



**UNITED STATES SPECIALTY  
SPORTS ASSOCIATION**

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

**August 1, 2008**

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

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

| <b>Item</b>   | <b>Page</b> |
|---|-------------|
| Amendments  | 3           |
| Forward   | 4           |
| Rule 1.00 – Name & Objective                            | 4           |
| Rule 2.00 – Membership, Participation & Classifications | 4           |
| Rule 3.00 – Team & Individual Player Eligibility        | 4           |
| Rule 4.00 – Qualifying Tournaments                      | 6           |
| Rule 5.00 – State Championships                         | 6           |
| Rule 6.00 – World Series                                | 7           |
| Rule 7.00 – Acts of Disbarment / Suspension             | 8           |
| Rule 8.00 – Rules of Play                               | 9           |
| 8.01 – Objective of the Game                            | 9           |
| 8.02 – Playing Field & Equipment                        | 9           |
| 8.03 – Game Preliminaries                               | 10          |
| 8.04 – Starting & Ending a Game                         | 12          |
| 8.05 – Putting the Ball in Play (Live Ball)             | 14          |
| 8.06 – The Batter                                       | 15          |
| 8.07 – The Runner                                       | 19          |
| 8.08 – The Pitcher                                      | 24          |
| 8.09 – Coach Pitch Specific Rules of Play               | 28          |
| 8.10 – Machine Pitch Specific Rules of Play             | 29          |
| 8.11 – T-Ball Specific Rules of Play                    | 29          |
| 8.12 – 7U & 8U Kid Pitch Specific Rules of Play         | 30          |
| Rule 9.00 – Umpires                                     | 30          |
| Rule 10.00 – Official Scorer                            | 31          |
| Rule 11.00 – Sportsmanship                              | 31          |
| Rule 12.00 – Ejections                                  | 31          |
| Rule 13.00 – Protests                                   | 31          |
| Rule 14.00 – Drafted League Program                     | 32          |
| Rule 15.00 – Drafted League All-Star Program            | 32          |
| Rule 16.00 – Items Not Specifically Covered             | 32          |

## AMENDMENTS & CHANGES DATED SEPTEMBER 24, 2008

| Item             | Page | Subject  |
|------------------|------|--|
| 3.06             | 5    | A player shall be eligible to compete...                 |
| 3.08             | 5    | Players participating in multiple age divisions...       |
| 3.09.A           | 5    | When a team qualifies prior to April 1st...              |
| 3.09.B           | 5    | When a team qualifies after April 1st...                 |
| 3.09.C           | 5    | When a team qualifies at a Super NIT...                  |
| 3.11 Comment     | 5    | A player may legally appear...                           |
| 3.12 Comment     | 5    | If a team adds one (1), two (2), or three (3) players... |
| 3.13             | 5    | There shall be no limit to the number of players...      |
| 3.14             | 5    | The team manager shall be responsible for...             |
| 3.14.A           | 5    | The intentional or unintentional act of...               |
| 3.14.B           | 5    | The intentional or unintentional act of...               |
| 3.14.C           | 5    | The intentional or unintentional act of...               |
| 3.14 Comment     | 6    | A player's first name, last name...                      |
| 3.16             | 6    | A team with a frozen Official Online Roster...           |
| 3.17             | 6    | If a disbanded team chooses...                           |
| 3.17.A           | 6    | The team manager shall be required...                    |
| 3.17.B           | 6    | The team manager shall be limited...                     |
| 3.17.C           | 6    | The team manager shall be bound...                       |
| 3.17.D           | 6    | The team shall be required...                            |
| 8.08.G.1         | 27   | Column A: The maximum number of innings...               |
| 8.08.G.2         | 27   | Column B: The maximum number of innings...               |
| 8.08.G.2 Comment | 27   | For age divisions 7U – 12U...                            |
| 8.08.G.2 Comment | 27   | For age divisions 13U – 14U...                           |
| 8.08.G.3         | 27   | In age divisions 7U – 14U...                             |
| 8.08.G.6 Penalty | 28   | It shall be the responsibility of each team manager...   |
| 8.09.M Comment   | 28   | A batter that has received less than...                  |
| 8.09.R Comment   | 28   | When a runner stands off a base...                       |
| 8.10.M Comment   | 29   | A batter that has received less than...                  |
| 8.10.R Comment   | 29   | When a runner stands off a base...                       |
| 8.11.P Comment   | 29   | When a runner stands off a base...                       |

## **FORWARD**

The USSSA Baseball National Committee has incorporated the Official Rules of Baseball as published by Major League Baseball on MLB.com including the Comments sections directly into the Official Baseball National By-laws & Rules at the appropriate places. Comments are a simplified explanation of the written rule or particular situation pertaining to the written rule and help interpret and / or elaborate on the basic written rules and in essence shall have the same authority, authorization, effect, influence, power, right and weight as the written rules themselves when applied to the particular intended sections. This arrangement will give quicker access to any written language pertaining to the rules and does not require a reader to refer to different sections in the rulebook or different rulebooks when considering the application of a particular written rule to a particular situation or play. The Official Rules of Baseball as published by Major League Baseball on MLB.com shall govern any item not specifically covered herein.

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

## **RULE 1.00 – NAME & OBJECTIVE**

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

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

- 2.01** Team Membership – A team registration fee shall be paid seasonally to participate in the USSSA Baseball program. The USSSA Baseball season begins August 1st and concludes July 31st.
- 2.02** Umpire Membership – An umpire registration fee shall be paid yearly to officiate in the USSSA Baseball program. Included with membership is general liability and accidental medical insurance while officiating in the USSSA Baseball program. In addition, umpires may choose to purchase optional insurance that will cover the umpire during non-USSSA Baseball contests.
- 2.03** League Participation – In all USSSA Baseball sanctioned leagues, teams shall qualify for State Championships and / or World Series play.
- 2.04** Tournament Participation – In all USSSA Baseball sanctioned tournaments, teams shall qualify for State Championships and / or World Series play.
- 2.05** Classifications of Play – The USSSA Baseball program shall offer four (4) classifications of play: Major, AAA, AA & A. The criteria for classifying teams shall be the overall offensive and defensive strength and experience of the team.

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

- 3.01** No team shall be allowed to compete in any USSSA Baseball program (sanctioned league or tournament) without first paying their team registration fee to the Association.
- 3.02** All teams shall maintain an Official Online Roster.
  - 3.02.A** Team rosters for age divisions 4U – 14U shall be composed of not more than twenty (20) players.
  - 3.02.B** Team rosters for scholastic divisions 15U – 18U shall be composed of not more than twenty-five (25) players.
- Rule 3.02 Comment:** If applicable, coaches or managers shall be included on an Official Online Roster to be eligible to play.
- 3.03** State Directors shall adopt an acceptable method to classify teams. State Directors shall have sole authority to classify teams within their respective state and the authority to classify and / or re-classify any team during the current season, except when team classification has been assigned by the USSSA Baseball National Committee.
- 3.04** A team's "home" state shall be determined by the home residency of fifty-one percent (51%) or the majority (whichever is greater) of the players on the team's Official Online Roster.
- 3.05** Age Eligibility:
  - 3.05.A** (**Chart 3.05.A-1**) For age divisions 4U – 14U, any player who before May 1st of the current season reaches the listed birthday in Column "B" shall not be eligible to participate in the listed age division in Column "A" and shall be required to play in the next older age division.

| <b>COLUMN A</b>       | <b>COLUMN B</b>   |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| <b>(AGE DIVISION)</b> | <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         |

Chart 3.05.A-1

**3.05.B (Chart 3.05.B-1)** For scholastic divisions 15U – 18U participation is based on age and scholastic grade. Any player that does not meet the listed birthday in Column “B”, must meet the listed grade restriction in column “A” **AND** the listed age restriction in Column “C”. Any player that does not meet **BOTH**, shall be required to play in the next older age division.

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

Chart 3.05.B-1

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

**3.07** A player shall be permitted to participate on multiple teams but only one (1) team per age division, regardless of classification and only one (1) team per day, event, tournament, week or weekend.

**3.08** Players participating in multiple age divisions shall not be permitted to participate on any team below the classification of the oldest team in which they participate on.

**3.09** Qualified Teams:

**3.09.A** When a team qualifies (is awarded a berth) for a State Championship and / or World Series prior to April 1st of the current season (whether the team accepts the berth or not), the team’s Official Online Roster shall become frozen on April 1st regardless of the date the roster is physically frozen in the USSSA online system.

**3.09.B** When a team qualifies (is awarded a berth) for a State Championship and / or World Series after April 1st of the current season (whether the team accepts the berth or not), the team’s Official Online Roster shall become frozen immediately at the qualifying event regardless of the date the roster is physically frozen in the USSSA online system.

**3.09.C** When a team qualifies (is awarded a berth) at a Super NIT event (whether the team accepts the berth or not), the team’s Official Online Roster shall become frozen immediately at the Super NIT event regardless of the date of the Super NIT event or the date the roster is physically frozen in the USSSA online system.

**Rule 3.09 Comment:** State Directors with the approval of the Association’s Executive Vice President of Baseball may option to freeze Official Online Rosters of qualified teams on a date earlier than April 1st of the current season.

**3.10** All players on the team’s Official Online Roster (unless released pursuant to these rules) shall be bound to the team up to and including the teams respective State Championship and / or World Series.

**3.11** Player(s) shall not be on any other team’s frozen or unfrozen Official Online Roster within the same age division regardless of classification.

**Rule 3.11 Comment:** A player may legally appear on multiple Official Online Rosters in the same age division regardless of classification(s) until such time one of the rosters the player appears on in the age division becomes frozen. From the freeze date forward, the player may only appear on the frozen team’s Official Online Roster in that age division unless released pursuant to these rules.

**3.12** Player Additions:

**3.12.A** Team managers shall be allowed to add a maximum of three (3) players to their frozen Official Online Roster. Players may be added as late as seventy-two (72) hours prior to the start of the World Series. Additional players can only be added to rosters that have openings to allow for such additions (see Rule 3.02).

**3.12.B** All players added to a frozen Official Online Rosters must meet the following requirements:

**3.12.B.1** Player(s) cannot be on another frozen Official Online Roster in the same age division regardless of classification.

**3.12.B.2** Player(s) must not have played on a team with a frozen Official Online Roster of higher classification regardless of age division.

**3.12.B.3** Player(s) must not have appeared on any roster two (2) classifications higher during the current season regardless of age division.

**3.12.B.4** Player(s) added to a frozen Official Online Roster in the AAA, AA, A & All-Star classifications must have a traceable playing history within the USSSA online system for the current or previous season.

**Rule 3.12 Comment:** If a team adds one (1), two (2), or three (3) players and any such added player becomes injured, ill or decides not to participate, an additional replacement player for the originally added player is not permitted.

**3.13** There shall be no limit to the number of players team managers may release from their frozen Official Online Roster. A player released from a team’s frozen Official Online Roster shall be prohibited from returning to that team during the current season.

**3.14** The team manager shall be responsible for all aspects of the eligibility of the players contained on the team’s Official Online Roster pursuant to these rules and the information of the players contained on the team’s Official Online Roster pursuant to these rules. This includes but is not limited to; age eligibility, classifications of teams the players may participate on in other age divisions, classifications of previous teams the players may have participated on, legal names of the players, and correct dates of birth of the players.

**3.14.A** The intentional or unintentional act of adding ineligible players to the team’s Official Online Roster shall be grounds for team manager suspension.

**3.14.B** The intentional or unintentional act of altering the spelling of a player’s name on the team’s Official Online Roster shall be grounds for team manager suspension.

**3.14.C** The intentional or unintentional act of incorrectly entering a player’s date-of-birth on the team’s Official Online Roster shall be grounds for team manager suspension.

**Rule 3.14 Comment:** A player's first name, last name (no middle names, nicknames, shortened names, slang names, initials, prefixes or suffixes are allowed) and date of birth (in proper format – mm/dd/yyyy) **MUST** be listed **EXACTLY** as they appear on his original birth certificate (see Rule 3.06).

- 3.15 State Directors shall have the authority to approve or reject all Official Online Roster additions. State Director approval of a team's Official Online Roster shall not release the team manager of his responsibilities pursuant to these rules.
- 3.16 A team with a frozen Official Online Roster listing less than nine (9) players, which has used all options for additions shall be automatically disbanded and shall forfeit all points and / or berths awarded.
- 3.17 If a disbanded team chooses to reform, it does so as a new team and;
- 3.17.A The team manager shall be required to re-register for the current season pursuant to Rule 3.01.
- 3.17.B The team manager shall be limited to adding six (6) players from the previously frozen Official Online Roster to the new Official Online Roster.
- 3.17.C The team manager shall be bound by all other roster rules contained within these National By-laws & Rules.
- 3.17.D The team shall be required to re-qualify.
- 3.18 Players from a disbanded team shall be bound to the disbanded team's classification regardless of age division.
- 3.19 A player who is in violation of the Association's Constitution and / or the Official Baseball National By-laws & Rules shall be considered an illegal player.
- 3.20 A player that is found to be illegal due to an age violation during a game or tournament shall result in the offending team losing the game, being ejected from the tournament, being placed last in the standings and forfeiting all awards, points, sponsors travel money, and tournament berths that would have been awarded. Additional penalties may also apply (see Rule 7.00).
- 3.21 A player that is found to be illegal due to an age violation after the completion of a game or tournament shall result in the offending team being placed last in the standings and forfeiting all awards, points, sponsors travel money, and tournament berths that have been awarded. Additional penalties may also apply (see Rule 7.00).
- 3.22 In age divisions 4U – 14U, all players participating in USSSA Baseball tournament play shall have photocopies of their original birth certificate in the possession of their team manager at all times. Upon protest, failure to have a photocopy of the original birth certificate immediately available upon demand shall result in the offending team losing the game, being ejected from the tournament, being placed last in the standings and forfeiting all awards, points, sponsors travel money, and tournament berths that would have been awarded at the tournament.
- 3.23 In scholastic divisions 15U – 18U, all players participating in USSSA Baseball tournament play shall have photocopies of their original birth certificate and if applicable, photocopies of their original current scholastic report card in the possession of the team manager at all times. Upon protest, failure to have a photocopy of the original birth certificate and if applicable, photocopy of the original current scholastic report card immediately available upon demand shall result in the offending team losing the game, being ejected from the tournament, being placed last in the standings and forfeiting all awards, points, sponsors travel money, and tournament berths that would have been awarded at the tournament.
- 3.24 Area Directors, Executive Board Members, Executive Committee Members, Local Directors, National Committee Members, National Directors, State Directors or Tournament Directors shall not be eligible to participate in the program as a team manager, team coach, team sponsor, umpire or player without approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball.

## **RULE 4.00 – QUALIFYING TOURNAMENTS**

- 4.01 State Directors shall have the authority to amend these 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 Qualifying Tournaments shall be at the discretion of the State Director.
- 4.04 The quantity of awards to be presented for Qualifying Tournaments shall be at the discretion of the State Director.
- 4.05 Each State Director shall adopt an acceptable system to qualifying teams for State Championship and / or World Series participation. Sanctioned league participation may be included in such a system is so desired.
- 4.06 No Qualifying Tournament shall be considered as sanctioned by the Association if all applicable fees and registrations are not paid to the Association within seventy-two (72) hours after completion of the tournament.
- 4.07 Only USSSA licensed baseballs shall be used in Qualifying Tournament play.
- 4.08 No change to a team's roster shall be allowed after the team has begun play in its first game during a Qualifying 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 Criteria:
- 4.10.A Head to Head
- 4.10.B Runs Allowed (Versus All Teams Played Not Just Tied Teams)
- 4.10.C Run Differential (Maximum +/- 8 Runs Per Game.)
- 4.10.D USSSA Point System
- 4.10.E Coin Flip
- Rule 4.10 Comment:** Once advanced to the next tie breaker criteria, do not return to a previous criteria.

