

1. THE PLAYING FIELD

1.1. The playing field is the area where the ball may be legally played or fielded.

1.2. Special field rules may be made by Directors when the field is less than the official minimum dimensions. If the outfield fence is less than the radius or is of such height to warrant consideration, a Director may adjust the rules to accommodate the reduced field size. The official minimum dimensions are:

1.2.1. In Men's, mixed, and coed, the radius distance is 300 feet.

1.2.2. In Women's, the radius distance will be a minimum of 250 feet.

1.3. The official diamonds of the field shall be established with:

1.3.1. 65 or 70 foot baselines. 70 foot baselines are preferred.

1.3.2. Pitcher's plate distance of 50 feet (from the back of home plate to the front of pitcher's plate).

2. EQUIPMENT

2.1. The official bat shall be manufactured by an approved USSSA bat manufacturer and has the new 2020 USSSA Certification Mark. The previous 2014 USSSA Certification Mark is ineligible for tournament events, but is eligible for use in league play. All key graphics, including sanction 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. Wood bats made on the approved USSSA bat manufacturer list shall be legal without regard to this section. Seniors aged 50+ (male) or 45+ (female) may use a senior (SSUSA) stamped bat. Senior bats must remain in their designated location and may only be used by approved players.

2.1.1. Altered Bat Inspection and Suspension. A Director may ask to inspect a bat that has been brought into the location of a League Joe (LJ) sanctioned event. The owner and/or user may either:

1. Withhold the bat from inspection and accept an immediate two year suspension (or longer for multiple offenses) from LJ sanctioned events 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.

2.1.1a. Altered Bat Determination by the Manufacturer. If the Director decides that the bat might be altered, the suspected offending owner and/or user may either:

1. Withhold the bat from further examination and accept an immediate two year suspension (or longer for multiple offenses) from LJ sanctioned activities with no right to appeal; or
2. Allow the Director to send the bat to the Manufacturer for a determination. If the Manufacturer determines that the bat has been altered, the Director who inspected the bat may suspend a first time offender for up to five (5) years from LJ play (or longer for multiple offenses).

2.1.2. Ownership/Knowledge of Altered Bat. The knowledge or lack thereof of a bat being altered does not factor into the determination of any punishment imposed for use or ownership of an altered bat at a LJ event.

2.1.3. Compression Testing. If a bat fails a compression test during a LJ event, it will be held by the director for the remainder of the tournament or league night game(s). Failing multiple compression tests may be considered unsportsmanlike conduct.

2.1.4. Worn/Abused/Damaged/Foreign Substance Bats Not Allowed in LJ Sanctioned Play.

2.1.4.1. Any damaged bat is considered illegal for play in LJ events.

2.1.4.2. If any graphics have worn off the bat, it is no longer considered legal for play. Bats shall be free of rattles, dents, burrs and cracks.

2.1.4.3. Any bat with a foreign substance on the barrel or taper of the bat is considered illegal. Foreign substances are anything that does not come manufactured as part of the bat to include dirt and mud.

2.1.4.4. If any bat is brought back into play after having been removed from the event, the owner and/or user may be suspended for up to one year for unsportsmanlike conduct. If the issue in question is severe enough that the batter should be aware of it, the batter may be penalized without warning

2.2 The official ball

2.2.1. The official ball to be used shall be of a spherical design with a smooth surface, a COR of .44 or less, and a compression not to exceed 400 pounds.

2.2.2. All balls shall have an optic yellow cover. Each ball shall have its model name visible on the ball.

2.2.3. Anyone using or providing altered balls shall be handled in the same manner as those having used altered bats.

2.2.4. Reducing the temperature of softballs is unsportsmanlike conduct.

2.3. The home plate is always a part of fair territory. The black border that outlines the plate is not part of the home plate.

2.4. The bases

2.4.1 A safety base is optional at first base and should be placed so that the safety base is wholly in foul territory (and is considered part of foul territory) and first base is wholly in fair territory (and is considered part of fair territory). If a safety base is in place, the batter-runner must use the safety base unless rounding the base during a ball hit to the outfield. The defensive player must always use the first base. The runner must use first base for any other situation to include returning to the base after over running it and tagging up. Exception: If the defender is pulled into foul territory during the play, both the defender and the batter-runner may use either base.

2.5. Metal cleats are prohibited.

2.6. League Joe encourages players to utilize any protective equipment that a player wishes to utilize, unless it is deemed unsafe or provides an unfair competitive advantage. Pitching helmets with mask (covering the face and top of head, at a minimum) must be worn by pitchers that choose not to use a net.

2.7. All equipment that is not in use must remain off of the playing field. A warm-up device may be kept near the on-deck circle during that team's at bat. Any equipment dropped by the batter-runner during the play will be considered a foreign object for the sake of any rulings.

3. THE GAME

3.1. The choice of home or visitor (away) shall be decided by either a single or double toss of a coin, unless otherwise stated. During bracket play, home or visitor may be determined by seeding determined by pool play with the choice being given to the higher seed. If the championship goes to an "if" game, it would revert back to a coin toss. If there is a loser's and/or doghouse bracket, the choice for these games will also be decided by coin toss.

3.2. The condition of the field for the beginning of the game shall be decided by the umpire, Tournament Director, the umpire-in-chief, and/or the facility manager. After the umpire has started a game, he shall be the sole judge as to the field conditions for continuing play.

3.3. A regulation game shall consist of seven innings, unless:

3.3.1. If the home team has more runs than the away team at any time during the bottom half of the seventh inning.

3.3.2. If a game is tied at the end of the seventh inning, additional inning(s) will be played until the away team has more runs than the home team at the completion of an inning or the home team has more runs than the away team at any point during the

inning. The last batter of the team at bat will be placed on second base and cannot receive a courtesy runner until one full at bat has been completed. In pool play and regular season league play, only one extra inning will be played (at most) and a tie game will remain a tie. In bracket play and league playoffs, the game will continue until one team is declared the winner.

3.3.3. (The umpire, tournament/league director, or umpire-in-chief may call a game at any time for any safety reasons.) If a game has been called and at least four innings have been completed, or if the home team is leading during the bottom of the fourth inning, then the game will be considered a complete game if it cannot be resumed within 30 minutes. The final score will be the total runs scored at the end of the last completed inning, to include the current inning if the home team is leading during the bottom half of that inning.

3.3.4. A team is winning by 20 runs after 3 innings, 15 runs after 4 innings, or 10 runs after 5 or 6 innings, then the game is over by run rule.

3.3.5. Flip/Flop Rule: If, at the top of an inning, the home team is losing by enough runs to implement the run rule for that inning, the home and away teams will flip/flop; i.e. the home team will now become the away team and their at bat will take place in the top half of the inning and the away team will become the home team and their at bat will take place in the bottom half of the inning. The remainder of the game will be played out in this manner and normal win conditions will determine the outcome, unless the situation occurs again, in which case the teams would flip/flop again. This rule may be implemented at the discretion of the umpire, tournament/league director, or umpire-in-chief.

3.4. The team with the most runs at the completion of a game shall be the winner.

3.4.1. Once the game has been called, the score shall be the total runs scored at the end of the last completed inning, assuming a minimum of four completed innings except when exceeding the game time limit.

3.4.2. After three innings, if the home team is winning during an uncompleted inning the home team wins.

3.4.3. If at least four innings have been completed or game time has been exceeded, the game shall revert to the last completed inning if the home team is not winning in the bottom half of an uncompleted inning.

3.5. One run is scored each time a player legally touches each base before the third out of an inning, except where stated in rule 3.6. Base runners may advance and score during a live ball situation or by being advanced by a walk with bases loaded.

3.6. A run shall not be scored if the third out of an inning is the result of:

3.6.1. The batter-runner being put out before reaching first base.

3.6.2. A force out.

3.6.3. A base runner being called out for leaving a base too soon on a pitched ball.

3.6.4. A leading (runner ahead of the runner in question) base runner being called out for failure to touch a base.

3.6.5. The batter-runner being called out for carrying his bat to first base.

3.7. A base runner shall not score a run ahead of a base runner ahead of him in the team's batting order if the leading runner has not been put out. A leading runner appealed out for missing a base does not affect the trailing (runner behind the runner in question) runners on a first or second out. However, no leading runner crossing home plate may return to touch any missed base after a trailing runner has scored. If the defensive team appeals a leading runner missing a base, which is allowed, the trailing runner's score is counted unless the appealed out is the third out of the inning. If no appeal is made, then all the runs scored are counted.

3.8. The following home run rules will be used.

3.8.1. Over-the-fence home runs are limited to three plus one up. All fair untouched fly balls over-the-fence in excess of the limit will be ruled an out. Note: Three plus one up means that either team can hit three home runs without penalty. Once the three home runs have been hit, additional home runs may be hit without penalty only if it does not exceed more than one home run more than the opposing team. Once an additional home run has been hit resulting in an out, it is counted solely as an out and will not add to the running total of home runs for that team.

3.8.1.1. If the batter is ruled out because of an over-the-fence home run in excess of the limit, the ball is dead and base runners do not advance.

3.8.1.2. If a defensive player touches a fair fly ball which goes over the fence in fair territory, the batter shall be awarded four bases, but this is not counted in the home run total. The position of the fair fly ball when touched by the fielder does not matter.

3.8.1.3. Hit & Sit Rule: Any time a batter hits a home run or is awarded four bases, the batter and base runners are awarded the runs and don't need to touch any additional bases.

3.9. Forfeit: A forfeit shall be scored as a 7-0 win in favor of the opposing team. Every possible measure should be taken to prevent a forfeit.

3.9.1. If a team does not show up for their game or refuses to begin their game.

3.9.2. If a team refuses to play or resume play.

3.9.3. If a team purposefully tries to slow or speed up the playing of a game.

3.9.4. If a team does not have enough players to begin or continue the game.

3.9.5. A grace period should be allowed before considering a forfeit.

3.10. A tournament game may be suspended if the umpire determines the need to stop play prior to the conclusion of a full game. The game must be resumed in the same conditions that it was prior to the game being suspended.

3.11. A team may protest a game when that team has a different opinion on the interpretation or application of these rules or the league/tournament specific rules. The game shall immediately be suspended until the protest is resolved.

3.11.1. Governing conditions of protests during a game.

3.11.1.1. Umpire judgment calls shall not be considered for potential protest.

3.11.1.2. Possible misinterpretation or application of the rules should be accepted for potential protest.

3.11.1.3. All protests, except player eligibility protests, must be settled before any play can be resumed.

3.11.1.4. If an ineligible player is discovered during a tournament, the offending team shall be ejected from the tournament, placed last in the standings, and will be considered for unsportsmanlike conduct. If the ineligible player is discovered during a game, the offending team shall also forfeit that game. All games already played will stand.

3.11.1.5. Rule protests must be made before the next legal pitch, intentional walk, illegal pitcher action, or before all fielders have left fair territory. This allows the conditions of the game to be noted prior to suspending the game.

4. THE PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTES

4.1. A team shall consist of twelve players. Situations may arise that cause a team to vary from this number.

4.1.1. Players may take position anywhere in fair territory that they choose at the time each pitch is delivered. Exceptions: pitcher and catcher.

