00 – WORLD SERIES**

- 6.01** The USSSA Baseball program will use the Pool-Play format in its World Series. Teams will be placed in pools where they will play a round robin within their pool. A double elimination format will be used in the championship bracket following pool play. A single elimination consolation tournament will be held for the teams, which do not qualify for the championship bracket. The exact format of the tournament (i.e.; quantity of pools, quantity of teams in each pool, seeding out of pools) will be set by the USSSA Baseball National Committee.
- 6.02** 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.
- 6.03** All teams receiving berths to World Series must participate in their home state’s State Championship Tournament provided such a State Championship Tournament is played. Failure to participate in the State Championship Tournament if played will result in forfeiture of the World Series berth. State Directors has the authority to waive this rule with approval of the Association’s Executive Vice President of Baseball.
- 6.04** State Directors must approve all Entry Forms and Official On-Line Rosters of teams entering World Series. If a state does not have a State Director, then the Association’s Executive Vice President of Baseball can give such approval. A properly completed Electronic Transmittal must accompany each Entry Form and Entry Fee for World Series participation. State Directors may not issue an Electronic Transmittal for teams from another state. Rosters approved by State Directors cannot be protested except for age violations or acts of fraud.
- 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** The USSSA Baseball National Committee will assign awards packages to all World Series.

- 6.08** A team must participate in the highest World Series in which it wins (is awarded) a berth unless the team is reclassified by the State Director.
- 6.09** A team can play in a higher age World Series but must play at or above their current classification.  
**Rule 6.09 Example:** A 10U AAA team can play up in the 11U AAA or 11U Major World Series but cannot play down in the 11U AA World Series.
- 6.10** Only USSSA licensed baseballs can be used in sanctioned events.
- 6.11** 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.
- 6.12** Pool Play Tie Breaker Recommendations:  
**6.12.A** Head to Head  
**6.12.B** Runs Allowed  
**6.12.C** Run Differential (Max +/- 8 Runs Per Game)  
**6.12.D** USSSA Point System  
**6.12.E** Coin Flip  
**Rule 6.12 Comment:** Once you advance to the next tiebreaker criteria, you do not return to the previous criteria. Runs are considered amongst all teams in the pool not just the tied teams.
- 6.13** Players, coaches, and managers participating in a World Series cannot be charged any additional fees to gain admission to said playing venues. Coaches and managers in World Series are limited to three (3) complementary passes.

## **RULE 7.00 – ACTS OF DISBARMENT**

- 7.01** Acts of disbarment include:
- 7.01.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.
- 7.01.B** Players, coaches, managers, or sponsors threatening an umpire, tournament official, Association Director or Association Officer.
- 7.01.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.
- 7.01.D** Destruction of property or the abuse of hotel / motel property or failure to pay hotel / motel bills.
- 7.01.E** Participating in a tournament in which cash prizes are offered.  
**Rule 7.01.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 standings of the event. These acts shall apply to a player and / or team.
- 7.01.F** Paying or receiving compensation in consideration of participating in baseball competition. These acts shall apply to a player and / or team and / or sponsor.
- 7.01.G** Receiving money directly or indirectly by capitalizing on athletic ability, athletic prominence, or 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 and services if it is done pursuant to a registered personal services contract.
- 7.01.H** By knowingly competing with or against illegal or suspended players. It is always the managers and players responsibility to know eligibility rules. Not knowing the rules is not an excuse for violation of the rules and not an excuse for being suspended or disbarred.
- 7.01.I** By participating in or permitting a fraud to be perpetuated.
- 7.01.J** Any official of the Association who refuses to submit funds to the Association that is due the Association.
- 7.01.K** Competing under an assumed and / or altered name.
- 7.01.L** Submitting a check, for any reason, that cannot be negotiated for payment.
- 7.01.M** Failure to appear after entering a World Series unless reasonable advance notice is given. The USSSA Baseball National Committee shall determine what "reasonable advance notice" is.
- 7.01.N** Purposely using false information to damage, harm, hurt, impair or mar the Association.
- 7.01.O** An illegal player as defined by these By-laws & Rules may be suspended for one year.
- 7.01.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 suspension from any activities of the Association.
- 7.02** Any USSSA Baseball Director or Officer that violates any articles of the Association's constitution or USSSA Baseball National By-laws & Rules may be suspended.

