



## PARKS AND RECREATION

### Softball Rules

Updated 4/12/2023

#### **Contact Information**

League Coordinator Kelsey Albair (208)-608-7653, [kalbair@cityofboise.org](mailto:kalbair@cityofboise.org)

Rec Specialist Dan Goodale (208)-608-7654, [dgoodale@cityofboise.org](mailto:dgoodale@cityofboise.org)

Customer Service (208)-608-7651, [Sports@cityofboise.org](mailto:Sports@cityofboise.org)

Rainout Information: (208)-231-0001

#### **Websites:**

Boise Parks & Recreation website: [www.cityofboise.org/parks](http://www.cityofboise.org/parks)

USA website: [www.idahosoftball.com](http://www.idahosoftball.com) or [www.usasoftball.com](http://www.usasoftball.com).

USSSA website: [www.ussa.com](http://www.ussa.com)

#### **Softball Player Advisory Board:**

##### **Board President**

Dave Kaufman

##### **Board Vice President**

Aubrey Cheney

##### **Women's Gold**

Q Maldonado- Women's Upper/Mid

Tasha Rutan-Gullquist-Women's Lower

Tammy Dettman-Women's 38+

##### **Men's Gold**

Sean Hawk-Men's Upper

Sean Hunter-Men's Mid

Vacant-Men's Lower

Dennis Benjamin-Men's Senior

##### **Coed Gold**

Zach Monroe-Upper

Aubrey Cheney- Mid

Josh Warnke-Lower

##### **Coed Silver**

Shelly Lenhart

##### **Sunday Coed**

Amy Vaughan-Uppers

Rachael Fullinwider-Middles

Theresa Palmgren-Lower

##### **Other Members**

Vacant- Member at Large

#### **Facilities Use/Regulations:**

1. Hitting into the fences is not allowed at any time due to extensive damage it causes.
2. No children will be allowed in the dugouts or playing area. Only the players, coaches, and scorekeepers will be allowed in the dugouts (liability and safety reasons).

3. No pets are allowed in the softball playing area of Willow Lane. This includes warm-up areas and spectator areas due to safety and sanitary reasons. Violators will be required to put the pet in their car or remove it from the park.
4. Problems that occur with teams that practice at schools or private facilities may result in a possible suspension from the league. No alcohol is permitted on school grounds.
5. Please use trash and recycling receptacles.
6. No glass containers are allowed at any park or school facility.
7. Field lighting will be turned off no later than 10:55 p.m. due to City Ordinance.
8. No non-motorized scooters, skateboards, bicycles or roller blades are allowed at Willow Lane Athletic Complex due to safety concerns.
9. Do not park in the No Parking zones. Cars will be towed at the owner's expense.
10. Music played in the dugout or the vicinity of playing fields must be played a reasonable volume and may not disturb the surrounding community members.
11. Smoking is prohibited, except in specified areas.

## **League Structure:**

1. The Gold, Sunday, and Coed leagues are sanctioned by USA/ASA Softball.
2. The league fee covers the officials, field equipment, facilities, maintenance and operation costs, administrative costs, and awards. Gold and Sunday Coed league player fees are deposited into a capital fund for facility improvements and acquisitions.
3. The ASA and USSSA sanctioning fee provides the City with field liability insurance and allows teams to play in sanctioned tournaments, among other benefits. ASA and USSSA offer optional insurance that covers all players and coaches. Teams are encouraged to check into the insurance and other benefits on each respective website.
4. By participating, all players agree to release Boise Parks & Recreation, the Softball Advisory Board and all cooperating agencies, employees, officials, or managers thereof from all liability for damages to persons or property that may be sustained as a result of participation in the program.
5. Payments returned due to insufficient funds are the entire team's responsibility. Team and players will be suspended from further participation in all Boise Parks & Recreation Programs until all fees are paid.

## **REFUND POLICY**

1. Team and player fees will not be refunded to teams which drop from the league after the registration deadline. A full refund will be given to teams who drop out of the league prior to the completion of registration, minus a \$15.00 processing fee.
2. Player fees are non-refundable after the registration deadline.
3. Players may transfer teams up until the second Monday of league play without an additional fee being assessed.
4. If a team disbands during the season, the players may move to other teams without a fee being assessed.

## **LEAGUE CLASSIFICATION**

1. Teams are classified by the Program Coordinators and the Softball Advisory Board. Classifications are based on the following criteria: League standings from previous years, teams registering in each division, number of teams returning and the caliber of the players on the team. Mid - lower teams that have upper division men on their roster may

be moved up one or more divisions. Teams are not guaranteed the division they request.

2. Changing divisions after league begins can only be done by switching with another team. Boise Parks and Recreation will work with the manager to find a team that is willing to switch. Teams with a winning record may be moved up at the discretion of the Softball Advisory Board.

## **RESCHEDULED/CANCELED/RAINOUT GAMES**

1. If no official umpire arrives for a game, the game may be played if both managers agree and there is a volunteer to umpire the game, or it will be rescheduled. If the game is started with a volunteer umpire, it must be completed. Both coaches are required to sign the score book as proof of agreement. (Refunds will not be given.) Complaints against a volunteer umpire will not be considered. Home team is responsible to call the score into the Boise Parks & Recreation Center the next day.

2. All games which are declared a no Game because of poor weather conditions, unplayable field (umpire's decision), or umpires not showing up will be rescheduled the next working day. Teams must notify the sports teams- 208-608-7651 or e-mail sports@cityofboise.org before 10:00 a.m. the next working day as to any dates that could be a conflict for future reschedule dates. The league coordinator may cancel games at his/her discretion. Messages can be left at 208-608-7654 or 208-608-7653.

3. Rained out games will be replayed the next available day and time. Teams should be prepared to play that same week.

4. If it has been raining for a few days prior but has stopped, be sure to call and double-check that the fields are playable.

5. A decision will be made at 3:00 p.m. as to whether the games will be canceled. It is the team manager's responsibility to call in at 208-231-0001.

6. If rain occurs after 3:00 p.m. and the games are canceled, our rainout app will have the updated information and will notify you if you have selected that option. Game cancellations after 5pm will be at the umpire's discretion.

## **OPTIONS FOR RESCHEDULING GAMES (NOT WEATHER RELATED)**

1. Teams must notify program coordinators of their intent to re-schedule a game (3) three days prior to game date. Program coordinators will work on a new date/time with team captains involved in the reschedule to get their approval. Each team must verify with the Boise Parks & Recreation officials and confirm that they have received the correct information.

2. Day-of cancellations: Teams must notify program coordinators and captains of opposing team by phone if they are unable to field a team for a scheduled game. Day-of cancellations are not eligible for a reschedule.

3. Each team will be allowed only one (1) emergency reschedules during the season. Notice that a game needs to be rescheduled must be given to Boise Parks and Recreation officials at least (3) three business days in advance of the game that is to be rescheduled. Any reschedule request that does not meet the deadline will result in a forfeit. If a team has already used its emergency reschedule, any additional games that are rescheduled will result in a \$35 charge to the team per game. Reschedules are subject to field availability. Note: Changes not only affect your team, but your opponents, spectators, and the umpires scheduled to work the game.

## **LEAGUE STANDINGS AND AWARDS**

1. League standings are posted on the website.
2. Awards will be given for 1st place in league play. The contact person listed on the registration form will be notified of the awards pick-up date.
3. League standings will be determined in the following manner:
  - a. Total wins
  - b. Total win percentage
  - c. Head-to-head record
  - d. Runs allowed
  - e. Run differential
  - f. Top-down record

## **IMPORTANT DATES AND DEADLINES**

The last day to add players to league rosters is the final league game. Invitational Tournament registration deadlines are 7 days prior to the tournament start date, unless otherwise stated.

## **Player Eligibility:**

### **1. MINIMUM AGE REQUIREMENT:**

- a. Gold leagues – 16 years of age (By registration date)
- b. Sunday and Coed leagues – 14 years of age (By registration date)

### **2. ELIGIBILITY**

- a) All players' names and signatures must be on the roster before they play their first game. Players can only switch teams one time during the season. There is no maximum for the number of players on a league roster.
- b) Rosters will remain open for player additions for league until the last league game. All additions to the roster must be made online by using the Add/Drop Player form. It is the manager's responsibility to make sure the roster addition has been made. No player additions may be made by phone or in person. Only the manager or departing player may remove a name from the roster.
- c) Teams SHOULD carry an updated copy of their roster to each game. Players should have photo IDs available at the game.
- d) A player may be on more than one team's roster in league only, with the following requirements:
  - i. Players must be signed on each team's roster and have paid their player fees for each team.
  - ii. Players must not play more than two divisions below their highest level of play. For example, an M1 player may participate on teams in M2, M3 leagues only.

## **ILLEGAL PLAYER PENALTIES**

1. Team forfeits the game.
2. Team suspended from tournament where applicable.
3. Player is ineligible to play in their next scheduled league game. (This affects any team the player is registered on if they play on more than one team.)

## LEAGUE PICK-UP PLAYER GUIDELINES

1. Pick-Up Player Cards: Teams can pick up player cards on site from the site supervisor or score keeper. A team can pick up a maximum of two players for a game. The pick-up player must be on a registered, signed Boise Parks & Recreation roster and must be a caliber equal to or lower than the team they are being picked up by. Pick-up player cards should be used for hardship only. Players must list their highest level of play/participation on the card.
2. Any legal pick-up player must bat at the last batting position (see #4 for exceptions).
3. GAME PROCEDURES: The manager will report to the umpire and the opposing manager that a pick-up player(s) will be used. At the pre-game meeting, the manager must present the pick-up player card/waiver. The player must have signed the waiver. The waiver then remains in the possession of the umpire and will be turned in with the game score card.
4. In case of hardship (injury, emergency, or unavailable players at game time for pick up, etc.) a pick-up player may be obtained after the start of the game. This player would bat in the place of the hardship player.