## **RULE 5.00 – STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS**

- 5.01 State Directors shall have the authority to amend these 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 Championships to assure that the USSSA Baseball National By-laws & Rules are being followed at all times.

- 5.03** Teams are permitted to participate in multiple "Level 1" State Championships but shall only be awarded "Level 1" State Championship points for the first (earliest) State Championship in which the team participates. Teams participating in subsequent "Level 1" State Championships shall be awarded "Qualifying Tournament" points. Teams shall only participate in their respective (home) state's "Level 1" State Championship(s).
- 5.04** Teams are permitted to participate in multiple "Level 2" State Championships and shall be awarded "Level 2" State Championship points for each "Level 2" State Championships in which the team participates. Teams shall be permitted to cross state boundaries to participate in "Level 2" State Championships if allowed by the host state.
- 5.05** Official Online Roster composition for State Championship participation:
- 5.05.A** Major Classification – A team's Official Online Roster shall be composed of at least 50% state residents from the state in which the state championship is being played.
- 5.05.B** AAA, AA & A Classifications – A team's Official Online Roster shall be composed of at least 50% state residents from the state in which the state championship is being played. Non-residential players must reside in a contiguous state.
- 5.06** Amounts to be charged as entry fees for State Championships shall be at the discretion of the State Director.
- 5.07** The quantity of awards to be presented for State Championships shall be at the discretion of the State Director.
- 5.08** Each State Director shall adopt an acceptable system for qualifying teams for World Series participation. Sanctioned league participation may be included in such system is so desired.
- 5.09** No State Championship shall be considered as sanctioned by the Association if all applicable fees and registrations are not paid to the Association within seventy-two (72) hours after completion of the tournament.
- 5.10** Only USSSA licensed baseballs shall be used in State Championship play.
- 5.11** No change to a team's Official Online Roster will be allowed after the team has begun play in its first game during a State Championship.
- 5.12** Each State Director with approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball shall set refund policies.
- 5.13** State Championships shall be scheduled to provide each team at least two games of participation. This can be changed at the site of the tournament, by the Tournament Director with approval of the State Director after the starting date of the tournament has begun and it is determined that it would not be feasible to attempt to continue the original format due to weather conditions or other acts of God. A substitute format shall be implemented.
- 5.14** Pool Play / Tie Breaker Criteria:
- 5.14.A** Head to Head
- 5.14.B** Runs Allowed (Versus All Teams Played Not Just Tied Teams)
- 5.14.C** Run Differential (Maximum +/- 8 Runs Per Game.)
- 5.14.D** USSSA Point System
- 5.14.E** Coin Flip
- Rule 5.14 Comment:** Once advanced to the next tie breaker criteria, do not return to a previous criteria.

## **RULE 6.00 – WORLD SERIES**

- 6.01** The USSSA Baseball program shall use a pool-play and double elimination format in its World Series. A single elimination consolation tournament shall be held for the teams, which do not qualify for the championship bracket.
- 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 shall participate in their (home) state's State Championship provided such a State Championship is played. Failure to participate in the State Championship if played shall result in forfeiture of the World Series berth. State Directors shall have the authority to waive this rule with approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball.
- 6.04** State Directors shall approve all entries and Official Online Rosters of teams entering World Series. If the State Director position is vacant, the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball or his designee shall give such approval. A properly completed electronic transmittal shall accompany each entry for World Series participation. State Directors shall not issue an electronic transmittal for teams from another state.
- 6.05** When a team has qualified to compete in a World Series and for some legitimate reason cannot compete, the State Director or directors appointed by the State Director may select the next team in line to take their place or may select a substitute plan to award the berth.
- 6.06** A deadline for accepting entries in World Series shall be set by the USSSA Baseball National Committee.
- 6.07** A team shall participate in the highest classification World Series in which it wins (is awarded) a berth unless the team is re-classified by the State Director.
- 6.08** A team may participate in a higher age division World Series but shall participate at or above the team's current classification.  
**Rule 6.08 Example:** A 10U AAA team can participate up in the 11U AAA or 11U Major World Series but cannot participate down in the 11U AA World Series.
- 6.09** Only USSSA licensed baseballs shall be used in World Series play.
- 6.10** Any team in a World Series that forfeits a pool-play game 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.
- 6.11** USSSA prohibits the visual display of any non-USSSA association, alliance, federation, organization or union name, badge, crest, emblem, insignia, motif, sign or symbol anywhere on the uniform, such as but not limited to the temporary or permanent affixing of a patch or logo.
- 6.12** Pool Play / Tie Breaker Criteria:
- 6.13.A** Head to Head

- 6.13.B Runs Allowed (Versus All Teams Played Not Just Tied Teams)
- 6.13.C Run Differential (Maximum +/- 8 Runs Per Game.)
- 6.13.D USSSA Point System
- 6.13.E Coin Flip

**Rule 6.13 Comment:** Once advanced to the next tie breaker criteria, do not return to a previous criteria.

## **RULE 7.00 – ACTS OF DISBARMENT / SUSPENSION**

- 7.01** Acts of disbarment / suspension 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 final standings of the event. These acts shall apply to an individual player as well as a team or sponsor.
  - 7.01.F** Paying or receiving compensation in consideration of participating in baseball competition. These acts shall apply to an individual player as well as a team or sponsor.
  - 7.01.G** Receiving money directly or indirectly by capitalizing on athletic ability, athletic prominence, or athletic fame in baseball except that a player or team may use his name and likeness to advertise, recommend, or promote the sale of baseball sporting goods equipment or other goods or services if it is done pursuant to a registered personal services contract.
  - 7.01.H** By knowingly competing with or against illegal or disbarred / suspended player (see Rule 3.14).
  - 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 name, altered (miss-spelled) name, and / or date of birth.
  - 7.01.L** Submitting a check, for any reason, that cannot be negotiated for payment.
  - 7.01.M** Failure to appear after entering a State Championship and / or World Series unless reasonable advance notice is given. The USSSA Baseball National Committee shall determine what "reasonable advance notice" is.
  - 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 disbarred / 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 disbarment / suspension from any activities of the Association.
- 7.02** Only State Directors and / or the USSSA Baseball National Committee, have the authority to issue disbarments / suspensions for a period of one year from the time of the incident. The State Director in the state in which the offense occurred may act upon any offense that occurs as described in Rule 7.01.A – 7.01.P. Should the State Director not take action, he shall submit the incident to the player or team's home State Director to be acted upon. The USSSA Baseball National Committee shall rule upon any disbarment / suspension beyond one (1) year, anytime it convenes. In order for such action to be effective, reasonable notice, at least thirty (30) days shall be given to the offending person before the convening of the USSSA Baseball National Committee. Such notice shall be deemed sufficient if sent by registered mail to the address of the offending party last on file with the USSSA National Office or the USSSA Baseball State Director's office; and contains a written statement of the offense and the length and terms of the requested additional disbarment / suspension beyond one (1) year suspension.
- 7.03** The offending party may appear at the convening of the USSSA Baseball National Committee and give evidence on his behalf as to why the additional disbarment / suspension should not be imposed. The decision of the USSSA Baseball National Committee shall be final and binding and is not subject to appeal.
- 7.04** Players or other announced participants, who have been disbarred / suspended or declared illegal, may use the appeal process procedure set forth in the constitution, except as limited by the provisions of Rule 7.03.
- 7.05** Any person so disbarred / suspended shall have the right to apply for reinstatement to membership in the Association, on an annual basis, provided the person gives the National Committee, through National Headquarters, thirty (30) days written notice if his intention to so reapply. The USSSA Baseball National Committee shall act on such applications at its annual meeting.
- 7.06** State Directors and Officers have the authority to issue indefinite disbarments / suspensions for players, teams, and other announced participants who fail to meet financial responsibilities to that state's association.
- 7.07** All reports of disbarment / suspension must be in writing and submitted to USSSA National Headquarters within five (5) days of the disbarment / suspension. Copies of such disbarments / suspensions shall also be sent to the party against whom it is directed.
- 7.08** Tournament Directors have the authority to eject a player or team at anytime during a tournament.
- 7.09** Any USSSA Baseball Director or Officer that violates any articles of the Association's constitution or USSSA Baseball National By-laws & Rules may be disbarred / suspended.
- 7.10** Any USSSA Baseball Director or Officer that fails to submit fees and / or information due the Association within fourteen (14) days of receipt thereof by the Director or Officer may be disbarred / suspended.
- 7.11** Any USSSA Baseball Director, Officer, Umpire, or participant that is disbarred / suspended for any reason, shall not be allowed to participate in any capacity within USSSA until such disbarment / suspension has been lifted.

## RULE 8.00 – RULES OF PLAY

### 8.01 Objective of the Game –

- 8.01.A** Baseball is a game between two teams, under direction of a manager, played on an enclosed field in accordance with these rules, under the jurisdiction of one (1) or more umpires.
- 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** (**Chart 8.02.A-1**) The playing field shall be laid out according to the recommended dimensions contained within these rules.

| 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'      | 160'       | 185'         |
| 8U                 | 60'   | 40'      | 160'       | 185'         |
| 9U                 | 65'   | 44'      | 180'       | 210'         |
| 10U                | 65'   | 46'      | 180'       | 210'         |
| 11U                | 70'   | 50'      | 230'       | 275'         |
| 12U                | 70'   | 50'      | 230'       | 275'         |
| 13U                | 80'   | 54'      | 275'       | 300'         |
| 14U – 54/80        | 80'   | 54'      | 275'       | 300'         |
| 14U – 60/90        | 90'   | 60' 6"   | 320'       | 375'         |
| 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'         |

Chart 8.02.A-1

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

- 8.02.C** The pitcher's plate shall be a rectangular slab of whitened rubber set in the ground that measures:

- 8.02.C.1** Eighteen (18) inches by four (4) inches for age divisions 4U – 12U and;
- 8.02.C.2** Twenty four (24) inches by six (6) inches for age divisions 13U – 18U.

- 8.02.D** 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.E** The official ball:

- 8.02.E.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.E.2** It shall weigh not less than five (5) nor more than five and one fourth (5 1/4) ounces avoirdupois;
- 8.02.E.3** It shall measure not less than nine (9) nor more than nine and one fourth (9 1/4) inches in circumference.
- 8.02.E.4** It shall be licensed by the Association and permanently stamped with the USSSA logo.

- 8.02.F** The official bat:

- 8.02.F.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.F.2** The maximum diameter shall not exceed two and three fourths (2 3/4) inches;
- 8.02.F.3** The maximum length shall not exceed thirty-six (36) inches;
- 8.02.F.4** Any material to improve the grip may be used for a distance not to exceed eighteen (18) inches from the handle end. Any such material or substance, which extends past the eighteen (18) inch limitation, shall cause the bat to be removed from the game.  
**Rule 8.02.F.4 Comment:** If the umpire discovers that the bat does not conform to Rule 8.02.F.4 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.F.5** 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.F.5(a)** All bats for age division 4U – 14U that exceed the 1.15 BPF (Bat Performance Factor) as defined for baseball bats by ASTM Standards, may be disapproved by USSSA. Such disapproval shall be the sole discretion of USSSA and may be made without notice;

- 8.02.F.5(b)** All bats for scholastic divisions 15U – 18U must conform to the NFHS (National Federation of High School Association) bat limitations including a length to weight ratio no greater than negative three (-3) ounces.

- 8.02.G** All players shall be fully uniformed, which includes baseball pants, socks, baseball cap, shoes and team jerseys with numbers that are non-duplicating and at least three (3) inches in height. No player shall wear ragged, frayed

or slit sleeves and no player shall attach to his uniform tape or other material of a different color from his uniform. No part of the uniform shall include a pattern that imitates or suggests the shape of a baseball. Glass buttons and polished metal shall not be used on a uniform. No player shall attach anything to the heel or toe of his shoe other than the ordinary shoe plate or toe plate. Shoes with pointed spikes similar to golf or track shoes shall not be worn in any division of play.

**8.02.G.1** In age divisions 4U – 12U, non-metal cleats must be worn.

**8.02.G.2** In age divisions 13U – 18U, traditional metal baseball spikes may be worn.

**Rule 8.02.G Comment:** Protests on uniforms shall not be allowed. It shall be the League / Tournament Director's responsibility regarding uniform legality. Violation of the uniform rules shall result in the violator being allowed to immediately conform or be removed from the game. Managers and coaches may wear athletic type shorts.

**8.02.H** The catcher shall 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.

**8.02.H.1** The catcher shall wear all appropriate protective gear including a catcher's helmet with facemask and either a built in extended throat guard or a separately attached throat guard, chest protector, shin and / or leg guards, and protective cup.

**8.02.H.2** In age divisions 4U – 12U, the catcher's helmet shall fully cover both ears.

**8.02.I** The first baseman shall 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.

**8.02.J** Each fielder, other than the first baseman or catcher, shall 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.

**8.02.K** 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 this rule 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.L** All offensive players shall use a double ear-flap batting helmet whenever at bat, on deck, on base or any other time outside of the dugout and the ball is live and in play. All bat / ball boys must wear a double earflap batting helmet when outside the dugout.

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

**8.02.M** Playing equipment including but not limited to the baseballs, bases, bats, catcher's gloves and mitts, first baseman's gloves and mitts, infielders and outfielders gloves and mitts, protective helmets, and uniforms as detailed in the provisions of this rule, shall not contain any undue commercialization of the product. Designations by the manufacturer on any such equipment shall be in good taste as to the size and content of the manufacturer's logo or the brand name.

**Rule 8.02.M Comment:** 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** A flip of a coin between the two teams shall determine the home team for each pool play game, championship game and "if" game. The highest seeded team will be the home team for bracket play games.

**Rule 8.03.A Comment:** For league play, a system to predetermine the home team is acceptable.

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

**8.03.C** In World Series play, time limits may be used in pool play and consolation bracket games with approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball.

**8.03.D** Approved Team Line-ups:

**8.03.D.1** Teams may bat a nine (9) player line-up, a ten (10) player line-up using an Extra Hitter (EH) or a continuous line-up of all present uniformed players. Such line-up must be declared before the start of the game and used the entire game.

**8.03.D.1(a)** If a team uses a line-up that contains substitute players, all starting players may be removed and re-enter the game once, but must re-enter in their original position in the batting order. Non-starters are not allowed to re-enter. When a starter re-enters, the player in the starter's batting position in the batting order must be removed from the game and is ineligible for the remainder of the game.

**Rule 8.03.D.1(a) Approved Ruling:** Baker is batting in the 2nd position. In the fourth inning Charles enters the game in the 2nd batting position, removing Baker from the game. In the sixth inning Baker re-enters the game but must replace Charles so as to remain in the 2nd batting position. Charles is ineligible for the remainder of the game.

**Rule 8.03.D.1(a) Approved Ruling:** Baker is batting in the 2nd position. In the fourth inning Charles enters the game in the 2nd batting position, removing Baker

from the game. In the fifth inning Daniel enters the game in the 2nd batting position, removing Charles from the game. In the sixth inning Baker re-enters the game but must replace Daniel so as to remain in the 2nd batting position. Charles and Daniel are ineligible for the remainder of the game.

**8.03.D.1(b)** If a team uses a line-up that contains ten (10) players, the player in the Extra Hitter position, while not actually playing a defensive position, will be treated as such for substitution purposes.