- 7.02.A** 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 suspended.
- 7.02.B** Any USSSA Baseball Director, Officer, Umpire, or participant that is suspended for any reason, shall not be allowed to participate in any capacity within the Association, until such suspension has been lifted.
- 7.03** Only State Directors and / or the USSSA Baseball National Committee, have the authority to issue disbarments 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 Rule 7.00. 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 beyond one (1) year suspension 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 beyond one (1) year suspension.
- 7.04** 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 suspension or disbarment should not be imposed. The decision of the USSSA Baseball National Committee shall be final and binding and is not subject to appeal.
- 7.05** Players or other announced participants, who have been disbarred or declared illegal, may use the appeal process procedure set forth in the constitution, except as limited by the provisions of Rule 7.03.
- 7.06** Any person so disbarred or suspended shall have the right to apply for reinstatement to membership in the Association, on an annual basis, provided the person gives the Disbarment Committee, through National Headquarters, thirty (30) days written notice of his intention to so reapply. The USSSA Baseball National Committee shall act on such applications at the annual meeting of the Association.
- 7.07** State Directors and Officers have the authority to issue indefinite suspensions for players, teams, and other announced participants who fail to meet financial responsibilities to that state's association.
- 7.08** Tournament Directors have the authority to eject a player or team anytime during a tournament.
- 7.09** All reports of suspension must be in writing and submitted to USSSA National Headquarters within five (5) days of the suspension. Copies of such suspensions shall also be sent to the party against whom it is directed.

## **RULE 8.00 – RULES OF PLAY**

Playing rules not specifically covered herein shall follow the Official Rules of Baseball (National League) as published by the Sporting News. The State Director also has the authority to administer rules within his respective state as deemed appropriate with the approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of USSSA Baseball.

### **8.01 Objective of the Game:**

**8.01.A** Baseball is a game between two teams under direction of a manager, played on an enclosed field in accordance with these rules, under the jurisdiction of one (1) or more umpires. The objective of each team is to win by scoring more runs than the opponent scores. The winner of the game shall be that team which shall have scored, in accordance with these rules, the greater number of runs at the conclusion of a regulation game.

### **8.02 The Playing Field & Equipment:**

**8.02.A** The playing field shall be laid out according to the recommended dimensions in Chart 8.02 Figure 1.

<b>AGE DIVISION</b>	<b>BASES</b>	<b>PITCHING</b>	<b>FOUL LINES</b>	<b>CENTER FIELD</b>
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	90'	60' 6"	320'	375'
14U – Pre-Freshman	90'	60' 6"	320'	375'
15U – HS Freshman	90'	60' 6"	320'	375'
16U – HS Sophomore	90'	60' 6"	320'	375'
17U – HS Junior	90'	60' 6"	320'	375'

18U – HS Senior	90'	60' 6"	320'	375'
<b>Chart 8.02 Figure 1</b>				

**8.02.B** All players must 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 part of the uniform shall include a pattern that imitates or suggests the shape of a baseball. In age divisions 12U & younger non-metal cleats must be worn and in age divisions 13U & older traditional metal baseball spikes may be worn. Managers and coaches must wear a baseball cap with team insignia and be properly dressed. Managers and coaches may wear athletic type shorts. While in the field, as a defensive player or on the field as an offensive coach, baseball caps must be worn.

**Rule 8.02.B Comment:** Protests on uniforms will not be allowed. It shall be the League / Tournament Director's responsibility regarding uniform legality. Violation of the uniform rules will result in the violator being allowed to immediately conform or be removed from the game.

**8.02.C** All offensive players shall use a double ear-flap batting helmet whenever at bat, on deck, on base or any other time outside the dugout and the ball is live. **Batboys, if used must wear a double ear-flap batting helmet when outside the dugout.**

**Rule 8.02.C Comment:** If the umpire observes any violation of these rules, he shall direct the violation to be corrected. If the violation is not corrected within a reasonable time, in the umpire's judgment, the umpire shall eject the offender from the game.

**8.02.D** The catcher must wear all appropriate protective gear: protective catcher's helmet with face mask and throat guard, chest protector, shin guards and protective cup.

**8.02.D.1** In age divisions 12U & younger the catcher's protective helmet must fully cover both ears.

**8.02.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 quarters (2 3/4) inches and the maximum length shall not exceed thirty-six (36) inches. 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. The bat shall be constructed of wood, aluminum, or any other material or combination of materials unless such materials or combination of materials are specifically disapproved by USSSA. Such disapproval shall be in the sole discretion of USSSA and may be made without notice.

**Rule 8.02.E Comment:** If the umpire discovers that the bat does not conform to Rule 8.03.G until a time during or after which bat has been used in play, it shall not be grounds for declaring the batter out, or ejection from the game.

**8.02.E.1** All bats for age based divisions 14U & younger 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.

**8.02.E.2** All bats for scholastic (grade) based divisions 14U – 18U must conform to the NFHS bat limitations including a length to weight ratio no greater than a negative three (-3) ounces.

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

**8.03** Game Preliminaries:

**8.03.A** For tournament play, a flip of a coin between the two teams will determine the home team for each pool play game, championship and "if" game. For bracket play games up to but not including the championship game, the highest seed team will be home team.

**8.03.B** In league, qualifying tournament and state championship play, time limits may be used with approval of the League / Tournament / State Director.

**8.03.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.

**8.03.D** In all age divisions starting players may re-enter 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.

**8.03.E** **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 8.04.E Comment:** A ninth (9th) player may be added to the batting order as soon as he becomes available.

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

**8.03.F.1** When playing with a ten (10) player line-up, the player in the Extra Hitter position, while not actually playing a defensive position, will be treated as such for substitution purposes.

**Rule 8.03.F.1 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.

**8.03.F.2** When playing with a continuous line-up, all players other than the nine (9) defensive position players are Extra Hitters and may move freely in defensive positions.

**Rule 8.03.F.2 Approved Ruling:** Any player(s) arriving after the game has begun, shall be added to the bottom on the batting line-up.

**Rule 8.03.F Exception:** For substitutions to the pitching position, see Rule 8.05.D.

**8.03.G** In scholastic (grade) based divisions 14U & older, if the Extra Hitter (EH) is not be utilized, then the Designated Hitter (DH) may be utilized in accordance with the NFHS Association baseball rules.

**8.03.G.1** A DH may be (not mandatory) designated for any one starting player (not just pitchers) and all subsequent substitutes for that player in the game.

**8.03.G.2** A starting defensive player cannot be listed as the DH in the starting lineup.

**8.03.G.3** A DH for said player shall be selected prior to the start of the game, and his name shall be included on the lineup cards presented to the umpire-in-chief and to the official scorer.

**8.03.G.4** Failure to declare a DH prior to the game precludes the use of a DH in the game.

**8.03.G.5** If a pinch hitter or pinch runner for the DH is used, that player becomes the new DH.

**8.03.G.6** The player who was the DH may re-enter as the DH under the re-entry rule.

**8.03.G.7** A DH and the player for whom he is batting are locked into the batting order. No multiple substitutions may be made that will alter the batting order.

**8.03.G.8** The role of the DH is terminated for the remainder of the game when:

**8.03.G.8(a)** The defensive player, or any previous defensive player for whom the DH batted, subsequently bats, pinch-hits, or runs for the DH;

**8.03.G.8(b)** The DH or any previous designated DH assumes a defensive position.

**8.03.H** A regulation game consists of six (6) innings for age divisions 12U & younger and seven (7) innings for age divisions 13U & older, unless the game is:

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

**8.03.H.4** Shortened because any applicable part of Rule 8.03.I has been met; or

**8.03.H.5** Shortened because of any part of Rule 8.04.E.

**8.03.I** Mercy Rules (see Chart 8.03 Figure 1):

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 Figure 1

**Rule 8.03.I 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. Likewise, 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 at that moment and the game will end.