## Equipment/Uniforms:

1. No metal cleats are allowed, including hard plastic or polyurethane spikes like metal or sole & heel plates, in any league or invitational tournaments.
2. Softballs must be USA/ASA certified and yellow optic in color.
3. The 11 & 12-inch ball must have a Ball COR of .52 and a Ball Compression of 300 lbs., Senior leagues use a Ball COR of .44 and compression of 375 lbs.
4. Game balls will be provided by Boise Parks and Recreation.
5. Uniforms are not required for league play or league tournaments.

### A. **Official Approved Bats for Boise Parks & Recreation League & ASA Championship Play**

1. If a bat is not marked OFFICIAL SOFTBALL but has an ASA Certification Mark, meets Rule 3 Section 1 of the ASA Rules, is included on a list of approved models published by the ASA, and is not listed on the Non-Approved Bat List then it is allowed in ASA Championship Play and League/Tournament play.



### B. **Non-Approved Bats**

1. The official reference will be lists of approved and non-approved bats on the ASA and USSSA websites: [http://www.asasoftball.com/about/certified\\_equipment.asp](http://www.asasoftball.com/about/certified_equipment.asp). ASA's lists will be printed and kept for reference at the Boise Parks & Recreation Dick Eardley Senior Center one month prior to the start of each annual softball season and will serve as the official reference until the start of the next annual season. For updated lists of illegal bats, use the ASA and USSSA websites. The lists may change.
2. A player who enters the batter's box with a non-approved bat will immediately be

called out and subject to a "Level Two Violation" penalty. Ownership of the bat is irrelevant.

3. A second offense of using a non-approved bat will result in indefinite suspension from Boise City softball leagues. The player may request reinstatement by appearing in front of the Softball Advisory Board or at the discretion of the director. The Softball Advisory Board and/or the director will determine what, if any, further suspension may be merited for second offenses.

#### **C. Altered/Doctored Bats**

1. Umpires may examine a bat at any time if they have reasonable suspicion to believe the bat to be altered, based on appearance or performance.
2. If, upon examination, the bat is suspected to have been modified, the umpire shall identify both the user and the owner of the bat. Umpires have the authority to immediately take the bat into their possession for testing.

#### **D. Testing Process**

1. The umpire will turn the bat into Boise Parks & Recreation Staff for testing. If the bat passes Boise City's test, it will be made available to the player within two (2) business days.
2. If the bat fails Boise Parks & Recreation testing, it will be sent to the ASA Office to undergo further testing.
3. A player who refuses to submit a bat to the umpire for examination and/or testing will be immediately called out, ejected from the game and suspended for a minimum of 1 year.
4. Article 510 N 06 Altered Bat. Any person discovered in possession of an altered bat at or near the facility or grounds of a softball competition in which such equipment is not permitted to be used shall be subject to discipline pursuant to Article 505. ASA shall have the right to take possession of a bat that is, in the sole discretion of the official, reasonably suspected to be an altered bat. In the event the suspected altered bat is tested and determined to be an altered bat, then the person shall surrender ownership of the altered bat to ASA. If the bat is found not to be altered, a bat of equal or greater value, or a monetary equivalent, in the sole discretion of ASA, shall be returned to the owner of the subject bat. In addition, a player found in possession of an Altered Bat and found guilty according to Article 505 shall be suspended from ASA play for a minimum of five (5) years. A team that is discovered to have within its possession or control an Altered Bat maybe 6 suspended from further tournament competition and from ASA play.
5. Players can have their bats examined and tested upon appointment Monday - Friday at the Boise Parks & Recreation Office located behind Fort Boise softball field # 1. Additionally, umpires can be asked to examine bats prior to the start of a game. Buying used bats or bats from unknown vendors (especially web-based) presents a risk to the buyer - the bat may have been modified or altered. Play it safe - if you're unsure, have your bat tested!

## **Rules of the Game:**

### **PLAYER CONDUCT**

1. Teams and team managers will be held responsible for the action of their players

and spectators.

2. If team managers are dissatisfied with the performance of an umpire, the manager is requested to file, in writing, complaints or suggestions to the sports@cityofboise.org. These comments will then be reviewed by the Recreation Program Coordinator and the Softball Advisory Board. If the comments require review, such actions as needed will be taken by the Recreation Program Coordinator, Boise Softball Umpire Association and the Softball Advisory Board. Concerns not put in writing will not be addressed.
3. If, in the opinion of the umpire(s), the game cannot be continued in a sportsmanlike manner, the game shall be forfeited by the offending team.
4. Only the team manager, determined by the person who represents the team at the pre-game meeting, may speak to the umpire. The umpire will direct all conduct warnings to the managers and/or players in question. It is the manager's responsibility to control all player conduct.
5. Officials are not required to warn a player or manager prior to ejection. When a player is ejected from a game, if asked, he/she must leave the park immediately or the team will forfeit the game and the police may be called.

## **VIOLATIONS AND PENALTIES**

1. Any violation not included below shall be at the discretion of the League Coordinator and/or Softball Advisory Board.
2. The following penalties will be assessed for each specific act that occurs before, during or after a game. Automatic penalties may be increased based on severity.
3. Any Boise Parks & Recreation sports program participant who is suspended or placed on probation for conduct violation shall serve the same penalty in all Boise Parks & Recreation sports programs they may be participating in, or registered for, during the specified time period.
4. Once a player has been suspended, they are not allowed to coach or be engaged in play, be near the dugout, or be present inside the fence lines. When a player is serving a suspension, the player will be notified they are not to be involved in play with any recreational team, regardless of multiple rosters and teams. All affected team managers will also be notified. This rule applies to ALL Player Conduct – Level 1, 2, and 3 Violations.

### **Minimal Violation**

1. Possession or consumption of alcohol on the field or in the dugout.
2. Casual profanity and unsportsmanlike conduct rule: Any team member in a game using profanity or unsportsmanlike language, expletives not directed at umpires or opposing players, and loud enough to be heard by spectators will result in an out being called against the offending team.
  - a) If a team is at bat and unsportsmanlike words are used, the next batter will be declared out.
  - b) If the act is committed by a player remaining at bat, that player will be called out.
  - c) If the act is committed by the defensive team, then their first batter up once they are on offense will be declared out.
  - d) The outs will be treated as a delayed dead ball situation.
  - e) If the violation occurs in the bottom of the last inning, where the fielding team may not bat again, the ejection rule will apply. If the team goes

below eight (8) players, it will constitute a forfeit.

3. Continued hitting of balls against the fence after a warning. Minimum automatic penalty: Player will accrue an (out) or an (out) will be given to the team in which the violation occurs.

### **Level One Violation**

1. Possession or consumption of alcohol on the field or in the dugout. (After minimal out.)
2. Intentional throwing of bat (not directed at an individual).
3. Excessive disrespectful behavior directed at another player, umpire, spectator, or Recreation staff. Abusive language, continued swearing, taunting, or using gestures to provoke another player, umpire, spectator, or Recreation staff.
4. Attempting to arouse spectators against an official.
5. Not leaving the park when asked to by the umpire or Recreation staff.
6. Unsportsmanlike conduct.
7. Kicking or throwing dirt at an umpire.
8. Harassing players, spectators, or Recreation staff. Minimum automatic penalty: Ejection from the game and suspension for all other league games for 7 days, to include a minimum of one game, as well as probation for the remainder of the year.

### **Level Two Violation** (Police may be called.)

1. Verbal or physical threats to a player, umpire, spectator, or Recreation staff.
2. Fighting, whether initiated or done in retaliation.
3. Making physical contact with the intent to do harm to a player, umpire, spectator, or Recreation staff.
4. Throwing or kicking an object at a player, umpire, spectator, or Recreation staff with intent to do harm.
5. Causing, aiding, or assisting to the damage or destruction of property of Boise Parks & Recreation or individuals associated with the program.
6. Approaching or following an umpire or staff member off the field after the game is complete with the intent of verbal harassment or physical harm.
7. Any photographing and video recording of an umpire with intent to disseminate publicly (including social media) in an attempt to shame, ridicule, or defame an umpire. Minimum Automatic Penalty: Ejection from that game, suspension from the next four weeks of league play, and player probation for two years from the date of the incident. If there are fewer than four league games remaining in the season, the suspension will be extended to the league tournament and/or the next softball season. This includes all league teams the player is registered on. (ASA/USA & USSSA sanctioned tournaments are at the discretion of each respective Commissioner/Director.)

### **Probation**

A player that has been placed on probation and then is ejected from a game will be given an automatic suspension without the right to appeal. The suspension will be based on a repeat offense and the severity of the violation.

ALL PENALTIES At the discretion of the Program Coordinator and/or Softball Advisory Board, a hearing may be held to increase or decrease the penalty



according to the degree of the violations. A player appealing a conduct penalty will be suspended from play until a formal hearing. FOR APPEALS SEE APPLICABLE CITY CODE

## **Standard Gold Regulations**

### 1. GOLD LEAGUES

- a) A team may start and finish the game with a minimum of eight players. The missing players will be listed in the lowest possible position(s) in the batting order. An out will result in all missing player's batting positions. If additional players arrive after the game has started, the short team may add players up to a maximum of ten. The added players will bat in the appropriate batting order. A team can play shorthanded in any position they choose, other than pitcher and catcher. Teams starting with nine or more players will not forfeit if they drop to eight players due to an ejection or other circumstances. A team not having a minimum of eight players on or within sight of the field at game time, or anytime during the game will forfeit the game.
- b) Games forfeited at game time will still be played and officiated as a practice game if both managers agree, provided there are eight players or more for each team. (A team will have 10 minutes from game time to put a team together. Players must be on a League roster). The same rules as an official game apply to the practice game.
- c) Substitutes will follow the USA/ASA Rules, except that a player may re-enter as many times as he/she wishes in the same place in the batting order. All teams may bat the entire league roster; however, Coed teams must bat an equal number of male and female players.