4.1.2. When delivering the pitch, the pitcher must be in position on the pitcher's plate.

4.1.3. As each pitch is delivered, the catcher must be behind home plate.

4.1.4. Defensive player participation. Each player must play a minimum number of innings by the end of a certain inning:

4.1.4.1. Tournament pool play/League play: 2 by the end of the 3rd and 4th, 3 by the end of the 5th, 6th, and 7th.

4.1.4.2. Tournament bracket play: 1 by the end of the 3rd and 4th, 2 by the end of the 5th, 6th, and 7th.

4.1.4.3. Any player that is unable to play defensively is ineligible to bat.

4.2. A team must have a minimum of 8 players to start or to continue a game.

4.3. Substitutions may only be used after the start of a game to allow a team's original player to enter the game to replace a fill-in or in the case of an injury that brings a team below ten players, in which case the substitute must be approved by the opposing team manager. In league play, a player appearing late to the game may be inserted into the bottom of the lineup and may take the field immediately. If an approved substitute was filling in for the player, the late player will take the batting position of the substitute.

4.4. If an ejected player returns to play in the game he was ejected from, their team shall forfeit.

4.5. Participation following an injury. Anyone who is actively bleeding must cover their wound before being allowed back on the field. Any player that shows signs of concussion must be cleared by a health care professional before returning to play. Any player that leaves the field due to injury can re-enter the game as long as they do so before their next at bat. Any at bat that is skipped due to injury will not be an automatic out and will be skipped for the remainder of the game with no penalty.

4.6. No defensive player shall deliberately act unsportsmanlike while in the batter's line of sight in an attempt to distract the batter. The umpire shall issue a warning and eject from the game any player who does it again.

4.7. Fighting, excessive verbal abuse (to include arguing balls and strikes), carelessly throwing a bat, and poor sportsmanship will not be tolerated. Umpires, directors, the umpire-in-chief, and/or the facility manager reserve the right to dismiss any player from the game or event without refund and without warning (depending on the severity of the incident). This includes anyone involved with the team, such as spectators. Any person ejected must leave the game and park immediately; if they are only banned from the game, they may return to the park following their team's game.

4.8 In mixed leagues and tournaments, no team may sit more than one female defensively per inning. If there is a disparity in the number of females between opposing teams, then the team with less females must play all of their females defensively every inning. If the disparity is greater than one then any disparity greater than one will result in a ghost out at the bottom of the lineup of the team with less females; i.e. if one team has 10 players with 2 females and their opponent has 12 players with 5 females, team one needs to play both of their females defensively and will take two outs following their 10th batter (if the first ghost out results in the third out of the inning, then the second ghost out will be the first out of the next inning).

5. PITCHING

5.1. The pitcher shall not have any foreign substance on his pitching hand. No foreign substance may be applied to the ball either.

5.2. Any unapproved ball found in play must be replaced immediately with an approved ball. A warning will be given for the first offense. Repeated offense may result in the batter being out and the coach being ejected from the game.

5.3. During a pitcher's first appearance in a game, the pitcher may deliver three practice pitches. Between all other inning halves, the pitcher may practice until the batter has a bat in hand and is heading toward the batter's box.

5.4. All pitchers will be required to use either a provided safety screen or self-provided safety helmet with mask. Shin guards are highly recommended, but not required. There is no multiple swapping between screen and helmet during an inning. Additionally, the team that is using the net is responsible for moving the net to and from the pitching mound.

5.5. Pitching screens are intended for safety, not to create an extra defensive player on the field. Screen must be positioned no more than three feet ahead of the pitching rubber. One of the pitching screen support legs must be lined up within the width of the pitching rubber and cannot be set to the side of the rubber. If the net is hit by a ball during a throw, the ball is still considered live.

5.6. Legal pitcher's feet positions. The pitcher must have one foot (pivot foot) on the pitcher's plate. The pivot foot must remain firmly on the ground when the pitch is released. The other foot (free foot) may be positioned anywhere and may move in any direction prior to or while delivering the pitch. After the pitch has been released, the pitcher has no restrictions on their movements unless they are utilizing a pitching screen. Pitchers using the screen must keep half of their torso behind the screen until the batter makes contact with the ball. Failure to utilize the screen in this manner will result in a warning. Any further failure to utilize the screen properly will result in removal of that player from the pitcher position for the remainder of the game.

5.7. Pitcher's legal motions allowed in actual delivery of the pitch.

5.7.1. After assuming position on the pitching rubber, the pitcher must present the ball in front of his body (this can include holding the ball in your pitching hand while in your glove) in either one or both hands before starting the delivery.

5.7.2. The pitcher may hold or grip the ball in any manner before delivery and may release the ball in any manner when delivering the pitch, as long as it is a smooth underhand motion.

5.7.3. Once the pitcher begins his delivery; the umpire shall not call or signal for “time” unless absolutely necessary.

5.7.4. If the batter is in the batter’s box and the pitcher has the ball, the pitcher must pitch the ball within 5 seconds. Extra, but reasonable, time shall be allotted for an errant throw from the catcher in which the pitcher has to chase down the ball.

5.7.5. Pitcher must face home plate during their pitch delivery.

5.8. Type of pitch permitted.

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

5.8.2. The pitched ball must rise to at least 6 feet above the ground.

5.8.3. The pitched ball shall not rise higher than 10 feet above the ground.

5.8.4 The speed and height of the pitch are determined by the umpire’s judgment. The umpire shall warn a pitcher who delivers an excessive speed pitch and the pitcher shall be removed from the pitcher’s position for the remainder of the game for any subsequent excessive speed pitches.

5.9. The Catcher Must:

5.9.1. Return each pitch (that was not hit) to the pitcher immediately, unless the pitch resulted in an out. Failure to do so will result in the batter being awarded a ball (in addition to the original call of the pitch).

5.10. The umpire shall call “no pitch” immediately when:

5.10.1. The pitcher pitches during a dead ball interval.

5.10.2. A base runner leaves a base early. Runner is out.

5.11. A fairly delivered pitched ball is a pitch that follows the rules and regulations described in the preceding sections.

5.12. An unfairly delivered pitched ball is any pitch that does not follow the rules and regulations described in the preceding sections as well as a quick pitch. A quick pitch is any pitch that is meant to catch the batter off guard while he is still getting set in the box. An unfairly pitched ball shall be called a ball unless the batter swings at it, in which case it will be live if hit or called a strike if missed. There is no call for an unfairly delivered pitch until the pitch or play has completed.