**8.03.J** A regulation game consists of six (6) innings for age divisions 12U & younger and seven (7) innings for age divisions 13U & older, unless the game is:

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

**8.03.J.4** Shortened because any applicable part of Rule 8.03.H has been met; or

**8.03.J.5** Shortened because of any part of Rule 8.04.E.

**8.04** Playing Rules:

- 8.04.A** A team may continue a game with one (1) less player than it started with, whenever a player leaves the game for any reason. A player who has left a game for any reason cannot return to the game.  
**Rule 8.04.A Exception:** If the player left the game for Communicable Disease Procedure reasons.
- 8.04.A.1** If the player leaving the game is a runner, he shall be declared out.
- 8.04.A.2** When the player who has left the game is scheduled to bat, an out shall be declared for each turn at bat.
- 8.04.B** Courtesy runners may at any time be used for the pitcher and catcher of record the previous inning on defense.
- 8.04.B.1** For teams that have substitutes on the bench, the courtesy runner shall be a player not presently in the line-up and may appear as a courtesy runner one time per inning. 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 (if available) will be used without penalty. If no proper courtesy runner is available, the pitcher and / or catcher must run for themselves.
- 8.04.B.2** For teams using a continuous line-up, the courtesy runner shall be the player whom recorded the previous out. If no outs have been recorded in the game, the courtesy runner shall be the previous batter not on base. If a courtesy runner is determined to be ineligible, a proper replacement (if available) will be used without penalty. If no proper courtesy runner is available, the pitcher and / or catcher must run for themselves.
- 8.04.C** In all age divisions, an Intentional Walk may be issued upon announcement from the catcher or pitcher. It is not necessary to throw the four (4) pitches.
- 8.04.D** Whenever a tag play is evident, runners must slide or seek to avoid contact with the fielder and / or catcher. Malicious contact shall supersede all obstruction penalties.  
**Rule 8.04.D Penalty:** Runner shall be called out and may be ejected from the game at the umpire's discretion.  
**Rule 8.04.D Comment:** When enforcing this rule, the umpire should judge the runner's intent. If the umpire adjudges that the contact was unintentional, then the runner shall only be called out. If the umpire adjudges that the contact was intentional and / or malicious, then the runner shall be called out and ejected from the game.
- 8.04.E** If a game is called due to rain, weather, light failure in the case of a night game or other acts of God and cannot be resumed, it is a regulation game if:
- 8.04.E.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 (2) and a fraction half 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 of the third (3rd) inning to tie the score.
- 8.04.E.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 will revert back to last completed inning, or last completed half inning if the home team leads but back no further than the third (3rd) inning.
- Rule 8.04.E.1 Comment:** Games that cannot be declared a regulation game by Rules 8.04.E.1 & 8.04.E.1(a) shall be a suspended game.
- 8.04.E.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) or three (3) and a fraction half 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 of the fourth (4th) inning to tie the score.
- 8.04.E.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 will revert back to last completed inning, or last completed half inning if the home team leads but back no further than the fourth (4th) inning.
- Rule 8.04.E.2 Comment:** Games that cannot be declared a regulation game by Rules 8.04.E.2 & 8.04.E.2(a) shall be a suspended game.
- 8.04.E.3** All games that for any reason cannot be declared a regulation game under these rules will be a suspended game. A suspended game when resumed, will resume from the exact point of suspension.
- 8.05** Pitching Rules & Regulations:
- 8.05.A** Limitations (see Chart 8.05 Figure 1):
- 8.05.A.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 whatever reason extend past midnight or start late at night, past midnight and before the teams take the night break, will count as being played on the scheduled day. Games that for whatever reason are suspended and then resumed after the night break (the next day or another

day), will count as two days. The part of the game played before suspension will count as being played on the scheduled day and the part of the game played once resumed will count as being played on the resumed day.

AGE DIVISION	COLUMN A	COLUMN B	COLUMN C
4U	N/A	N/A	N/A
5U	N/A	N/A	N/A
6U	N/A	N/A	N/A
7U	3	4	6
8U	3	4	6
9U	4	6	8
10U	4	6	8
11U	4	6	9
12U	4	6	9
13U	5	7	11
14U	5	7	11
14U – Pre-Freshman	5	7	11
15U – HS Freshman	5	7	12
16U – HS Sophomore	5	7	12
17U – HS Junior	NONE	UNLIMITED	UNLIMITED
18U – HS Senior	NONE	UNLIMITED	UNLIMITED