2. Teams with fewer than eight (8) players at game time automatically become the visiting team. If they do not get their 8th player there before they go on defense, they will forfeit the game, or they may choose to use a 10-minute grace period to get their 8th person there. The team will then be penalized 2 runs. The 10-minute grace period will not be added on to the end of the game.

3. No new inning will start after 1 hour 10 minutes or 7 completed innings. Exception: If the game is tied after 7 innings and there is time remaining in the game, the game will continue using the ASA/USA tie breaker rule. If the time limit is up and the game is tied, it will not be played out. All started innings must be completed. It is the manager's responsibility to note the starting time with the official.

- a. Game start time will be announced by the umpire at the conclusion of the pre- game meeting which will be current time plus 2 minutes, UNLESS scheduled game time is later (i.e., scheduled game time is 6:30 p.m. and the pre-game meeting is occurring at 6:15 p.m., game time will be 6:30 p.m.).

4. Batters will start with a 1-1 ball-strike count with one courtesy foul ball allowed for all leagues: Men's, Women's, Coed, and Senior Leagues.

5. Pitching Arc follows the USA National Rule: 6-10 feet.

6. A pitcher's box is part of the playing field for the safety of the pitcher. The box should be 2 x 6 feet starting at the front edge of the pitcher's plate and extending back toward 2nd base 6 feet. The pitcher is allowed to pitch from anywhere within the box.

7. One courtesy runner (per sex) per inning is allowed for each team. The runner must be

the same gender in Coed. The courtesy runner can be ANY player not currently at bat. If a courtesy runner that is on base is due up to bat while still on the base path, the runner will be deemed out and the player due up to bat will take his turn at bat. If there are two outs and the courtesy runner is on base when it is their turn to bat, the inning will end, and that batter will take his turn at bat to start the next inning of play.

8. Courtesy runners from home plate are allowed for players requesting ADA accommodation. This courtesy runner does not count towards a team's general courtesy runner in that inning. The courtesy runner will start from the point established by extending a line from 3rd base line through home plate as close to the backstop as possible without interfering with the umpire. The courtesy runner must be the player, of the same gender, who most recently finished their turn at bat. The courtesy runner may advance toward 1st base once the bat contacts the ball. The courtesy runner is NOT required to stop at first base. In the event the batter making the last out also required a courtesy runner, the courtesy runner duties then fall to the next player who most recently finished their turn at bat. Note: Courtesy runner violations will result in an out and the courtesy runner is removed from the bases.

8. To speed up the game so that a full seven innings can be completed, no warm-up pitches or infield practice will be allowed after the first inning. A new pitcher coming into the game will be allowed to warmup.

9. Base stealing is not allowed in any league.

10. Completed games:

- a. 7 innings, or 6½ if the home team is ahead.
- b. Weather Related - 5 innings, or 4½ if the home team is ahead. 7
- c. Time Limit – there will be no minimum inning requirement, although an inning must be completed unless the home team is ahead.
- d. Run Rule – If a team is ahead by 12 runs after 5 innings of play, it will constitute an official game.
- e. Flip Rule – If the home team is behind by 12 runs or more when entering the 5th inning, they will bat first, and the visiting team will become home team.
- f. Games not declared official (not completing 5 innings or not meeting the time limit) will be continued later from the exact point where they left off. Roster substitutions may be used.

12. Home run rule: (Over the fence home run, the batter has the option to run the bases)

- a. **Gold Men's USSSA(M1-2), Men's Gold (M3) and Gold Coed (C1-2) are allowed 3 anytime, then progressive.** (e.g., a team cannot hit its 4th home run until the opponent has hit 3.)
- b. **All other leagues are progressive.** (e.g., once a team hits the 1st home run, the opponent would be allowed to hit 2.)
- c. Home runs in excess will result in an out.
- d. If divisions are combined or crossover games are being played, the lower division home run rule will be applied.

**Note:** Progressive indicates that a team's home run total can be only 1 greater than the opponent's home run total.

## **PROTESTING A GAME OR PLAYER**

1. Decisions involving an umpire's judgment may NOT be protested.

2. **Illegal Player:** The protest must be made before the umpires leave the playing field after the game is completed. If the player's name is in the book and the first pitch has been thrown, a player can be protested. It is strongly recommended that protests be made at this time instead of waiting until after part of the game has been played. Please do not allow the outcome of the game to influence your decision to protest.

3. **Rule Protest:** If a team feels a rule was misinterpreted, the team must use the word "Protest" before the next pitch for the protest to be valid. When the protest of a game is upheld, the game shall be resumed from the point at which it was protested.

4. The manager, acting manager or coach of the protesting team shall immediately notify the plate umpire that the game is being played under protest. The plate umpire shall notify the opposing manager and official scorekeeper. The umpire must make a notation of the protest and/or illegal player in the home team score book, on the score sheet, and sign both. The protesting manager must make sure these procedures are followed.

- a. The game will be completed. The protesting team must verbally notify the Boise Parks & Recreation Officials within 24 hours from the time of the game. The protest must also be put in writing to the Boise Parks & Recreation Officials no later than two working days from the day of the game protested.

5. The protest must contain the following information:

- a. The date, time, and place of the game.
- b. The names of the umpires.
- c. The rule and section of the official rules or local rules under which the protest is made and/or the names of the illegal players.
- d. The information, details, and conditions pertinent to the decision to protest. The protest will be reviewed and determined if valid or if a hearing needs to be held.
- e. The situation of the game (inning, outs, team at bat, runners on base, etc.).

**Note:** If proper procedures are not followed or the protest does not include the above information, it will not be considered and will be invalid.

## Coed League Regulations

### 1. COED REGULATIONS

- a) Playing with ten (10) players, teams must have 2 males and 2 females in the outfield, and 3 males and 3 females in the infield, with a pitcher/catcher combination of male/female.
- b) Coed teams playing short can have no more than 5 players of one gender on the field. No more than 3 players of one gender shall be in the infield and no more than 2 players of one gender in the outfield. The catcher/pitcher must be male/female combination.
- c) **Player positioning:** The player's defensive position on the field is determined by their position when they take the field. Infielders generally play on the dirt part of the field although they may be allowed to move into the grass area of the field to take a defensive position. Infielders cannot be even with or behind any of the outfielders before the ball is hit.
- d) There must be a visual separation between the players in the infield and those in the outfield. Outfielders generally play on the grass area of the field although they may be allowed to move onto the dirt area provided, they are not even with or in front of any infielder when the ball is hit.

- e) The batting order must alternate between male and female batters throughout. Teams can bat an unlimited number of players, but the number of male and female batters must be equal. An out will be assessed for any missed gender in a batting order.
- f) Any walk to a male player sends the male batter to 2nd base and the female batter hits. Exception: If there are 2 outs the female has her choice to hit or walk to 1st base (See USA/ASA Rules).
- g) Lowest Coed Division (LC) and Sunday Coed Only: A scoring line that is offset from home plate shall be used by base runners to score runs. Home plate is to be used only by the defense in making a force out. The runner who touches home plate will be called out. The runner cannot be tagged out, only forced out. The ball remains live. A commitment line is to be drawn perpendicular to the 3rd base line, 30 feet from 3rd base. Once runners from 3rd base touch or cross the commitment line, they cannot return safely to 3rd base. The ball remains live. Sliding is legal in all normal respects, except at the scoring line. Sliding into the scoring line will be an out.
- h) Lowest Coed Division (LC) A strike mat is used at home plate, along with an offset scoring line for base runners.
  - a. The rectangular strike mat covers home plate. Any legally pitched ball not swung at that lands on (first touches) any part of the mat will be ruled a strike. The shoulder to knee strike zone has been eliminated.
  - b. The scoring line is used only by base runners. A runner who touches the strike mat will be called out. The strike mat is used only by the defense in making a force out. Runners coming home cannot be tagged out, only forced out.
  - c. A commitment line is to be drawn perpendicular to the 3rd base line, 40 feet from 3rd base. Once runners from 3rd base touch or cross the commitment line, they cannot return safely to 3rd base. The ball remains live.

## **Women's League Regulations**

Women's Softball Upper Gold Team versus Mid Gold Team Equalizer Guidelines and Rules:

The upper-level offensive team can score a maximum of 5 runs per inning except for the last inning which is unlimited. The lower-level team can score an unlimited number of runs every inning. The higher-level team is automatically the home team. The umpire must notify both teams of the last/unlimited inning. The last inning is determined by the following:

- b. After completion of the sixth inning
- c. Once 60 minutes have elapsed from the start of the game according to the umpire's official time, then the current inning will be completed, and the unlimited inning will be played. There must be an unlimited inning.
- d. If the home team is trailing by 8 or more runs, the teams will "flip" and the visiting team will become the home team and the home team will bat first in the unlimited inning. The bottom half will only be played if there is a tie or lead change.

If the game is tied after the open inning, the game shall be declared a tie. If there is still game time left, a new unlimited inning can be played. Once the time limit is reached, the game is final and may end in a tie.

