

## TOP CHOICE BASEBALL/ARIZONA USSSA TOURNAMENT RULES

**Note:** These rules are for AZ USSSA Baseball Tournaments only and May not apply for other USSSA Tournaments and World Series

### 2017 NEW Rules Added at all parks

We have had an increasing amount of threats and violence take place during USSSA youth events. Most have taken place between parents and are alcohol related. The private parks are not going stop selling alcohol because they can't survive without that income and have failed to deal with these fan conduct issues. We are going have to take control of this situation and put rules into place that hopefully prevent this from happening in the future. The violence at youth events is unacceptable and creates a negative experience to all spectators and players. Parks and staff also have reported that outside alcohol has been brought into all parks, this is not acceptable at any venue. It has also been brought to our attention that coaches are drinking before and in between games. That is not acceptable and will not be tolerated any longer if you plan on coaching. Here are the new AZ USSSA rules and policies:

1. No drinking before and in between games for any coach, anyone caught or suspected will be removed from coaching that day.
2. Anyone caught with outside alcohol/drugs including parking lots in all venues will be ejected from the park and local law enforcement will be notified to enforce local statues of the parks.
3. Obscene gestures and fowl language will result in offenders being ejected from the park.
4. Threats of violence or acts of violence including parking lots, will result in following penalties:  
911 will be called by our staff and we will seek a police report and will most likely result in charges to be filed.  
Coaches/Parents/Fans involved will be ejected from the park and face suspensions from USSSA National Office.  
A Player of ejected legal guardian/parent will be taken out of the game and have to leave also.

It's not our goal to punish kids for out of control parents and coaches but we have no choice in the matter because we are not legal guardians and can not take custody of children to finish a game when parents have to leave the park immediately.

Our staff is not trained as investigators; they have been instructed to eject all suspected parties involved of any violations listed above. Coaches please enforce parent conduct within your teams and set a high example for your players.

We need to create a healthy and safe environment for all those that play and attend USSSA events.

### Due to excessive damage to the outfields

Any Player and Team that dig holes in the outfield will face penalties

1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Player removed from the game and can not re-enter.

2<sup>nd</sup> Offense by same Team: Manager Ejected from the game

Limit of 3 coaches outside the dug out, any others have to be inside.

No Buckets allowed outside the dug outs.

### AGE DIVISIONS:

7U-12U Age divisions are based upon player's age as of May 1st, year 2018, league age. Example - 12U players cannot turn 13 prior to May 1st, 2018 to play in that division.

13U/7<sup>th</sup> Grade, 14U/8<sup>th</sup> Grade, 15U/Freshmen, 16U/Sophomore, 17-18U/Junior-Senior divisions are based upon player's ages as of May 1st, 2018 league age or what grade they are currently attending in HS.

Players may play up 2 ages, but not down in age. Players may only play on one team during a tournament.

**REGISTRATION:** All teams must check in 1 hour prior to your first scheduled game at the park your playing at. Teams will need to turn in a current USSSA Roster with manager signature and a copy of Team Insurance Coverage. No players may be penciled in. Teams will need to show a copy of Birth certificates or State issued ID card or Passport for every player on your roster. Scholastic age groups 13U-18U will need to show a current report card for players that don't meet age requirement but are in the proper grade for the division that they are competing in. Any Team knowingly using illegal players shall be subject to discipline ranging from forfeiting a game, tournament disqualification and suspension from all USSSA sanctioned leagues and tournaments for up to a year.

### Pre roster freezes

- No major players on a CURRENT majors roster can be on a AA roster unless approved by the Arizona USSSA State office.
- If a team is playing up an age and if a player is able to play at the younger age's class he can so at the older age too. This mean if a player on an 11UAAA team is also on an 11UMajors team he is able to play for that 11UAAA team if they play 12UAA. That 11UAAA team cannot add a major's player as a fill-in and go play 12UAA. Only players that have been on their roster can play.
- Up to 3 guest players from a higher class are allowed. When adding "guest players" from a higher class to your roster do not show up with more than 12 players. This rule is to allow a team the ability to field a team when short on players.....it's not designed so a team can add upper class players to win an event. PLEASE MAKE EVERY ATTEMPT TO ADD GUEST PLAYERS FROM YOUR SAME CLASS.
- If you add a player from a higher class you are at risk of being re-classed to a higher class even if they are a fill-in player.
- If a AAA or AA player fills-in on a majors team it does not mean he is a majors player. Please release him from the major's roster right after he fills in. Same if a AA player fills in on a AAA team.
- If a player has been off a major's roster for some time he will not be considered a majors player any longer unless the Arizona USSSA State office deems that player a major's player. If we can confirm that a player has not been on a majors team for some time but he wasn't released for some reason by that majors team he will not be considered a major's player unless the Arizona USSSA State office deems that player a major's player. Same when a AAA player has not been on a AAA team for some time.
- The Arizona USSSA State office has the right to approve a roster even if it does not comply with the rules above. A few examples would be when a team has AAA players (more then 3) on their AA roster that are from a team that could or should be classed to a AA team. Or a AAA team splits into 2 teams with the weaker players going to the lower classed team (AA in this example). These are 2 examples of why we MIGHT approve a roster.
- All roster questioned will be treated as a protest and will require a \$50 protest fee. If you win the protest you will receive your money back.

• The following penalty(s) could be placed on a team found to break the above rules. The penalty is up to the Arizona USSSA State office (Tournament director).

1. Player or players disqualified from the tourney
2. Forfeit of games (All Fees are lost)
3. