



**UNITED STATES SPECIALTY  
SPORTS ASSOCIATION**

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

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**UNITED STATES SPECIALTY SPORTS ASSOCIATION**

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## **FORWARD**

The USSSA Baseball National Committee at the Thirty Ninth Annual USSSA National Convention in Scottsdale, Arizona, November 12 - 19, 2006, voted to incorporate the Official Rules of Baseball as published by The Sporting News including Notes and Case Book & Comments sections directly into the Official Baseball National By-laws & Rules at the appropriate places. Notes are a simplified explanation of the written rule or particular situation pertaining to the written rule. The Case Book & Comments help interpret and / or elaborate on the basic written rules and in essence have the same power, effect, right, influence, weight, authorization and authority as the written rules themselves when applied to the particular sections for which they are intended. This arrangement is designed to give quicker access to any written language pertaining to the Official Baseball National By-laws & Rules and does not require a reader to refer to different sections in considering the application of a particular written rule to a particular situation or play.

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 Changes Highlighted in Yellow**

### **DEFINITIONS OF TERMS**

- ADJUDGED**..... is a judgment decision by the umpire.
- APPEAL**..... the act of a fielder in claiming violation of the rules by the offensive team.
- BALK**..... an illegal act by the pitcher with a runner or runners on base, entitling all runners to advance one base.
- BALL**..... a pitch, which does not enter the strike zone in flight and is not struck at by the batter. If the pitch touches the ground and bounces through the strike zone, it is a "ball." If such a pitch touches the batter, he shall be awarded first base. If the batter swings at such a pitch after two strikes, the ball cannot be caught, for the purposes of Rule 8.06.H.3 and 8.06.L.2. If the batter hits such a pitch, the ensuing action shall be the same as if he hit the ball in flight.
- BASE**..... one of four points which must be touched by a runner in order to score a run; more usually applied to the canvas bags and the rubber plate which mark the base points.
- BASE COACH**..... a team member who is stationed in the coach's box at first or third base to direct the batter and the runner(s).
- BASE ON BALLS**..... an award of first base granted to a batter who, during his time at bat, receives four pitches outside the strike zone.
- BATTER**..... an offensive player who takes his position in the batter's box.
- BATTER RUNNER**..... a term that identifies the offensive player who has just finished his time at bat until he is put out or until the play on which he became a runner ends.
- BATTER'S BOX**..... the area within which the batter shall stand during his time at bat.
- BENCH**..... the seating facilities reserved for players, substitutes and other team members.
- BERTH**..... an official invitation to participate in an event (tournament) such as a State Championship or World Series. When a team qualifies (wins a berth) for a State Championship or World Series, the team roster will be frozen, whether the team accepts the berth or not. (also, see definition of PASSED DOWN BERTH)
- BRACKET PLAY**..... games played in plausible order eliminating losing teams and advancing winning teams to determine a champion.
- BUNT**..... a batted ball not swung at, but intentionally met with the bat and tapped slowly within the infield.
- CALLED GAME**..... a game in which, for any reason, the umpire-in-chief terminates play.
- CATCH**..... the act of a fielder in getting secure possession in his hand or glove of a ball in flight and firmly holding it; providing he does not use his cap, protector, pocket or any other part of his uniform in getting possession. It is not a catch, however, if simultaneously or immediately following his contact with the ball, he collides with a player, or with a wall, or if he falls down, and as a result of such collision or falling, drops the ball. It is not a catch if a fielder touches a fly ball, which then hits a member of the offensive team or an umpire and then is caught by another defensive player. If the fielder has made the catch and drops the ball while in the act of making a throw following the catch, the ball shall be adjudged to have been caught. In establishing the validity of the catch, the fielder shall hold the ball long enough to prove that he has complete control of the ball and that his release of the ball is voluntary and intentional. A catch is legal if the ball is finally held by any fielder, even though juggled, or held by

another fielder before it touches the ground. Runners may leave their bases the instant the first fielder touches the ball. A fielder may reach over a fence, railing, rope or other line of demarcation to make a catch. He may jump on top of a railing, or canvas that may be in foul ground. No interference should be allowed when a fielder reaches over a fence, a railing, a rope or into a stand to catch a ball. He does so at his own risk. If a fielder, attempting a catch at the edge of the dugout, is "held up" and kept from an apparent fall by a player or players of either team and the catch is made, it shall be allowed.

- CATCHER**.....the fielder who takes his position back of the home base.
- CATCHER'S BOX**.....that area within which the catcher shall stand until the pitcher delivers the ball.
- COACH**.....a team member appointed by the manager to perform such duties as the manager may designate, such as but not limited to acting as base coach.
- COURTESY RUNNER**.....a player inserted offensively to run for the pitcher or catcher of record the previous inning on defense. The re-entry status of the courtesy runner, pitcher and catcher shall not be affected.
- DEAD BALL**.....a ball out of play because of a legally created temporary suspension of play.
- DEFENSE**.....the team, or any player of the team, in the field.
- DESIGNATED HITTER**.....a hitter designated to bat for any starting player and all subsequent substitute players as described in Rule 8.06.N.
- DIRECTOR**.....the association, league or tournament official charged with enforcing these By-laws & Rules and resolving any disputes involving these By-laws & Rules.
- DOUBLE PLAY**.....a play by the defense in which two (2) offensive players are put out as a result of a continuous action, providing there is no error between putouts. A force double play is one in which both putouts are force plays. A reverse force double play is one in which the first out is a force play and the second out is made on a runner for whom the force is removed by reason of the first out.
- DUGOUT**.....(see definition of BENCH)
- ERR**.....action of a player or team to commit a mistake (to commit an error, is to Err).
- EXTRA HITTER (EH)**.....an extra offensive player giving a team a ten (10) player line-up that must be declared before the start of the game and used the remainder of the game. The player in the EH position, while not actually playing defensive, will be treated as such for substitution purposes.
- FAIR BALL**.....a batted ball that settles on fair ground between home and first base, or between home and third base, or that is on or over fair territory when bounding to the outfield past first or third base, or that touches first, second or third base, or that first falls on fair territory on or beyond first base or third base, or that, while on or over fair territory touches the person of an umpire or player, or that, while over fair territory, passes out of the playing field in flight. A fair fly shall be judged according to the relative position of the ball and the foul line, including the foul pole, and not as to whether the fielder is on fair or foul territory at the time he touches the ball. If a fly ball lands in the infield between home and first base, or home and third base, and then bounces to foul territory without touching a player or umpire and before passing first or third base, it is a foul ball; or if the ball settles on foul territory or is touched by a player on foul territory, it is a foul ball. If a fly ball lands on or beyond first or third base and then bounces to foul territory, it is a fair hit. Parks, increasingly, are erecting tall foul poles at the fence line with a wire netting extending along the side of the pole on fair territory above the fence to enable the umpires more accurately to judge fair and foul balls.
- FAIR TERRITORY**.....that part of the playing field within, and including the first base and third base lines, from home base to the bottom of the playing field fence and perpendicularly upwards. All foul lines are in fair territory.
- FIELDER**.....any defensive player.
- FLY BALL**.....a batted ball that goes high in the air in flight.
- FORCE PLAY**.....a play in which a runner legally loses his right to occupy a base by reason of the batter becoming a runner. Confusion regarding this play is removed by remembering that frequently the "force" situation is removed during the play. Example: Man on first, one out, ball hit sharply to the first baseman, who touches the bag, the batter-runner is out. The force is removed at that moment and runner advancing to second must be tagged. If there had been a runner on third or second, and either of these runners scored before the tag-out at second, the run counts. Had the first baseman thrown to second and the ball then had been returned to first, the play at second was a force out, making two outs, and the return throw to first ahead of the runner would have made three outs. In that case, no run would score. Example: Not a force out; one out, runners on first and third. Batter flies out for the second out, the runner on third tags up and scores. Runner on first tries to retouch before throw from fielder reaches first baseman, but does not get back in time and is out. Three outs. If, in umpire's judgment, the runner from third touched home before the ball was held at first base, the run counts.

**FORFEITED GAME**..... a game declared ended by the umpire-in-chief in favor of the offended team by the score of 6 to 0 for six inning games or 7 to 0 for seven inning games, for violation of these rules.

**FOUL BALL**..... a batted ball that settles on foul territory between home and first base, or between home and third base, or that bounds past first or third base on or over foul territory, or that first falls on foul territory beyond first or third base, or that, while on or over foul territory, touches the person of an umpire or player, or any object foreign to the natural ground. A foul fly shall be judged according to the relative position of the ball and the foul line, including the foul pole, and not as to whether the infielder is on foul or fair territory at the time he touches the ball. A batted ball not touched by a fielder, which hits the pitcher's rubber and rebounds into foul territory, between home and first, or between home and third base is a foul ball.

**FOUL TERRITORY**..... that part of the playing field outside the first and third base lines extended to the fence and perpendicularly upwards.

**FOUL TIP**..... a batted ball that goes sharp and direct from the bat to the catcher's hands and is legally caught. It is not a foul tip unless caught and any foul tip that is caught is a strike, and the ball is in play. It is not a catch if it is a rebound, unless the ball has first touched the catcher's glove or hand.

**FROZEN ROSTER**..... the roster of a qualified team by means of winning a Berth or accepting a Pass Down Berth. (also known as QUALIFIED ROSTER)

**GROUND BALL**..... a batted ball that rolls or bounces close to the ground.

**HOME TEAM**..... the team that assumes the defensive position in the top half of each inning and bats in the bottom half of each inning.

**ILLEGAL**..... contrary to these rules.

**ILLEGAL PITCH**..... a pitch delivered to the batter when the pitcher does not have his pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate; or a quick return pitch. An illegal pitch when runners are on base is a balk.

**INFIELDER**..... a fielder who occupies a position in the infield.

**INFIELD FLY**..... a fair fly ball (not including a line drive nor an attempted bunt) which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort, when first and second, or first, second and third bases are occupied, before two are out. The pitcher, catcher and any outfielder who stations himself in the infield on the play shall be considered infielders for the purpose of this rule. When it seems apparent that a batted ball will be an Infield Fly, the umpire shall immediately declare "Infield Fly" for the benefit of the runners. If the ball is near the baselines, the umpire shall declare "Infield Fly, if Fair." The ball is alive and runners may advance at the risk of the ball being caught, or retouch and advance after the ball is touched, the same as on any fly ball. If the hit becomes a foul ball, it is treated the same as any foul. If a declared Infield Fly is allowed to fall untouched to the ground, and bounces foul before passing first or third base, it is a foul ball. If a declared Infield Fly falls untouched to the ground outside the baseline, and bounces fair before passing first or third base, it is an Infield Fly. On the infield fly rule the umpire is to rule whether the ball could ordinarily have been handled by an infielder, not by some arbitrary limitation such as the grass, or the base lines. The umpire must rule also that a ball is an infield fly, even if handled by an outfielder, if, in the umpire's judgment, the ball could have been as easily handled by an infielder. The infield fly is in no sense to be considered an appeal play. The umpire's judgment must govern, and the decision should be made immediately. When an infield fly rule is called, runners may advance at their own risk. If on an infield fly rule, the infielder intentionally drops a fair ball, the ball remains in play despite the provisions of Rule 8.06.H.12. The infield fly rule takes precedence.

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

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

**INNING**..... that portion of a game within which the teams alternate on offense and defense and in which there are three putouts for each team. Each team's time at bat is a half inning.

**INTERFERENCE**..... offensive interference is an act by the team at bat, which interferes with, obstructs, impedes, hinders or confuses any fielder attempting to make a play. If the umpire declares the batter, batter-runner, or a runner out for interference, all other runners shall return to the last base that was in the judgment of the umpire, legally touched at the time of the interference, unless otherwise provided by these rules. Defensive interference is an act by a fielder, which hinders or prevents a batter from hitting a pitch. Umpire's interference occurs when an umpire hinders, impedes or prevents a catcher's throw attempting to prevent a stolen base, or when a fair ball touches an umpire on fair territory before passing a fielder. Spectator interference occurs when a spectator reaches out of the stands, or goes on the playing field, and touches a live ball. On any interference, the ball is dead. In the event the batter-runner has not reached first base, runners shall return to the base last occupied at the time of the pitch.

**LEAGUE**.....a group of teams that play each other under these rules for a league championship.

**LEGAL**.....in accordance with these rules.

**LIVE BALL**.....a ball which is in play.

**LINE DRIVE**.....a batted ball that goes sharp and direct from the bat to a fielder without touching the ground.

**MANAGER**.....a person appointed by the club to be responsible for the team's actions on the field, and to represent the team in communications with the umpire and the opposing team.

**MERCY RULE**.....a run limitations rule intended to limit the margin of victory by the winning team

**OBSTRUCTION**.....the act of a fielder who, while not in possession of the ball and not in the act of fielding the ball, impedes the progress of any runner. If a fielder is about to receive a thrown ball and if the ball is in flight directly toward and near enough to the fielder so he must occupy his position to receive the ball he may be considered "in the act of fielding a ball." It is entirely up to the judgment of the umpire as to whether a fielder is in the act of fielding a ball. After a fielder has made an attempt to field a ball and missed, he can no longer be in the "act of fielding" the ball. For example: If an infielder dives at a ground ball and the ball passes him and he continues to lie on the ground and delays the progress of the runner, he very likely has obstructed the runner.

**OFFENSE**.....the team, or any player of the team, at bat.

**OFFICIAL SCORER**.....the person designated to record the plays of the game in an official scorebook.

**ON-LINE ROSTER**.....an internet based on-line listing in the USSSA system of all eligible member players on a team with a maximum of twenty. (also known as OFFICIAL ON-LINE ROSTER)

**OUT**.....one of the three required retirements of an offensive team during its time at bat; and a declaration by the umpire that a batter's, batter-runner's, or runner's offensive turn is over.

**OUTFIELDER**.....a fielder who occupies a position in the outfield.

**OVER-RUN**.....the act of an offensive player when he runs to a base, other than when advancing from home to first base, is with such momentum that he loses contact with the base.

**OVER-SLIDE**.....the act of an offensive player when he slides to a base, other than when advancing from home to first base, is with such momentum that he loses contact with the base.

**PARAPHERNALIA**.....any part of or article of equipment worn by or used by any offensive or defensive player or umpire when properly attached to the person for whom the article of equipment is worn by or used by.

**PASSED DOWN BERTH**....an official invitation to participate in an event (tournament) such as a State Championship or World Series that is passed down to a team lower in the final standings in a league or tournament. When a team accepts a Pass Down Berth, the team roster will be frozen. When a team declines a Pass Down Berth, the team roster will not be frozen.

**PENALTY**.....the application of these rules following an illegal act.

**PERSON**.....a player or umpire or any part of his body, clothing, uniform or his equipment.

**PITCH**.....a ball delivered to the batter by the pitcher.

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

**PIVOT FOOT**.....the pitcher's foot that is in contact with the pitcher's plate as the pitcher delivers the pitch.

**PLAY**.....an action or series of actions by a team during the course of play; and the umpire's order to start the game or to resume action following any dead ball.

**POOL PLAY**.....a series of games played between teams grouped together.

**QUALIFIED ROSTER**.....the roster of a qualified team by means of winning a Berth or accepting a Pass Down Berth. (also known as FROZEN ROSTER)

**QUICK PITCH**.....one made with obvious intent to catch a batter off balance. It is an illegal pitch.

**REGULATION GAME**.....see Rule 8.04.L.

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

**ROSTER**.....an internet based on-line listing in the USSSA system of all eligible member players on a team with a maximum of twenty. (also known as OFFICIAL ON-LINE ROSTER)

**RUN (or SCORE)**.....the score made by an offensive player who advances from batter to runner and touches first, second, third and home bases in that order without being put out.

**RUN-DOWN**.....the act of the defense in an attempt to put out a runner between bases.

**RUNNER**.....an offensive player who is advancing toward, or touching, or returning to any base.

**SAFE**.....a declaration by the umpire that a runner is entitled to the base for which he was trying.

**SCORE (or RUN)**.....the score made by an offensive player who advances from batter to runner and touches first, second, third and home bases in that order without being put out.

**SET POSITION**.....one of the two legal pitching positions.

**SQUEEZE PLAY**.....a term to designate a play when a team, with a runner on third (3rd) base, attempts to score that runner by means of a bunt.

**STRIKE**.....a legal pitch when so called by the umpire, which is struck at by the batter and is missed; is not struck at, if any part of the ball passes through any part of the strike zone; is fouled by the

batter when he has less than two strikes; is bunted foul; touches the batter as he strikes at it; touches the batter in flight in the strike zone; or becomes a foul tip.

**STRIKE ZONE**..... that area over home plate the upper limit of which is a horizontal line at the midpoint between the top of the shoulders and the top of the uniform pants, and the lower level is a line at the hollow beneath the kneecap. The strike zone shall be determined from the batter's stance as the batter is prepared to swing at a pitch.

**SUSPENDED GAME**..... a called game, which is to be completed at a later time or date.

**TAG**..... the action of a fielder in touching a base with his body while holding the ball securely and firmly in his hand or glove; or touching a runner with the ball, or with his hand or glove holding the ball, while holding the ball securely and firmly in his hand or glove.

**THROW**..... the act of propelling the ball with the hand and arm to a given objective and is to be distinguished, always, from the pitch.

**TIE GAME**..... a regulation game, which is called when each team has the same number of runs.

**TIME**..... the announcement by an umpire of a legal interruption of play, during which the ball is dead.

**TIME LIMIT**..... a predetermined length of time for a game in which no new inning may be started after.

**TOUCH**..... to touch a player or umpire is to touch any part of his body, his clothing or his equipment.

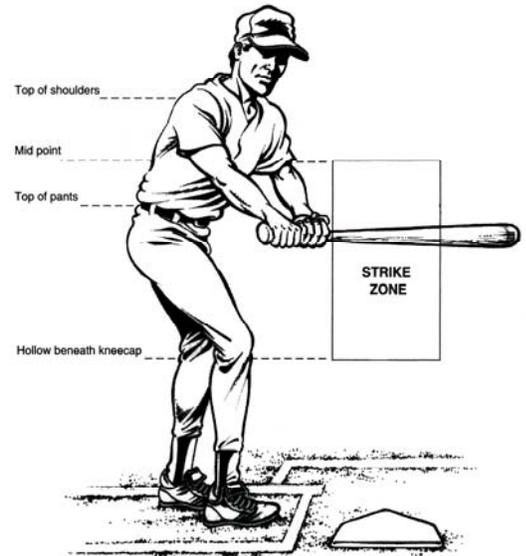
**TOURNAMENT**..... a group of teams that play each other in a prearranged format under these rules for a tournament championship.

**TRIPLE PLAY**..... a play by the defense in which three (3) offensive players are put out as a result of a continuous action, providing there is no error between putouts.

**VISITING TEAM**..... the team that bats in the top half of each inning and assumes the defensive position in the bottom half of each inning.

**WILD PITCH**..... a pitch so high, so low, or so wide of the plate that it cannot be handled with ordinary effort by the catcher.

**WIND UP POSITION**..... one of the two legal pitching positions.



## **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 league and tournament competition that leads to state championships and world championships in their respective competitive classes and age divisions.

## **RULE 2.00 – MEMBERSHIP & PARTICIPATION**

**2.01** **TEAM MEMBERSHIP** – A team 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. A & All-Star classification teams are defined by the method of establishment (see Rule 14.00).

## **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** A team roster must be composed of not more than twenty (20) eligible players.  
**Rule 3.02 Comment:** If applicable, coaches or managers must be included in the twenty (20) on the team 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 percent (50%) of the players on the team's Official On-Line Roster.
- 3.06** Age Eligibility:  
**3.06.A** In age divisions 4U – 14U, any player who before May 1st of the current season reaches the below listed birthday in Column "B" is not eligible to participate in the below listed age division in Column "A" and must play in the next older division.

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

- 3.06.B** In scholastic age divisions 14U – 18U, participation is based on age and scholastic grade. Any player that does not meet the below listed birthday in Column "B", must meet the below listed grade restriction in column "A" **AND** the below listed age restriction in Column "C". Any player that does not meet **BOTH**, must play in the next older division.

<b>COLUMN A AGE – GRADE DIVISION</b>	<b>COLUMN B BIRTHDAY</b>	<b>COLUMN C MEETS GRADE NOT BIRTHDAY</b>
<b>14U – Pre-Freshman</b>	<b>Fifteenth</b>	<b>Sixteenth</b>
15U – HS Freshman	Sixteenth	Seventeenth
16U – HS Sophomore	Seventeenth	Eighteenth
17U – HS Junior	Eighteenth	Nineteenth
18U – HS Senior	Nineteenth	Twentieth

- 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 listed as a member on an eligible team's Official On-Line Roster.
- 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. Players will be bound to this qualified 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. Players will be bound to this qualified 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 qualified 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 qualified 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 qualified team's Official On-Line Rosters must meet the following requirements:
  - 3.09.F.1 Player(s) cannot be on another qualified 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 qualified team of higher classification regardless of age division during the current season.
  - 3.09.F.3 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 By-laws & 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.
- 3.11 A player that is released from a qualified team's Official On-Line Roster cannot return to that team during the current season.
- 3.12 A team with a qualified 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 qualified Official On-Line Roster. Players from a qualified disband team may not be added to a lower classification team 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 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. In the scholastic divisions (15U and older), 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 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.
- 3.18 A player may participate on multiple teams but only one per age division and only one per event, week or weekend.
- 3.19 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 teams.

## **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 only participate in their respective home state's Level 1 State Championship Tournament and only one per season.
- 5.04 Roster composition will be as follows:
  - 5.04.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.
  - 5.04.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.
  - 5.04.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.
- 5.05 A team may participate in multiple Level 2 State Championship Tournaments and may cross state boundaries if allowed by the host 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 re-classified 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**

### **8.01 OBJECTIVE OF THE GAME –**

- 8.01.A Baseball is a game between two teams of nine (9) or ten (10) players each, under direction of a manager, played on an enclosed field in accordance with these rules, under the jurisdiction of one (1) or more umpires.
- 8.01.B The objective of each team is to win by scoring more runs than the opponent scores.

**8.01.C** 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.

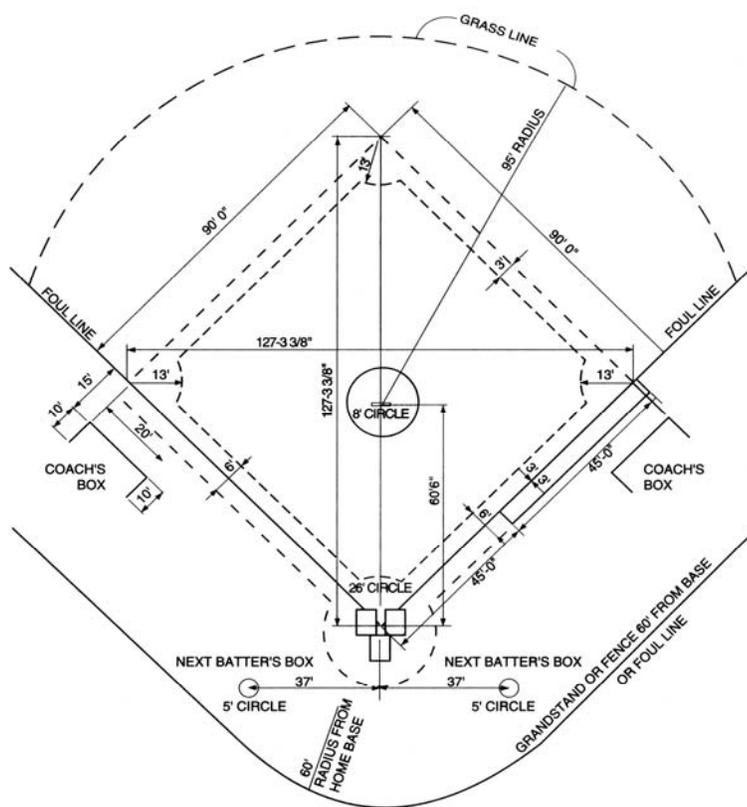
**8.02 PLAYING FIELD & EQUIPMENT –**

**8.02.A** The playing field shall be laid out according to the recommended dimensions and diagrams below.

AGE DIVISION	BASES	PITCHING	FOUL LINES	CENTER FIELD
4U	55'	N/A	140'	175'
5U	55'	N/A	140'	175'
6U	55'	N/A	140'	175'
7U	60'	40'	150'	185'
8U	60'	40'	160'	185'
9U	65'	44'	170'	190'
10U	65'	46'	180'	210'
11U	70'	50'	190'	230'
12U	70'	50'	230'	275'
13U	80'	54'	260'	300'
14U – 54/80	80'	54'	275'	300'
14U – 60/90	90'	60' 6"	320'	375'
<b>14U – Pre-Freshman</b>	<b>90'</b>	<b>60' 6"</b>	<b>320'</b>	<b>375'</b>
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'

**Note:** All below referenced measurements are based on a regulation size field. See Rule 8.02.A above for fields requiring smaller dimensions.

**8.02.B** The infield shall be a ninety (90) foot square. The outfield shall be the area between two foul lines formed by extending two (2) sides of the square, as in Diagram 1. The distance from home base to the nearest fence, stand or other obstruction on fair territory shall be two hundred fifty (250) feet or more. A distance of three hundred twenty (320) feet or more along the foul lines, and three hundred seventy five (375) feet or more to center field is preferable. The infield shall be graded so that the base lines and home plate are level. The pitcher's plate shall be ten (10) inches above the level of home plate. The degree of slope from a point six (6) inches in front of the pitcher's plate to a point six (6) feet toward home plate shall be one (1) inch to one (1) foot, and such degree of slope shall be uniform as in Diagram 3. The infield and outfield including the boundary lines are fair territory and all other area is foul territory. It is desirable that the line from home base through the pitcher's plate to second base shall run East - Northeast. It is recommended that the distance from home base to the backstop and from the base lines to the nearest fence, stand or other obstruction on foul territory shall be sixty (60) feet or more. After the location of home base is determined, measure one hundred twenty seven (127) feet, three and three eighths (3 3/8) inches in the desired direction to establish second (2nd) base. From home base, measure ninety (90) feet toward first (1st) base; from second (2nd) base, measure ninety (90) feet toward first (1st) base; the intersection of these lines establishes first (1st) base. From home base, measure ninety (90) feet toward third (3rd) base; from second (2nd) base, measure ninety (90) feet toward third (3rd) base; the intersection of these lines establishes third (3rd) base. The distance between first (1st) base and third (3rd) base is one hundred twenty seven (127) feet,



**DIAGRAM 1**

The distance from home base to the backstop and from the base lines to the nearest fence, stand or other obstruction on foul territory shall be sixty (60) feet or more. After the location of home base is determined, measure one hundred twenty seven (127) feet, three and three eighths (3 3/8) inches in the desired direction to establish second (2nd) base. From home base, measure ninety (90) feet toward first (1st) base; from second (2nd) base, measure ninety (90) feet toward first (1st) base; the intersection of these lines establishes first (1st) base. From home base, measure ninety (90) feet toward third (3rd) base; from second (2nd) base, measure ninety (90) feet toward third (3rd) base; the intersection of these lines establishes third (3rd) base. The distance between first (1st) base and third (3rd) base is one hundred twenty seven (127) feet,

three and three eighths (3 3/8) inches. All measurements from home base shall be from the point where the first (1st) and third (3rd) base lines intersect (the rear point of home base). The catcher's box, the batters' boxes, the coaches' boxes, the three (3) foot first (1st) base lines and the next batter's circles shall be laid out as shown in Diagrams 1 & 2. The foul lines and all other playing lines indicated in the diagrams by solid black lines shall be marked with chalk, paint or other white material. The grass lines and dimensions shown are those used in many fields, but they are not mandatory and each park shall determine the size and shape of the grassed and bare areas of its playing field.

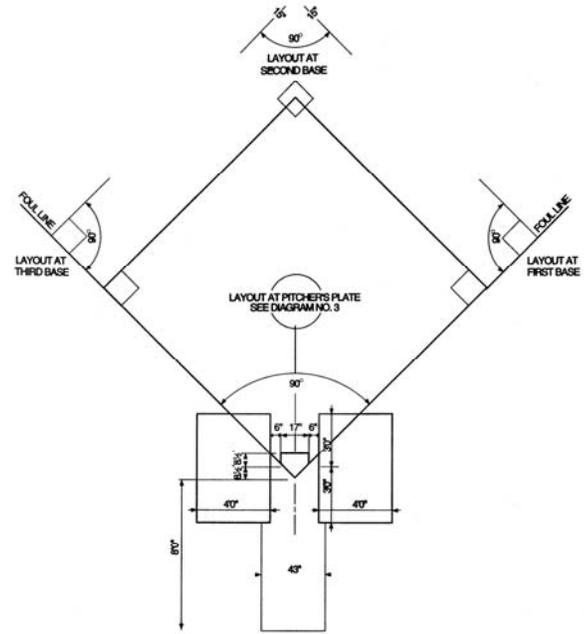


DIAGRAM 2

**8.02.C** Home base shall be marked by a five (5) sided slab of whitened rubber. It shall be a seventeen (17) inch square with two (2) of the corners removed so that one (1) edge is seventeen (17) inches long, two (2) adjacent sides are eight and one half (8 1/2) inches and the remaining two (2) sides are twelve (12) inches and set at an angle to make a point. It shall be set in the ground with the point at the intersection of the lines extending from home base to first (1st) base and to third (3rd) base; with the seventeen (17) inch edge facing the pitcher's plate, and the two (2) twelve (12) inch edges coinciding with the first (1st) and third (3rd) base lines. The top edges of home base shall be beveled and the base shall be fixed in the ground level with the ground surface

**8.02.D** First (1st), second (2nd) and third (3rd) bases shall be marked by white canvas or rubber bags securely attached to the ground as indicated in Diagram 2. The first (1st) and third (3rd) base bags shall be entirely within the infield. The second (2nd) base bag shall be centered on second (2nd) base. The bags shall be fifteen (15) inches square, not less than three (3) nor more than five (5) inches thick, and filled with soft material.

**8.02.E** The pitcher's plate will be a rectangular slab of whitened rubber, measuring eighteen (18) inches by four (4) inches for age divisions 12U and younger and twenty four (24) inches by six (6) inches for age divisions 13U and older. It shall be set in the ground as shown in Diagrams 1, 2 & 3.

**8.02.F** Player's benches shall be provided, one each for the home team and visiting team. They should be roofed and should be enclosed.

**8.02.G** The official ball:

**8.02.G.1** Shall be a sphere formed by yarn wound around a small core of cork, rubber or similar material, covered with two stripes of white horsehide or cowhide, tightly stitched together;

**8.02.G.2** It shall weigh not less than five (5) nor more than five and one fourth (5 1/4) ounces avoirdupois;

**8.02.G.3** It shall measure not less than nine (9) nor more than nine and one fourth (9 1/4) inches in circumference;

**8.02.H** The official bat:

**8.02.H.1** 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;

**8.02.H.2** The maximum diameter shall not exceed two and three fourths (2 3/4) inches;

**8.02.H.3** The maximum length shall not exceed thirty-six (36) inches;

**8.02.H.3** 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.

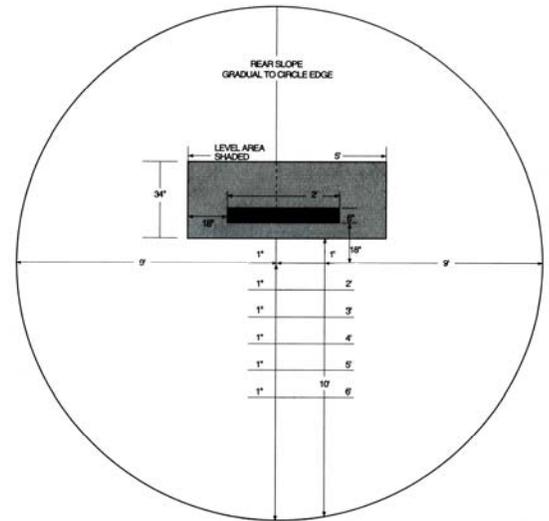


DIAGRAM 3

**Rule 8.02.H.3 Comment:** If the umpire discovers that the bat does not conform to Rule 8.02.H.3 until a time during or after which the bat has been used in play, it shall not be grounds for declaring the batter out, or ejection from the game.

**8.02.H.4** The bat shall be constructed of wood, aluminum, or any other material or combination of materials unless such materials or combinations of materials are specifically disapproved by USSSA. Such disapproval shall be the sole discretion of USSSA and may be made without notice;

**8.02.H.4(a)** All bats for 14U and younger age based divisions 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.H.4(b)** All bats for 14U – 18U scholastic based age divisions 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.

**8.02.I** 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 player shall wear ragged, frayed or slit sleeves and no player shall attach to his uniform tape or other material of a different color from his uniform. No part of the uniform shall include a pattern that imitates or suggests the shape of a baseball. Glass buttons and polished metal shall not be used on a uniform. No player shall attach anything to the heel or toe of his shoe other than the ordinary shoe plate or toe plate. Shoes with pointed spikes similar to golf or track shoes shall not be worn at any age of play. In age divisions 12U and younger non-metal cleats must be worn and in age divisions 13U and 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.I 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.J** The catcher may wear a leather mitt not more than thirty-eight (38) inches in circumference, nor more than fifteen and one half (15 1/2) inches from top to bottom. Such limits shall include all lacing and any leather band or facing attached to the outer edge of the mitt. The space between the thumb section and the finger section of the mitt shall not exceed six (6) inches at the top of the mitt and four (4) inches at the base of the thumb crotch. The web shall measure not more than seven (7) inches across the top or more than six (6) inches from its top to the base of the thumb crotch. The web may be either a lacing or lacing through leather tunnels, or a centerpiece of leather, which may be an extension of the palm, connected to the mitt with lacing and constructed so that it will not exceed any of the above-mentioned measurements. The catcher must wear all appropriate protective gear including a chest protector, shin and / or leg guards, protective cup and catcher's helmet with face mask and either a built in extended throat guard or a separately attached throat guard. In addition, in age divisions 12U and younger the catcher's helmet must fully cover both ears.

**8.02.K** The first baseman may wear a leather glove or mitt not more than twelve (12) inches long from top to bottom and not more than eight (8) inches wide across the palm, measured from the base of the thumb crotch to the outer edge of the mitt. The space between the thumb section and the finger section of the mitt shall not exceed four (4) inches at the top of the mitt and three and one half (3 1/2) inches at the base of the thumb crotch. The mitt shall be constructed so that this space is permanently fixed and cannot be enlarged, extended, widened, or deepened by the use of any materials or process what so ever. The web of the mitt shall measure not more than five (5) inches from its top to the base of the thumb crotch. The web may be a lacing, lacing through leather tunnels, or a centerpiece of leather, which may be an extension of the palm, connected to the mitt with lacing and constructed so that it will not exceed the above-mentioned measurements. The webbing shall not be constructed of wound or wrapped lacing.