**Rule 8.03.D.1(b) Approved Ruling:** Baker is the Extra Hitter and batting 2nd, Charles is the catcher and batting 3rd. Baker can become the catcher and Charles the Extra Hitter. Both players would remain in their original batting position in the batting order. When using the Extra Hitter, all players in the line-up may move freely in defensive positions.

**8.03.D.1(c)** If a team uses a continuous line-up, all players other than the nine (9) defensive position players are Extra Hitters and may move freely in defensive positions.

**Rule 8.03.D.1(c) Approved Ruling:** Any player(s) arriving after the game has begun, shall be added to the bottom of the batting line-up.

**Rule 8.03.D Exception:** For substitutions to the pitching position see Rule 8.08.F.4.

**8.03.E** In scholastic divisions 15U – 18U, if the Extra Hitter (EH) is not be utilized, then the Designated Hitter (DH) may be utilized in accordance with the NFHS Association baseball rules.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**8.03.G** A team may continue a game with one (1) less player than is 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.

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

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

**Rule 8.03.G Exception:** If the player left the game for Communicable Disease Procedure reasons.

**8.03.H** 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.I** The umpire-in-chief, after having been notified, shall immediately announce, or cause to be announced, each substitution.

**8.03.J** If no announcement of a substitution is made, the substitute shall be considered as having entered the game when:

**8.03.J.1** If a pitcher, he takes his place on the pitcher's plate;

**8.03.J.2** If a batter, he takes his place in the batter's box;

**8.03.J.3** If a fielder, he reaches the position usually occupied by the fielder he has replaced, and play commences;

**8.03.J.4** If a runner, he takes the place of the runner he has replaced.

**Rule 8.03.J Comment:** Any play made by, or on, any above mentioned unannounced substitution shall be legal.

**8.03.K** Before the game begins, the umpire shall:

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

**8.03.K.2** Be sure that all playing lines are marked with chalk, paint or other white material easily distinguishable from the ground or grass;

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

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

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

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

**8.03.L** No player shall intentionally discolor or damage the ball by rubbing it with soil, rosin, paraffin, licorice, sandpaper, emery-paper or other foreign substance.

**Rule 8.03.L Penalty:** The umpire shall demand the ball and eject 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.M** 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.N** 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.O** 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.P** 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.Q** 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 the bench area during a game.
- 8.04** Starting and 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 shall be orientated in batting order sequence and shall contain each player's first name and last name (no middle names, nicknames, shortened names, slang names, initials, prefixes or suffixes are allowed) as they appear on the team's Official Online Roster, 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 of the team in error, so the correction can be made before the game starts. 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.
- Rule 8.04.D.1 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.
- Rule 8.04.F Penalty:** The offending base coach shall be ejected 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.

**Rule 8.04.H Penalty:** The offender shall be ejected from the game and shall leave the playing field. If the pitcher commits a balk, 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:

**Rule 8.04.J Penalty:** The umpire shall eject the offenders from the game. If the umpire 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.

**Rule 8.04.K.2 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.

**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 4U – 12U and seven (7) innings for age divisions 13U – 18U, 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 an imposed Time Limit expires; or

**8.04.L.4** Shortened because any applicable part of Rule 8.04.M has been met; or

**8.04.L.5** Shortened because any applicable part of Rule 8.04.N has been met.

**8.04.M** (**Chart 8.04.M-1**) An imposed Mercy (Run) Rule shall be used to complete a regulation game when one team's margin of lead is greater than or equal to the listed run differential in the corresponding listed inning.

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

Chart 8.04.M-1

**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 shall 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 and one half (2 1/2) innings than the visiting team has scored in three (3) complete innings or if the home team scores one (1) or more runs in its half (1/2) of the third (3rd) inning to tie the score.

- 8.04.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 shall revert back to last completed inning, or last completed half (1/2) inning if the home team leads but back no further than the third (3rd) inning.
- Rule 8.04.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) innings or three and one half (3 1/2) innings than the visiting team has scored in four (4) complete innings or if the home team scores one (1) or more runs in its half (1/2) of the fourth (4th) inning to tie the score.
- 8.04.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 shall revert back to last completed inning, or last completed half (1/2) inning if the home team leads but back no further than the fourth (4th) inning.
- Rule 8.04.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.O** All games that for any reason cannot be declared a regulation game pursuant to Rule 8.04.N shall be a suspended game. A suspended game when resumed, will resume from the exact point of suspension.
- 8.04.P** The score of a regulation game is the total number of runs scored by each team at the moment the game ends.
- 8.04.P.1** The game ends when the visiting team completes its half (1/2) of the last inning if the home team is ahead.
- 8.04.P.2** The game ends when the last inning is completed, if the visiting team is ahead.
- 8.04.P.3** If the home team scores the winning run in its half (1/2) of the last inning (or its half of an extra inning after a tie), the game ends immediately when the winning run is scored.
- Rule 8.04.P.3 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.Q** A called game ends at the moment the umpire terminates play, unless it becomes a suspended game pursuant to these rules.
- 8.04.R** 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.S** A game shall be forfeited to the opposing team when a team:
- 8.04.S.1** Fails to appear upon the field, or being upon the field, refuses to start play within one (1) minute after the umpire has called "Play" at game time unless such delayed appearance is, in the umpire's judgment, unavoidable;
- 8.04.S.2** Employs tactics palpably designed to delay or shorten the game;
- 8.04.S.3** Refuses to continue play during a game unless the game has been suspended or terminated by the umpire;
- 8.04.S.4** Fails to resume play, after a suspension, within one (1) minute after the umpire has called "Play";
- 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 is 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.
- Rule 8.05.I.2 Comment:** Interference shall be disregarded if the catcher's throw retires the runner.
- 8.05.I.3** A balk is committed; runners advance;
- 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.J.1 – 8.05.J.7, 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 the batter's box after the pitcher starts his windup or comes to the Set Position.  
**Rule 8.06.C 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.  
**Rule 8.06.E.9 Comment:** 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.E.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.  
**Rule 8.06.I.3 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.  
**Rule 8.06.J.2 Comment:** 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.

- 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 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.  
**Approved Ruling:** The offensive manager may elect to take the run and have batter called out or have the 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.  
**Approved 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).  
**Rule 8.06.K.3 Additional Comment:** 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.I.  
**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.

**8.07** The Runner –

**8.07.A** At any time, the team at bat may use a courtesy runner for the pitcher and catcher of record the previous inning on defense.

**8.07.A.1** For teams that have legal substitutes on the bench, the courtesy runner shall be a player not presently in the line-up and may appear as a courtesy runner one time per inning. The re-entry status of the courtesy runner, pitcher, and catcher, shall not be affected by this rule. If at any time, a courtesy runner is determined to be ineligible, a proper replacement (if available) will be used without penalty. If no proper courtesy runner is available, the pitcher and / or catcher must run for themselves.

**8.07.A.2** For teams using a continuous line-up, the courtesy runner shall be the player whom recorded the previous out. If no outs have been recorded in the game, the courtesy runner shall be the previous batter not on base. If a courtesy runner is determined to be ineligible, a proper replacement (if available) will be used without penalty. If no proper courtesy runner is available, the pitcher and / or catcher must run for themselves.

**8.07.B** 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.B 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.C** 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.I. In such cases, the runner may go directly to his original base.

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

**8.07.E.1** There is a balk;

**8.07.E.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.E.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.

**Approved 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.E.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.E.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.E.4** While he is attempting to steal a base, the batter is interfered with by the catcher or any other fielder.