**Chart 8.05 Figure 1**

- 8.05.A.2** Column A: The number of innings a pitcher can pitch in one (1) day and still pitch the next day.  
**Rule 8.05.A.2 Example:** In the 10U age division, a pitcher may throw up to four (4) innings in one (1) day and still pitch the next day; but if that pitcher throws four and one-third (4 1/3) innings or more in one (1) day, he cannot pitch the next day.
- 8.05.A.3** Column B: The number of innings a pitcher can pitch in one (1) day.  
**Rule 8.05.A.3 Example:** In the 10U age division, a pitcher may throw a maximum of six (6) innings in one (1) day. The pitcher would not be allowed to pitch the next day.
- 8.05.A.4** Column C: The number of innings a pitcher can pitch in two (2) consecutive days.  
**Rule 8.05.A.4 Example:** In the 10U age division, a pitcher may throw a maximum of eight (8) innings in two (2) consecutive days. This is to be interpreted as a pitcher may pitch any combination of innings that equal eight (8) as long as the first (1st) day pitched does not equal more than four (4) innings due to Column A requirements.
- 8.05.A.5** For purposes of the pitching limitations rules, a pitcher is in violation of the rule if he records any out above the pitching limits.  
**Rule 8.05.A.5 Exception:** Exceeding the maximum innings allowed in the case of a double or triple play will not be counted against the pitcher.
- 8.05.A.6** 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.A.7** It is the responsibility of each team's manager to challenge pitching violations by notifying the umpire-in-chief and then the League / Tournament Director.
- 8.05.A.8** Any innings pitched or outs recorded during a game that is forfeited shall count towards the pitchers' allotted innings.
- 8.05.A.9** In age divisions 12U & younger, a player that pitches two (2) consecutive days must rest the third (3rd) day regardless of the number of innings pitched on either day.  
**Rule 8.05.A.1 – 8.05.A.5 Penalty:** Any violation of pitching limitation rules shall result in immediate forfeiture of the game. This may be done at any point after an illegal out has been recorded while the pitcher in violation is in the game and in the pitching position. 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.B** In age divisions 10U & younger, pitchers will be allowed some leniency in regard to balks. Pitchers will be called for all major violations and warned for minor violations that do not affect the outcome of a play. In all other divisions, balks will be strictly enforced without warning.
- 8.05.C** When a team is charged with its second trip to the mound in the same inning to the same pitcher, the pitcher must be removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game. The pitcher may be moved to another defensive position.
- 8.05.D** 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 the 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.D Penalty:** If the violating pitcher has legal innings remaining, the violation is deemed an illegal substitution and is corrected. If the violating pitcher has no legal innings remaining, it's deemed a pitching limitations violation.

**8.06** 7U & 8U Kid Pitch Specific Rules of Play:

**8.06.A** Nine (9) defensive players will play in the field.

**8.06.B** Balk rules will not apply.

**8.06.C** Batters may not advance to first (1st) base on a dropped / missed third (3rd) strike by the catcher.

**8.06.D** Runners on base cannot 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 8.06.D Exception:** Runners may advance on a batted ball hit to the pitcher and time has not been called.

**8.06.E** Runners can not lead-off but can advance at their own risk (steal) once a pitched ball has passed home plate.

**8.06.E.1** When a runner tries to advance prior to the pitched ball passing home plate, the following will apply:

**8.06.E.1(a)** If the runner advances safely, the umpire will call "Time" and the runner shall return to the base last legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

**8.06.E.1(b)** If the runner is called out, the runner is out.

**8.06.E.1(c)** If the ball is hit, the defensive team has the option of the result of the play or a no pitch.

**8.06.F** Runners may 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 may not advance from third (3rd) base to home on passed balls, wild pitches or dropped / missed third (3rd) strikes by the catcher.

**8.07** Coach Pitch Specific Rules of Play:

**8.07.A** Fair Ball Arc: There will 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 will 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 will 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** Pitcher's Line: A line drawn from the pitcher's circle to the fair ball arc.

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

**8.07.D.2** The pitching coach cannot coach while in the pitching position, either verbally or physically.

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

**Rule 8.07.D Penalty:** If a coach violates this rule before the ball is pitched, first (1st) offense: Warning; second (2nd) offense: Removal of coach as the pitcher for the remainder of the game.

**Rule 8.07.D Additional Penalty:** If a coach violates this rule after the ball is pitched, obstruction will be called.

**8.07.E** The catcher must 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.

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

**8.07.G** The defensive player listed as pitcher cannot 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 are not allowed on the field of play and must coach from the dugout.