**8.02.L** Each fielder, other than the first baseman or catcher, may use or wear a leather glove. The measurements covering size of glove shall be made by measuring front side or ball receiving side of glove. The tool or measuring tape shall be placed to contact the surface or feature of item being measured and follow all contours in the process. The glove shall not measure more than twelve (12) inches from the tip of any one of the four fingers, through the ball pocket to the bottom edge or heel of glove. The glove shall not measure more than seven and three fourths (7 3/4) inches wide, measured from the inside seam at base of first (1st) finger, along base of other fingers, to the outside edge of the little finger edge of glove. The space or area between the thumb and first (1st) finger, called crotch, may be filled with leather webbing or backstop. The webbing may be constructed of two (2) plies of standard leather to close the crotch area entirely, or it may be constructed of a series of tunnels made of leather, or a series of panels made of leather, or of lacing leather thongs. The webbing may not be constructed

of wound or wrapped lacing to make a net type of trap. When webbing is made to cover entire crotch area, the webbing can be constructed so as to be flexible. When constructed of a series of sections, they must be joined together. These sections may not be so constructed to allow depression to be developed by curvatures in the section sides. The webbing shall be made to control the size of the crotch opening. The crotch opening shall measure not more than four and one half (4 1/2) inches at the top, not more than five and three fourths (5 3/4) inches deep, and shall be three and one half (3 1/2) inches wide at its bottom. The opening of crotch shall not be more than four and one half (4 1/2) inches at any point below its top. The webbing shall be secured at each side, and at top and bottom of crotch. The attachment is to be made with leather lacing, these connections to be secured. If they stretch or become loose, they shall be adjusted to their proper condition. The glove can be of any weight.

**8.02.M** The pitcher's glove shall be uniform in color, including all stitching, lacing and webbing. The pitcher's glove may not be white, gray, nor, in the judgment of an umpire, distracting in any manner. No pitcher shall attach to his glove any foreign material of a color different from the glove. The umpire-in-chief shall cause a glove that violates Rules 8.02.M to be removed from the game, either on his own initiative, at the recommendation of another umpire or upon complaint of the opposing manager with which the umpire-in-chief agrees.

**8.02.N** All players shall use a double ear-flap batting helmet whenever at bat, on deck, on base or any other time an offensive player is outside of the dugout and the ball is live. All bat / ball boys must wear a double ear-flap batting helmet when outside the dugout.

**Rule 8.02.N 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.O** Playing equipment including but not limited to the bases, pitcher's plate, baseballs, bats, uniforms, catcher's mitts, first baseman's gloves, infielders and outfielders gloves and protective helmets, 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 must be in good taste as to the size and content of the manufacturer's logo or the brand name.

**Note:** 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** Before the game begins, the umpire shall:

**8.03.A.1** Require strict observance of all Rules governing implements of play and equipment of players;

**8.03.A.2** Be sure that all playing lines (heavy lines on Diagrams 1 and 2 from Rule 8.02) are marked with chalk, paint or other white material easily distinguishable from the ground or grass;

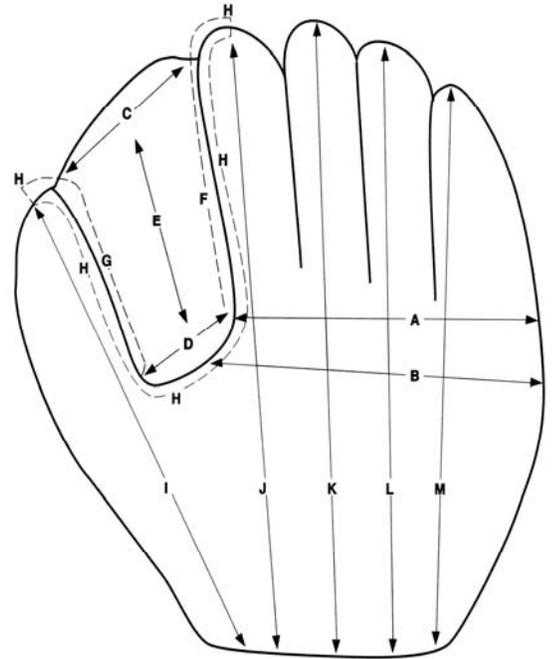
**8.03.A.3** Receive a supply of regulation baseballs and alternate regulation baseballs. The umpire shall inspect all baseballs to ensure they are regulation baseballs. Such alternate baseballs shall be put in play when:

**8.03.A.3(a)** A ball has been batted out of the playing field or into the stands;

**8.03.A.3(b)** A ball has become discolored and / or unfit for further use;

**8.03.A.3(c)** The pitcher requests such alternate ball.

**Note:** The umpire shall not give an alternate ball to the pitcher until play has ended and the previously used ball is dead. After a thrown or batted ball goes out of the playing field, play shall not be resumed with an alternate ball until the runners have reached the bases to which they are entitled. After a home run is hit out of the playing grounds, the umpire shall not deliver a new



- A - PALM WIDTH
- B - PALM WIDTH
- C - TOP OPENING OF WEB
- D - BOTTOM OPENING OF WEB
- E - WEB TOP TO BOTTOM
- F - FIRST FINGER CROTCH SEAM
- G - THUMB CROTCH SEAM
- H - GLOVE CROTCH SEAM
- I - THUMB TOP TO BOTTOM EDGE
- J - FIRST FINGER TOP TO BOTTOM EDGE
- K - SECOND FINGER TOP TO BOTTOM EDGE
- L - THIRD FINGER TOP TO BOTTOM EDGE
- M - FOURTH FINGER TOP TO BOTTOM EDGE

ball to the pitcher or the catcher until the batter hitting the home run has crossed the plate.

- 8.03.B** No player shall intentionally discolor or damage the ball by rubbing it with soil, rosin, paraffin, licorice, sandpaper, emery-paper or other foreign substance.  
**Penalty:** The umpire shall demand the ball and remove the offender from the game. For rules in regards to a pitcher defacing the ball, see Rules 8.08.B.2 – 8.08.B.6.
- 8.03.C** A player, or players, may be substituted during a game at any time the ball is dead. A substitute player shall bat in the replaced player's position in the team's batting order. A starting player removed from a game shall be allowed to re-enter the game once but must bat in their original position in the team's batting order. A substitute player removed from a game is ineligible for the remainder of the game. When two or more substitute players of the defensive team enter the game at the same time, the manager shall, immediately before they take their positions as fielders, designate to the umpire-in-chief such players' positions in the team's batting order and the umpire-in-chief shall so notify the official scorer. If this information is not immediately given to the umpire-in-chief, he shall have authority to designate the substitutes' places in the batting order.  
**Rule 8.03.C Note:** See Rule 8.08.F.5 for substitutions of the pitching position.  
**Rule 8.03.C Comment:** Any player other than a pitcher substituted for an injured player shall be allowed five warm-up throws.
- 8.03.D** The pitcher named in the batting order handed to the umpire-in-chief, as provided in Rule 8.04.B.1, shall pitch to the first batter or any substitute batter until such batter is put out or reaches first base, unless the pitcher sustains injury or illness which, in the judgment of the umpire-in-chief, incapacitates him from pitching. If the pitcher is replaced, the substitute pitcher shall pitch to the batter then at bat, or any substitute batter, until such batter is out or reaches first base, or until the offensive team is put out, unless the substitute pitcher sustains injury or illness which, in the judgment of the umpire-in-chief, incapacitates him from pitching. If an improper substitution is made for the pitcher, the umpire shall direct the proper pitcher to return to the game until the provisions of this rule are fulfilled. If the improper pitcher is permitted to pitch, any play that results is legal. The improper pitcher becomes the proper pitcher as soon as he makes his first pitch to the batter, or as soon as any runner is put out.
- 8.03.E** The manager shall immediately notify the umpire-in-chief of any substitution and shall state to the umpire-in-chief the substitute's place in the batting order.
- 8.03.F** The umpire-in-chief, after having been notified, shall immediately announce, or cause to be announced, each substitution.
- 8.03.G** If no announcement of a substitution is made, the substitute shall be considered as having entered the game when:  
**8.03.G.1** If a pitcher, he takes his place on the pitcher's plate;  
**8.03.G.2** If a batter, he takes his place in the batter's box;  
**8.03.G.3** If a fielder, he reaches the position usually occupied by the fielder he has replaced, and play commences;  
**8.03.G.4** If a runner, he takes the place of the runner he has replaced.  
**Rule 8.03.G Comment:** Any play made by, or on, any above mentioned unannounced substitution shall be legal.
- 8.03.H** When the umpire suspends play he shall call "Time". At the umpire's call of "Play", the suspension is lifted and play resumes. Between the call of "Time" and the call of "Play" the ball is dead.
- 8.03.I** Members of both teams shall carry all gloves and other equipment off the field and into the dugout while their team is at bat. No equipment shall be left lying on the field, either in fair or foul territory.
- 8.03.J** When there is spectator interference with any thrown or batted ball, the ball shall be dead at the moment of interference and the umpire shall impose such penalties as in his opinion will nullify the act of interference.
- 8.03.K** Players and substitutes of both teams shall confine themselves to their team's benches unless actually participating in the play or preparing to enter the game. No one except players, substitutes, managers, coaches, trainers and bat / ball boys shall occupy a bench during a game.
- 8.03.L** For tournament play, a flip of a coin between the two teams will 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.
- 8.03.M** In league, qualifying tournament and state championship play, time limits may be used with approval of the League / Tournament / State Director.
- 8.03.N** 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.
- 8.04** STARTING & ENDING A GAME –
- 8.04.A** The umpire, or umpires, shall enter the playing field five (5) minutes before the scheduled game time and proceed directly to home base where they shall be met by the managers of the opposing teams.
- 8.04.B** The following shall take place in sequence:

- 8.04.B.1** Both team managers (home team first) shall tender a properly completed line-up card in duplicate to the umpire-in-chief. Such line-up card will be orientated in batting order sequence and must contain each player's legal last name and first initial as it appears on the team's Official On-Line Roster (no nicknames or slang names), a correct uniform number and starting defensive position. The umpire-in-chief shall make certain that the original and copies of the respective batting orders are identical, and then tender a copy of each batting order to the opposing manager. The copy retained by the umpire shall be the official batting order. The tender of the batting order by the umpire shall establish the batting orders. Thereafter, no substitutions shall be made by either manager, except as provided in these rules.
- Rule 8.04.B.1 Comment:** Obvious errors in the batting order, which are noticed by the umpire-in-chief before he calls "Play" for the start of the game, should be called to the attention of the manager or captain of the team in error, so the correction can be made before the game starts. For example, if a manager has inadvertently listed only eight men in the batting order, or has listed two players with the same last name but without an identifying first initial and the errors are noticed by the umpire before he calls "play," he shall cause such error or errors to be corrected before he calls "play" to start the game. Teams should not be "trapped" later by some mistake that obviously was inadvertent and which can be corrected before the game starts.
- 8.04.C** The players of the home team shall take their defensive positions, the first (1st) batter of the visiting team shall take his position in the batter's box, the umpire shall call "Play" and the game shall start.
- 8.04.D** When the ball is put in play at the start of, or during a game, all fielders other than the catcher shall be on fair territory.
- 8.04.D.1** The catcher shall station himself directly back of the plate. He may leave his position at any time to catch a pitch or make a play except that when the batter is being given an intentional base on balls, the catcher must stand with both feet within the lines of the catcher's box until the ball leaves the pitcher's hand.
- Penalty:** Balk.
- 8.04.D.2** The pitcher, while in the act of delivering the ball to the batter, shall take his legal position;
- 8.04.D.3** Except the pitcher and the catcher, any fielder may station himself anywhere in fair territory;
- 8.04.D.4** Except the batter, or a runner attempting to score, no offensive player shall cross the catcher's lines when the ball is in play.
- 8.04.E** The batting order shall be followed throughout the game unless a player is substituted for another. In that case, the substitute shall take the place of the replaced player in the batting order.
- 8.04.F** The offensive team shall station two (2) base coaches on the field during its term at bat, one (1) near first (1st) base and one (1) near third (3rd) base. Base coaches shall be limited to two (2) in number and shall remain within the coach's box at all times.
- Penalty:** The offending base coach shall be removed from the game.
- Rule 8.04.F Comment:** It has been common practice for many years for some coaches to put one (1) foot outside the coach's box or stand astride or otherwise be slightly outside the coaching box lines. The coach shall not be considered out of the box unless the opposing manager complains, and then, the umpire shall strictly enforce the rule and require all coaches (on both teams) to remain in the coach's box at all times. It is also common practice for a coach who has a play at his base to leave the coach's box to signal the player to slide, advance or return to a base. This may be allowed if the coach does not interfere with the play in any manner.
- 8.04.G** No manager, player, substitute, coach, trainer or bat / ball boy shall at any time, whether from the bench, the coach's box or on the playing field, or elsewhere:
- 8.04.G.1** Incite, or try to incite by word or sign a demonstration by spectators;
- 8.04.G.2** Use languages that will in any manner refer to or reflect upon opposing players, an umpire, or any spectator;
- 8.04.G.3** Call "Time," or employ any other word or phrase or commit any act while the ball is alive and in play for the obvious purpose of trying to make the pitcher commit a balk.
- 8.04.G.4** Make intentional contact with the umpire in any manner.
- 8.04.H** No fielder shall take a position in the batter's line of vision, and with deliberate unsportsmanlike intent, act in a manner to distract the batter.
- Penalty:** The offender shall be removed from the game and shall leave the playing field. If a balk is made, it shall be nullified.
- 8.04.I** When a manager, coach, player, or trainer is ejected from a game, he shall leave the field immediately and take no further part in that game (see Rule 12.00).
- 8.04.J** When the occupants of a player's bench show violent disapproval of an umpire's decision, the umpire shall first give warning that such disapproval shall cease. If such action continues:

**Penalty:** The umpire shall eject the offenders from the game. If he is unable to detect the offender, or offenders, he may clear the bench of all substitute players. The manager of the offending team shall have the privilege of recalling to the playing field only those players needed for substitution in the game.

**8.04.K** How a team scores:

**8.04.K.1** One (1) run shall be scored each time a runner legally advances to and touches first (1st), second (2nd), third (3rd) and home base before three (3) men are put out to end the inning. A run is not scored if the runner advances to home base during a play in which the third (3rd) out is made:

**8.04.K.1(a)** by the batter-runner before he touches first (1st) base;

**8.04.K.1(b)** by any runner being forced out; or

**8.04.K.1(c)** by a preceding runner who is declared out because he failed to touch one (1) of the bases.

**8.04.K.2** When the winning run is scored in the last half-inning of a regulation game, or in the last half of an extra inning, as the result of a base on balls, hit batter or any other play with the bases full which forces the runner on third (3rd) to advance, the umpire shall not declare the game ended until the runner forced to advance from third (3rd) has touched home base and the batter-runner has touched first (1st) base.

**Rule 8.04.K.2 Comment:** An exception will be if fans rush onto the field and physically prevent the runner from touching home plate or the batter from touching first (1st) base. In such cases, the umpires shall award the runner the base because of the obstruction by the fans.

**Penalty:** If the runner on third (3rd) refuses to advance to and touch home base in a reasonable time, the umpire shall disallow the run, call out the offending player and order the game resumed. If, with two (2) out, the batter-runner refuses to advance to and touch first (1st) base, the umpire shall disallow the run, call out the offending player, and order the game resumed. If, before two (2) are out, the batter-runner refuses to advance to and touch first (1st) base, the run shall count, but the offending player shall be called out.

**Approved Ruling:** No run shall score during a play in which the third (3rd) out is made by the batter-runner before he touches first (1st) base. Example: One (1) out, Jones on second (2nd), Smith on first (1st). The batter, Brown, hits safely. Jones scores. Smith is out on the throw to the plate. Two (2) outs. But Brown missed first (1st) base. The ball is thrown to first (1st), an appeal is made, and Brown is out. Three (3) outs. Since Jones crossed the plate during a play, in which the third (3rd) out was made by the batter-runner before he touched first (1st) base, Jones' run does not count.

**Approved Ruling:** Following runners are not affected by an act of a preceding runner unless two (2) are out. Example: One (1) out, Jones on second (2nd), Smith on first (1st), and batter, Brown, hits home run inside the park. Jones fails to touch third (3rd) on his way to the plate. Smith and Brown score. The defense holds the ball on third (3rd), appeals to umpire, and Jones is out. Smith's and Brown's runs count.

**Approved Ruling:** Two (2) out, Jones on second (2nd), Smith on first (1st) and batter, Brown, hits home run inside the park. All three (3) runs cross the plate. But Jones missed third (3rd) base, and on appeal is declared out. Three (3) outs. Smith's and Brown's runs are voided. No score on the play.

**Approved Ruling:** One (1) out, Jones on third (3rd), Smith on second (2nd). Batter Brown flies out to center. Two (2) out. Jones scores after catch and Smith scores on bad throw to plate. But Jones, on appeal, is adjudged to have left third (3rd) before the catch and is out. Three (3) outs. No runs.

**Approved Ruling:** Two (2) out, bases full, batter hits home run. Batter, on appeal, is declared out for missing first (1st) base. Three (3) outs. No runs.

**Approved Ruling:** One (1) out, Jones on third (3rd), Smith on first (1st), and Brown flies out to right field. Two (2) outs. Jones tags up and scores after the catch. Smith attempted to return to first (1st) but the right fielder's throw beat him to the base. Three (3) outs. But Jones scored before the throw to catch Smith reached first (1st) base, hence Jones' run counts. It was not a force play.

**General Statement:** When a runner misses a base and a fielder holds the ball on a missed base, or on the base originally occupied by the runner if a fly ball is caught, and appeals for the umpire's decision, the runner is out when the umpire sustains the appeal; all runners may score if possible, except that with two (2) out the runner is out at the moment he misses the bag, if an appeal is sustained as applied to the following runners.

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

- 8.04.L.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
- 8.04.L.2** Shortened because the home team needs none of its half of the last inning or only a fraction of it to win; or
- 8.04.L.3** Shortened because of any part of Rule 8.04.N; or
- 8.04.L.4** Shortened because an imposed Time Limit expires; or
- 8.04.L.5** Shortened because any applicable part of Rule 8.04.M has been met.

**8.04.M** Mercy Rules:

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

**Rule 8.04.M 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.

**8.04.N** 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.N.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.N.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.N.1 Comment:** Games that cannot be declared a regulation game by Rules 8.04.N.1 & 8.04.N.1(a) shall be a suspended game.

**8.04.N.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.N.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.N.2 Comment:** Games that cannot be declared a regulation game by Rules 8.04.N.2 & 8.04.N.2(a) shall be a suspended game.

**8.04.N.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.

**8.04.O** The score of a regulation game is the total number of runs scored by each team at the moment the game ends.

**8.04.O.1** The game ends when the visiting team completes its half of the last inning if the home team is ahead.

**8.04.O.2** The game ends when the last inning is completed, if the visiting team is ahead.

**8.04.O.3** If the home team scores the winning run in its half of the last inning (or its half of an extra inning after a tie), the game ends immediately when the winning run is scored.

**Exception:** If the last batter in a game hits a home run out of the playing field, the batter-runner and all runners on base are permitted to score, in accordance with the base-running rules, and the game ends when the batter-runner touches home plate.

**Approved Ruling:** The batter hits a home run out of the playing field to win the game in the last half of the last or an extra inning, but is called out for passing a preceding runner. The game ends immediately when the winning run is scored.

**8.04.O.4** A called game ends at the moment the umpire terminates play, unless it becomes a suspended game pursuant to Rule 8.04.N.3.

**8.04.P** The umpire-in-chief shall order the playing field lights turned on whenever in his opinion darkness makes further play in daylight hazardous.

- 8.04.Q** A game may be forfeited to the opposing team when a team:
- 8.04.Q.1** Fails to appear upon the field, or being upon the field, refuses to start play within five (5) minutes after the umpire has called "Play" at game time unless such delayed appearance is, in the umpire's judgment, unavoidable;
  - 8.04.Q.2** Employs tactics palpably designed to delay or shorten the game;
  - 8.04.Q.3** Refuses to continue play during a game unless the game has been suspended or terminated by the umpire;
  - 8.04.Q.4** Fails to resume play, after a suspension, within one (1) minute after the umpire has called "Play";
  - 8.04.Q.5** After warning by the umpire, willfully and persistently violates any rules of the game;
- 8.04.R** A game shall be forfeited to the opposing team when a team is unable or refuses to place nine (9) players on the field. 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.
- 8.04.R.1** If the player leaving the game is a runner, he shall be declared out.
  - 8.04.R.2** When the player who has left the game is scheduled to bat, an out shall be declared for each turn at bat.  
**Rule 8.04.R Exception:** If the player left the game for Communicable Disease Procedure reasons.
- 8.05** PUTTING THE BALL IN PLAY (LIVE BALL) –
- 8.05.A** At the time, set for beginning the game the umpire shall call "Play."
  - 8.05.B** After the umpire calls "Play" the ball is alive and in play and remains alive and in play until for legal cause, or at the umpire's call of "Time" suspending play, the ball becomes dead. While the ball is dead no player may be put out, no bases may be run and no runs may be scored, except that runners may advance one or more bases as the result of acts which occurred while the ball was alive (such as, but not limited to a balk, an overthrow, interference, or a home run or other fair ball hit out of the playing field).  
**Rule 8.05.B Comment:** Should a ball come partially apart in a game, it is in play until the play is completed.
  - 8.05.C** The pitcher shall deliver the pitch to the batter who may elect to strike the ball, or who may not offer at it, as he chooses.
  - 8.05.D** The offensive team's objective is to have its batter become a runner, and its runners advance.
  - 8.05.E** The defensive team's objective is to prevent offensive players from becoming runners, and to prevent their advance around the bases.
  - 8.05.F** When a batter becomes a runner and touches all bases legally, he shall score one (1) run for his team.  
**Rule 8.05.F Comment:** A run legally scored cannot be nullified by subsequent action of the runner, such as but not limited to an effort to return to third (3rd) base in the belief that he had left the base before a caught fly ball.
  - 8.05.G** When three (3) offensive players are legally put out, that team takes the field and the opposing team becomes the offensive team.
  - 8.05.H** If a thrown ball accidentally touches a base coach, or a pitched or thrown ball touches an umpire, the ball is alive and in play. However, if the coach interferes with a thrown ball, the runner is out.
  - 8.05.I** The ball becomes dead and runners advance one (1) base, or return to their bases, without liability to be put out, when:
    - 8.05.I.1** A pitched ball touches a batter, or his clothing, while in his legal batting position; runners, if forced, advance;
    - 8.05.I.2** The plate umpire interferes with the catcher's throw; runners may not advance.  
**Note:** The interference shall be disregarded if the catcher's throw retires the runner.
    - 8.05.I.3** A balk is committed; runners advance; (See Penalty 8.08.E).
    - 8.05.I.4** A ball is illegally batted; runners return;
    - 8.05.I.5** A foul ball is not caught; runners return. The umpire shall not put the ball in play until all runners have retouched their bases;
    - 8.05.I.6** A fair ball touches a runner or an umpire on fair territory before it touches an infielder including the pitcher, or touches an umpire before it has passed an infielder other than the pitcher;  
**Rule 8.05.I.6 Comment:** If a fair ball touches an umpire working in the infield after it has bounded past, or over, the pitcher, it is a dead ball. If a batted ball is deflected by a fielder in fair territory, hits a runner or an umpire while still in flight, and then is caught by an infielder it shall not be a catch, but the ball shall remain in play. If a fair ball goes through, or by, an infielder, and touches a runner immediately back of him, or touches a runner after being deflected by an infielder, the ball is in play and the umpire shall not declare the runner out. In making such decision the umpire must be convinced that the ball passed

through, or by, the infielder and that no other infielder had the chance to make a play on the ball; runners advance, if forced;

**8.05.I.7** A pitched ball lodges in the umpire's or catcher's mask or paraphernalia, and remains out of play, runners advance one (1) base;

**Rule 8.05.I.7 Comment:** If a foul tip hits the umpire and is caught by a fielder on the rebound, the ball is "dead" and the batsman cannot be called out. The same shall apply where such foul tip lodges in the umpire's mask or other paraphernalia. If a third (3rd) strike (not a foul tip) passes the catcher and hits an umpire, the ball is in play. If such ball rebounds and is caught by a fielder before it touches the ground, the batsman is not out on such a catch, but the ball remains in play and the batsman may be retired at first (1st) base, or touched with the ball for the out. If a pitched ball lodges in the umpire's or catcher's mask or paraphernalia, and remains out of play, on the third (3rd) strike or fourth (4th) ball, then the batter is entitled to first (1st) base and all runners advance one (1) base. If the count on the batter is less than three (3) balls, runners advance one (1) base.

**8.05.I.8** Any legal pitch touches a runner trying to score; runners advance.

**8.05.J** The ball becomes dead when an umpire calls "Time." The umpire-in-chief shall call "Time" when:

**8.05.J.1** In his judgment weather, darkness or similar conditions makes immediate further play impossible;

**8.05.J.2** Light failure makes it difficult or impossible for the umpires to follow the play;

**8.05.J.3** An accident incapacitates a player or an umpire. If an accident to a runner is such as to prevent him from proceeding to a base to which he is entitled, as on a home run hit out of the playing field, or an award of one (1) or more bases, a substitute runner shall be permitted to complete the play.

**8.05.J.4** A manager requests "Time" for a substitution or for a conference with one (1) of his players.

**8.05.J.5** The umpire wishes to examine the ball, to consult with either manager, or for any similar cause.

**8.05.J.6** A fielder, after catching a fly ball, falls into a bench or stand, or falls across ropes into a crowd when spectators are on the field. If a fielder after making a catch steps into a bench, but does not fall, the ball is in play and runners may advance at their own peril.

**8.05.J.7** An umpire orders a player or any other person removed from the playing field.

**8.05.J.8** Except in the cases stated in Rules 8.05.I.2 and 8.05.I.3, no umpire shall call "Time" while a play is in progress.

**8.05.K** After the ball is dead; play shall be resumed when the pitcher takes his place on the pitcher's plate with a new ball or the same ball in his possession and the plate umpire calls "Play." The plate umpire shall call "Play" as soon as the pitcher takes his place on his plate with the ball in his possession.

## **8.06** THE BATTER –

**8.06.A** Each player of the offensive team shall bat in the order that his name appears in his team's batting order. The first (1st) batter in each inning after the first (1st) inning shall be the player whose name follows that of the last player who legally completed his time at bat in the preceding inning.

**8.06.B** The batter shall take his position in the batter's box promptly when it is his time at bat.

**8.06.C** The batter shall not leave his position in the batter's box after the pitcher comes to Set Position, or starts his windup.

**Penalty:** If the pitcher pitches, the umpire shall call "Ball" or "Strike," as the case may be.

**Rule 8.06.C Comment:** The batter leaves the batter's box at the risk of having a strike delivered and called, unless he requests the umpire to call "Time." The batter is not at liberty to step in and out of the batter's box at will. Once a batter has taken his position in the batter's box, he shall not be permitted to step out of the batter's box in order to use the resin or the pine tar rag, unless there is a delay in the game action or, in the judgment of the umpires, weather conditions warrant an exception. Umpires will not call "Time" at the request of the batter or any member of his team once the pitcher has started his windup or has come to a set position even though the batter claims "dust in his eyes", "steamed glasses", "didn't get the sign" or for any other cause. Umpires may grant a hitter's request for "Time" once he is in the batter's box, but the umpire should eliminate hitters walking out of the batter's box without reason. If umpires are not lenient, batters will understand that they are in the batter's box and they must remain there until the ball is pitched. If pitcher delays once the batter is in his box and the umpire feels that the delay is not justified he may allow the batter to step out of the box momentarily. If after the pitcher starts his windup or comes to a "set position" with a runner on, he does not go through with his pitch because the batter has stepped out of the box, it shall not be called a balk. Both the pitcher and batter have violated a rule and the umpire shall call time and both the batter and pitcher start over from "scratch."

**8.06.D** If the batter refuses to take his position in the batter's box during his time at bat, the umpire shall call a strike on the batter. The ball is dead, and no runners may advance. After the penalty, the batter may

take his proper position and the regular ball and strike count shall continue. If the batter does not take his proper position before three strikes have been called, the batter shall be declared out.

**8.06.E** The batter shall keep at least one (1) foot in the batter's box throughout the batter's time at bat, unless one (1) of the following exceptions applies, in which case the batter may leave the batter's box but not the dirt area surrounding home plate:

**8.06.E.1** The batter swings at a pitch;

**8.06.E.2** The batter is forced out of the batter's box by a pitch;

**8.06.E.3** A member of either team requests and is granted "Time";

**8.06.E.4** A defensive player attempts a play on a runner at any base;

**8.06.E.5** The batter feints a bunt.

**8.06.E.6** A wild pitch or passed ball occurs;

**8.06.E.7** The pitcher leaves the dirt area of the pitching mound after receiving the ball; or

**8.06.E.8** The catcher leaves the catcher's box to give defensive signals.

**Rules 8.06.E.1 - 8.06.E.8 Comment:** If the batter intentionally leaves the batter's box and delays play, and none of the exceptions listed above applies, the umpire shall award a strike without the pitcher having to deliver the pitch. The ball shall remain alive. The umpire shall award additional strikes, without the pitcher having to deliver the pitch, if the batter remains outside the batter's box and further delays play.

**8.06.E.9** The batter may leave the batter's box and the dirt area surrounding home plate when "Time" is called for the purpose of making a substitution; or a conference by either team.

**Note:** Umpires shall encourage the on-deck batter to take a position in the batter's box quickly after the previous batter reaches base or is put out.

**8.06.F** The batter's legal position shall be with both feet within the batter's box.

**Approved Ruling:** The lines defining the box are within the batter's box.

**8.06.G** A batter has legally completed his time at bat when he is put out or becomes a runner.

**8.06.H** A batter is out when:

**8.06.H.1** His fair or foul fly ball (other than a foul tip) is legally caught by a fielder;

**Rule 8.06.H.1 Comment:** A fielder may reach into, but not step into, a dugout to make a catch, and if he holds the ball, the catch shall be allowed. A fielder, in order to make a catch on a foul ball nearing a dugout or other out-of-play area (such as the stands), must have one (1) or both feet on or over the playing surface (including the lip of the dugout) and neither foot on the ground inside the dugout or in any other out-of-play area. Ball is in play, unless the fielder, after making a legal catch, falls into a dugout or other out-of-play area, in which case the ball is dead. Status of runners shall be as described in Rule 8.07.D.3.

**8.06.H.2** A third (3rd) strike is legally caught by the catcher;

**Rule 8.06.H.2 Comment:** "Legally caught" means in the catcher's glove before the ball touches the ground. It is not legal if the ball lodges in his clothing or paraphernalia; or if it touches the umpire and is caught by the catcher on the rebound. If a foul-tip first strikes the catcher's glove and then goes on through and is caught by both hands against his body or protector, before the ball touches the ground, it is a strike, and if third strike, batter is out. If smothered against his body or protector, it is a catch provided the ball struck the catcher's glove or hand first.

**8.06.H.3** A third strike is not caught by the catcher when first base is occupied before two (2) are out;

**8.06.H.4** He bunts foul on third (3rd) strike;

**8.06.H.5** An Infield Fly is declared;

**8.06.H.6** He attempts to hit a third (3rd) strike and the ball touches him;

**8.06.H.7** His fair ball touches him before touching a fielder;

**8.06.H.8** After hitting or bunting a fair ball, his bat hits the ball a second (2nd) time in fair territory. The ball is dead and no runners may advance. If the batter-runner drops his bat and the ball rolls against the bat in fair territory and, in the umpire's judgment, there was no intention to interfere with the course of the ball, the ball is alive and in play;

**Rule 8.06.H.8 Comment:** If a bat breaks and part of it is in fair territory and is hit by a batted ball or part of it hits a runner or fielder, play shall continue and no interference be called. If batted ball hits part of broken bat in foul territory, it is a foul ball. If a whole bat is thrown into fair territory and interferes with a defensive player attempting to make a play, interference shall be called, whether intentional or not. In cases where the batting helmet is accidentally hit with a batted or thrown ball, the ball remains in play the same as if it has not hit the helmet. If a batted ball strikes a batting helmet or any other object foreign to the natural ground while on foul territory, it is a foul ball and the ball is dead. If, in the umpire's judgment, there is intent on the part of a base runner to interfere with a batted or thrown ball by dropping the helmet or throwing it at the ball, then the runner would be out, the ball dead and runners would return to last base legally touched.