## SENIOR REGULATIONS: Men's 50+ & Women's 38+

To follow "Softball League Rules and Regulations" for Gold Division with the following exceptions:

### THE GAME:

2. The offensive team can score a limit of 5 runs in its half inning, except for the last inning. In the last inning, as determined and announced by the umpire, an unlimited number of runs can be scored by either team.
2. The umpire must announce the last inning to both team managers and/or benches before play continues. The last inning is determined as follows:
  - a. At the completion of the 6th inning, OR
  - b. Once 60 minutes have elapsed from the start of the game, the current inning in progress shall be completed and then one additional (last) inning will be played.
3. A game cannot be completed without allowing for an unlimited-run inning.
4. Batters will start with a 1-1 ball-strike count in men's and women's senior divisions, with a courtesy foul ball.
5. A strike mat is used at home plate, along with an offset scoring line for base runners.
  - a. The rectangular strike mat covers home plate. Any legally pitched ball not swung at that lands on (first touches) any part of the mat will be ruled a strike. The shoulder to knee strike zone has been eliminated.
  - b. The scoring line is used only by base runners. A runner who touches the strike mat will be called out. The strike mat is used only by the defense in making a force out. Runners coming home cannot be tagged out, only forced out.
  - c. A commitment line is to be drawn perpendicular to the 3rd base line, 40 feet from 3rd base. Once runners from 3rd base touch or cross the commitment line, they cannot return safely to 3rd base. The ball remains live.
6. Sliding is legal in all normal respects, except at the scoring line. Sliding into the scoring line will be an out.
7. Pitching Arc is 6-12 feet.

8. **Home Run Policy:** Senior Men's home runs are **unlimited**. Exception: Senior Men's 50+ League (Mondays) shall have a limit of **3 home runs per team**, allowed anytime.

Senior Women's home runs are **progressive**. A team's home run total must always be

within 1 of the opponent's home run total. (Once a team hits the 1st home run, the opponent would be allowed to hit 2.)

**Notes:** Home runs in excess will result in an out. A home run will be charged for any ball hit over the fence whether a run scores or not. This will be used in conjunction with the 5-run limit.

9. To speed up the game so that a full 7 innings can be completed, no warm-up pitches or infield practice will be allowed after the 1st inning. **Exception:** A new pitcher coming into the game will be allowed to warmup.

10. Teams shall be allowed to have an unlimited number of players in the batting lineup.

11. The 12-run rule is not in effect.

12. Base stealing is not allowed.

### **OFFICIAL SOFTBALL:**

1. All Senior Softball games will be played utilizing an USA/ASA-sanctioned senior softball. There will be no exceptions. All game balls will be provided by Boise Parks and Recreation. Use of your own team ball is permitted if the softball meets USA/ASA requirements.

2. Senior Men's will use the 12-inch ball and must have a Ball COR of .44 or under and a Ball Compression of 375 lbs. and be yellow optic in color.

3. Senior Women's will use the 11-inch ball and must have a Ball COR of .44 and a Ball Compression of 375lbs. and be yellow optic in color.

### **PITCHERS MANDATED SAFETY EQUIPMENT:**

1. All Senior Men's 50+ (league), Silver, Bronze, Gold and Copper League: pitchers SHALL wear a protective face mask in order to pitch in league games. Monday League pitchers are strongly encouraged for their safety, but not required, to also wear protective safety equipment to protect the head, chest/heart and shins. There are no exceptions to this SAFETY rule which is adopted to protect pitchers and to bring the league in compliance with Senior Softball USA safety rules.

2. Pitchers in the Senior Women's League, though not required, are also strongly encouraged to comply with this rule.

### **PITCHER'S BOX:**

1. For the safety of the pitcher, a pitcher's box is part of the playing field. The box should be 2 x 10 feet starting at the front edge of the pitcher's plate and extending back toward 2nd base 10 feet.

2. At the beginning and end of all pitches, the pitcher must have both feet firmly on the ground and one or both feet must be within the pitcher's box or in contact with the boundary lines of the pitcher's box.

## **BATS:**

All bats used in the **Senior Women's League** and in the **Senior Men's Draft Leagues** (Gold, Silver, Bronze, and Copper) will follow Gold Division requirements. Bats must have the ASA Certification Mark, meet Rule 3 Section 1 of the ASA Rules, and be included on the list of approved models published by ASA. Players 75 yrs. and over may use BPF 1.21 or less bats in all leagues EXCEPT COPPER. Players 80 yrs. and over may use BPF 1.21 bats in the Copper League. Any bat listed on the USA/ASA Non-Approved Bat List cannot be used in league or tournament play. The USA/ASA website maintains current lists.

All bats used in **Senior Men's 50+League** (Mondays) must be Official Softball Bats certified by USA/ASA and/or marked BPF 1.21 or less. Bats must have their original paint markings for complete identification. These bats must meet all other provisions of Rule 3, Section 1 of the ASA Rules, and pass all bat inspections performed by the National Championship Finals Tournament Official. The Mikan Ultra is not allowed. The Mikan Ultra II and other so called "hot bats" are allowed. These Senior ASA-approved bats must also meet the rest of the ASA bat standards –no 20 cracks, dents, or rattles.

## **FIELDERS (65/70+ LEAGUES ONLY)**

175 ft. outfield arc will be used in the Bronze (65+) and Copper (70+) leagues. Outfield players must stay behind the line until the ball is hit. There will be no use of rovers. Defensive players must be an infielder or an outfielder.

a) Minimum of 3 outfielders starting behind the established line.

b) Maximum (Not including pitcher and catcher) of 5 infielders. Infielders must have both feet on the infield dirt prior to the batter contacting the ball.

## **SENIOR COURTESY RUNNER:**

1. An unlimited number of courtesy runners are allowed each inning.
2. A courtesy runner may be used for a base runner at any time.
3. A courtesy runner is in the game when announced by the offensive team representative.
4. A courtesy runner is officially in the game after a pitch, legal or illegal, or a play is made.
5. A courtesy runner whose turn at bat comes while on base will be called out and will then bat.
6. A courtesy runner may not run for an existing courtesy runner, except for an injury.
7. A runner who is replaced with a courtesy runner may not be used as a courtesy runner for the remainder of the inning.
8. Designated runners from home plate are allowed in Senior Men's 60+, 65+, and 70+ Draft Leagues. The designated runner will start from the point established by extending a line from 3rd base line through home plate as close to the backstop as possible without interfering with the umpire. The designated runner must be the player who most recently finished their turn at bat. The designated runner may advance toward 1st base once the bat contacts the ball but cannot advance beyond 1st base until the next batter. Other runners may advance as normal. In the event

the batter making the last out also required a designated runner, the designated runner duties then fall to the next player who most recently finished their turn at bat. Once on base, the designated runner may be replaced with a courtesy runner. Note: Courtesy runner violations will result in an out and the courtesy runner is removed from the bases.

### **AGE REQUIREMENTS:**

1. All Senior Men's teams will not be allowed to have players under the age of 50, 60, 65, and 70 on the roster or on the field for each respective league.
2. All Senior Women's teams will not be allowed to have players under the age of 38 on the roster or on the field.
3. The age a player attains on his or her birthday during the calendar year is considered league age for that entire year.

### **AGE VERIFICATION POLICY:**

1. The team manager shall be responsible for ensuring each player is age compliant.
2. Each season the managers will provide a list of players and a copy of their driver's licenses, or any other legal proof of age, to the Senior Softball Board.
3. The Senior Softball Board is responsible for age verification of all players and will sign and verify all rosters in the Senior Softball League.
4. The Senior Softball Board will maintain current signed rosters.

### **AGE IDENTIFICATION CHECK:**

A manager may request a player age identification check before or during any Senior game. A player who cannot provide age identification will be allowed to play or continue to play in the game. However, the player must provide age identification to the Senior Softball Board the next working day. If the player does not produce the necessary age confirmation, the Senior Softball Board will notify the Parks & Recreation Coordinator that the game should be forfeited.

### **SENIOR SHORTHAND RULE:**

1. The intent of the Shorthand Rule is to allow teams to adjust for temporary roster player shortages. Teams should use the Shorthand Rule only in emergencies. Constant use of the rule will be considered abuse of the rule and will be addressed by the Senior Softball Board and Boise Parks & Recreation.
2. If a team has less than 10 defensive players available for a league game, the manager may recruit up to 2 players from any team within the same league. The added player(s) may only play the catcher and/or right field positions and must be placed at the bottom of the batting order. Pickup player cards will not be used.

**Exception:** Senior Men's 50+ League (Monday) may play any position in the field and bat at the bottom of the lineup.

Or, as an alternative, the team may play shorthanded and may bat a minimum of 8 batters. Outs will not be assessed for the missing batters.



**Exceptions for Senior Women's League Only:** A shorthanded player may be recruited before or during a game and may play defense in any position. The player does not have to be from the same league if age requirements are met. Batting at the end of the batting order is still required. The batting lineup is not limited to 10 batters.

3. Outs **will not be assessed** if a team becomes short of player(s) after the game begins. The team may close the batting order and bat with as few as 8 batters. If a roster player arrives after the game begins, the player must bat at the end of the batting order.
4. The team manager will inform the other team manager and the umpire before the game begins when a team plans to use a player from another Senior roster to field 10 players or plans to start the game with less than 10 players.
5. A player may not fill in as a shorthanded player for more than one game per evening. **Exception:** In the last game of the evening if no other players are available to play and if the opposing team manager agrees, playing a second game as a fill-in shall be allowed.
6. In case of hardship (injury, emergency, or unavailable players at game time for pick up, etc.) a pick-up player maybe obtained after the start of the game. This player would bat in the place of the hardship player.

### **ILLEGAL PLAYER PENALTIES**

1. Teams will forfeit all games in which an illegal player participated.
2. Illegal, underage players may not participate in any Senior game for the remainder of the season.
3. The Senior Softball Board must approve an illegal player's reinstatement. The Senior Softball Board shall reserve judgment over the involvement or non-involvement of the manager.

### **Women's League:**

1. When a higher-level team plays against a lower-level team, the 5-run limit per inning shall apply only to the higher-level team. The lower-level team is allowed to score unlimited runs every inning. In the last inning, an unlimited number of runs can be scored by both teams.
2. The higher-level team automatically becomes the home team.