**8.07.I** The Infield Fly Rule is not in effect at any time.

**8.07.J** The batting order shall constitute all 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 nine (9) players. The tenth (10th) position in the batting order will be declared an out each time at bat. A tenth (10th) player and all subsequent players may be added to the batting order as soon as they become available.

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

**8.07.L** Bunting is not allowed.

- 8.07.M** The batter shall receive a maximum of six (6) pitches or three (3) swinging strikes. No extra pitches or swings on foul balls.
- 8.07.N** Each batter (player) may only be Intentionally Walked once per game by announcement from the defensive team. Four (4) pitches need not be thrown.
- 8.07.O** Runners may 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 will call "time" after every play and declare the ball dead. "Time" should 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.
- 8.07.S** When a batted ball hits the Pitching Coach, the following rules shall apply:
- 8.07.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.
- 8.07.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.
- 8.08** Machine Pitch Specific Rules of Play:
- 8.08.A** Fair Ball Arc: There will 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.
- 8.08.B** Safety Arc: There will 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.
- 8.08.C** Pitching Circle: There will be a ten (10) foot diameter circle with the front edge set at forty-two (42) feet from the rear point of home plate.
- 8.08.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.
- 8.08.E** Recommended pitching machine speeds:
- 8.08.E.1** 36 M.P.H. – 39 M.P.H. for the 7U age division.
- 8.08.E.2** 39 M.P.H. – 42 M.P.H. for the 8U age division.
- 8.08.F** Ten (10) defensive players will play in the field with four (4) outfielders. The fourth (4th) outfielder may not assume an infield position. All outfielders must stay behind the baselines.
- 8.08.G** The defensive player listed as pitcher cannot leave the pitching circle until the ball is hit.  
**Rule 8.08.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 8.08.G Additional Penalty:** First Offense: Warning. Second Offense: Removal of player from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.
- 8.08.H** Defensive coaches are not allowed on the field of play and must coach from the dugout.
- 8.08.I** The Infield Fly Rule is not in effect at any time.
- 8.08.J** The batting order shall constitute all 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.J.1** Teams may start a game with nine (9) players. The tenth (10th) position in the batting order will be declared an out each time at bat. A tenth (10th) player and all subsequent players may be added to the batting order as soon as they become available.
- 8.08.K** Teams may use free substitution on defense but the batting order must remain the same.
- 8.08.L** Teams may bunt a maximum of two (2) times per inning.
- 8.08.L.1** Fake bunts are prohibited. If a batter "shows" bunt, they are committed to attempt to bunt or take the pitch.  
**Rule 8.08.L.1 Penalty:** A batter who swings after "showing" bunt shall be called out and no runners may advance.
- 8.08.M** The batter shall receive a maximum of six (6) pitches or three (3) swinging strikes. No extra pitches or swings on foul balls.
- 8.08.N** Each batter (player) may only be Intentionally Walked once per game by announcement from the defensive team. Four (4) pitches need not be thrown.
- 8.08.O** Runners may not lead-off or steal bases. A runner is out for leaving the base before the ball is hit or reaches home plate.
- 8.08.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.

- 8.08.Q** A team may score a maximum of seven (7) runs per inning, including the last inning or record three (3) outs.
- 8.08.R** Umpires will call “time” after every play and declare the ball dead. “Time” should 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.
- 8.08.S** When a batted ball hits the pitching machine, the ball is dead, the batter is awarded first (1st) base and all runners advance one (1) base.
- 8.09** T-Ball Specific Rules of Play:
- 8.09.A** Fair Ball Arc: There will 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.
- 8.09.B** Safety Arc: There will 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.
- 8.09.C** Pitching Plate: The pitching plate shall be located at forty-two (42) feet from the front edge of the pitching plate to the rear point of home plate.
- 8.09.D** The catcher shall wear a dual ear-flap catcher’s helmet with mask.
- 8.09.E** Ten (10) defensive players will play in the field with four (4) outfielders. The fourth (4th) outfielder may not assume an infield position. All outfielders must stay behind the baselines.
- 8.09.F** The defensive player listed as pitcher must stay in contact with the pitching plate until the ball is hit.  
**Rule 8.09.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.
- 8.09.G** Defensive coaches are not allowed on the field of play and must coach from the dugout.
- 8.09.H** The Infield Fly Rule is not in effect at any time.
- 8.09.I** The batting order shall constitute all 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.
- 8.09.I.1** Teams may start a game with nine (9) players. The tenth (10th) position in the batting order will be declared an out each time at bat. A tenth (10th) player and all subsequent players may be added to the batting order as soon as they become available.
- 8.09.J** Teams may use free substitution on defense but the batting order must remain the same.
- 8.09.K** Bunting is not allowed.
- 8.09.L** The batter shall receive a maximum of three (3) swings to put the ball in play or is called out. No extra swings on foul balls.
- 8.09.M** Each batter (player) may only be Intentionally Walked once per game by announcement from the defensive team. Four (4) pitches need not be thrown.
- 8.09.N** Runners may not lead-off or steal bases. A runner is out for leaving the base before the ball is hit or reaches home plate.
- 8.09.O** A team may score a maximum of seven (7) runs per inning, including the last inning or record three (3) outs.
- 8.09.P** Umpires will call “time” after every play and declare the ball dead. “Time” should 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.
- 8.09.Q** An eight and one half (8 1/2) inch diameter baseball will be used.