- 8.06.H.9** After hitting or bunting a foul ball, he intentionally deflects the course of the ball in any manner while running to first (1st) base. The ball is dead and no runners may advance;
- 8.06.H.10** After a third (3rd) strike or after he hits a fair ball, he or first (1st) base is tagged before he touches first (1st) base;
- 8.06.H.11** In running the last half of the distance from home base to first (1st) base, while the ball is being fielded to first (1st) base, he runs outside (to the right of) the three (3) foot line, or inside (to the left of) the foul line, and in the umpire's judgment in so doing interferes with the fielder taking the throw at first (1st) base, in which case the ball is dead; except that he may run outside (to the right of) the three (3) foot line or inside (to the left of) the foul line to avoid a fielder attempting to field a batted ball.  
**Rule 8.06.H.11 Comment:** The lines marking the three (3) foot lane are a part of that lane and a batter-runner is required to have both feet within the three (3) foot lane or on the lines marking the lane.
- 8.06.H.12** An infielder intentionally drops a fair fly ball or line drive, with first (1st), first (1st) and second (2nd), first (1st) and third (3rd), or first (1st), second (2nd) and third (3rd) base occupied before two (2) are out. The ball is dead and runner or runners shall return to their original base or bases;  
**Approved Ruling:** In this situation, the batter is not out if the infielder permits the ball to drop untouched to the ground, except when the Infield Fly rule applies.
- 8.06.H.13** A preceding runner shall, in the umpire's judgment, intentionally interfere with a fielder who is attempting to catch a thrown ball or to throw a ball in an attempt to complete any play:  
**Rule 8.06.H.13 Comment:** The objective of this rule is to penalize the offensive team for deliberate, unwarranted, unsportsmanlike action by the runner in leaving the baseline for the obvious purpose of crashing the pivot man on a double play, rather than trying to reach the base. Obviously, this is an umpire's judgment play.
- 8.06.H.14** With two (2) out, a runner on third (3rd) base, and two (2) strikes on the batter, the runner attempts to steal home base on a legal pitch and the ball touches the runner in the batter's strike zone. The umpire shall call "Strike Three," the batter is out and the run shall not count; before two (2) are out, the umpire shall call "Strike Three," the ball is dead, and the run counts.
- 8.06.I** A batter is out for illegal action when:
- 8.06.I.1** He hits a ball with one (1) or both feet on the ground entirely outside the batter's box.  
**Rule 8.06.I.1 Comment:** If a batter hits a ball fair or foul while out of the batter's box, he shall be called out. Umpires should pay particular attention to the position of the batter's feet if he attempts to hit the ball while he is being intentionally passed. A batter cannot jump or step out of the batter's box and hit the ball.
- 8.06.I.2** He steps from one (1) batter's box to the other while the pitcher is in position ready to pitch;
- 8.06.I.3** He interferes with the catcher's fielding or throwing by stepping out of the batter's box or making any other movement that hinders the catcher's play at home base.  
**Exception:** Batter is not out if any runner attempting to advance is put out, or if runner trying to score is called out for batter's interference.  
**Rule 8.06.I.3 Comment:** If the batter interferes with the catcher, the plate umpire shall call "interference." The batter is out and the ball dead. No player may advance on such interference (offensive interference) and all runners must return to the last base that was, in the judgment of the umpire, legally touched at the time of the interference. If, however, the catcher makes a play and the runner attempting to advance is put out, it is to be assumed there was no actual interference and that runner is out, not the batter. Any other runners on the base at the time may advance as the ruling is that there is no actual interference if a runner is retired. In that case, play proceeds just as if no violation had been called. If a batter strikes at a ball, misses, and swings so hard he carries the bat all the way around and, in the umpire's judgment, unintentionally hits the catcher or the ball behind him on the backswing before the catcher has securely held the ball, it shall be called a strike only (not interference). The ball will be dead, however, and no runner shall advance on the play.
- 8.06.I.4** He uses or attempts to use a bat that, in the umpire's judgment, has been altered or tampered with in such a way to improve the distance factor or cause an unusual reaction on the baseball. This includes bats that are filled, flat-surfaced, nailed, hollowed, grooved or covered with a substance such as paraffin, wax, etc. No advancement on the bases will be allowed and any out or outs made during a play shall stand. In addition to being called out, the player shall be ejected from the game. A batter shall be deemed to have used or attempted to use an illegal bat if he brings such a bat into the batter's box.
- 8.06.J** Batting out of turn:

- 8.06.J.1** A batter shall be called out, on appeal, when he fails to bat in his proper turn, and another batter completes a time at bat in his place.  
**Rule 8.06.J.1 Comment:** The proper batter may take his place in the batter's box at any time before the improper batter becomes a runner or is put out, and any balls and strikes shall be counted in the proper batter's time at bat.
- 8.06.J.2** When an improper batter becomes a runner or is put out, and the defensive team appeals to the umpire before the first pitch to the next batter of either team, or before any play or attempted play, the umpire shall declare the proper batter out; and nullify any advance or score made because of a ball batted by the improper batter or because of the improper batter's advance to first (1st) base on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batter or otherwise.  
**Note:** If a runner advances, while the improper batter is at bat, on a stolen base, balk, wild pitch or passed ball, such advance is legal.
- 8.06.J.3** When an improper batter becomes a runner or is put out, and a pitch is made to the next batter of either team before an appeal is made, the improper batter thereby becomes the proper batter, and the results of his time at bat become legal.
- 8.06.J.4** When the proper batter is called out because he has failed to bat in turn, the next batter shall be the batter whose name follows that of the proper batter thus called out; When an improper batter becomes a proper batter because no appeal is made before the next pitch, the next batter shall be the batter whose name follows that of such legalized improper batter. The instant an improper batter's actions are legalized, the batting order picks up with the name following that of the legalized improper batter.  
**Rule 8.06.J.4 Comment:** The umpire shall not direct the attention of any person to the presence in the batter's box of an improper batter. This rule is designed to require constant vigilance by the players and managers of both teams. There are two fundamentals to keep in mind: When a player bats out of turn, the proper batter is the player called out. If an improper batter bats and reaches base or is out and no appeal is made before a pitch to the next batter, or before any play or attempted play, that improper batter is considered to have batted in proper turn and establishes the order that is to follow.  
**Approved Rulings:** To illustrate various situations arising from batting out of turn, assume a first inning batting order as follows: Abel - Baker - Charles - Daniel - Edward - Frank - George - Hooker - Irwin.  
**Play (1):** Baker bats with the count two (2) balls and one (1) strike. Before the next pitch, (a) the offensive team discovers the error; or (b) the defensive team appeals.  
**Ruling:** (a) & (b) In either case, Abel replaces Baker, with the count of two (2) balls and one (1) strike.  
**Play (2):** Baker bats and hits a double and the defensive team appeals, (a) immediately; or (b) after a pitch to Charles.  
**Ruling:** (a) Abel is called out and Baker is the proper batter; (b) Baker stays on second (2nd) and Charles is the proper batter.  
**Play (3):** Abel walks, Baker walks, Charles forces Baker and Edward bats in Daniel's turn. While Edward is at bat, Abel scores and Charles goes to second (2nd) on a wild pitch. Edward grounds out and Charles advances to third (3rd). The defensive team appeals, (a) immediately; or (b) after a pitch to Daniel.  
**Ruling:** (a) Abel's run counts and Charles is entitled to second (2nd) base since these advances were not made because of the improper batter batting a ball or advancing to first (1st) base. Charles must return to second (2nd) base because his advance to third (3rd) resulted from the improper batter batting a ball. Daniel is called out, and Edward is the proper batter; (b) Abel's run counts and Charles stays on third (3rd). The proper batter is Frank.  
**Play (4):** With the bases loaded and two (2) out, Hooker bats in Frank's turn, and triples, scoring three (3) runs. The defensive team appeals, (a) immediately; or (b) after a pitch to George.  
**Ruling:** (a) Frank is called out and no runs score. George is the proper batter to lead off the next inning; (b) Hooker stays on third (3rd) and three (3) runs score. Irwin is the proper batter.  
**Play (5):** After Play (4) (b) above, George continues at bat, (a) Hooker is picked off third (3rd) base for the third (3rd) out; or (b) George flies out, and no appeal is made. Who is the proper leadoff batter in the next inning?  
**Ruling:** (a) Irwin. He became the proper batter as soon as the first (1st) pitch to George legalized Hooker's triple; (b) Hooker. When no appeal was made, the first (1st) pitch to the leadoff batter of the opposing team legalized George's time at bat.

**Play (6):** Daniel walks and Abel comes to bat. Daniel was an improper batter, and if an appeal is made before the first pitch to Abel, Abel is out, Daniel is removed from base, and Baker is the proper batter. There is no appeal, and a pitch is made to Abel. Daniel's walk is now legalized, and Edward thereby becomes the proper batter. Edward can replace Abel at any time before Abel is put out or becomes a runner. He does not do so and Abel flies out. Baker comes to bat. Abel was an improper batter, and if an appeal is made before the first pitch to Baker, Edward is out, and the proper batter is Frank. There is no appeal, and a pitch is made to Baker. Abel's out is now legalized, and the proper batter is Baker. Baker walks, Charles is the proper batter. Charles flies out. Now Daniel is the proper batter, but he is on second base. Who is the proper batter?

**Ruling:** The proper batter is Edward. When the proper batter is on base, he is passed over, and the following batter becomes the proper batter.

**8.06.K** The batter becomes a runner and is entitled to first (1st) base without liability to be put out (provided he advances to and touches first base) when:

**8.06.K.1** Four (4) "balls" have been called by the umpire or, in all age divisions an Intentional Walk is issued by announcement from either the pitcher or catcher.

**Rule 8.06.K.1 Comment:** A batter who is entitled to first (1st) base because of a base on balls must go to first (1st) base and touch the base before other base runners are forced to advance. This applies when bases are full and applies when a substitute runner is put into the game. If, in advancing, the base runner thinks there is a play and he slides past the base before or after touching it, he may be put out by the fielder tagging him. If he fails to touch the base to which he is entitled and attempts to advance beyond that base he may be put out by tagging him or the base he missed.

**8.06.K.2** He is touched by a pitched ball, which he is not attempting to hit unless the ball is in the strike zone when it touches the batter, or the batter makes no attempt to avoid being touched by the ball. If the ball is in the strike zone when it touches the batter, it shall be called a strike, whether or not the batter tries to avoid the ball. If the ball is outside the strike zone when it touches the batter, it shall be called a ball if he makes no attempt to avoid being touched.

**Approved Ruling:** When the batter is touched by a pitched ball, which does not entitle him to first (1st) base, the ball is dead and no runner may advance.

**8.06.K.3** The catcher or any fielder interferes with him. If a play follows the interference, the manager of the offense may advise the plate umpire that he elects to decline the interference penalty and accept the play. Such election shall be made immediately at the end of the play. However, if the batter reaches first (1st) base on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batsman, or otherwise and all other runners advance at least one (1) base, the play proceeds without reference to the interference.

**Rule 8.06.K.3 Comment:** If catcher's interference is called with a play in progress, the umpire will allow the play to continue because the manager may elect to take the play. If the batter-runner missed first (1st) base, or a runner misses his next base, he shall be considered as having reached the base.

**Play (1):** Runner on third (3rd) with one (1) out and the batter hits fly ball to the outfield on which the runner scores but catcher's interference was called.

**Ruling:** The offensive manager may elect to take the run and have batter called out or have runner remain at third (3rd) and batter awarded first (1st) base.

**Play (2):** Runner on second (2nd) base and the catcher interferes with batter as he bunts ball fairly sending runner to third (3rd) base.

**Ruling:** The manager may rather have a runner on third (3rd) base with an out on the play than have runners on second (2nd) and first (1st).

**Note:** If a runner is trying to score by a steal or squeeze from third (3rd) base, note the additional penalty set forth in Rule 8.07.H.

**Approved Ruling:** If the catcher interferes with the batter before the pitcher delivers the ball, it shall not be considered interference on the batter under Rule 8.06.K.3. In such cases, the umpire shall call "Time" and the pitcher and batter start over from "scratch."

**8.06.K.4** A fair ball touches an umpire or a runner on fair territory before touching a fielder. If a fair ball touches an umpire after having passed a fielder other than the pitcher, or having touched a fielder, including the pitcher, the ball is in play.

**8.06.L** The batter becomes a runner when:

**8.06.L.1** He hits a fair ball;

**8.06.L.2** The third (3rd) strike called by the umpire is not caught, providing first (1st) base is unoccupied, or first (1st) base is occupied with two (2) out;

**Rule 8.06.L.2 Comment:** A batter who does not realize his situation on a third (3rd) strike not caught, and who is not in the process of running to first (1st) base, shall be declared out once he leaves the dirt circle surrounding home plate.

**8.06.L.3** A fair ball, after having passed a fielder other than the pitcher, or after having been touched by a fielder, including the pitcher, shall touch an umpire or runner on fair territory;

**8.06.L.4** A fair ball passes over a fence or into the stands. Such hit entitles the batter to a home run when he shall have touched all bases legally.

**8.06.L.5** A fair ball, after touching the ground, bounds into the stands, or passes through, over or under a fence, or through or under a scoreboard, or through or under shrubbery, or vines on the fence, in which case the batter and the runners shall be entitled to advance two (2) bases;

**8.06.L.6** Any fair ball which, either before or after touching the ground, passes through or under a fence, or through or under a scoreboard, or through any opening in the fence or scoreboard, or through or under shrubbery, or vines on the fence, or which sticks in a fence or scoreboard, in which case the batter and the runners shall be entitled to advance two (2) bases;

**8.06.L.7** Any bounding fair ball is deflected by the fielder into the stands, or over or under a fence on fair or foul territory, in which case the batter and all runners shall be entitled to advance two (2) bases;

**8.06.L.8** Any fair fly ball is deflected by the fielder into the stands, or over the fence into foul territory, in which case the batter shall be entitled to advance to second (2nd) base; but if deflected into the stands or over the fence in fair territory, the batter shall be entitled to a home run.

**8.06.M** In all age divisions, an Extra Hitter (EH) will be allowed. This will give a team a ten (10) player line-up, which must be declared before the start of the game and used the remainder of the game. The player in the EH position, while not actually playing a defensive position, will be treated as such for substitution purposes. The re-entry rule applies to the EH position (see Rule 8.03.C).

**Approved Ruling:** Baker is the EH and batting second (2nd). Charles is the catcher and batting third (3rd). Baker can become the catcher and Charles the EH. Both players would remain in their original batting position in the batting order.

**Approved Ruling:** Players can move freely in defensive positions with the exception of the pitching position, the EH is considered a defensive position.

**8.06.N** In scholastic based age divisions 14U – 18U only, if the Extra Hitter (see Rule 8.06.M) is not utilized, the Designated Hitter (DH) may be utilized in accordance with the NFHS (National Federation of High School Associations) baseball rules.

**Note:** The Designated Hitter is prohibited in the 14U age based division as defined by in Rule 3.06.A.

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

**8.06.N.2** A starting defensive player cannot be listed as the DH in the starting line-up.

**8.06.N.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.

**8.06.N.4** Failure to declare a DH prior to the game precludes the use of a DH in the game.

**8.06.N.5** If a pinch hitter or pinch runner is substituted for the DH, the substitute player becomes the new DH.

**8.06.N.6** The player who was the DH may re-enter as the DH under the re-entry rule (see Rule 8.03.C).

**8.06.N.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.

**8.06.N.8** The role of the DH is terminated for the remainder of the game when:

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

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

## **8.07** THE RUNNER –

**8.07.A** A runner acquires the right to an unoccupied base when he touches it before he is out. He is then entitled to it until he is put out, or forced to vacate it for another runner legally entitled to that base.

**Rule 8.07.A Comment:** If a runner legally acquires title to a base, and the pitcher assumes his pitching position, the runner may not return to a previously occupied base.

**8.07.B** In advancing, a runner shall touch first (1st), second (2nd), third (3rd) and home base in order. If forced to return, he shall retouch all bases in reverse order, unless the ball is dead under any provision of Rule 8.05.H. In such cases, the runner may go directly to his original base.

**8.07.C** Two (2) runners may not occupy a base, but if, while the ball is alive, two (2) runners are touching a base the following runner shall be out when tagged. The preceding runner is entitled to the base.

**8.07.D** Each runner, other than the batter, may without liability to be put out, advance one (1) base when:

- 8.07.D.1** There is a balk;
- 8.07.D.2** The batter's advance without liability to be put out forces the runner to vacate his base, or when the batter hits a fair ball that touches another runner or the umpire before such ball has been touched by, or has passed a fielder, if the runner is forced to advance;  
**Rule 8.07.D.2 Comment:** A runner forced to advance without liability to be put out may advance past the base to which he is entitled only at his peril. If such a runner, forced to advance, is put out for the third (3rd) out before a preceding runner, also forced to advance, touches home plate, the run shall score.  
**Play:** Two (2) out, bases full, batter walks but runner from second (2nd) is overzealous and runs past third (3rd) base toward home and is tagged out on a throw by the catcher.  
**Ruling:** Even though two (2) are out, the run would score on the theory that the run was forced home by the base on balls and that all the runners needed to do was proceed and touch the next base.
- 8.07.D.3** A fielder, after catching a fly ball, falls into a bench or stand, or falls across ropes into a crowd when spectators are on the field;  
**Rule 8.07.D.3 Comment:** If a fielder, after having made a legal catch, should fall into a stand or among spectators or into the dugout or any other out-of-play area while in possession of the ball after making a legal catch, or fall while in the dugout after making a legal catch, the ball is dead and each runner shall advance one (1) base, without liability to be put out, from his last legally touched base at the time the fielder fell into, or in, such out-of-play area.
- 8.07.D.4** While he is attempting to steal a base, the batter is interfered with by the catcher or any other fielder.  
**Note:** When a runner is entitled to a base without liability to be put out, while the ball is in play, or under any rule in which the ball is in play after the runner reaches the base to which he is entitled, and the runner fails to touch the base to which he is entitled before attempting to advance to the next base, the runner shall forfeit his exemption from liability to be put out, and he may be put out by tagging the base or by tagging the runner before he returns to the missed base.
- 8.07.E** Each runner including the batter-runner may, without liability to be put out, advance:
- 8.07.E.1** To home base, scoring a run, if a fair ball goes out of the playing field in flight and he touched all bases legally; or if a fair ball which, in the umpire's judgment, would have gone out of the playing field in flight, is deflected by the act of a fielder in throwing his glove, cap, or any article of his apparel;
- 8.07.E.2** Three (3) bases, if a fielder deliberately touches a fair ball with his cap, mask or any part of his uniform detached from its proper place on his person. The ball is in play and the batter may advance to home base at his peril;
- 8.07.E.3** Three (3) bases, if a fielder deliberately throws his glove at and touches a fair ball. The ball is in play and the batter may advance to home base at his peril.
- 8.07.E.4** Two (2) bases, if a fielder deliberately touches a thrown ball with his cap, mask or any part of his uniform detached from its proper place on his person. The ball is in play;
- 8.07.E.5** Two (2) bases, if a fielder deliberately throws his glove at and touches a thrown ball. The ball is in play;  
**Rules 8.07.E.2 - 8.07.E.5 Comment:** In applying these rules, the umpire must rule that the thrown glove or detached cap or mask has touched the ball. There is no penalty if the ball is not touched. Under Rules 8.07.E.3 – 8.07.E.5 this penalty shall not be invoked against a fielder whose glove is carried off his hand by the force of a batted or thrown ball, or when his glove flies off his hand as he makes an obvious effort to make a legitimate catch.
- 8.07.E.6** Two (2) bases, if a fair ball bounces or is deflected into the stands outside the first (1st) or third (3rd) base foul lines; or if it goes through or under a field fence, or through or under a scoreboard, or through or under shrubbery or vines on the fence; or if it sticks in such fence, scoreboard, shrubbery or vines;
- 8.07.E.7** Two (2) bases when, with no spectators on the playing field, a thrown ball goes into the stands, or into a bench (whether or not the ball rebounds into the field), or over or under or through a field fence, or on a slanting part of the screen above the backstop, or remains in the meshes of a wire screen protecting spectators. The ball is dead. When such wild throw is the first (1st) play by an infielder, the umpire, in awarding such bases, shall be governed by the position of the runners at the time the ball was pitched; in all other cases the umpire shall be governed by the position of the runners at the time the wild throw was made;

**Approved Ruling:** If all runners, including the batter-runner, have advanced at least one (1) base when an infielder makes a wild throw on the first (1st) play after the pitch, the award shall be governed by the position of the runners when the wild throw was made.