5.13. Illegal actions will result in the umpire immediately calling “dead ball” and the batter being awarded a ball. These actions include:

5.13.1. Pitcher holding the ball longer than 5 seconds.

5.13.2. Pitcher throwing the ball to any fielder unless attempting to make an appeal play or during dead ball time.

5.13.3. Catcher throwing the ball to any fielder other than the pitcher following a pitch unless the pitch results in an out.

5.14. Live ball appeal: Any fielder can appeal a runner once by verbally stating their appeal and touching the runner or base which they are appealing. Ball is live and all runners may advance with liability of being put out.

5.15. Dead ball appeal: The pitcher announces which runner and base he is appealing, only one attempted appeal is allowed. The ball is live only for the purpose of making an appeal. The runners may not advance or be put out for stepping off the base during the appeal.

6. BATTING

6.1. The batting order must be made available to the opposing team. The lineups are considered official and cannot be adjusted once the umpire begins the game through the act of allowing the batter to take his place in the batter's box.

6.1.1. The batting order must be followed for the entirety of the game unless a substitution occurs, in which case the substitute player takes the order of the replaced player. Exception: In league play, a late player may be added to the bottom of the lineup with no adverse effect.

6.1.2. Each player shall become the batter for their team in the order that their name appears on the score sheet.

6.1.3. The first batter of each half inning shall be the batter following the last player who completed an at bat in their team's half of the previous inning.

6.1.4. A completed at bat occurs when a batter has been put out or becomes a base runner.

6.1.5. In the event of a dead ball third out prior to a batter completing his turn at bat, the same batter will return to bat at the beginning of their team's half of the next inning with a new ball/strike count.

6.1.6. After entering the batter's box for the first time of each batter's at bat, the batter shall only be allowed to request "TIME" and exit the batter's box once per at bat.

6.1.7. Batting out of order is an appeal play by the defense.

6.1.7.1. If a batter is discovered batting out of order during his turn at bat, the correct batter may finish the at bat taking on any balls and strikes already given.

6.1.7.2. If a batter is discovered batting out of order after the batter has completed the at bat and before a pitch has been delivered to the following batter, a ghost out is called and the correct batter will take his turn at bat. Any runners that advanced during the play of the incorrect batter's at bat must return to their original base occupied prior to the start of the at bat. Normal batting order continues.

6.1.7.3. If a batter is discovered batting out of order after the batter has completed that at bat, but not before a pitch has been delivered to the following batter, the incorrect batter's at bat will stand and the batting order will continue from the point of the incorrect batter, skipping any batters that were missed. Intentional walk and illegal pitcher actions shall also be considered action to prevent the appeal.

4. In the event that a base runner is on base during an out of order situation, the base runner shall maintain his position on base and miss his turn at bat with no penalty. The batter following him in the batting order shall become the next batter.

6.2. The batter is out if:

6.2.1. The batter, as part of his complete swing (i.e. after front foot has rested in its final location during the swing process), has at least one foot in contact with the ground completely outside of either side line or the rear line of the batter's box or when the batter's foot is in contact with home plate. Additionally, 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.

6.2.2. He hits the ball with an illegal or altered bat. The illegal action must be discovered before the next pitch, either by observation of the umpire or through an appeal from the opposition. This is a dead ball situation. The batter is out and ejected from the game/tournament. Any baserunners shall return to their initial position prior to the at bat.

6.2.3. He bunts, intentionally chops the ball downward, or attempts either.

6.2.4. He has a second called strike. If he hits a foul after a called strike, then the ball is live if caught.

6.2.5. He steps across the plate with the pitcher in pitching position.

6.2.6. He intentionally interferes with the catcher attempting a play.

6.2.7. Any of his teammates interferes with a fielder attempting to make a play on a foul fly ball.

6.2.8. He hits a fair fly ball or line drive that an infielder intentionally drops, with a runner on first base, any additional runners on base are included in this rule, with less than two outs. The umpire shall immediately call the batter out (in a forceful manner) and the ball is dead. A trapped ball that hits the ground is never ruled intentionally dropped.

6.2.9. He hits a legally caught fly ball. The ball remains live and in play, and the runners are in jeopardy.

6.2.10. He hits an infield fly with runners on first and second bases, any additional runners on base are included in this rule, with less than two outs. The ball remains live and in play, and the runners are in jeopardy.

6.2.10.1. If a declared infield fly falls to the ground untouched and bounces foul before passing first or third base, it is a foul ball, not an infield fly.

6.2.10.2. If a fly ball falls to the ground untouched outside the foul lines then bounces fair, before reaching first or third base it is an infield fly.

6.2.10.3. Umpire should always call "INFIELD FLY– IF FAIR".

6.3. A strike is called by the umpire:

6.3.1. For each fairly delivered pitched ball by the pitcher that passes through the strike zone before touching the ground. The strike zone is the area over home plate that is lower than the top of the batter's back shoulder and higher than the bottom of his front knee when the batter assumes his natural batting stance adjacent to home plate. Any individual who repeatedly argues balls and strikes will be ejected.

6.3.2. For each pitch swung at and missed by the batter.

6.3.3. For a batted ball striking the batter, while he is in the batter's box.

6.3.4. For a foul tip. A foul tip is a batted ball that goes directly to the catcher's hands, is legally caught, and does not go over the batter's head. A foul tip constitutes a dead ball.

6.3.5. For a foul ball.

6.3.6. If the pitcher has started his delivery and the batter steps out of position, the umpire shall not call or signal for "time" and if the pitcher completes his delivery, the pitch shall be called a strike. The batter may take his proper position after any such pitch (within 10 seconds) and regular ball and strike count shall continue.