## **RULE 9.00 – UMPIRES**

- 9.01** All tournament and league games played under the jurisdiction and administration of the USSSA Baseball program shall utilize only umpires who are registered with the Association.

## **RULE 10.00 – OFFICIAL SCORER**

- 10.01** The official scorer shall:
- 10.01.A** Observe the game from a position in or near the press box. The 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.
- 10.01.B** Record the official game start time announced by the umpire-in-chief.
- 10.01.C** Report the final score and if applicable, complete signed pitching records for both teams to league / tournament officials immediately following each game.
- 10.02** The official scorer shall not publicly cheer for a particular team from the press box.

## **RULE 11.00 – SPORTSMANSHIP**

- 11.01 All players, coaches and managers will be expected to behave in a sportsmanlike manner at all times.
- 11.02 Any player, coach, manager, sponsor or spectator whose conduct is unbecoming or abusive will at a minimum be reprimanded with a warning. If warranted, the offending party may be removed from the playing field and stands area at the discretion of the Umpires and / or the League / Tournament Director.
- 11.03 Abusive language or cursing will not be tolerated under any circumstances and will be an automatic ejection.
- 11.04 Throwing of equipment will be an automatic ejection.
- 11.05 A team may be forced to forfeit and / or be removed from the tournament, if necessary.
- 11.06 Any player, coach, manager, sponsor or spectator leaving their position or base on the playing field or leaving the bench or dugout area or the stands to participate in a fight or brawl will be immediately ejected from the game and may be disbarred pursuant to Rule 7.00.

## **RULE 12.00 – EJECTIONS**

- 12.01 If a coach is ejected from a game, he must sit out the remainder of that game. Additional penalties may be assessed as deemed by the League / Tournament Director.
- 12.02 A player ejected must sit out the remainder of that game.
- 12.03 Anyone ejected may be asked to leave the park at the discretion of the League / Tournament Director.
- 12.04 As these rules indicate, the matter of disorderly conduct will be taken seriously. The leagues and 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 your players, coaches, manager, sponsors and spectators to be extra aware of good sportsmanship.

## **RULE 13.00 – PROTESTS**

- 13.01 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. No protest will be allowed following the game. League / Tournament officials will rule on all protests and their decision will be final.  
*Rule 13.01 Comment:* Leagues may develop their own method of recording and settling protests.
- 13.02 The Protest fee is \$100.00 cash. The fee shall be returned only if the protest is upheld.
- 13.03 A League / Tournament Director will be available at all times. If you have any questions, please talk to the League / Tournament Director.