**Note:** In certain circumstances, it is impossible to award a runner two (2) bases. Example: Runner on first (1st). Batter hits fly to short right and the runner holds up between first (1st) and second (2nd). The batter comes around first (1st) and pulls up behind him. The ball falls safely and the outfielder, in throwing to first (1st), throws ball into stands.

**Approved Ruling:** Since no runner, when the ball is dead, may advance beyond the base to which he is entitled, the runner originally on first (1st) base goes to third (3rd) base and the batter is held at second (2nd) base. The term "when the wild throw was made" means when the throw actually left the player's hand and not when the thrown ball hit the ground, passes a receiving fielder or goes out of play into the stands. The position of the batter-runner at the time the wild throw left the thrower's hand is the key in deciding the award of bases. If the batter-runner has not reached first (1st) base, the award is two (2) bases at the time the pitch was made for all runners. The decision as to whether the batter-runner has reached first (1st) base before the throw is a judgment call. If an unusual play arises where a first (1st) throw by an infielder goes into stands or dugout but the batter did not become a runner (such as catcher throwing ball into stands in attempt to get runner from third trying to score on passed ball or wild pitch) award of two (2) bases shall be from the position of the runners at the time of the throw. For the purpose of this rule, a catcher is considered an infielder.

**Play:** Runner on first (1st) base, batter hits a ball to the shortstop who throws to second (2nd) base too late to get runner at second (2nd) then the second baseman throws toward first (1st) base after the batter-runner has crossed first (1st) base.

**Ruling:** Runner at second (2nd) scores.

**Note:** On this play, if the batter-runner is past first (1st) base ONLY when throw is made, is he awarded third (3rd) base.)

**8.07.E.8** One (1) base, if a ball, pitched to the batter, or thrown by the pitcher from his position on the pitcher's plate to a base to catch a runner, goes into a stand or a bench, or over or through a field fence or backstop. The ball is dead;

**Approved Ruling:** When a wild pitch or passed ball goes through or by the catcher, or deflects off the catcher, and goes directly into the dugout, stands, above the break, or any area where the ball is dead, the awarding of bases shall be one (1) base. One (1) base shall also be awarded if the pitcher while in contact with the rubber throws to a base, and the throw goes directly into the stands or into any area where the ball is dead. If, however, the pitched or thrown ball goes through or by the catcher or through the fielder, and remains on the playing field, and is subsequently kicked or deflected into the dugout, stands or other area where the ball is dead, the awarding of bases shall be two (2) bases from position of runners at the time of the pitch or throw.

**8.07.E.9** One (1) base, if the batter becomes a runner on Ball Four (4) or Strike Three (3), when the pitch passes the catcher and lodges in the umpire's mask or paraphernalia. If the batter becomes a runner on a wild pitch, which entitles the runners to advance one (1) base, the batter-runner shall be entitled to first (1st) base only.

**Rule 8.07.E.9 Comment:** The fact a runner is awarded a base or bases without liability to be put out does not relieve him of the responsibility to touch the base he is awarded and all intervening bases. For example: batter hits a ground ball, which an infielder throws into the stands, but the batter-runner missed first (1st) base. He may be called out on appeal for missing first (1st) base after the ball is put in play even though he was "awarded" second (2nd) base. If a runner is forced to return to a base after a catch, he must retouch his original base even though, because of some ground rule or other rule, he is awarded additional bases. He may retouch while the ball is dead and the award is then made from his original base.

**8.07.E.10** One (1) base, if a fielder deliberately touches a pitched ball with his cap, mask or any part of his uniform detached from its proper place on his person. The ball is in play, and the award is made from the position of the runner at the time the ball was touched.

**8.07.F** When obstruction occurs, the umpire shall call or signal "Obstruction":

**8.07.F.1** If a play is being made on the obstructed runner, or if the batter runner is obstructed before he touches first (1st) base, the ball is dead and all runners shall advance, without liability to be put out, to the bases they would have reached, in the umpire's judgment, if there had been no obstruction. The obstructed runner shall be awarded at least one (1) base beyond the base he had last legally touched before the obstruction. Any preceding runners, forced

to advance by the award of bases as the penalty for obstruction, shall advance without liability to be put out.

**Rule 8.07.F.1 Comment:** When a play is being made on an obstructed runner, the umpire shall signal obstruction in the same manner that he calls "Time," with both hands overhead. The ball is immediately dead when this signal is given; however, should a thrown ball be in flight before the obstruction is called by the umpire, the runners are to be awarded such bases on wild throws as they would have been awarded had not obstruction occurred. On a play where a runner was trapped between second (2nd) and third (3rd) and obstructed by the third baseman going into third (3rd) base while the throw is in flight from the shortstop, if such throw goes into the dugout the obstructed runner is to be awarded home base. Any other runners on base in this situation would also be awarded two (2) bases from the base they last legally touched before obstruction was called.

**8.07.F.2** If no play is being made on the obstructed runner, the play shall proceed until no further action is possible. The umpire shall then call "Time" and impose such penalties, if any, as in his judgment will nullify the act of obstruction.

**Rule 8.07.F.2 Comment:** When the ball is not dead on obstruction and an obstructed runner advances beyond the base, which in the umpire's judgment, he would have been awarded because of being obstructed, he does so at his own peril and may be tagged out. This is a judgment call.

**Note:** The catcher, without the ball in his possession, has no right to block the pathway of the runner attempting to score. The base line belongs to the runner and the catcher should be there only when he is fielding a ball or when he already has the ball in his hand.

**8.07.G** Whenever a tag play is evident, the runners must slide or seek to avoid contact with the fielder. Malicious contact shall supersede all obstruction penalties.

**Penalty:** Runner shall be called out and may be ejected from the game at the umpire's discretion.

**Rule 8.07.G Comment:** When enforcing this rule, the umpire should judge the runner's intent. If the umpire feels that the contact was unintentional, then the runner should only be declared out. If the umpire feels that the contact was intentional and / or malicious, then the runner should be declared out and ejected.

**8.07.H** If, with a runner on third (3rd) base and trying to score by means of a squeeze play or a steal, the catcher or any other fielder steps on, or in front of home base without possession of the ball, or touches the batter or his bat, the pitcher shall be charged with a balk, the batter shall be awarded first (1st) base on the interference and the ball is dead.

**8.07.I** Any runner is out when:

**8.07.I.1** He runs more than three (3) feet away from a direct line between bases to avoid being tagged unless his action is to avoid interference with a fielder fielding a batted ball; or after touching first (1st) base, he leaves the baseline, obviously abandoning his effort to touch the next base;

**Rule 8.07.I.1 Comment:** Any runner after reaching first (1st) base who leaves the baseline heading for his dugout or his position believing that there is no further play, may be declared out if the umpire judges the act of the runner to be considered abandoning his efforts to run the bases. Even though an out is called, the ball remains in play in regard to any other runner. This rule also covers the following and similar plays:

**Play (1):** Less than two (2) out, score tied bottom of the last inning, runner on first (1st) and the batter hits a ball out of park for winning run. The runner on first (1st) passes second (2nd) and thinking the home run automatically wins the game, cuts across diamond toward his bench as batter-runner circles bases.

**Ruling:** In this case, the base runner would be called out "for abandoning his effort to touch the next base" and batter-runner permitted to continue around bases to make his home run valid. If there are two (2) out, home run would not count (see Rule 8.07.M). This is not an appeal play.

**Play (2):** Runner believing he is called out on a tag at first (1st) or third (3rd) base starts for the dugout and progresses a reasonable distance still indicating by his actions that he is out.

**Ruling:** The runner shall be declared out for abandoning the bases.

**8.07.I.2** He intentionally interferes with a thrown ball; or hinders a fielder attempting to make a play on a batted ball;

**Rule 8.07.I.2 Comment:** A runner who is adjudged to have hindered a fielder who is attempting to make a play on a batted ball is out whether it was intentional or not. If, however, the runner has contact with a legally occupied base when he hinders the fielder, he shall not be called out unless, in the umpire's judgment, such hindrance, whether it occurs on fair or foul territory, is intentional. If the umpire declares the hindrance

intentional, the following penalty shall apply: With less than two (2) out, the umpire shall declare both the runner and batter out. With two (2) out, the umpire shall declare the batter out. If, in a run-down between third (3rd) base and home plate, the succeeding runner has advanced and is standing on third (3rd) base when the runner in a run-down is called out for offensive interference, the umpire shall send the runner standing on third (3rd) base back to second (2nd) base. This same principle applies if there is a run-down between second (2nd) and third (3rd) base and succeeding runner has reached second (2nd) base. The reasoning is that no runner shall advance on an interference play and a runner is considered to occupy a base until he legally has reached the next succeeding base.

- 8.07.1.3** He is tagged, when the ball is alive, while off his base.  
**Exception:** A batter-runner cannot be tagged out after overrunning or over-sliding first (1st) base if he returns immediately to the base;  
**Approved Ruling:** If the impact of a runner breaks a base loose from its position, no play can be made on that runner at that base if he had reached the base safely.  
**Approved Ruling:** If a base is dislodged from its position during a play, any following runner on the same play shall be considered as touching or occupying the base if, in the umpire's judgment, he touches or occupies the point marked by the dislodged bag.
- 8.07.1.4** He fails to retouch his base after a fair or foul ball is legally caught before he, or his base, is tagged by a fielder. He shall not be called out for failure to retouch his base after the first following pitch, or any play or attempted play. This is an appeal play;  
**Rule 8.07.1.4 Comment:** Runners need not "tag up" on a foul tip. They may steal on a foul tip. If a so-called tip is not caught, it becomes an ordinary foul and runners then return to their bases.
- 8.07.1.5** He fails to reach the next base before a fielder tags him or the base, after he has been forced to advance by reason of the batter becoming a runner. However, if a following runner is put out on a force play, the force is removed and the runner must be tagged to be put out. The force is removed as soon as the runner touches the base to which he is forced to advance, and if he over slides or overruns the base, the runner must be tagged to be put out. However, if the forced runner, after touching the next base, retreats for any reason towards the base he had last occupied, the force play is reinstated, and he can again be put out if the defense tags the base to which he is forced;  
**Rule 8.07.1.5 Comment:** Runner on first (1st) and three (3) balls on the batter: Runner steals on the next pitch, which is the fourth (4th) ball, but after having touched second (2nd) he over-slides or over-runs that base. The catcher's throw catches him before he can return. Ruling is that runner is out. (Force out is removed.) Over-sliding and over-running situations arise at bases other than first base. For instance, before two (2) are out, and runners on first (1st) and second (2nd), or bases loaded, the ball is hit to an infielder who tries for the double play. The runner on first (1st) beats the throw to second (2nd) base but over-slides the base. The relay is made to first (1st) base and the batter-runner is out. The first baseman, seeing the runner at second (2nd) base off the bag, makes the return throw to second (2nd) and the runner is tagged off the base. Meanwhile runners have crossed the plate. The question is: Is this a force play? Was the force removed when the batter-runner was out at first (1st) base? Do the runs that crossed the plate during this play and before the third (3rd) out was made when the runner was tagged at second (2nd), count? Answer: The runs score. It is not a force play. It is a tag play.
- 8.07.1.6** He is touched by a fair ball in fair territory before the ball has touched or passed an infielder. The ball is dead and no runner may score, nor runners advance, except runners forced to advance.  
**Exception:** If a runner is touching his base when touched by an Infield Fly, he is not out, although the batter is out;  
**Rule 8.07.1.6 Comment:** If two runners are touched by the same fair ball, only the first (1st) one is out because the ball is instantly dead. If runner is touched by an Infield Fly when he is not touching his base, both runner and batter are out.
- 8.07.1.7** He attempts to score on a play in which the batter interferes with the play at home base before two (2) are out. With two (2) out, the interference puts the batter out and no score counts;
- 8.07.1.8** He passes a preceding runner before such runner is out;
- 8.07.1.9** After he has acquired legal possession of a base, he runs the bases in reverse order for the purpose of confusing the defense or making a travesty of the game. The umpire shall immediately call "Time" and declare the runner out;  
**Rule 8.07.1.9 Comment:** If a runner touches an unoccupied base and then thinks the ball was caught or is decoyed into returning to the base he last touched, he may be put out

running back to that base, but if he reaches the previously occupied base safely, he cannot be put out while in contact with that base.

**8.07.I.10** He fails to return at once to first (1st) base after over-running or over-sliding that base. If he attempts to run to second (2nd), he is out when tagged. If, after over-running or over-sliding first base he starts toward the dugout, or toward his position, and fails to return to first (1st) base at once, he is out, on appeal, when he or the base is tagged;

**Rule 8.07.I.10 Comment:** Runner who touches first (1st) base in over-running and is declared safe by the umpire has, within the intent of Rule 8.04.K.1 “reached first base” and any run which scores on such a play counts, even though the runner subsequently becomes the third (3rd) out for failure to return “at once,” as covered in Rule 8.07.I.10.

**8.07.I.11** In running or sliding for home base, he fails to touch home base and makes no attempt to return to the base, when a fielder holds the ball in his hand, while touching home base, and appeals to the umpire for the decision.

**Rule 8.07.I.11 Comment:** This rule applies only where runner is on his way to the bench and the catcher would be required to chase him. It does not apply to the ordinary play where the runner misses the plate and then immediately makes an effort to touch the plate before being tagged. In that case, runner must be tagged.

**8.07.J** It is interference by a batter or a runner when:

**8.07.J.1** After a third (3rd) strike, he hinders the catcher in his attempt to field the ball;

**8.07.J.2** After hitting or bunting a fair ball, his bat hits the ball a second time in fair territory. The ball is dead and no runners may advance. If the batter-runner drops his bat and the ball rolls against the bat in fair territory and, in the umpire’s judgment, there was no intention to interfere with the course of the ball, the ball is alive and in play;

**8.07.J.3** He intentionally deflects the course of a foul ball in any manner;

**8.07.J.4** Before two (2) are out and a runner on third (3rd) base, the batter hinders a fielder in making a play at home base; the runner is out;

**8.07.J.5** Any member or members of the offensive team stand or gather around any base to which a runner is advancing, to confuse, hinder or add to the difficulty of the fielders. Such runner shall be declared out for the interference of his teammate or teammates;

**8.07.J.6** Any batter or runner who has just been put out hinders or impedes any following play being made on a runner. Such runner shall be declared out for the interference of his teammate;  
**Rule 8.07.J.6 Comment:** If the batter or a runner continues to advance after he has been put out, he shall not by that act alone be considered as confusing, hindering or impeding the fielders.

**8.07.J.7** If, in the judgment of the umpire, a base runner willfully and deliberately interferes with a batted ball or a fielder in the act of fielding a batted ball with the obvious intent to break up a double play, the ball is dead. The umpire shall call the runner out for interference and also call out the batter-runner because of the action of his teammate. In no event may bases be run or runs scored because of such action by a runner.

**8.07.J.8** If, in the judgment of the umpire, a batter-runner willfully and deliberately interferes with a batted ball or a fielder in the act of fielding a batted ball, with the obvious intent to break up a double play, the ball is dead. The umpire shall call the batter-runner out for interference and shall also call out the runner who had advanced closest to the home plate regardless where the double play might have been possible. In no event shall bases be run because of such interference.

**8.07.J.9** In the judgment of the umpire, the base coach at first (1st) or third (3rd) base, by touching or holding the runner, physically assists him in returning to or leaving first (1st) or third (3rd) base.

**8.07.J.10** With a runner on third (3rd) base, the base coach leaves his box and acts in any manner to draw a throw by a fielder;

**8.07.J.11** In running the last half of the distance from home base to first (1st) base while the ball is being fielded to first (1st) base, he runs outside (to the right of) the three (3) foot line, or inside (to the left of) the foul line and, in the umpire’s judgment, interferes with the fielder taking the throw at first (1st) base, or attempting to field a batted ball;

**Rule 8.07.J.11 Comment:** The lines marking the three (3) foot lane are a part of that “lane” but the interpretation to be made is that a runner is required to have both feet within the three (3) foot “lane” or on the lines marking the “lane”.

**8.07.J.12** He fails to avoid a fielder who is attempting to field a batted ball, or intentionally interferes with a thrown ball, provided that if two (2) or more fielders attempt to field a batted ball, and the runner comes in contact with one (1) or more of them, the umpire shall determine which fielder is entitled to the benefit of this rule, and shall not declare the runner out for coming in

contact with a fielder other than the one (1) the umpire determines to be entitled to field such a ball;

**Rule 8.07.J.12 Comment:** When a catcher and batter-runner going to first (1st) base have contact when the catcher is fielding the ball, there is generally no violation and nothing should be called. "Obstruction" by a fielder attempting to field a ball should be called only in very flagrant and violent cases because the rules give him the right of way, but of course such "right of way" is not a license to, for example, intentionally trip a runner even though fielding the ball. If the catcher is fielding the ball and the first baseman or pitcher obstructs a runner, going to first (1st) base "obstruction" shall be called and the base runner awarded first (1st) base.