**Rule 8.07.E.4 Comment:** 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.F** Each runner including the batter-runner may, without liability to be put out, advance:

**8.07.F.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.F.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.F.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.F.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.F.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.F.2 - 8.07.F.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.F.3 & 8.07.F.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.F.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.F.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.  
**Rule 8.07.F.7 Comment:** 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.  
**Approved Ruling:** Runner at second (2nd) scores.  
**Rule 8.07.F.7 Additional Comment:** 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.F.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.F.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.F.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.F.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.G** When obstruction occurs, the umpire shall call or signal "Obstruction":
- 8.07.G.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.G.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.G.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.G.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.

**Rule 8.07.G.2 Comment:** 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.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.

**Approved 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.

**Approved 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.I.3** He is tagged, when the ball is alive, while off his base.

**Rule 8.07.I.3 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.I.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.I.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.I.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.I.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.I.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.
- Rule 8.07.I.6 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.J.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.I.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.I.8** He passes a preceding runner before such runner is out;
- 8.07.I.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.I.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.I.12** Whenever a tag play is evident, a runner must slide or seek to avoid contact with the fielder and / or catcher. Attempting to jump, leap, or dive over the fielder and / or catcher is not interpreted as seeking to avoid contact. Malicious contact shall supersede all obstruction penalties.
- Rule 8.07.I.12 Penalty:** The runner shall be called out and may be ejected from the game at the umpire’s discretion.
- Rule 8.07.I.12 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.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.  
**Rule 8.07.J.13 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);  
**Approved 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.

**Approved 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.

**Rule 8.07.L 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.

**8.08** 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.”  
**Rule 8.08.A.2(b) Additional Comment:** 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.  
**Rule 8.08.B.1 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.  
**Rule 8.08.B.1 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** Apply a foreign substance of any kind to the ball;
- 8.08.B.3** Expectorate on the ball, either hand or his glove;
- 8.08.B.4** Rub the ball on his glove, person or clothing;
- 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 only.  
**Rules 8.08.B.2 – 8.08.B.6 Penalty:** For violation of any part of these rules, 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.3 & 8.08.B.4 Comment:** If a pitcher violates either Rule 8.08.B.2 or 8.08.B.4 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.  
**Rule 8.08.B.7 Penalty:** The pitcher or player shall be immediately ejection 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.  
**Rule 8.08.B.8 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)** Eject 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 ejection 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 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.

**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.

**Rule 8.08.E.13 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 Concerning Balks:** Umpires should bear in mind that the purpose of the balk rule is to prevent the pitcher from deliberately deceiving the base runner. If there is doubt in the umpire's mind, the "intent" of the pitcher should govern. However, certain specifics should be borne in mind: 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. In age divisions 9U & 10U, pitchers should be allowed some leniency in regards to balks. Pitchers should be called for all major violations and warned for minor violations that do not affect the outcome of a play. In age divisions 11U – 18U, balks shall be strictly enforced without warning.

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

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

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

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

**Rules 8.08.F.1 - 8.08.F.3 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.4** A player removed from the pitching position (starting pitcher or subsequent relief pitcher) may not return to the pitching position for the remainder of the game. The defensive team may correct the rules infraction at any time by substituting a legal pitcher without penalty. If an illegal pitcher is permitted to pitch, any pitch or play that results is legal. The rule violation should be caught by the umpire or the offensive team and immediately corrected.

**Rule 8.08.F.4 Comment:** If the violating pitcher has legal innings remaining, the violation is deemed an improper substitution and is corrected without penalty.

**Rule 8.08.F.4 Penalty:** If the violating pitcher has no legal innings remaining, it's deemed a pitching limitations violation, see Rule 8.08.G.6.

**8.08.G** **(Chart 8.08.G-1)** The end of the day for the pitching limitation rules is the time of day or night when the ballpark is shutdown and the teams go home for the night break. Games that for any reason extend past midnight (12:00 AM) or start late at night, past midnight (12:00 AM) and are completed before the teams take the night break, will count as being played on the scheduled day. A game not completed before the night break per Rule 8.04.N, shall be a suspended game per Rule 8.04.O. Suspended games, when resumed (the next day or another day), shall count as being played on two different days. The outs recorded during the part of the game played before suspension shall count as being played on the regularly scheduled day. The outs recorded during the part of the game played once resumed, shall count as being played on the resumed day.

| AGE DIVISION   | COLUMN A  | COLUMN B  |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|
| 7U – 12U       | 6         | 9         |
| 13U – 14U      | 7         | 11        |
| 15U – 18U      | UNLIMITED | UNLIMITED |
| Chart 8.08.G-1 |           |           |

**8.08.G.1** Column A: The maximum number of innings a player can pitch in one (1) day.

**8.08.G.2** Column B: The maximum number of innings a player can pitch in three (3) consecutive days.

**Rule 8.08.G.2 Comment:** For age divisions 7U – 12U, this is to be interpreted as a player can pitch any combination of innings that equals nine (9) as long as he doesn't pitch more than six (6) innings in any one day pursuant to Rule 8.08.G.1.

**Rule 8.08.G.2 Comment:** For age divisions 13U – 14U, this is to be interpreted as a player can pitch any combination of innings that equals eleven (11) as long as he doesn't pitch more than seven (7) innings in any one day pursuant to Rule 8.08.G.1.

**8.08.G.3** In age divisions 7U – 14U, any player that pitches three (3) consecutive days must rest the next two (2) consecutive days.

**8.08.G.4** 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.5** Outs recorded during a game that ends in forfeit shall count towards a pitchers' innings limits.

**8.08.G.6** For purposes of pitching limitations rules, a pitcher is in violation of the rule if he records any out above the legal pitching limits pursuant to these rules.

**Rule 8.08.G.6 Exception:** Exceeding the maximum innings allowed in the case of a double or triple play shall not be counted against the pitcher.

**Rule 8.08.G.6 Penalty:** It shall be the responsibility of each team manager to challenge pitching violations by notifying the Umpire-in-Chief and then filing a Protest with the League / Tournament Director. A protest may be filed at any point after the pitcher in violation records an out beyond his legal limit **AND** while the pitcher in violation is in the game and in the pitching position. Any violation of pitching limitations Rule 8.08.G.1 – 8.08.G.6 shall result in immediate forfeiture of the game. If such violation occurs during Pool-Play, the team in violation of the Rule may not advance to the championship bracket regardless of record.

## **8.09** Coach Pitch Specific Rules of Play:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Rule 8.09.D.1 – 8.09.D.3 Penalty:** If a coach violates this rule after the ball is pitched, obstruction will be called.

**Rule 8.09.D.1 – 8.09.D.3 Additional Penalty:** If a coach violates this rule before the ball is pitched, First Offense: Warning; Second Offense: Removal of coach as the pitcher for the remainder of the game.

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

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

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

**Rule 8.09.G Penalty:** The play continues. After the play has ended, the offensive team has the option of taking the result of the play or no-pitch.

**Rule 8.09.G Additional Penalty:** First Offense: Warning; Second Offense: Removal of player from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.

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

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

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

**8.09.J.1** Teams may start a game with eight (8) players. The ninth (9th) & tenth (10th) positions in the batting order will be declared an out each time at bat. A ninth (9th) & tenth (10th) player and all subsequent players may be added to the batting order as soon as they become available.

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

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

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

**Rule 8.09.M Comment:** A batter that has received less than six (6) pitches and has a count of two (2) swinging strikes shall have his turn at bat extended on foul balls up to the six (6) pitch limit.

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

**8.09.O** Runners shall not lead-off or steal bases. A runner is out for leaving the base before the ball is hit or reaches home plate.

**8.09.P** A courtesy runner for catcher of record only the previous inning may be used. The courtesy runner shall be the player that made the previous out. If no outs have been recorded in the game, the courtesy runner shall be the previous batter not on base.

**8.09.Q** A team may score a maximum of seven (7) runs per inning, including the last inning or record three (3) outs.

**8.09.R** Umpires shall call "Time" after every play and declare the ball dead. "Time" shall be called as soon as the lead runner is not attempting to advance. "Time" does not have to be called by the defense for the purpose of this rule.