## **RULE 14.00 – “A” CLASSIFICATION DRAFTED LEAGUE PROGRAM**

- 14.01 The “A” Classification Drafted League program gives traditional league based teams the opportunity to compete amongst teams formed by a similar system. The “A” Classification is a playing level for actual drafted league teams from USSSA Sanctioned Leagues. Age divisions include 5U – 18U.
- 14.02 Any league that meets the below guidelines and registers one hundred percent (100%) of their league teams will be allowed to participate. State Directors may approve others with the approval of the Association’s Executive Vice President of Baseball.
- 14.03 Qualifying for the “A” Classification:
  - 14.03.A Teams will qualify through their approved Drafted League.
  - 14.03.B Each State Director will approve leagues in their respective state based on the criteria set forth by the USSSA Baseball National Committee.
  - 14.03.C Leagues must have an approved draft system for league play. This system must include no more than **four (4)** protected / frozen players per team.
  - 14.03.D Leagues must submit their complete rules, by-laws, and schedules for approval.
  - 14.03.E A league must consist of at least an eight (8) game schedule.
  - 14.03.F Eligible players must compete in at least seventy five percent (75%) of the scheduled games.
- 14.04 Each State Director will set guidelines for teams to qualify for the “A” Classification State Championships.
- 14.05 Each State Director will set guidelines for teams to advance from their State Championships to the World Series.
- 14.06 Drafted League (A & All-Star) Specific Rules of Play:
  - 14.06.A 9U Age Division ONLY - Runners cannot lead-off but can advance at their own risk (steal) once the pitch is released by the pitcher.
    - 14.06.A.1 When a runner tries to advance prior to a released pitch, the following will apply:
      - 14.06.A.1(a) If the runner is called safe, the runner returns to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.
      - 14.06.A.1(b) If the runner is called out, the runner is out.
      - 14.06.A.1(c) If the ball is hit, the defensive team has the option of the result of the play or a no-pitch.

- 14.06.B** 9U Age Division ONLY - Runners may 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 may not advance from third (3rd) base on passed balls or wild pitches.

## **RULE 15.00 – DRAFTED LEAGUE ALL-STAR PROGRAM**

- 15.01** The Drafted League All-Star program gives traditional league based All-Star teams the opportunity to compete amongst All-Star teams formed by a similar system. The “A” Classification is a playing level for actual drafted teams to participate amongst themselves. Players may play with an All-Star team and be on an AA, AAA or Major team, but must comply with Rule 3.20. There are two (2) divisions within the All Star Program to help insure that teams are competing against like opponents from similar leagues. Age divisions include 5U – 18U.
- 15.02** Any league that meets the below guidelines and registers one hundred percent (100%) of their league teams will be allowed to participate. State Directors may approve others with the approval of the Association’s Executive Vice President of Baseball.
- 15.03** Qualifying for All-Stars:
- 15.03.A** Leagues must meet all the qualifications set forth under Rules 14.03.A – 14.03.F.
  - 15.03.B** All-Star teams may be chosen by any method.
  - 15.03.C** Leagues may have multiple All-Star teams in any age division.
  - 15.03.D** Only State Directors can register and enter an Official On-Line Roster for All-Star teams.
  - 15.03.E** The League President (or Highest Officer) must submit an official roster form to the State Director for approval to be eligible to compete as an All-Star team.
- 15.04** There are two divisions of play for All-Star teams, National and American.
- 15.04.A** National Division: All-Star team players cannot have participated on a travel baseball team after April 1st of the current year. All-Star team players that have participated on a travel baseball team between January 1st and April 1st of the current year must not have participated on a team of higher classification than AA. **Players may continue to play in the AA program after April 1st. National Division teams may have no more than three players on their roster that have participated on a tournament team during this time period. National Division All-Star teams cannot begin playing together before Memorial Day weekend. With the assistance of the USSSA League National Director, States may adopt guidelines to have two (2) divisions on the state level.**
- Rule 15.04.A Note:** All-Star team players that have participated on a travel baseball team between January 1st and April 1st of the current year that have participated on a team of higher classification than AA (i.e.; AAA, Major), are ineligible for National Division participation but are eligible for American Division participation as defined by these rules.
- Rule 15.04.A Comment:** For the purpose of this rule, Memorial Day weekend is defined as starting at 6:00 P.M., the calendar Friday before Memorial Day as observed by the Federal Government.
- 15.04.B** American Division: All-Star teams that do not meet the requirements set forth under Rule 15.04.A but still meet the requirements set forth under Rules 15.01 – 15.03.
- Rule 15.04.B Note:** If an American Division tournament does not make, American Division teams must participate in the classification the team would otherwise be eligible.
- 15.05** Each State Director will set guidelines for teams to qualify for the All-Star State Championships.
- 15.06** Each State Director will set guidelines for teams to advance from their State Championships to the World Series.

## **RULE 16.00 – ITEMS NOT SPECIFICALLY COVERED**

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

## **NOTES:**