6.3.7. If the batter steps outside of the batter's box between pitches without requesting and being granted "time," the pitcher may deliver a pitch and it shall be called a strike. Reasonable exceptions are allowed, such as during a foul ball or a pitch that would hit the batter.

6.3.8. If the batter takes more than 10 seconds to enter the batter's box after the umpire signals play ball, the umpire shall declare dead ball and a strike shall be called on the batter.

6.4. A ball is called for each pitch not swung at by the batter if:

6.4.1. The pitched ball does not cross through the strike zone.

6.4.2. The ball hits the ground before passing across home plate.

6.4.3. The ball hits any part of home plate.

6.4.4. An unfairly delivered pitch is made.

6.4.5. The pitcher or catcher performs an illegal action (as stated in the pitching section).

6.4.6. The pitcher does not release the ball within 5 seconds from the time he has the ball and the batter has taken position in the batter's box.

6.5. A fair batted ball is a legally batted ball that is immediately in play.

6.5.1. Any batted ball which is in fair territory while passing first or third base or ends its movement in fair territory if not having passed first or third base shall be a fair ball. The path of the ball into foul territory shall have no bearing on it being a fair ball as long as nothing other than the ground touched the ball while it was in foul territory

6.5.2. The ball shall be judged by the position of the ball relative to foul territory and the fielder's position should have no bearing on the determination of a fair or foul ball.

6.5.3. When a batted ball is hit over the fence, the ball's position at the time it went over the fence shall be used to determine whether it is a fair or foul ball.

6.5.4. A fly ball beyond first or third base is judged based on where the ball first makes contact.

6.6. A foul ball is a legally batted ball that does not meet the requirements of a fair ball. A ball batted into a pitcher's screen will be ruled as a foul ball.

6.6.1. It is a strike.

6.6.2. A foul fly may be caught and the runners are then in jeopardy of being put out.

6.6.3. A foul ball becomes a dead ball if it is not caught and the runners must return to their bases.

7. BASERUNNING

7.1. A base runner or runner is a player of the team at bat who has hit a fair ball or been awarded first base for any reason before being put out.

7.2. A batter–runner is an offensive player who has just hit a fair ball and remains such until he is either put out or until the play has ended.

7.3. An appeal play involving baserunning will have the following effects:

7.3.1. Unless the appealed runner is the third out, the status of a runner behind the appealed runner is not affected by a runner's violation.

7.3.2. If a leading runner is the third out due to appeal no runner behind the appealed runner shall be allowed to score.

7.3.3. If the appealed out is the third out and a force out, no runners shall score.

7.3.4. If the appealed out is the third out and is the result of the batter-runner not touching first base, no runners shall score.

7.3.5. On any appealed play that is not a force out, all runners ahead of the appealed out who touch home plate legally before actual physical completion of the third appealed out shall be counted. Runners behind the appealed runner cannot score.

7.4. A base runner must touch each base in order: first, second, third and home. A base runner acquires the right to an advanced base by touching it before being put out and holds the base until he touches the next base legally or is forced to leave the base by a batter hitting a fair ball with no empty base between the base runner and the trailing runner.

7.5. The batter becomes a batter-runner when he hits a fair ball and is in jeopardy immediately.

7.5.1. If a fair batted ball strikes the umpire or base runner while off base before passing a fielder, other than the pitcher. The ball is dead immediately and the batter is entitled to first base without liability to be put out.

7.5.2. If the fair batted ball hits the umpire or base runner after passing a fielder other than the pitcher, or touches any fielder including the pitcher, it remains in play with all runners being in jeopardy.

7.5.3. The pitcher becomes an infielder after releasing the pitch if he has a reasonable opportunity to field the ball, determined by the umpire's judgment.

7.6. The batter is awarded first base:

7.6.1. The batter is awarded first base only, unless the batter is a male and a female is next in the lineup while following all rules required to receive an automatic walk; in which case, the male will be awarded second and the female has the option to take her at bat

or be awarded first base. To receive the automatic walk, the female must either be in the on deck circle with no other players from her team in a position that could deceive the pitcher from knowing that she is the next batter or she must be announced as the next batter in a manner that the umpire and/or pitcher can clearly determine; if she is on base at the time of the walk, he is only awarded first base and she is not awarded a base. The ball is dead.

7.6.1.1. When three balls are called by the umpire.

7.6.1.2. When the pitcher tells the umpire to intentionally walk a batter.

7.6.2. If a fielder obstructs or prevents the batter from striking at a pitched ball. When a batter is obstructed, the batter is awarded first base unless the batter succeeds in hitting the pitch and reaches first safely and no leading runner is put out before advancing at least one advanced base, in which case the obstruction should not be called or enforced. If the obstruction is not enforced, the ball remains live and in play. The coach has the option to accept the obstruction or result of the play.

7.6.3. If an outfielder (any player that starts in the outfield grass or an umpire's judgment of such a distance) making a play in the outfield attempts to complete a force out at first base, the batter-runner is awarded first base but play continues until "time" is called. Infielders brought into the outfield through defensive actions are allowed to complete the throw for a force out at first base. The use of a relay is not allowed to complete a force out at first base during a ball hit to the outfield. The batter-runner must make reasonable effort to get to first base. A delay in game, per umpire's judgment, from the batter-runner in this situation may result in an automatic out for the batter-runner at first base.

7.6.4. Walk & Sit Rule: Any player awarded first base that is receiving a courtesy runner does not have to touch first base. The courtesy runner may take their place on first or second base and the batter may go directly to the dugout.

7.7. A batter-runner is out:

7.7.1. When he hits the ball, leaves the batter's box, and is hit by the batted ball in fair territory.

7.7.2. When he hits the ball, drops the bat, and it contacts the ball in fair territory.

7.7.3. When a fielder legally catches a fly ball with their feet within the field boundaries.

7.7.4. When a fielder holds the ball while on first base before the batter-runner touches the base during a fair ball hit.