**Rule 8.09.R Comment:** When a runner stands off a base and "jukes" or "feints" back and forth, this is to be interpreted as "not attempting to advance" and "Time" shall be called.

**8.09.S** When a batted ball hits the Pitching Coach, the following 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** Machine Pitch Specific Rules of Play:
- 8.10.A** Fair Ball Arc: There shall be a twenty (20) foot arc drawn from first (1st) baseline to third (3rd) baseline in front of home plate. A batted ball must go past this line to be a fair ball.
- 8.10.B** Safety Arc: There shall be a thirty (30) foot arc drawn from first (1st) baseline to third (3rd) baseline in front of home plate. Infielders must stay behind this line until the ball is hit.
- 8.10.C** Pitching Circle: There shall be a ten (10) foot diameter circle with the front edge set at forty-two (42) feet from the rear point of home plate.
- 8.10.D** Pitching Machine: The front leg(s) shall be set at a distance of forty-two (42) feet from the rear point of home plate.
- 8.10.E** Recommended pitching machine speeds:
- 8.10.E.1** 36 M.P.H. – 39 M.P.H. for the 7U age division.
- 8.10.E.2** 39 M.P.H. – 42 M.P.H. for the 8U age division.
- 8.10.F** Ten (10) defensive players shall play in the field with four (4) outfielders. The fourth (4th) outfielder shall not assume an infield position. All outfielders shall stay behind the baselines.
- 8.10.G** The defensive player listed as pitcher shall not leave the pitching circle until the ball is hit.  
**Rule 8.10.G Penalty:** The play continues. After the play has ended, the offensive team has the option of taking the result of the play or no-pitch.  
**Rule 8.10.G Additional Penalty:** First Offense: Warning; Second Offense: Removal of player from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.
- 8.10.H** Defensive coaches shall not allowed on the field of play and shall coach from the dugout.
- 8.10.I** The Infield Fly Rule shall not be in effect at any time.
- 8.10.J** The batting order shall constitute all present players on the team roster at the beginning of the game. Late arrivals shall be inserted at the bottom of the batting order. All players on the roster shall bat before returning to the top of the batting order.
- 8.10.J.1** Teams may start a game with eight (8) players. The ninth (9th) & tenth (10th) positions in the batting order will be declared an out each time at bat. A ninth (9th) & tenth (10th) player and all subsequent players may be added to the batting order as soon as they become available.
- 8.10.K** Teams may use free substitution on defense but the batting order shall remain the same.
- 8.10.L** Teams may bunt a maximum of two (2) times per inning.
- 8.10.L.1** Fake bunts shall be prohibited. A batter that “shows” bunt is committed to an attempt to bunt or take the pitch.  
**Rule 8.10.L.1 Penalty:** A batter who swings after “showing” bunt shall be called out and no runners may advance.
- 8.10.M** The batter shall receive a maximum of six (6) pitches or three (3) swinging strikes.  
**Rule 8.10.M Comment:** A batter that has received less than six (6) pitches and has a count of two (2) swinging strikes shall have his turn at bat extended on foul balls up to the six (6) pitch limit.
- 8.10.N** A player may only be Intentionally Walked once per game by announcement from the defensive team.
- 8.10.O** Runners shall not lead-off or steal bases. A runner is out for leaving the base before the ball is hit or reaches home plate.
- 8.10.P** A courtesy runner for catcher of record only the previous inning may be used. The courtesy runner shall be the player that made the previous out. If no outs have been recorded in the game, the courtesy runner shall be the previous batter not on base.
- 8.10.Q** A team may score a maximum of seven (7) runs per inning, including the last inning or record three (3) outs.
- 8.10.R** Umpires shall call “Time” after every play and declare the ball dead. “Time” shall be called as soon as the lead runner is not attempting to advance. “Time” does not have to be called by the defense for the purpose of this rule.  
**Rule 8.10.R Comment:** When a runner stands off a base and “jukes” or “feints” back and forth, this is to be interpreted as “not attempting to advance” and “Time” shall be called.
- 8.10.S** When a batted ball hits the pitching machine, the ball is dead, the batter is awarded first (1st) base and all runners shall advance one (1) base.
- 8.11** T-Ball Specific Rules –
- 8.11.A** Fair Ball Arc: There shall be a twenty (20) foot arc drawn from first (1st) baseline to third (3rd) baseline in front of home plate. A batted ball must go past this line to be fair.
- 8.11.B** Safety Arc: There shall be a thirty (30) foot arc drawn from (1st) baseline to third (3rd) baseline in front of home plate. Infielders must stay behind this line until the ball is hit.
- 8.11.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.
- 8.11.D** The catcher shall wear a dual ear-flap catcher’s helmet with mask.
- 8.11.E** Ten (10) defensive players shall play in the field with four (4) outfielders. The fourth (4th) outfielder shall not assume an infield position. All outfielders shall stay behind the baselines.
- 8.11.F** The defensive player listed as pitcher shall stay in contact with the pitchers’ plate until the ball is hit.  
**Rule 8.11.F Penalty:** The play continues. After the play has ended, the offensive team has the option of taking the result of the play or no-pitch.  
**Rule 8.11.F Additional Penalty:** First Offense: Warning; Second Offense: Removal of player from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.
- 8.11.G** Defensive coaches shall not allowed on the field of play and shall coach from the dugout.
- 8.11.H** The Infield Fly Rule shall not be in effect at any time.
- 8.11.I** The batting order shall constitute all present players on the team roster at the beginning of the game. Late arrivals shall be inserted at the bottom of the batting order. All players on the roster shall bat before returning to the top of the batting order.

- 8.11.I.1** Teams may start a game with eight (8) players. The ninth (9th) & tenth (10th) positions in the batting order will be declared an out each time at bat. A ninth (9th) & tenth (10th) player and all subsequent players may be added to the batting order as soon as they become available.
- 8.11.J** Teams may use free substitution on defense but the batting order shall remain the same.
- 8.11.K** Bunting shall not be allowed.
- 8.11.L** A batter shall receive a maximum of three (3) swings to put the ball in play or be called out. No additional swings shall be awarded on foul balls.
- 8.11.M** A player may only be Intentionally Walked once per game by announcement from the defensive team.
- 8.11.N** Runners shall not lead-off or steal bases. A runner is out for leaving the base before the ball is hit.
- 8.11.O** A team may score a maximum of seven (7) runs per inning, including the last inning or record three (3) outs.
- 8.11.P** Umpires shall call "Time" after every play and declare the ball dead. "Time" shall be called as soon as the lead runner is not attempting to advance. "Time" does not have to be called by the defense for the purpose of this rule.  
**Rule 8.11.P Comment:** When a runner stands off a base and "jukes" or "feints" back and forth, this is to be interpreted as "not attempting to advance" and "Time" shall be called.
- 8.11.Q** An eight and one half (8 1/2) inch diameter baseball shall be used.
- 8.12** 7U & 8U Kid Pitch Specific Rules –
- 8.12.A** Nine (9) defensive players shall play in the field.
- 8.12.B** Balk rules shall not apply.
- 8.12.C** A batter is automatically out on a dropped / missed third (3rd) strike by the catcher.
- 8.12.D** Runners shall not advance when the pitcher is on the pitching rubber with the ball in his possession and the catcher is in position to receive a pitch.  
**Rule 8.12.D Exception:** Runners may advance on a batted ball hit to the pitcher and when "Time" has not been called.
- 8.12.E** Runners shall not lead-off.
- 8.12.F** Runners can advance at their own risk (steal) once a pitched ball has passed home plate.
- 8.12.F.1** When a runner tries to advance prior to the pitched ball passing home plate, the following shall apply:
- 8.12.F.1(a)** If the runner advances safely, the umpire shall call "Time" and the runner shall return to the base last legally occupied at the time of the pitch.
- 8.12.F.1(b)** If the runner is called out, the call shall stand and the runner is out.
- 8.12.F.1(c)** If the ball is hit, the defensive team has the option of the result of the play or a no pitch.
- 8.12.G** Runners shall not advance from third (3rd) base to home unless the runner is batted home or forced by a base on balls, hit batsman, or award from the umpire. Runners shall not advance from third (3rd) base to home on passed balls, wild pitches or dropped / missed third (3rd) strikes by the catcher.