## **Men's USSSA Uppers League**

To follow "USSSA Softball League Rules and Regulations" with the following exceptions:

A team may start and finish the game with a minimum of eight players. The missing

players will be listed in the lowest possible position(s) in the batting order. An out will result in all missing player's batting positions. If additional players arrive after the game has started, the short team may add players up to a maximum of ten. The added players will bat in the appropriate batting order. A team can play shorthanded in any position they choose, other than pitcher and catcher. Teams starting with nine or more players will not forfeit if they drop to eight players due to an ejection or other circumstances. A team not having a minimum of eight players on or within sight of the field at game time, or anytime during the game will forfeit the game.

d) Games forfeited at game time will still be played and officiated as a practice game if both managers agree, provided there are eight players or more for each team. (A team will have 10 minutes from game time to put a team together. Players must be on a League roster). The same rules as an official game apply to the practice game.

e) Substitutes will follow the USSSA Rules, except that a player may re-enter as many times as he/she wishes in the same place in the batting order. All teams may bat the entire league roster.

2. Teams with fewer than eight (8) players at game time automatically become the visiting team. If they do not get their 8th player there before they go on defense, they will forfeit the game, or they may choose to use a 10-minute grace period to get their 8th person there. The team will then be penalized 2 runs. The 10-minute grace period will not be added on to the end of the game.

3. No new inning will start after 1 hour 10 minutes or 7 completed innings. Exception: If the game is tied after 7 innings and there is time remaining in the game, the game will continue using the USSSA tie breaker rule. If the time limit is up and the game is tied, it will not be played out. All started innings must be completed. It is the manager's responsibility to note the starting time with the official.

a. Game start time will be announced by the umpire at the conclusion of the pre- game meeting which will be current time plus 2 minutes, UNLESS scheduled game time is later (i.e., scheduled game time is 6:30 p.m. and the pre-game meeting is occurring at 6:15 p.m., game time will be 6:30 p.m.).

4. Batters will start with a 1-1 ball-strike count with NO courtesy foul ball allowed for this league.

5. Pitching Arc follows the USSSA National Rule: 6-10 feet.

6. There is no pitcher's box. Pitchers must toe the rubber before throwing a pitch.

7. One courtesy runner (per sex) per inning is allowed for each team. The courtesy runner can be ANY player not currently at bat. If a courtesy runner that is on base is due up to bat while still on the base path, the runner will be deemed out and the player due up to bat will take his turn at bat. If there are two outs and the courtesy runner is on base when it is their turn to bat, the inning will end, and that batter will take his turn at bat to start the next inning of play.

8. Courtesy runners from home plate are allowed for players requesting ADA accommodation. This courtesy runner does not count towards a team's general courtesy runner in that inning. The courtesy runner will start from the point established by extending a line from 3rd base line through home plate as close to the backstop as possible without interfering with the umpire. The courtesy runner must be the player, of the same gender, who most recently finished their turn at bat. The courtesy runner may advance toward 1st base once the bat contacts the ball. In the event the batter making the last out also required a courtesy runner, the courtesy runner duties then fall to the

next player who most recently finished their turn at bat. Note: Courtesy runner violations will result in an out and the courtesy runner is removed from the bases.

8. To speed up the game so that a full seven innings can be completed, no warm-up pitches or infield practice will be allowed after the first inning. A new pitcher coming into the game will be allowed to warmup.

9. Base stealing is not allowed in any league.

10. Completed games:

- a. 7 innings, or 6½ if the home team is ahead.
- b. Weather Related - 5 innings, or 4½ if the home team is ahead. 7
- c. Time Limit – there will be no minimum inning requirement, although an inning must be completed unless the home team is ahead.
- d. Run Rule – If a team is ahead by 12 runs after 5 innings of play, it will constitute an official game.
- e. Flip Rule – If the home team is behind by 12 runs or more when entering the 5th inning, they will bat first, and the visiting team will become home team.
- f. Games not declared official (not completing 5 innings or not meeting the time limit) will be continued later from the exact point where they left off. Roster substitutions may be used.

13. Home run rule: (Over the fence home run, the batter has the option to run the bases)

e. **Men's USSSA are allowed 3 anytime, then progressive.**

f. Home runs in excess will result in an out.

**Note:** Progressive indicates that a team's home run total can be only 1 greater than the opponent's home run total.

## **PROTESTING A GAME OR PLAYER**

1. Decisions involving an umpire's judgment may NOT be protested.

2. Illegal Player: The protest must be made before the umpires leave the playing field after the game is completed. If the player's name is in the book and the first pitch has been thrown, a player can be protested. It is strongly recommended that protests be made at this time instead of waiting until after part of the game has been played. Please do not allow the outcome of the game to influence your decision to protest.

3. Rule Protest: If a team feels a rule was misinterpreted, the team must use the word "Protest" before the next pitch for the protest to be valid. When the protest of a game is upheld, the game shall be resumed from the point at 8 which it was protested.

4. The manager, acting manager or coach of the protesting team shall immediately notify the plate umpire that the game is being played under protest. The plate umpire shall notify the opposing manager and official scorekeeper. The umpire must make a notation of the protest and/or illegal player in the home team score book, on the score sheet, and sign both. The protesting manager must make sure these procedures are followed.

- e. The game will be completed. The protesting team must verbally notify the Boise Parks & Recreation Officials within 24 hours from the time of the game. The protest must also be put in writing to the Boise Parks & Recreation Officials no later than two working days from the day of the game protested.

5. The protest must contain the following information:

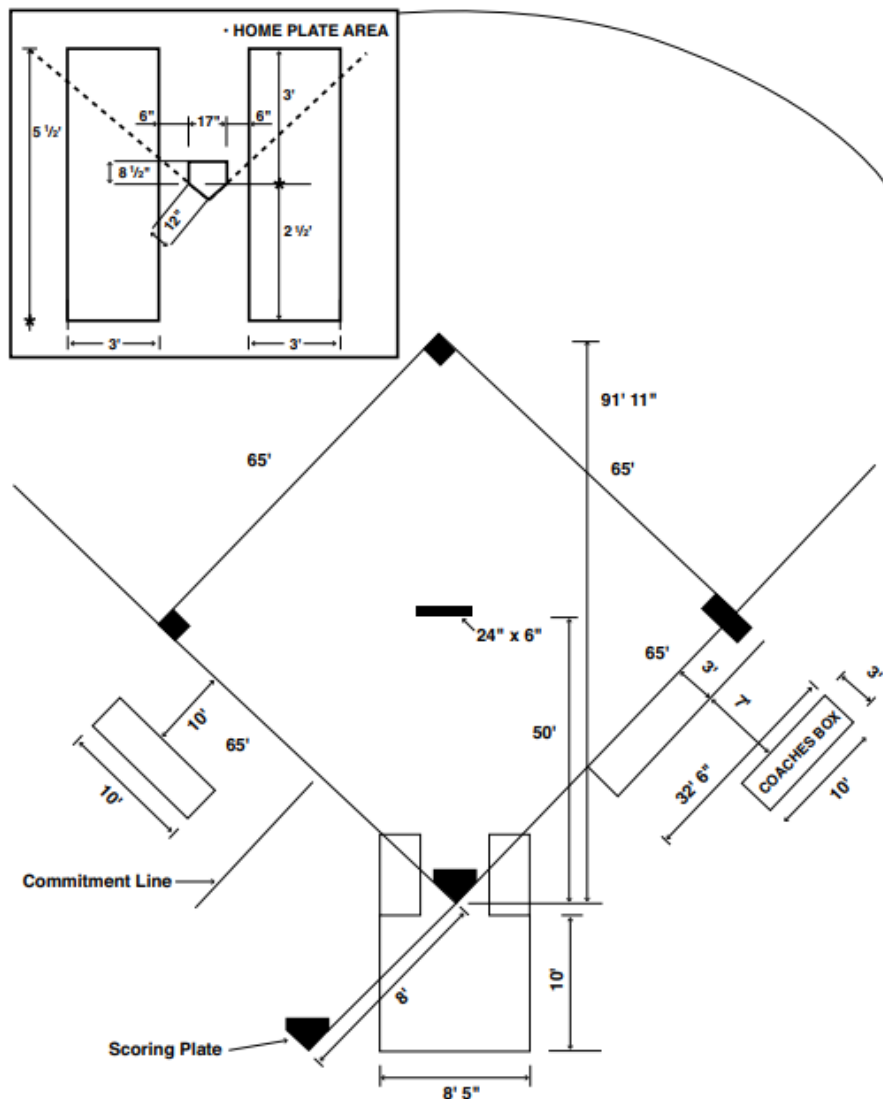
- The date, time, and place of the game.
- The names of the umpires.
- The rule and section of the official rules or local rules under which the protest is made and/or the names of the illegal players.
- The information, details, and conditions pertinent to the decision to protest. The protest will be reviewed and determined if valid or if a hearing needs to be held.
- The situation of the game (inning, outs, team at bat, runners on base, etc.).

**Note:** If proper procedures are not followed or the protest does not include the above information, it will not be considered and will be invalid.

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## OFFICIAL USSSA AND GSL STANDARD PLAYING FIELD DIMENSIONS



## **RULE 1. THE PLAYING FIELD**

**THE OFFICIAL DIAMONDS** of the field shall be established for 11 inch and 12 inches with:

A. 65- or 70-foot baselines shall be used in all adult programs. 70-foot baselines are the preferred distance.

B. Pitcher's distances of 50 feet for both men and women along with a pitching area the width of the pitcher's plate up to six (6) feet behind the back edge of the pitcher's plate. pitching plate that is 24 inches wide and six inches deep.

**BATTER'S BOXES** shall be provided on either side of home plate, with the inside line of this box 6 inches from home plate and parallel to its sideline. The batter's box shall be 5-1/2 feet long, extending 3 feet forward and 2-1/2 feet toward the rear, measured from the center corner of home plate. The batter's box shall be 3 feet wide, thus forming a rectangle of 5-1/2 feet by 3 feet. The lines marking the batter's box are part of the batter's box. Further, the following batter's box guidelines will be used: The batter must take an initial position with his back foot no further forward than a line defining the front edge of home plate. The batter will be called out if he hits the ball when the back foot is completely further forward than the line defining the front edge of home plate. NOTE: All other ILLEGALLY BATTED BALL infractions, regarding the side and rear lines of the batter's box, along with stepping on home plate, remain in effect. NOTE: The measurements of the length and the width of the batter's box begin at the outside edge of the lines of the box. **THE CATCHER'S BOX shall** be 10 feet long from the rear outside corners of the batter's box on each side of home plate, thus forming a rectangle 10 feet long and 8 feet 5 inches

## **RULE 2. EQUIPMENT**

DUE TO RAPIDLY EXPANDING and advanced technologies of softball equipment, all new equipment introduced to the game of slow pitch softball must be reviewed and approved by the USSSA Equipment Performance and Safety Standards Committee. Each item approved shall be tested for one year. During this time the item can be further evaluated in actual game-playing situations. The USSSA reserves the right to disapprove any equipment due to failure to meet current safety standards as set by the USSSA Equipment Performance and Safety Standards Committee.

**THE OFFICIAL BAT** shall be round in cross section, straight in length and measure not more than 34 inches long, including tape or other grip additions to the bat, shall have a knob at the end of its handle, and not more than 2-1/4 inches in diameter at its largest part. Its weight shall not exceed 31-ounces, including tape or grip addition to the bat. The bat shall have a grip of tape or some other material to facilitate holding the bat during the batter's swing. The grip shall be not less than 10 inches long, nor extend to touch 10 the taper or barrel of the bat. All key graphics, including USSSA and BPF markings, must be permanent and cannot be applied as decals or by any other method that would allow the key graphics to be easily removed or added to the bat.

**A. Material.** THE BAT may be made of hard wood of one piece or laminated from sections of hard wood bonded together with adhesive in such a way that the grain directions of all the pieces are essentially parallel to the length of the bat. THE BAT may also be made of aluminum or other metals, fiberglass, graphite, or composite materials.

**B. Construction.** The bat may be made in pieces from different materials but must have a closed barrel end, a handle, and a taper. The bat may be modular with interchangeable parts, subject to additional safety and tampering requirements as set forth in the standard USSSA Bat Licensing Agreement. The knob portion must be welded or mechanically attached to the bat. Only USSSA approved bats, USSSA approved weighted bats or USSSA approved bat weigh attachments, may be used by the on-deck batter while loosening up on the field.

**C. Other Criteria for Legal USSSA Bats.**

1. Bats will be legal for USSSA sanctioned play only if the bat is manufactured by an approved USSSA bat manufacturer on the USSSA approved bat manufacturer list (kept by USSSA and published and made available by means including, but not limited to, the USSSA website) and has the new 2020 USSSA Certification Mark. The previous 2014 USSSA Certification Mark as of January 1, 2023, is ineligible for USSSA Sanctioned events, but is eligible for use in USSSA league play (pictured below) on the taper of the bat. Wood bats made on the approved USSSA bat manufacturer list shall be legal without regard to this section E.2.

2. Any addition to the handle or knob area of a bat is altering the bat if and only if it adds any length to the bat or adds more than half an ounce of weight to the bat. Tournament Directors at the request of USSSA National Office may, however, allow for up to an inch increase in length and up to an ounce increase in weight for an addition to the knob area that is placed on bats in a tournament for the purpose of gathering swing/batted ball data (such as bat speed) for USSSA National Office, provided that the Tournament Director insures that the addition is securely added to the knob and will not create any significant safety concern.

**D. Altered Bat Director Inspection and Suspension.** A USSSA Director may at any time ask to inspect a bat that has been brought into the location of a USSSA sanctioned event or any other USSSA facility. The owner and/or user may either: 2020 USSSA Certification Mark 2014 USSSA Certification Mark

1. Withhold the bat from inspection and accept an immediate two year (automatic life for second time offenders under EI and/or E) suspension from USSSA sanctioned activities with no right to appeal; or,

2. Allow the Director to inspect the bat and reach a conclusion as to whether or not the bat might be altered. DI. Altered Bat Determination by Altered Bat Committee Chairman or Manufacturer. If, after making the inspection of a potential altered bat, the Director in his discretion decides that the bat might be an altered bat, the suspected offending owner and/or user may either:

1. Withhold the bat from further examination by the USSSA Altered Bat Committee Chairman or Manufacturer of the bat and accept an immediate two year (up to life for second time offenders under sections E and/or EI) suspension from USSSA sanctioned activities with no right to appeal; or

2. Allow the Director to send the bat to the USSSA Altered Bat Committee Chairman and/or Manufacturer of the bat for a determination as to whether or not the bat is altered. If the Manufacturer or the USSSA Altered Bat Committee Chairman determines that the bat has been altered, the Altered Bat Committee Chairman in consultation with the Director who inspected the bat at the USSSA facility may suspend a first time offender for up to five (5) years from USSSA play. For a second time offender under E and/or EI, any such suspension will be for life.

**E. Ownership and Knowledge of Bat Being Altered.** The responsibility for knowing whether a bat is altered is that of the users and the owner of the bat. If an individual uses an altered bat in USSSA sanctioned play or is the owner of an altered bat that is brought into a USSSA facility, the suspensions under this Rule 2, Section 1 will be

imposed without regard to what the individual actually knew about the altered bat. An individual must know that his bat is not an altered bat, if he brings it into a USSSA facility or used it in a USSSA sanctioned activity. If not, the individual can be suspended from USSSA activities for using or owning an altered bat. The fact that the individual did not know that the bat was altered is not a factor in imposing the suspension. The only question is whether the bat is altered or whether the owner/user has refused to let the bat be examined to determine if it is altered. After the Director, Altered Bat Committee and Manufacturer examination of a bat to determine if it is altered have all been completed, or upon the decision of the owner/user to not allow further inspection of the bat under E or EI, above, the bat shall be returned to the owner. If no one claims to be the owner, USSSA shall retain the bat. Once the bat has been returned to the owner, no appeal can be made with respect to whether the bat is altered or not.

**F. Investigation Cooperation.** Any coach, manager, player or other person who fails to cooperate in the investigation by USSSA of a potential or actual altered bat shall be subject to an unsportsmanlike conduct suspension. A manager or coach of a team that has more than one of his team's bats determined to be altered (or not allowed to be inspected upon request for an altered bat inspection under E and/or EI, above) shall be subject to an unsportsmanlike conduct suspension.

**G. Awards and Coach Suspensions** If an owner/user chooses to submit a suspected altered bat to the USSSA Altered Bat Committee or the Manufacturer no awards will be given to the team until the bat is determined not to be altered. If the bat is found to be altered, no awards or berth will be given and the team will be placed last in the standings and the listed manager and coaches may be suspended for unsportsmanlike conduct.

**H. Participation in, Profits from, or Encouraging the Altering of USSSA Marked Bats.** Anyone who participates in, profits from, or encourages the altering of USSSA marked bats shall be suspended indefinitely from all USSSA activities, until the offending party has satisfied all requests of the Altered Bat Committee with respect to his altered bat activities including but not limited to publicly swearing under penalties of perjury to never again participate in, profit from, or encourage the altering of USSSA marked bats. Violation of such an oath shall result in permanent suspension from all USSSA activities.

**I. Compression Testing.** Failure of a USSSA approved compression testing device test shall result in the offending bat being removed from play for the duration of the tournament or league game, no longer without the permission of the owner/user—such as in the case of an allowed USSSA altered bat determination under section EI. Multiple failures of such USSSA compression testing may in the discretion of USSSA be viewed as unsportsmanlike conduct of the owner/user, coaches, manager, and team. J. Custom Bats. No approved manufacturer may make a custom USSSA bat for a player or a team. All USSSA marked bats made by a USSSA approved manufacturer must be available to the public for purchase. Individualized graphics (such as a team name, different color, player name or number only changes for a team or player), however, do not constitute custom bats for purposes of this section

**K. Worn/Abused/Damaged/Foreign Substance Bats Not Allowed in USSSA Sanctioned Play.**

1. No bat is legal for USSSA sanctioned play, if it is damaged in any way. Damaged bats include those with damage to the knob or end cap, those which have loose knobs or end caps, and those with cracks or dents in the bat material. For example, if the end cap is in any way loose or appears damaged, the bat should be removed from play for being a damaged bat. If an end plug has come out or the knob has come off, the only way that such bat is legal in USSSA play, is if the knob or end cap is replaced by the manufacturer.

Replacement by anyone else results in an altered bat with potential suspension for the owner/ user of the bat.

2. No bat is legal for USSSA sanctioned play, if any of the graphics of the bat have worn off. For example, even if the only graphics that have worn off are not key graphic information and are only items such as the patent no., a manufacturer logo, or the approval mark of another association, the bat should be removed from play for being too worn. NOTE: The bat shall not have exposed rivets, pins, rough or sharp edges, or any form of exterior fastener that would present a hazard. Bats shall be free of rattles, dents, burrs and cracks.

3. No bat is legal for USSSA sanctioned play, if the paint has been worn through and the actual bat material is showing. For example, if at the end of the barrel next to the taper where there are no graphics the bat paint is worn off and the underlying bat material is exposed, that bat should be removed from play for being too worn.

4. No bat is legal for USSSA sanctioned play, if there is a foreign substance on the barrel or taper of a baseball or softball bat. Foreign substances included among other substances, pine tar, stick-em type products and even dirt or mud, but only if the substance adds to the thickness of the barrel or covers key graphic information such as the USSSA 1.20 BPF mark, the serial number of the bat, the model or manufacturer name, official softball, etc.. Players are responsible for their equipment and must clean such substances off of their bats so that the substance does not add to the thickness of the bat or obscure any key graphic information about the bat. For example, while bats will surely get dirt on them under normal use and may have pine tar added to the grip, if the dirt or pine tar obscures key graphic information or adds to the thickness of the bat, such bats cannot be used in USSSA play until the dirt or pine tar has been removed to the extent necessary to make all such key graphic information readable and the bat not have increased thickness. If key graphic information about a bat cannot be read, the bat should not be used in USSSA play.

5. If any removed bat under these section L rules is brought back into play at any USSSA sanctioned event at any time, the owner and user of such bat may be suspended for up to one year for unsportsmanlike conduct. And if the foreign substance or the wear/abuse/damage is apparent enough that the batter should have been aware of it, the batter may be suspended for bringing such a bat into the batters box without having been warned in advance. Players are responsible for their equipment and must not use equipment that is even potentially illegal for use in USSSA sanctioned play.

6. In addition to the player being suspended for unsportsmanlike conduct, coaches of youth teams may also be so suspended when their players attempt to bat with such bats. Also, coaches of adult teams which have multiple offenses under this rule may also be so suspended for failing to have his team follow USSSA equipment rules. Please be reminded that unsportsmanlike conduct may result in a game or tournament suspension in the discretion of the umpire or tournament director and up to a year suspension in the discretion of the state director.

**THE OFFICIAL BALL** to be used shall be of a spherical design with a smooth surface. The center or core of the ball shall be of a material and design traditionally used to make softballs or other materials or design as approved by the USSSA. The cover shall be of horsehide, cowhide or other material approved by the USSSA and shall be cemented to the core and stitched with cotton, linen or nylon or any other material approved by the USSSA. A molded cover ball or a molded ball without a separate cover, or a multiple layer core design or multiple material core design, may be approved by the discretion of the USSSA on a case-by-case basis. The thread shall be in either flat seam or concealed stitch type which gives a flat surface. The stitch color must be blue. The internal composition of the



core and the material of the cover must be clearly printed on the ball and the words "Official Slow Pitch Softball" must be clearly printed on the ball. All USSSA balls shall have the lettering and logo applied to be indelible. Note: The performance of a softball by reducing the temperature below that of game conditions is unsportsmanlike conduct.

12" Classic Plus Ball:

- shall have an optic yellow cover
- shall have "USSSA Classic Plus" in 1/8" letters and the USSSA logo with a 7/8" diameter
- shall have lettering and logo in red and the stitching shall be blue and logo shall be applied to be indelible.
- shall have a COR up to .52 or less under the ASTM test used under the USSSA Softball License Agreement and
- shall have a compression of not more than 300 pounds under the ASTM test used under the USSSA Softball Ball License Agreement.

12" Pro M Ball:

- shall have an optic yellow cover
- shall have "USSSA Pro M" in 1/8" letters and USSSA logo with a 7/8" diameter
- shall have lettering and new USSSA word logo in black and the stitching shall be blue and the logo shall be applied to be indelible
- shall have a COR up to .44 or less under the ATSM test used under the USSSA Softball License Agreement and
- shall have a compression of not more than 400 pounds under the ATSM test used under the USSSA Softball Ball License Agreement.

**THE PITCHER'S PLATE** shall be made of rubber or wood. It shall be 24 inches long and 6 inches wide. The front edge of this plate shall be centered on the direct line from home plate to second base. The top of the plate shall be level with the flat surface of the ground. The front edge of the plate shall be of legal distance as measured from the extreme rear corner of home plate.

**THE PITCHING AREA** is the area the width of the pitcher's plate (24 inches) up to six (6) feet behind the back edge of the pitcher's plate. NOTE: All pitching rules that apply to the pitcher's actions before and during the release of the pitch along with the restrictions on height, speed, etc., shall remain the same.

**A SHOE** shall be considered legal if it is made with either leather or canvas uppers or similar materials. The soles may have soft or hard rubber cleats. Metal cleats are prohibited. Shoe sole or heel projections other than the standard shoe plate are prohibited. The all-purpose molded cleat softball shoe is legal. All players must wear shoes.

**Any player may wear a MASK.** EFFECT Sec. 10 TO PREVENT INJURY it is strongly recommended that all protective equipment be worn.

A bat dropped by the batter-runner in foul territory, or any mask, cap, etc. dropped incidental to making a play will be considered as foreign to the normal playing area and foul ball rulings will be made accordingly.

**PROTECTIVE GEAR:** As a general rule, USSSA continues its long standing policy of permitting players to determine the use of protective equipment when they deem appropriate. Game conditions (temperature, equipment, rain, wind, visibility, field conditions, humidity, etc.) vary greatly from game to game and from field to field. In addition, the relative and absolute experience and skill levels of teams and players will vary from player to player and from team to team. Thus, USSSA encourages players to utilize any protective equipment that they deem appropriate. Such protective gear will be allowed in USSSA sanctioned play, unless by rule or by director/umpire ruling that such protective gear is disallowed as unsafe or as providing an unfair competitive advantage.

## **RULE 3. PITCHING**

AT NO TIME during the progress of the game shall the pitcher be allowed to use tape or any other substance, including a glove, upon the pitching hand or fingers; nor shall any 36 foreign substance be applied to the ball, provided that, under supervision and control of the umpire, a bag containing powdered resin may be used to dry the hands. AT THE BEGINNING of a game or when a pitcher relieves another pitcher, not more than one minute may be used to deliver not more than TWO PRACTICE PITCHES to the catcher or some other teammate. Between all other innings, only one practice pitch will be permitted. LEGAL POSITIONS OF THE PITCHER'S FEET.

A. The pitcher must have one foot in contact with the pitching rubber in the Major, AA, A and B all divisions. The pitcher may must pitch from the pitching plate or from the pitching area, an area the width of the plate and up to six (6) feet behind the pitcher's plate in the C, D and E in all divisions.

B. Preliminary to pitching, the pitcher shall take a position with his/her pivot foot firmly on the ground and in contact with the pitching plate or pitching area. The pivot foot must be in contact with the pitcher's plate or pitching area when the pitched ball is released.

C. The other foot (free foot) has no restriction on position and may be placed on, in front of, to the rear of, or to the side of the pitcher's plate or pitching area. After taking the initial position, the pitcher may take more than one step with the free foot, in any direction of his choice, provided that it is taken prior to, simultaneously with or during the actions of delivering the pitched ball.

D. After the release of the pitch, there are no restrictions on pitcher's subsequent movements or the fielding positions he may assume as a defensive player.

PITCHER'S LEGAL MOTIONS ALLOWED IN ACTUAL DELIVERY OF THE PITCH.

A. After assuming the pitching position on the pitcher's plate or in the pitching area (as allowed in 6.3.A), the pitcher must present the ball in FRONT OF HIS BODY (for at least one second) in either one or both hands before starting the delivery motions. Note: All pitching rules that apply to the pitcher's actions before and during the release of the pitch along with the restrictions on height, speed, etc., shall remain the same.

B. The pitcher may hold or grip the ball in any manner before delivery.

C. Only a definite underhand motion is permitted in the delivery of the pitch.

D. The pitcher may release the pitched ball in any manner when delivering the pitch. This includes any and all types of delivery. EFFECT Sec. A-D. After the pitcher presents the ball, he may make any windup or arm motions desired, either in front of his body, above his head or behind his back, including stops and pauses in these motions.

E. Once the pitcher begins his delivery motions; the umpire shall not give a call or signal for "time" unless something unusual occurs. 37

F. The pitched ball must be released within 5 seconds from the time the pitcher has the ball and the batter has taken his position in the batter's box. From this point, the umpire shall not give a call or signal for "time" unless something unusual occurs.

G. Pitcher must face home plate on delivery of pitch. NOTE Sec. 4. A-E. Realizing that the pitcher does not fool very many batters to the extent that they cannot hit the ball, it is desired that pitchers not be handicapped by technicalities, when they do develop a new technique or delivery that, perhaps, will add to the pleasure and appeal to the spectators, as long as the pitcher adheres to the basic pitching rules.

TYPE OF PITCH PERMITTED.

A. The ball must be pitched in a definite underhanded motion at slow speed.

B. The pitched ball must arc at least 3 feet after leaving the pitcher's hand and before it passes any part of home plate.

C. The pitched ball shall not rise higher than 10 feet above the ground. EFFECT Sec. 5. A-

C. The speed of the pitch and height of the pitched ball are left entirely to the judgment of the umpire (NOTE: For sake of uniformity in decisions, any doubtful pitch should be ruled as an unfairly delivered pitch). The umpire shall warn a pitcher who delivers a pitch with EXCESSIVE SPEED that repeating such EXCESSIVE SPEED PITCH will cause the pitcher's removal from the pitcher's position for the remainder of the game. A pitch that does not arc the full 3 feet as required (flat level pitch) may not be an EXCESSIVE SPEED PITCH, but merely an unfairly delivered pitch.

THE CATCHER MUST:

A. Be in and remain in the lines of the catcher's box when the pitcher is in position and remain until a pitched ball has reached or passed home plate, or is batted. EFFECT Sec. 6.

A. An unfairly delivered pitch.

B. Immediately return each pitch not hit directly to the pitcher, unless the pitch results in an out. EFFECT Sec. 6. B. A ball shall be awarded to the batter.

NO PITCH shall be declared immediately when:

A. The pitcher pitches during a dead ball interval.

A FAIRLY DELIVERED PITCHED BALL includes all pitches that the pitcher delivers in accordance with the several preceding paragraphs and provisions of the pitching rule.

UNFAIRLY DELIVERED PITCHED BALLS INCLUDE:

A. Any pitched ball that does not conform to all requirements of a fairly delivered pitched ball.

B. All pitches made by the pitcher when not conforming to pitching restrictions.

C. Delivering a pitch from other than the pitcher's plate or pitching area (as allowed in 6.3.A) and pitcher's position.

D. A quick-return pitch.

E. The pitcher failing to face home plate on delivery of the pitch. EFFECT Sec. 9. A-E. In each case, an unfairly delivered ball shall be declared a ball by the umpire provided, however, that if the batter strikes at any unfairly delivered pitch, it shall be declared a strike with no penalty for the unfairly delivered pitch. The ball remains in play if batted by the batter. NOTE Sec. 9. A-E. These unfairly delivered pitches may not be so declared until the pitched ball reaches or crosses the plate.

ILLEGAL PITCHER'S ACTIONS INCLUDE:

A. Holding the ball by the pitcher longer than 5 seconds.

B. Throwing the ball by the pitcher to any fielder, unless making preliminary warm-up pitches or making an effort to complete an appeal play, or while the ball is dead.

C. After a pitch is made, throwing the ball by the catcher to any fielder except the pitcher, unless the pitch results in an out. EFFECT: Sec. 10. A-C. The umpire should immediately indicate "DEAD BALL" and award a ball to the batter.

APPEALING WHILE THE BALL IS LIVE (before umpire calls "time"): Any fielder can appeal a runner once. During a live ball appeal, the defensive team must verbally state their appeal and touch the runner or the base which they are appealing. Ball is live and all runners may advance with liability of being put out.

APPEALING AFTER BALL IS DEAD: Umpire signals "play ball"; the pitcher announces which runner and base he is appealing. The ball is now live only for the purpose of making an appeal. EFFECT: Sec. 12.

A. The defensive team can have only one attempted appeal per runner.

B. No runner may advance on an appeal play after time has been called.

C. No runner is out if he steps off the base during an appeal.

D. When a ball is thrown into a dead ball area, the team forfeits their right for a second appeal on any runner.

Any second conference with the same pitcher in an inning will require the removal of that pitcher from that position for the remainder of the game.

## **RULE 4. BATTING**

**Sec. 1.** THE BATTING ORDER of each team must be listed and delivered to the OFFICIAL SCOREKEEPER, by the MANAGER or team representative. SHOULD an Official Scorekeeper not be assigned to the game, the BATTING ORDER must be delivered to the Umpire-In-Chief, prior to the starting time of the game. After each team has submitted its own batting order, both lineups shall be made available to both teams, for their inspection and knowledge. The lineups are considered official once the umpire puts the ball in play to begin the game. EFFECT Sec. 1. Each manager must have submitted his own team's lineup, before he can have access to the lineup of his opponents. The umpire may forfeit the game if there is unwarranted delay in providing a lineup for batting order purposes.

A. The batting order thus submitted must be followed throughout the game unless a substitute replaces a player. When this occurs, the substitute must take the turn in the regular order at bat of the player he replaces.

B. Each player of the side at bat shall become the batter and enter the batter's box in the order in which his name appears on the score sheet.

C. The first batter in each following inning shall be the batter whose name follows that of the player who last completed a turn at bat in the preceding inning.

D. A batter completes a time at bat when he has either been put out or has become a base runner.

E. When a third out of an inning is made before the batter can complete his turn at bat, the same batter will be the first batter in the next inning and all previous called balls and strikes will be canceled. EFFECT Sec.1. A-E. Batting out of order is an appeal play by the defense.

1. If an incorrect batter is discovered before he completes his turn at bat, the correct batter may take his proper place, assuming any accumulated balls and strikes.

2. If the mistake is discovered after the incorrect batter has completed the turn at bat and before a pitch has been made to a succeeding batter, the batter who should have batted is called out. All base runners, if they have advanced, must return to the base occupied at the time the incorrect batter took a position in the batter's box. The next batter is the player whose name follows that of the batter called out for failure to bat. This may even be carried over to the first batter of the next inning, if the appealed out was the third out.

3. If the mistake was not discovered until a pitch is made to the next batter, the turn at bat of the incorrect batter is then legal. All bases advanced or runs scored are counted, the next following batter shall be the one whose name follows that of the incorrect batter who just finished a time at bat. No one is called out for failure to bat and players missing their turn at bat have lost that turn and do not bat again until reached in the regular batter rotation. EFFECT Sec. 1. E. 2-3. For purposes of interpretation, an intentional walk to a next batter or illegal pitcher's action shall be considered the same as a pitch delivered to the batter.

4. No base runner shall be removed from the base he is occupying to bat in his proper place. He just misses his turn at bat with no penalty. The batter following him in the batting order becomes the legal batter.

**Sec. 2.** THE BATTER IS OUT IF:

A. He bats illegally. (Refer to RULE 3.)

B. He hits the ball with an illegal or altered bat. The umpire must discover this illegal action before the next pitch, either by observation or because of an appeal from the defensive team. EFFECT Sec. 2B. If the batter hits the ball with an altered bat, the ball is dead, the batter is out, and he is ejected from the game/tournament, and immediately reported to the State Director for consideration of disbarment proceedings.

C. He bunts or chops the ball deliberately downward (either fair or foul).

- D. He has a second strike. Note: The batter is out on 2 strikes and walks on 3 balls. 1. He hits first foul after one strike, then the ball is live.
- E. He steps across the plate with the pitcher in pitching position.
- F. He intentionally interferes with the catcher attempting a play.
- G. Any member of his team interferes with a fielder attempting to make a play on a foul fly ball.
- H. He hits a fair fly ball or line drive that an infielder intentionally drops, with a runner on first, runner on first and second, first, second and third, or on first and third with less than two outs. NOTE: A trapped ball that hits the ground is never ruled intentionally dropped. EFFECT Sec. 2. H. The umpire shall immediately call the batter out (in a forceful manner) and the ball is dead.
- I. He hits a fly ball that is legally caught.
- J. He hits an infield fly, with runners on first and second, or on first, second and third bases with less than two out. EFFECT Sec. 2. I-J. The ball remains live and in play, and the runners are in jeopardy.
1. If a declared infield fly falls to the ground untouched and bounces foul before passing first or third bases, it is a foul ball.
  2. If a fly ball falls to the ground untouched outside the foul lines then bounces fair, before reaching first or third bases it is an infield fly.
  3. NOTE: Umpire should always call "INFIELD FLY- IF FAIR" to protect himself.

**A STRIKE IS CALLED BY THE UMPIRE:**

- A. For each fairly delivered pitched ball by the pitcher that passes through the strike zone before touching the ground. EFFECT Sec. 3. A. An umpire should not let the batter's position, either in the front part, or the rear of the batter's box, be of influence in calling strikes. Each pitch should be adjudged according to the height of any part of the ball as it is crossing only above or over any part of the home plate. Any individual who repeatedly argues balls and strikes will be ejected. 1. The strike zone is only that part, or any part of the area, over home plate that is lower than the top of the batter's highest shoulder, or higher than the bottom of his FRONT KNEE.
- B. For each pitch struck at and missed by the batter.
- C. For a batted ball striking the batter, while he is in the batter's box with no strikes.
- D. For each foul tip. The batter is out if this is the second strike.
- E. For a foul ball not caught on the fly with no strikes.
- F. The umpire shall not give a call or signal for "TIME" when a batter steps out of position after a pitcher has started his delivery motions. EFFECT Sec. 3. F. If the pitcher pitches, the umpire shall call "STRIKE" on each such pitch. The batter may take his proper position after any such pitch (within 10 seconds) and regular ball and strike count shall continue.
- G. When the batter delays entering the batter's box after the umpire signals play ball. After 10 seconds the umpire shall declare dead ball and a strike shall be called on the batter.

**A BALL IS CALLED BY THE UMPIRE on each pitch not swung at by batter if:**

- A. The pitched ball does not enter the strike zone.
- B. The ball strikes the ground before passing completely across home plate, or any part of the plate.
- C. A pitched ball strikes any part of home plate.
- D. Any unfairly delivered pitch is made and not struck at.
- E. There is an illegal pitcher action.
- F. A pitched ball is not released within 5 seconds from the time the pitcher has the ball and the batter has taken his position in the batter's box.
- G. The catcher fails to return each pitch that is not hit directly to the Pitcher. EFFECT Sec. 4. A-G. The pitched ball is dead after each ball, strike or illegal pitcher action and must be

returned immediately to the pitcher (unless an out occurs). Any individual who repeatedly argues balls and strikes will be ejected.

**Sec. 5.** A FAIR BATTED BALL is a legally batted ball that is immediately in play. EFFECT Sec. 5.

1. A batted ball which first falls to the ground in foul territory and then rolls or bounces into fair territory, before passing first or third bases, and without having touched some object other than the ground, is a fair ball. A batted ball first touching the ground in fair territory, then rolling into foul territory and then again rolling into fair territory, is also a fair ball provided the ball did not touch anything while over foul territory other than the ground.

2. A fair or foul ball shall be judged according to the position of the ball, relative to FOUL LINES including the FOUL POLE, and not whether the fielder is on or over the fair or foul territory at the time the ball is first touched.

3. When a batted ball passes out of the field over a fence the umpire shall declare it fair or foul, according to position of the ball, as it leaves the playing field.

4. When a batted ball hits any object including a fielder and is ruled a fair ball under the rules, it is always treated as a fair ball regardless of what happens to the ball or where it may go.

5. A fly ball falling beyond first or third base is judged at point of first contact.

**Sec. 6.** A FOUL BALL is a legally batted ball which does not conform to the provisions or rules that would cause it to be a fair ball. EFFECT Sec. 6. A batted ball which first strikes any person, object, fence, bench, screen, bat or other equipment, or which goes into pre-determined out-of-play area in foul territory, remains a foul ball regardless of where it may go. 1. It is a strike unless the batter already has one strike. 2. A foul fly may be caught, thus putting the runners in jeopardy. (Refer to 7-2D for exception). 3. A foul ball not caught is a dead ball, and the runners must return to their bases.