7.7.5. When he is tagged out after making an attempt to start towards second after over running first base.

7.7.6. When, after hitting a fair ball, the batter uses the bat to interfere with a defender making a play; interference should be called. There is no penalty for carrying the bat to first base.

7.7.7. When the batter-runner leaves the playing field during a live ball (e.g. walking to the dugout). The ball remains live and in play and other base runners are in jeopardy.

7.7.8. When he runs out of the base path when a fielder has the ball and is attempting to make a tag.

7.7.9. When he intentionally interferes with a thrown ball or a fielder attempting to field a ball. Ball is dead. If the umpire determines that it was an obvious attempt to break up a double play then the most advanced runner shall be out as well.

7.8. Base runners are out:

7.8.1. When he is not touching the base that he is on prior to a pitched ball touching the ground, reaching or passing home plate, or being hit. The umpire shall call "no pitch" and the ball is dead.

7.8.2. When the base runner interferes with a thrown ball or a fielder attempting to field a ball. Ball is dead. If not intentional, the batter-runner is granted first base. If the umpire determines that it was an obvious attempt to break up a double play then the trailing runner shall be out as well. If a base runner interferes after he is out or has scored, the most advanced runner shall be out as well.

7.8.3. When a fair batted ball touches a base runner while off his base before it touches or passes a fielder. Ball is dead.

7.8.4. When a base runner intentionally interferes with a ball in play even if he is on base. Ball is dead.

7.8.5. When a base runner runs bases in reverse order other than when permitted. Ball is dead.

7.8.6. When a base runner continues to run the bases after being put out and draws the play to attempt to put him out a second time. Ball is dead and the most advanced runner shall be out as well.

7.8.7. When the offensive team member(s) stand at or collect around a base that a base runner is running to (confuses the fielders making plays more difficult), intentionally interfere with a live ball, run in the direction of a base/home on or near a baseline while a fielder is attempting to make a play drawing a throw in his direction, or they or their gear cause a blocked ball. Ball is dead and the most advanced runner shall be out as well.

7.8.8. When anyone other than another runner physically assists him while the ball is in play.

7.8.9. When he is tagged out while not in contact with a base.

7.8.10. When a fielder tags him with the ball (while on or off a base) during a force out or holds the ball and touches the base to which the base runner is forced to run to before the base runner can reach the base.

7.8.11. When he runs more than 3 feet out of the base path, a direct line between his position at the time a fielder has the ball while attempting to tag the runner and the base he is running to.

7.8.12. When a base runner passes a leading runner before that runner has been put out.

7.8.13. When a base runner enters dead ball territory.

7.8.14. When a base runner fails to return to their base when play resumes after a suspension of play. This is an appeal play.

7.8.15. When a base runner leaves his base early before a fly ball has been touched and subsequently caught. This is an appeal play.

7.8.16. When a base runner fails to touch a base while the ball is in play. This is an appeal play.

7.8.17. Whenever a fielder clearly has the ball and is waiting to tag the runner, the runner must attempt to avoid contact by way of slide, jump, running around the fielder, or running back to the previous base; if the fielder moves to avoid a collision while attempting to tag, the runner shall still be out (this shall include plays in which the fielder drops the ball or fails to tag, as long as a reasonable attempt was made). If a collision occurs or contact is made that forces the ball out of the fielders hand or glove, the ball is declared dead and all other runners must return to the last base touched at the time of the contact. If, in the umpire's judgment, the runner deliberately and forcefully runs into the defensive player, the runner shall be ejected from the game.

NOTE: A fielder may not block the path of the runner on a batted or thrown ball unless the fielder has clear possession of the ball or is in the initial act of fielding a batted ball.

7.9. Base runners are entitled to advance with liability to be out:

7.9.1. When a live ball is in play. The umpire shall call "time" when the offense has stopped trying to advance because the defense has the ball in the infield and the play is apparently completed. Base runners must return to the last base touched when play is stopped.

7.9.2. When a live ball is overthrown, remains in the playing field, and does not become a blocked ball.

7.9.3. When any ball is first touched by a fielder, the ground, or the outfield fence.

7.9.4. When a live thrown ball accidentally touches an umpire, base runner, or coach.

7.9.5. When a base runner passes another base runner.

7.9.6. When a leading base runner fails to touch a base as required.

7.9.7. When a fielder deliberately contacts a batted or thrown ball with any part of his uniform or equipment while it is detached from its proper place on his body.

7.9.7.1. On a fair batted ball, or a ball over foul ground in a situation that might become a fair ball, all runners are entitled to advance 3 bases from the time of the pitch.

7.9.7.2. On a thrown ball all base runners are entitled to advance 2 bases.

7.9.7.3. In either situation, the runners may advance further at their own risk, being in jeopardy after reaching the awarded bases.

7.9.7.4. If an umpire determines that the hit would have been a home run if not interfered with, the batter shall be awarded a home run.

7.10. Base runners are entitled to advance without liability to be put out:

7.10.1. When a fair batted ball goes over the fence or into a stand without touching the ground or being touched by a fielder, the batter shall be entitled to a home run. A fair batted ball that first touches a fielder then goes over the fence without first touching the ground shall be considered a four base error.

7.10.1.1. When a batted ball, either fair or foul, is legally caught on the fly while the fielder's feet are still within the established lines of the playing area, the batter is out even though the fielder's momentum may cause him to fall over the fence, into a dugout, or patron areas, or cross a line, or marking the out of play area, provided in the umpire's judgment the catch was completed. The ball is declared dead and each and every runner is advanced one base after the catch. If ball is carried intentionally into a dead ball area, two bases are awarded to each base runner.

7.10.2. When a fair batted ball bounds or rolls into a stand over, under or through a fence or other boundary of the playing field, base runners are awarded two bases, from the time of the pitch. This award is made whether or not the batted ball is first touched by a fielder, so long as it is not intentionally forced out of play by the fielder.

7.10.3. When forced to advance because of the batter being awarded first base.

7.10.4. When he is obstructed by a fielder between the bases or as he rounds a base, unless the fielder is trying to field a batted ball, or had the ball in his possession ready to tag the runner. The obstructed runner shall be awarded at least one base beyond the base he had last legally touched before the obstruction. The umpire should also award

the runner all other advanced bases that he believes the runner would have made, had no obstruction occurred, without waiting for an appeal from the offensive team. If the runner continues beyond the base awarded by the obstruction, he then becomes in jeopardy. The ball remains live with all other runners in jeopardy, except any runners ahead of the obstructed runner (as they are forced by the award for obstruction) shall advance without liability to be put out to the base which they are awarded.

7.10.5. When a ball is live after a batted ball and is overthrown into foul territory and is blocked. In all cases, when a blocked ball occurs on an overthrown live ball, the ball is immediately dead. Each and every base runner is awarded two bases from last base occupied, unless required to retouch. For offensive equipment or team representative causing a blocked ball, the most advanced runner will be declared out and all other runners must return to the last base touched when the ball becomes blocked.

7.10.5.1. When a FIRST throw is made by an infielder trying for a first play, the award is made from the batter's and a base runner's positions at the time of the pitch.

7.10.5.2. When an infielder makes any FIRST attempt at a play, and then makes a second attempted play or throw, or on any throw from the outfield, the award is made from the last base touched by a runner at the time this throw is released.

NOTE: Should more than one runner be between the same bases, the advanced runner governs the award.

7.10.6. When an accident or incident occurs that prevents a base runner from proceeding to a base to which he is entitled, as on a home run or other awarded base, a substitute runner shall be permitted to take his place when a play is resumed so to complete the play.

7.11. A base runner forfeits exemption from liability to be put out, if:

7.11.1. While the ball is in play, he fails to touch each base in legal order before attempting to make the next base. Either the batter-runner at first base, or any other runner forced to advance because the batter became a base runner, is considered as a force out, should an appeal be made.

7.11.2. After reaching first base, the batter-runner's momentum causes him to overrun or over slide first base; the batter-runner makes an attempt to start toward second base before returning to retouch first base.

7.11.3. After dislodging a base, the runner attempts to continue to the next base. To avoid being in jeopardy, the runner must either remain with the dislodged base or remain stationary at the base's proper location; that is, where the base was originally located. If the base runner makes a start toward the next advanced base and then tries to return to the dislodged base, he is in jeopardy and it is entirely within the umpire's judgment whether or not the runner should be safe or out.

7.12. Base runners may, and shall, return to bases at various times:

7.12.1. Base runners required to return, or attempting to return, when the ball is in play must touch each base in regular legal reverse order, which includes any intervening bases. The instances below are appeal plays.

7.12.1.1. Base runners are in jeopardy until they return to their bases, in order to comply with the several sections of these rules, when the ball is live.

7.12.1.2. No base runner may return to a preceding base after the ball has been declared dead if the base runner touches any succeeding base.

7.12.1.3. No base runner may return to retouch a missed base after a following runner has scored.

7.12.2. Two base runners may not occupy the same base simultaneously. The first runner touching a base shall be entitled to occupy it until he has touched the next base legally or is forced to leave the base due to the batter becoming a base runner. The trailing runner may be put out by being tagged with the ball even though both runners are in contact with the same base.

7.12.3. A base runner shall not run bases in reverse order to confuse the fielders nor to make a travesty of the game. The base runner shall be declared out by the umpire and the ball is dead.

7.12.4. A base runner returning to a base to retag a base on a fly ball caught and thrown by a fielder to any base. If the ball is thrown by a fielder into the restricted area, the base runner shall be awarded the base he must retouch, plus one base. Since the base runner is required to regain the base he first occupied, he is awarded that base and only one more. If the base runner is in contact with the base, he will be awarded two bases from the time of the throw. If he leaves the base too soon, he will be awarded the base he must retouch plus one base. It may now become an appeal play and the base runner may be put out. The determining factor shall be whether the base runner had possession of the base at the time of the throw.

7.12.5. A base runner returning to a base on a ground ball or any time runners are not required to retouch the bases; runners are awarded two bases from the last base occupied.

7.13. Base runners must return to their bases (Additionally, the ball is immediately dead. Base runners need not touch intervening bases when required to return. Base runners must be allowed sufficient time to return when required.) :

7.13.1. When any foul ball is not legally caught.

7.13.2. When any illegally batted ball occurs.

7.13.3. When a proper batter is out on appeal for failing to bat in order.

7.13.4. When an offensive player is called out for interference.

7.13.5. When an umpire or base runner is struck by a fair batted ball, before it touches a fielder or passes any fielder other than the pitcher. Base runners may be forced to advance if the batter is credited with a hit.

7.13.6. When time out is called by the umpire.

7.14. Base stealing is not permitted:

Base runners must keep in contact with their base and may leave it only when a pitched ball is batted or hits the ground. Base runners may come off their base momentarily to assist in retrieving an errantly thrown ball.

7.14.1. Each pitch not hit becomes dead and base runners must immediately return to their base, as the catcher is returning the ball to the pitcher at his position.

7.14.2. After a runner has returned to his base, he cannot leave it again, during a pitched ball situation until the pitched ball again reaches home plate, is batted or touches the ground.

7.15. Base runners are not out:

7.15.1. When a batter-runner overruns or over slides first base and immediately returns to that base.

7.15.2. When a base runner is required to return to a base and is not given sufficient time to return following a dead ball play.

7.15.3. When a base runner is touched with the ball not securely held by a fielder.

7.15.4. When a defensive team does not attempt an appeal play until after the next pitch is made.

7.15.5. When a base runner holds his base until a fly ball is touched, and then attempts to advance.

7.15.6. When a base runner runs outside a baseline, and behind a fielder attempting to field a batted ball.

7.15.7. When a base runner runs outside the baseline, other than to avoid a fielder attempting to tag him with the ball.

7.15.8. When a base runner is hit by a batted ball that has passed or touched a fielder.

7.15.9. When a base runner makes contact with a fielder, not entitled to field the ball, when more than one fielder is attempting to field a batted ball.

7.15.10. When a base runner sliding into a base dislodges it from its proper position. If a runner sliding into a base is adjudged to be safe by the umpire before dislodging the base, he remains safe by either staying at the position the base is supposed to occupy or by remaining in contact with the base. The runner puts himself in jeopardy when he attempts to advance to the next base. If he then tries to return to the misplaced base, it is entirely within the umpire's jurisdiction to declare the runner safe or out, if he is tagged with the ball.

7.15.11. During a play in which a base becomes dislodged, additional runners are not required to touch the base if the base is several feet removed from its proper location. These runners may either touch the dislodged base or touch the original position of the base as if the base were in its proper location.

7.15.12. When, while in contact with the base, the base runner is hit with a fair batted ball unless the umpire rules that the ball or fielder was intentionally interfered with while attempting to field a batted ball. The ball remains live with all runners continuing to be in jeopardy.

7.15.13. When while in contact or off of a base, the base runner is hit with a fair batted ball that first hits a base unless the umpire rules that the ball or fielder was intentionally interfered with while attempting to field a batted ball. The ball remains live with all runners continuing to be in jeopardy.

7.16. Courtesy runners: Three courtesy runners per inning (one time each) may be used. The courtesy runners can be any player in the lineup. Once the courtesy runner occupies the base, the selected courtesy runner may not be exchanged for any other desired courtesy runner. If the courtesy runner is still on base at the time his turn at bat comes up, that spot in the batting order will be an out. The courtesy runner(s) may run for the same person multiple times in an inning. If a fourth courtesy runner of the inning, or one not from the lineup, enters the game, and the defensive team completes a proper appeal, the runner will be declared out.

8. BALL IN PLAY AND BALL DEAD

8.1. The ball is legally put in play by the umpire by signaling "play" following any dead ball period while the pitcher has the ball and the pitcher and catcher are in position, and the batter is in the batter's box.

8.2. The ball is live and in play:

8.2.1. When the pitcher has the ball at the pitcher's plate.

8.2.2. When the pitcher delivers the pitch.

8.2.3. When the batter legally hits the ball.

- 8.2.4. While there is a play resulting from a legally batted ball.
- 8.2.5. When a live ball touches someone assigned to the field as part of the game.
- 8.2.6. When a fly ball is legally caught.
- 8.2.7. During an infield fly rule.
- 8.2.8. When a ball is thrown into foul territory and is not blocked.
- 8.2.9. When a fair-batted or thrown-live ball accidentally touches the coach.
- 8.2.10. When a thrown ball touches an umpire or offensive player.
- 8.2.11. When a fair-batted ball touches an umpire or base runner after touching or passing any fielder including the pitcher.
- 8.2.12. When a fair ball touches the umpire or offensive player in foul territory.
- 8.2.13. When base runners have reached the base to which they are entitled because the fielder illegally touched or fielded a batted or thrown ball.
- 8.2.14. When obstruction is called but the runner obstructed cannot be put out until he reaches the base to which he is entitled because of the obstruction.
- 8.2.15. When a base runner must return to a base in reverse order while the ball is live and in play.
- 8.2.16. When a base runner is called out for passing a leading runner.
- 8.2.17. When a base runner has the right to a base by legally touching it before being put out.
- 8.2.18. When a base is dislodged while base runners are progressing around the bases.
- 8.2.19. When a base runner is called out for being out of the running path.
- 8.2.20. When a base runner is forced or tagged out.
- 8.2.21. When a live appeal play is involved or enforced.
- 8.2.22. Any other time the ball is not dead.

8.3. The ball is dead and not in play:

8.3.1 The ball is immediately dead, and no runner may advance a base:

- 8.3.1.1. When “no pitch” is called.
- 8.3.1.2. When an illegal pitcher’s action is called.

8.3.1.3. When a base runner is called out for leaving a base early during a pitch.

8.3.1.4. After each pitch not batted.

8.3.1.5. When a pitched ball passes home plate, lands in foul territory, strikes the catcher or umpire, or when legally caught by the catcher.

8.3.1.6. When a pitched ball touches any part of a batter.

8.3.1.7. When a batter bats illegally, or hits the ball with an illegal or altered bat.

8.3.1.8. When a batter deliberately bunts or chops the ball downward.

8.3.1.9. When the batter is hit by his own-batted ball.

8.3.1.10. When a foul ball is not caught in the air.

8.3.1.11. When a batter steps completely across the plate, with the pitcher on the pitcher's plate.

8.3.1.12. On an intentionally dropped fair fly ball or line drive, by an infielder.

8.3.1.13. When an offensive team member or their equipment causes a blocked ball.

8.3.1.14. When an offensive team member causes interference.

8.3.2 The ball is immediately dead, but the runners may retain any bases they may have advanced to, or any bases they may be awarded at the time of the interference.

8.3.2.1. When a base runner deliberately runs into a defensive player who is waiting to make a tag.

8.3.2.2. When a base runner is off a base and is hit with a fair-batted ball before the ball is touched by an infielder or passes an infielder not including the pitcher.

8.3.2.3. When a ball is blocked.

8.3.2.4. When the ball exits the established playing field.

8.3.2.5. When a coach intentionally interferes with a batted or live-thrown ball.

8.3.2.6. When someone not in the game causes interference.

8.3.2.7. When a batted ball hits an umpire before the ball is touched by an infielder or passes by an infielder excluding the pitcher, the batter is awarded first base. No base runners may advance except to make room for the batter-runner.

8.3.2.8. When "time" is called for any reason by the umpire.

8.3.2.9. When there is obstruction on the batter.