**8.07.J.13** A fair ball touches him on fair territory before touching a fielder. If a fair ball goes through, or by, an infielder, and touches a runner immediately back of him, or touches the runner after having been deflected by a fielder, the umpire shall not declare the runner out for being touched by a batted ball. In making such decision, the umpire must be convinced that the ball passed through, or by, the fielder, and that no other infielder had the chance to make a play on the ball. If, in the judgment of the umpire, the runner deliberately and intentionally kicks such a batted ball on which the infielder has missed a play, then the runner shall be called out for interference.

**Penalty:** The runner is out and the ball is dead.

**8.07.K** Any runner shall be called out, on appeal, when:

**8.07.K.1** After a fly ball is caught, he fails to retouch his original base before he or his original base is tagged;

**Rule 8.07.K.1 Comment:** "Retouch," in this rule, means to tag up and start from a contact with the base after the ball is caught. A runner is not permitted to take a flying start from a position in back of his base.

**8.07.K.2** With the ball in play, while advancing or returning to a base, he fails to touch each base in order before he, or a missed base, is tagged.

**Approved Ruling:** No runner may return to touch a missed base after a following runner has scored. When the ball is dead, no runner may return to touch a missed base or one (1) he has left after he has advanced to and touched a base beyond the missed base.

**Play (1):** Batter hits ball out of park or ground rule double and misses first (1st) base (ball is dead);

**Ruling:** He may return to first (1st) base to correct his mistake before he touches second (2nd) but if he touches second (2nd) he may not return to first (1st) and if defensive team appeals he is declared out at first (1st).

**Play (2):** Batter hits ball to shortstop who throws wild into the stands (ball is dead). The batter-runner misses first (1st) base but is awarded second (2nd) base on the overthrow.

**Ruling:** Even though the umpire has awarded the runner second (2nd) base on the overthrow, the runner must touch first (1st) base before he proceeds to second (2nd) base. These are appeal plays.

**8.07.K.3** He over-runs or over-slides first (1st) base and fails to return to the base immediately, and he or the base is tagged;

**8.07.K.4** He fails to touch home base and makes no attempt to return to that base, and home base is tagged. Any appeal under this rule must be made before the next pitch, or any play or attempted play. If the violation occurs during a play, which ends a half-inning, the appeal must be made before the defensive team leaves the field. An appeal is not to be interpreted as a play or an attempted play. Successive appeals may not be made on a runner at the same base. If the defensive team on its first (1st) appeal errs, a request for a second (2nd) appeal on the same runner at the same base shall not be allowed by the umpire. (Intended meaning of the word "err" is that the defensive team in making an appeal threw the ball out of play. For example, if the pitcher threw to first base to appeal and threw the ball into the stands, no second appeal would be allowed.) Appeal plays may require an umpire to recognize an apparent "fourth (4th) out." If the third (3rd) out is made during a play in which an appeal play is sustained on another runner, the appeal play decision takes precedence in determining the out. If there is more than one (1) appeal during a play that ends a half-inning, the defense may elect to take the out that gives it the advantage. For the purpose of this rule, the defensive team has "left the field" when the pitcher and all infielders have left fair territory on their way to the bench or clubhouse.

**Rule 8.07.K.4 Comment:** If two (2) runners arrive at home base about the same time and the first (1st) runner misses home plate but a second (2nd) runner legally touches the plate, the runner is tagged out on his attempt to come back and touch the base or is called out, on appeal, then he shall be considered as having been put out before the second (2nd)

runner scored and being the third (3rd) out, second (2nd) runner's run shall not count, as provided in Rule 8.07.M. If a pitcher balks when making an appeal, such act shall be a play. An appeal should be clearly intended as an appeal, either by a verbal request by the player or an act that unmistakably indicates an appeal to the umpire. A player, inadvertently stepping on the base with a ball in his hand, would not constitute an appeal. Time is not out when an appeal is being made.

**8.07.L** The players, coaches or any member of an offensive team shall vacate any space (including both dugouts) needed by a fielder who is attempting to field a batted or thrown ball.

**Penalty:** Interference shall be called and the batter or runner on whom the play is being made shall be declared out.

**8.07.M** Unless two (2) are out, the status of a following runner is not affected by a preceding runner's failure to touch or retouch a base. If, upon appeal, the preceding runner is the third (3rd) out, no runners following him shall score. If such third (3rd) out is the result of a force play, neither preceding nor following runners shall score.

**8.07.N** At any time, the team at bat may use a courtesy runner for the pitcher and catcher of record the previous inning on defense. The courtesy runner must be someone 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 (see Rule 8.03.C). 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 / themselves.

## **8.08** THE PITCHER –

**8.08.A** Legal pitching delivery. There are two (2) legal pitching positions, the Windup Position and the Set Position, and either position may be used at any time. Pitchers shall take signs from the catcher while standing on the rubber.

**Rule 8.08.A Comment:** Pitchers may disengage the rubber after taking their signs but may not step quickly onto the rubber and pitch. This may be judged a quick pitch by the umpire. When the pitcher disengages the rubber, he must drop his hands to his sides. Pitchers will not be allowed to disengage the rubber after taking each sign.

**8.08.A.1** The Windup Position. The pitcher shall stand facing the batter, his pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate and the other foot free. From this position, any natural movement associated with his delivery of the ball to the batter commits him to the pitch without interruption or alteration. He shall not raise either foot from the ground, except that in his actual delivery of the ball to the batter, he may take one (1) step backward and one (1) step forward with his free foot. When a pitcher holds the ball with both hands in front of his body, with his pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate and his other foot free, he will be considered in the Windup Position.

**Rule 8.08.A.1 Comment:** In the Windup Position, a pitcher is permitted to have his "free" foot on the rubber, in front of the rubber, behind the rubber or off the side of the rubber.

From the Windup Position, the pitcher may:

**8.08.A.1(a)** deliver the ball to the batter, or

**8.08.A.1(b)** step and throw to a base in an attempt to pick-off a runner, or

**8.08.A.1(c)** disengage the rubber (if he does he must drop his hand to his sides). In disengaging the rubber the pitcher must step off with his pivot foot and not his free foot first (1st). He may not go into a set or stretch position; if he does it is a balk.

**8.08.A.2** The Set Position. Set Position shall be indicated by the pitcher when he stands facing the batter with his pivot foot in contact with, and his other foot in front of, the pitcher's plate, holding the ball in both hands in front of his body and coming to a complete stop. From such Set Position he may deliver the ball to the batter, throw to a base or step backward off the pitcher's plate with his pivot foot. Before assuming Set Position, the pitcher may elect to make any natural preliminary motion such as that known as "the stretch." But if he so elects, he shall come to Set Position before delivering the ball to the batter. After assuming Set Position, any natural motion associated with his delivery of the ball to the batter commits him to the pitch without alteration or interruption. Preparatory to coming to a set position, the pitcher shall have one (1) hand on his side; from this position, he shall go to his set position as defined in Rule 8.08.A.2 without interruption and in one continuous motion. The pitcher, following his stretch must:

**8.08.A.2(a)** hold the ball in both hands in front of his body, and

**8.08.A.2(b)** come to a complete stop.

**Rule 8.08.A.2(b) Comment:** This must be enforced. Umpires should watch this closely. Pitchers are constantly attempting to "beat the rule" in their efforts to hold runners on bases and in cases where the pitcher fails to make

a complete “stop” called for in the rules, the umpire should immediately call a “Balk.”

**Note:** With no runners on base, the pitcher is not required to come to a complete stop when using the Set Position. If, however, in the umpire’s judgment, a pitcher delivers the ball in a deliberate effort to catch the batter off guard, this delivery shall be deemed a quick pitch, for which the penalty is a ball.

**8.08.A.2(c)** At any time during the pitcher’s preliminary movements and until his natural pitching motion commits him to the pitch; he may throw to any base provided he steps directly toward such base before making the throw.

**Rule 8.08.A.2(c) Comment:** The pitcher shall step “ahead of the throw.” A snap throw followed by the step directly toward the base is a balk.

**8.08.A.2(d)** If the pitcher makes an illegal pitch with the bases unoccupied, it shall be called a ball unless the batter reaches first (1st) base on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batter or otherwise.

**Rule 8.08.A.2(d) Comment:** A ball, which slips out of a pitcher’s hand and crosses the foul line, shall be called a ball; otherwise, it will be called no pitch. This would be a balk with men on base.

**8.08.A.2(e)** If the pitcher removes his pivot foot from contact with the pitcher’s plate by stepping backward with that foot, he thereby becomes an infielder and if he makes a wild throw from that position, it shall be considered the same as a wild throw by any other infielder.

**Rule 8.08.A.2(e) Comment:** The pitcher, while off the rubber, may throw to any base. If he makes a wild throw, such throw is the throw of an infielder and what follows is governed by the rules covering a ball thrown by a fielder.

**8.08.B** The pitcher shall not:

**8.08.B.1** Bring his pitching hand in contact with his mouth or lips while in the eighteen (18) foot circle surrounding the pitching rubber.

**Exception:** Provided it is agreed to by both managers, the umpire prior to the start of a game played in cold weather, may permit the pitcher to blow on his hand.

**Penalty:** For violation of this part of this rule, the umpires shall immediately call a ball. However, if the pitch is made and a batter reaches first (1st) base on a hit, an error, a hit batsman or otherwise, and no other runner is put out before advancing at least one (1) base, the play shall proceed without reference to the violation.

**8.08.B.2** Expectorate on the ball, either hand or his glove;

**8.08.B.3** Rub the ball on his glove, person or clothing;

**8.08.B.4** Apply a foreign substance of any kind to the ball;

**8.08.B.5** Deface the ball in any manner;

**8.08.B.6** Deliver a ball defaced in a manner prescribed by Rule 8.08.B.2 – 8.08.B.5 or what is called the “shine” ball, “spit” ball, “mud” ball or “emery” ball. The pitcher is allowed to rub the ball between his bare hands.

**Penalty:** For violation of any part of Rules 8.08.B.2 – 8.08.B.6, the pitcher shall be ejected immediately from the game. If a play follows the violation called by the umpire, the manager of the offense may advise the plate umpire that he elects to accept the play. Such election shall be made immediately at the end of the play. However, if the batter reaches first (1st) base on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batsman, or otherwise, and no other runner is put out before advancing at least one (1) base, the play shall proceed without reference to the violation. Even though the offense elects to take the play, the violation shall be recognized and the pitcher shall be ejected immediately from the game. The umpire shall be sole judge on whether any portion of this rule has been violated.

**Rules 8.08.B.2 & 8.08.B.3 Comment:** If a pitcher violates either Rule 8.08.B.2 or 8.08.B.3 and, in the judgment of the umpire, the pitcher did not intend, by his act, to alter the characteristics of a pitched ball, then the umpire may, in his discretion, warn the pitcher in lieu of applying the penalty set forth for violations of Rules 8.08.B.2 – 8.08.B.6. If the pitcher persists in violating either of those Rules, however, the umpire should then apply the penalty.

**8.08.B.7** If at any time the ball hits the rosin bag, cleat scrape or stick it is in play. In the case of rain or wet field, the umpire may instruct the pitcher to carry the rosin bag in his hip pocket. A pitcher may use the rosin bag for the purpose of applying rosin to his bare hand or hands. Neither the pitcher nor any other player shall dust the ball with the rosin bag; neither the pitcher nor any other player shall be permitted to apply rosin from the bag to his glove or

dust any part of his uniform with the rosin bag or have on his person, or in his possession, any foreign substance.

**Penalty:** The pitcher or player shall be immediately ejected from the game.

**8.08.B.8** Intentionally delay the game by throwing the ball to players other than the catcher, when the batter is in position, except in an attempt to retire a runner.

**Penalty:** If, after warning by the umpire, such delaying action is repeated, the pitcher shall be removed from the game.

**8.08.B.9** Intentionally Pitch at the Batter. If, in the umpire's judgment, such a violation occurs, the umpire may elect either to:

**8.08.B.9(a)** Expel the pitcher, or the manager and the pitcher, from the game, or

**8.08.B.9(b)** May warn the pitcher and the manager of both teams that another such pitch will result in the immediate expulsion of that pitcher (or a replacement) and the manager.

**Rules 8.08.B.9 Comment:** If, in the umpire's judgment, circumstances warrant, both teams may be officially "warned" prior to the game or at any time during the game. To pitch at a batter's head is unsportsmanlike and highly dangerous; it should be and is condemned by everybody. Umpires should act without hesitation in enforcement of this rule.

**8.08.C** When a pitcher takes his position at the beginning of each inning, or when he relieves another pitcher, he shall be permitted to pitch not to exceed eight (8) preparatory pitches to his catcher during which play shall be suspended. Such preparatory pitches shall not consume more than one minute of time. If a sudden emergency causes a pitcher to be summoned into the game without any opportunity to warm up, the umpire-in-chief shall allow him as many pitches as the umpire deems necessary.

**8.08.D** When the bases are unoccupied, the pitcher shall deliver the ball to the batter within twelve (12) seconds after he receives the ball. Each time the pitcher delays the game by violating this rule, the umpire shall call "Ball." The twelve (12) second timing starts when the pitcher is in possession of the ball and the batter is in the box alert to the pitcher. The timing stops when the pitcher releases the ball.

**Rule 8.08.D Comment:** The intent of this rule is to avoid unnecessary delays. The umpire shall insist that the catcher return the ball promptly to the pitcher, and that the pitcher take his position on the rubber promptly. Obvious delay by the pitcher should instantly be penalized by the umpire.

**8.08.E** If there is a runner, or runners on base, it is a balk when:

**8.08.E.1** The pitcher, while touching his plate, makes any motion naturally associated with his pitch and fails to make such delivery;

**Rule 8.08.E.1 Comment:** If a left-handed or right-handed pitcher swings his free foot past the back edge of the pitcher's rubber, he is required to pitch to the batter except to throw to second (2nd) base on a pick-off-play.

**8.08.E.2** The pitcher, while touching his plate, feints a throw to first (1st) base and fails to complete the throw;

**8.08.E.3** The pitcher, while touching his plate, fails to step directly toward a base before throwing to that base;

**Rule 8.08.E.3 Comment:** Requires the pitcher, while touching his plate, to step directly toward a base before throwing to that base. If a pitcher turns or spins off his free foot without actually stepping or if he turns his body and throws before stepping, it is a balk. A pitcher is to step directly toward a base before throwing to that base but does not require him to throw (except to first base only) because he steps. It is possible, with runners on first (1st) and third (3rd), for the pitcher to step toward third (3rd) and not throw, merely to bluff the runner back to third (3rd); then seeing the runner on first (1st) start for second (2nd), turn and step toward and throw to first (1st) base. This is legal. However, with runners on first (1st) and third (3rd), the pitcher, while in contact with the rubber, steps toward third (3rd) and then immediately and in practically the same motion "wheels" and throws to first (1st) base, it is obviously an attempt to deceive the runner at first (1st) base, and in such a move it is practically impossible to step directly toward first (1st) base before the throw to first (1st) base, and such a move shall be called a balk. Of course, if the pitcher steps off the rubber and then makes such a move, it is not a balk.

**8.08.E.4** The pitcher, while touching his plate, throws, or feints a throw to an unoccupied base, except for the purpose of making a play;

**8.08.E.5** The pitcher makes an illegal pitch;

**Rule 8.08.E.5 Comment:** A quick pitch is an illegal pitch. Umpires will judge a quick pitch as one (1) delivered before the batter is reasonably set in the batter's box. With runners on base, the penalty is a balk; with no runners on base, it is a ball. The quick pitch is dangerous and should not be permitted.

**8.08.E.6** The pitcher delivers the ball to the batter while he is not facing the batter;

- 8.08.E.7** The pitcher makes any motion naturally associated with his pitch while he is not touching the pitcher's plate;
- 8.08.E.8** The pitcher unnecessarily delays the game;
- 8.08.E.9** The pitcher, without having the ball, stands on or astride the pitcher's plate or while off the plate, he feints a pitch;
- 8.08.E.10** The pitcher, after coming to a legal pitching position, removes one (1) hand from the ball other than in an actual pitch, or in throwing to a base;
- 8.08.E.11** The pitcher, while touching his plate, accidentally or intentionally drops the ball;
- 8.08.E.12** The pitcher, while giving an intentional base on balls, pitches when the catcher is not in the catcher's box;
- 8.08.E.13** The pitcher delivers the pitch from Set Position without coming to a stop.  
**Penalty:** The ball is dead, and each runner shall advance one (1) base without liability to be put out, unless the batter reaches first (1st) on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batter, or otherwise and all other runners advance at least one (1) base, in which case the play proceeds without reference to the balk.  
**Approved Ruling:** In cases where a pitcher balks and throws wild, either to a base or to home plate, a runner or runners may advance beyond the base to which he is entitled at his own risk.  
**Approved Ruling:** A runner who misses the first (1st) base to which he is advancing and who is called out on appeal shall be considered as having advanced one (1) base for the purpose of this rule.  
**General Statement:** Umpires should bear in mind that the purpose of the balk rule is to prevent the pitcher from deliberately deceiving the base runner. If there is doubt in the umpire's mind, the "intent" of the pitcher should govern. However, certain specifics should be borne in mind: Straddling the pitcher's rubber without the ball is to be interpreted as intent to deceive and ruled a balk. With a runner on first (1st) base, the pitcher may make a complete turn, without hesitating toward first (1st), and throw to second (2nd). This is not to be interpreted as throwing to an unoccupied base.
- 8.08.F** In age divisions 10U and younger, pitchers will be allowed some leniency in regards 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 age divisions, balks will be strictly enforced without warning.
- 8.08.F** All leagues and tournaments shall adopt the following rule pertaining to the visit of the manager or a coach to the pitcher:
- 8.08.F.1** This rule limits the number of visits a manager or a coach may make to any one (1) pitcher in any one (1) inning;
- 8.08.F.2** A second (2nd) visit to the same pitcher in the same inning will cause this pitcher's automatic removal from the pitching position;
- 8.08.F.3** The manager or a coach is prohibited from making a second (2nd) visit to the mound while the same batter is at bat, but
- 8.08.F.4** 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.  
**Rules 8.08.F.1 - 8.08.F.4 Comment:** If the manager or coach goes to the catcher or infielder and that player then goes to the mound or the pitcher comes to him at his position before there is an intervening play (a pitch or other play) that will be the same as the manager or coach going to the mound. Any attempt to evade or circumvent this rule by the manager or coach going to the catcher or an infielder and then that player going to the mound to confer with the pitcher shall constitute a visit to the mound. If the coach goes to the mound and removes a pitcher and then the manager goes to the mound to talk with the new pitcher, that will constitute one (1) visit to that new pitcher that inning. In a case where a manager has made his first (1st) visit to the mound and then returns the second (2nd) time to the mound in the same inning with the same pitcher in the game and the same batter at bat, after being warned by the umpire that he cannot return to the mound, the manager shall be removed from the game and the pitcher required to pitch to the batter until he is retired or gets on base. After the batter is retired, or becomes a base runner, then this pitcher must be removed from the pitching position. The manager should be notified that his pitcher will be removed from the pitching position after he pitches to one (1) hitter, so he can have a substitute pitcher warmed up. The substitute pitcher will be allowed eight (8) preparatory pitches or more if in the umpire's judgment circumstances justify.

**8.08.F.5** 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.

**8.08.G** Limitations:

The end of the day for the pitching limitations rule is the time of day or night when the ballpark is shutdown and the teams go home for the night break. For games that for what ever 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. For games that for whatever reason are suspended and then resumed after the night break (the next day or another day), 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
<b>14U – Pre-Freshman</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>11</b>
15U – HS Freshman	5	7	12
16U – HS Sophomore	5	7	12
17U – HS Junior	NONE	UNLIMITED	UNLIMITED
18U – HS Senior	NONE	UNLIMITED	UNLIMITED

**8.08.G.1** Column A: The number of innings a pitcher can legally pitch in one (1) day and still legally pitch the next day.

**Rule 8.08.G.1 Example:** In the 10U age division, a pitcher may throw up to four (4) innings in one (1) day and still throw 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.

**8.08.G.2** Column B: The number of innings a pitcher can legally pitch in one (1) day.

**Rule 8.08.G.2 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.

**8.08.G.3** Column C: The number of innings a pitcher can legally pitch in two (2) consecutive days.

**Rule 8.08.G.3 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 legally pitch any combination of innings the equal eight (8) as long as the first (1st) day pitched does not equal more than four (4) innings due to Column A requirements.

**8.08.G.4** For purposes of the pitching limitations rules, a pitcher is in violation of the rule if he records any out above the pitching limits.

**Exception:** Exceeding the maximum innings allowed in the case of a double or triple play will not be counted against the pitcher.

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

**8.08.G.6** 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.

**8.08.G.7** Any innings pitched or outs recorded during a game that is forfeited shall count towards the pitchers’ allotted innings.

**8.08.G.8** In age divisions 12U and 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.

**Penalty:** Any violation of pitching limitations Rule 8.08.G.1 through 8.08.G.8 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.

**8.09** 7U & 8U COACH PITCH 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 plat. 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 Circle: There will be a ten (10) foot diameter circle with the front edge set at forty-two (42) feet from the back point of home plate.
- 8.09.D** Pitcher's Line: A line drawn from the pitcher's circle to the fair ball arc.
- 8.09.D.1** The pitching coach must keep one foot on or straddle the pitcher's line.
- 8.09.D.2** The pitching coach cannot coach while in the pitching position, either verbally or physically and once the ball has been hit, must position himself as not to be an obstruction to the defensive team on any possible play.
- Penalty:** If a coach violates this rule after the ball is pitched, then obstruction will be called.
- Additional 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.
- 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** A base runner is out for leaving the base before the ball is hit or reaches home plate. Stealing is not allowed.
- 8.09.G** 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.
- 8.09.H** 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.H.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.I** A maximum of seven (7) runs may be scored per inning or three (3) recorded outs. This includes the last inning.
- 8.09.J** Teams may use free substitution on defense but the batting order must remain the same.
- 8.09.K** No bunting.
- 8.09.L** Defensive coaches are not allowed on the field of play and must coach from the dugout.
- 8.09.M** 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.N** A player can only be Intentionally Walked once per game by announcement from the defensive team. Four (4) pitches need not be thrown.
- 8.09.O** The Infield Fly Rule is never in effect.
- 8.09.P** The batter shall receive a maximum of six (6) pitches or three (3) swinging strikes. No extra pitches or swings on foul balls.
- 8.09.Q** The defensive player listed as pitcher cannot leave the pitching circle until the ball is hit.
- 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.
- Additional Penalty:** First Offense: Warning. Second Offense: Removal of player from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.
- 8.09.R** A courtesy runner for catcher of record only the previous inning may be used. The courtesy runner must be the player that made the last out. If no outs have been recorded, the courtesy runner will be the previous batter not on base.
- 8.09.S** When a batted ball hits the Pitching Coach, the following rules shall apply:
- 8.09.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.
- 8.09.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.
- 8.10** 7U & 8U KID PITCH SPECIFIC RULES OF PLAY –
- 8.10.A** 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.
- Exception:** Runners may advance when the ball is hit to the pitcher and time has not been called.
- 8.10.B** Runners can not lead-off but can advance at their own risk (steal) once a pitched ball has passed home plate.
- 8.10.B.1** When a runner tries to advance prior to the pitched ball passing home plate, the following will apply:
- 8.10.B.1(a)** If the runner is called safe, the runner returns to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

**8.10.B.1(b)** If the runner is called out, the runner is out.

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

**8.10.C** 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.

**8.10.D** In the event of a dropped / missed third (3rd) strike by the catcher, the batter is out and cannot advance to first (1st) base.

**8.10.E** Teams may bat nine (9) or ten (10) using the EH (see Rule 8.06.M).

**8.10.F** Nine (9) players will be used on defense.

**8.10.G** Balk rules will not apply.

**8.11** 7U & 8U MACHINE PITCH SPECIFIC RULES OF PLAY –

**8.11.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 plat. A batted ball must go past this line to be a fair ball.

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

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

**8.11.D** Pitching Machine: The front legs shall be set at a distance of forty-two (42) feet from the back point of home plate.

**8.11.E** Recommended pitching machine speeds:

**8.11.E.1** 36 M.P.H. – 39 M.P.H. for the 7U age division.

**8.11.E.2** 39 M.P.H. – 42 M.P.H. for the 8U age division.

**8.11.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.

**8.11.G** A base runner is out for leaving the base before the ball is hit or reaches home plate. Stealing is not allowed.

**8.11.H** 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.

**8.11.H.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.

**8.11.I** A maximum of seven (7) runs may be scored per inning or three (3) recorded outs. This includes the last inning.

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

**8.11.K** Bunting:

**8.11.K.1** A team may bunt only two (2) times per inning.

**8.11.K.2** No fake bunts are allowed. If a player “shows” bunt, they are committed to attempt to bunt or take the pitch.

**Penalty:** If a batter swings after “showing” bunt, the batter is called out and no runners shall advance.

**8.11.L** Defensive coaches are not allowed on the field of play and must coach from the dugout.

**8.11.M** 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.

**8.11.N** A player can only be Intentionally Walked once per game by announcement from the defensive team. Four (4) pitches need not be thrown.

**8.11.O** The Infield Fly Rule is never in effect.

**8.11.P** The batter shall receive a maximum of six (6) pitches or three (3) swinging strikes. No extra pitches or swings on foul balls.

**8.11.Q** The defensive player listed as pitcher cannot leave the pitching circle until the ball is hit.

**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.

**Additional penalty:** First Offense: Warning. Second Offense: Removal of player from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.

**8.11.R** A courtesy runner for catcher of record only the previous inning may be used. The courtesy runner must be the player that made the last out. If no outs have been recorded, the courtesy runner will be the previous batter not on base.

**8.11.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.

**8.12** T-BALL SPECIFIC RULES OF PLAY –

- 8.12.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 fair. The arc is to be treated as a foul line.
- 8.12.B Safety Arc: There will be a thirty (30) foot arc drawn from (1st) baseline to third (3rd) baseline in front of home plate. Infielders must stay behind this line until the ball is hit.
- 8.12.C Pitching Plate: The pitching plate shall be located at forty-two (42) feet from the front edge of the pitching plate to the back point of home plate.
- 8.12.D 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.
- 8.12.E A base runner is out for leaving the base before the ball is hit or reaches home plate. Stealing is not allowed.
- 8.12.F The catcher must wear a dual ear-flap catcher's helmet with mask.
- 8.12.G 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 order.
  - 8.12.G.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.
- 8.12.H A maximum of seven (7) runs may be scored per inning or three (3) recorded outs. This includes the last inning.
- 8.12.I Teams may use free substitution on defense but the batting order must remain the same.
- 8.12.J No bunting.
- 8.12.K Defensive coaches are not allowed on the field of play and must coach from the dugout.
- 8.12.L 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.
- 8.12.M A player can only be Intentionally Walked once per game by announcement from the defensive team. Four (4) pitches need not be thrown.
- 8.12.N The Infield Fly Rule is never in effect.
- 8.12.O A 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.
- 8.12.P The defensive player listed as pitcher must stay in contact with the pitchers' plate until the ball is hit.
  - 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.
- 8.12.Q An eight and one half (8 1/2) inch diameter baseball will be used.

## **RULE 9.00 – UMPIRES**

- 9.01 All leagues and tournaments played under the jurisdiction and administration of USSSA Baseball shall utilize umpires who are registered with the Association.
- 9.02 One or more umpires will be assigned to officiate each game.
- 9.03 The umpires shall be responsible for the conduct of the game in accordance with these Rules and for maintaining discipline and order on the playing field during the game.
- 9.04 Each umpire is the representative of USSSA Baseball, and is authorized and required to enforce all of these Rules.
  - 9.04.A Each umpire has authority to order a player, coach, manager, sponsor or spectator to do or refrain from doing anything, which affects the administering of these Rules, and to enforce the prescribed penalties.
  - 9.04.B Each umpire has authority to disqualify any player, coach or manager for objecting to decisions or for unsportsmanlike conduct or language, and to eject such disqualified person from the playing field.
  - 9.04.C Each umpire has authority at his discretion to eject from the playing field any person whose duties permit his presence on the field, such as ground crew members, ushers, photographers, newsmen, broadcasting crewmembers, etc., and any spectator or other person not authorized to be on the playing field.
- 9.05 Any umpire's decision which involves judgment, such as, but not limited to, whether a batted ball is fair or foul, whether a pitch is a strike or a ball, or whether a runner is safe or out, is final. No player, coach or manager shall object to any such judgment decisions.
  - Note:** Players leaving their position in the field or on base, or managers or coaches leaving the bench or coaches box, to argue on BALLS AND STRIKES will not be permitted. They should be warned if they start for the plate to protest the call. If they continue, they will be ejected from the game.
- 9.06 If there is reasonable doubt that any umpire's decision may be in conflict with the rules, the manager may appeal the decision and ask that a correct ruling be made. Such appeal shall be made only to the umpire who made the protested decision.

- 9.07** If a decision is appealed, the umpire making the decision may ask another umpire for information before making a final decision. No umpire shall criticize, seek to reverse or interfere with another umpire's decision unless asked to do so by the umpire making it.
- Note:** The manager or the catcher may request the plate umpire to ask his partner for help on a half swing when the plate umpire calls the pitch a ball, but not when the pitch is called a strike. The manager may not complain that the umpire made an improper call, but only that he did not ask his partner for help. Field umpires must be alerted to the request from the plate umpire and quickly respond. Managers may not protest the call of a ball or strike on the pretense they are asking for information about a half swing. Appeals on a half swing may be made only on the call of ball and when asked to appeal, the home plate umpire must refer to a base umpire for his judgment on the half swing. Should the base umpire call the pitch a strike, the strike call shall prevail. Base runners must be alert to the possibility that the base umpire on appeal from the plate umpire may reverse the call of a ball to the call of a strike, in which event the runner is in jeopardy of being out by the catcher's throw. Also, a catcher must be alert in a base stealing situation if a ball call is reversed to a strike by the base umpire upon appeal from the plate umpire. The ball is in play on appeal on a half swing. On a half swing, if the manager comes out to argue with first (1st) or third (3rd) base umpire and if after being warned he persists in arguing, he can be ejected as he is now arguing over a called ball or strike.
- 9.08** If there is only one (1) umpire, he shall have complete jurisdiction in administering the rules. He may take any position on the playing field, which will enable him to discharge his duties (usually) behind the catcher, but sometimes behind the pitcher if there are runners.
- 9.09** If there are two (2) or more umpires, one (1) shall be designated umpire-in-chief and the others field umpires.
- 9.09.A** The umpire-in-chief shall stand behind the catcher. (He usually is called the plate umpire.) His duties shall be to:
- 9.09.A.1** Take full charge of, and be responsible for, the proper conduct of the game;
  - 9.09.A.2** Call and count balls and strike;
  - 9.09.A.3** Call and declare fair balls and fouls except those commonly called by field umpires;
  - 9.09.A.4** Make all decisions on the batter;
  - 9.09.A.5** Make all decisions except those commonly reserved for the field umpires;
  - 9.09.A.6** If a time limit has been set, announce the fact and the time set before the game starts;
  - 9.09.A.7** Inform the official scorer of the official batting order, and any changes in the lineups and batting order, on request;
  - 9.09.A.8** Announce any special ground rules.
- 9.09.B** A field umpire(s) may take any position on the playing field he thinks best suited to make impending decisions on the bases. His duties shall be to:
- 9.09.B.1** Make all decisions on the bases except those specifically reserved to the umpire-in-chief;
  - 9.09.B.2** Take concurrent jurisdiction with the umpire-in-chief in calling "Time," balks, illegal pitches, or defacement or discoloration of the ball by any player.
  - 9.09.B.3** Aid the umpire-in-chief in every manner in enforcing the rules, and excepting the power to forfeit the game, shall have equal authority with the umpire-in-chief in administering and enforcing the rules and maintaining discipline.
- 9.10** If different decisions should be made on one (1) play by different umpires, the umpire-in-chief shall call all the umpires into consultation, with no manager or player present. After consultation, the umpire-in-chief shall determine which decision shall prevail, based on which umpire was in best position and which decision was most likely correct. Play shall proceed as if only the final decision had been made.
- 9.11** Immediately following a game, the umpire shall report to the league / tournament officials all violations of rules and other incidents worthy of comment, including the disqualification of any player, coach or manager and the reasons therefore.

**General Statement:** Umpires on the field should not indulge in conversation with players. Keep out of the coaching box and do not talk to the coach on duty. Keep your uniform in good condition, be active, and alert on the field. Be courteous, always. When you enter a ballpark, your sole duty is to umpire a ball game as the representative of USSSA Baseball. Do not allow criticism to keep you from studying out bad situations that may lead to protested games. Carry your rulebook, it is better to consult the rules and hold up the game five (5) minutes to decide a knotty problem than to have a game thrown out on protest and replayed. Keep the games moving. A ball game is often helped by energetic and earnest work of the umpires. You are the only official representative of USSSA Baseball on the field. It is often a trying position which requires the exercise of much patience and good judgment, but do not forget that the first (1st) essential in working out of a bad situation is to keep your own temper and self-control. You no doubt are going to make mistakes, but never attempt to "even up" after having made one. Make all decisions as you see them and forget which is the home or visiting team. Keep your eye everlastingly on the ball while it is in play. It is more vital to know just where a fly ball fell, or a thrown ball finished up, than whether or not a runner missed a base. Do not call the plays too quickly, or turn away too fast when a fielder is throwing to complete a double play. Watch out for dropped balls after you have called a man out. Do not come running with your arm up or down, denoting "out" or "safe", wait until the play is completed

before making any arm motion. Each umpire team should work out a simple set of signals, so the proper umpire can always right a manifestly wrong decision when convinced he has made an error. If sure you got the play correctly, do not be stampeded by players' appeals to "ask the other man." If not sure, ask one of your associates. Do not carry this to extremes, be alert and get your own plays. But remember...the first (1st) requisite is to get decisions correctly. If in doubt do not hesitate to consult your partner(s). Umpire dignity is important but never as important as "being right." A most important rule for umpires is always "BE IN POSITION TO SEE EVERY PLAY." Even though your decision may be one hundred percent (100%) right, players still question it if they feel you were not in a spot to see the play clearly and definitely. Finally, be courteous, impartial and firm, and so compel respect from all.

## **RULE 10.00 – OFFICIAL SCORER**

- 10.01** The official scorer shall:
- 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.
- Note:* 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 three (3) 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 and ALL STAR) SPECIFIC RULES OF PLAY –**
- 14.06.A **9U Age Division ONLY - Runners can not 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. 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 to be approved and 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. National Division All-Star teams cannot begin playing together before Memorial Day weekend.  
**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.

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