## **RULE 9.00 – UMPIRES**

- 9.01** All leagues and tournaments played under the jurisdiction and administration of USSSA Baseball shall utilize umpires who are registered with the Association.
- 9.02** One (1) or more umpires will be assigned to officiate each game.
- 9.03** The umpires shall be responsible for the conduct of the game in accordance with these Rules and for maintaining discipline and order on the playing field during the game.
- 9.04** Each umpire is the representative of USSSA Baseball, and is authorized and required to enforce 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 and any spectator or other person not authorized to be on the field.
- 9.05** Any umpire's decision which involves judgment, such as, but not limited to, whether a batted ball is fair or foul, whether a pitch is a strike or a ball, or whether a runner is safe or out, is final. No player, coach or manager shall object to any such judgment decisions.  
**Rule 9.05 Comment:** Players leaving their position in the field or on base, or managers or coaches leaving the bench or coaches box, to argue 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.  
**Rule 9.07 Comment:** The manager or the catcher may request the plate umpire to ask his partner for help on a half swing when the plate umpire calls the pitch a ball, but not when the pitch is called a strike. The manager may not complain that the umpire made an improper call, but only that he did not ask his partner for help. Field umpires must be alerted to the request from the plate umpire and quickly respond. Managers may not protest the call of a ball or strike on the pretense they are asking for information about a half swing. Appeals on a half swing may be made only on the call of ball and when asked to appeal, the home plate umpire must refer to a base umpire for his judgment on the half swing. Should the base umpire call the pitch a strike, the strike call shall prevail. Base runners must be alert to the possibility that the base umpire on appeal from the plate umpire may reverse the call of a ball to the call of a strike, in which event the runner is in jeopardy of being out by the catcher's throw. Also, a catcher must be alert in a base stealing situation if a ball call is reversed to a strike by the base

umpire upon appeal from the plate umpire. The ball is in play on appeal on a half swing. 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** 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 Concerning Umpires:** 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. 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 crew should work out a simple set of signals, so the proper umpire can always right a manifestly wrong decision when convinced he has made an error. If you’re sure you got the play correct, do not be stampeded by appeals to “ask the other man”. If not sure, ask one of your associates. Do not carry this to extremes, be alert and get your own plays. 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 area.

### **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 barred pursuant to Rule 7.00.

### **RULE 12.00 – EJECTIONS**

- 12.01** If a coach is ejected from a game, he must sit out the remainder of that game. Additional penalties may be assessed as deemed by the League / Tournament Director.
- 12.02** A player ejected must sit out the remainder of that game.
- 12.03** Anyone ejected may be asked to leave the park at the discretion of the League / Tournament Director.
- 12.04** As these rules indicate, the matter of disorderly conduct will be taken seriously. The leagues and tournaments your team will be participating in will include some of the finest baseball teams in the world. The level of competition will be high and at times fierce. Because of this, please remind your players, coaches, manager, sponsors and spectators to be extra aware of good sportsmanship.

### **RULE 13.00 – PROTESTS**

- 13.01** Umpires will work to settle all situations on the field. Protests will be allowed for age and pitching violations or rule interpretations only. Protests must be declared to the Umpire-in-Chief and then to the League / Tournament Director before the next pitch following the dispute. No protest will be allowed following the game. League / Tournament officials will rule on all protests and their decision will be final.
- Rule 13.01 Comment:** Leagues may develop their own method of recording and settling protests.
- 13.02** The Protest fee is \$100.00 cash. The fee shall be returned only if the protest is upheld.
- 13.03** A League / Tournament Director will be available at all times. If you have any questions, please talk to the League / Tournament Director.

## **RULE 14.00 – DRAFTED LEAGUE PROGRAM**

- 14.01** The Drafted League Program gives traditional league based teams the opportunity to compete amongst teams formed by a similar system. Drafted League is a playing level for actual drafted league teams from USSSA Sanctioned Leagues. Age divisions shall include 5U – 18U.
- 14.02** Leagues that meet the below guidelines and register one hundred percent (100%) of their league teams shall 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 Drafted League Program:
- 14.03.A** Teams shall qualify through their approved Drafted League.
  - 14.03.B** Each State Director shall approve leagues in their respective state based on the criteria set forth by the USSSA Baseball National Committee.
  - 14.03.C** Leagues shall have an approved draft system for league play. This system shall include no more than four (4) protected / frozen players per team.
  - 14.03.D** Leagues shall submit their complete rules, by-laws, and schedules for approval.
  - 14.03.E** A league shall consist of a minimum eight (8) game schedule.
  - 14.03.F** Eligible players shall compete in a minimum of seventy five percent (75%) of the scheduled games.
- 14.04** Each State Director shall set guidelines for teams to qualify for the Drafted League State Championship.
- 14.05** Each State Director shall set guidelines for teams to advance form their State Championship to the World Series.
- 14.06** In the 9U Age Division ONLY, runners shall not lead-off but may advance at their own risk (steal) once the pitch is released by the pitcher. When a runner tries to advance prior to a released pitch, the following shall apply:  
**Rule 14.06 Penalty:** If the runner is called safe, the runner shall return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch. If the runner is called out, the play shall stand and the runner is out. If the ball is hit, the defensive team shall have the option of the result of the play or a no-pitch.

## **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. . Drafted League All-Stars is a playing level for actual drafted league All-Star teams from USSSA Sanctioned Leagues. Players shall be permitted to participate with an All-Star team and an A, AA, AAA or Major team pursuant to Rule 3.00. There shall be two (2) divisions within the All Star program. Age divisions shall include 5U – 18U.
- 15.02** Leagues that meet the below guidelines and register one hundred percent (100%) of their league teams shall be allowed to participate. State Directors may approve others with the approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball.
- 15.03** All-Star Qualifications:
- 15.03.A** Leagues shall meet all the qualifications set forth under Rules 14.01 – 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 shall register and enter an Official On-Line Roster for All-Star teams.
  - 15.03.E** The League President (or Highest Officer) shall submit an official roster to the State Director for approval.
- 15.04** Divisions:
- 15.04.A** National:
    - 15.04.A.1** All-Star team players shall not have participated on a team of higher classification than AA (i.e.; AAA, Major) between January 1st and April 1st of the current year.  
**Rule 15.04.A.1 Comment:** Any player that has participated on a AAA or Major team between January 1st and April 1st of the current year is ineligible for National All-Star play but may be eligible for American All-Star play, see Rule 15.04.B.
    - 15.04.A.2** All-Star teams shall have no more than three players on their roster that have participated on a AA team after April 1st.
    - 15.04.A.3** All-Star teams shall not begin playing together as a team before Memorial Day weekend.  
**Rule 15.04.A.3 Approved Ruling:** Memorial Day weekend is defined as starting at 12:00 P.M., the calendar Friday before Memorial Day as observed by the Federal Government.
  - 15.04.B** American:
    - 15.04.B.1** All-Star teams that do not meet the requirements set forth under Rules 15.04.A but meet the requirements set forth under Rules 15.01 – 15.03 shall be eligible for American All-Star play.
    - 15.04.B.2** All-Star teams entering tournaments that do not make must participate in the highest classification the team would otherwise be eligible (i.e.; AA, AAA, Major).
- 15.05** With the assistance of the USSSA Drafted League Program Director, states may adopt guidelines to have two (2) divisions on the state level.
- 15.06** Each State Director shall set guidelines for teams to qualify for the All-Star State Championship.
- 15.07** Each State Director shall set guidelines for teams to advance form their State Championship 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 Baseball State Director with guidance from the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball.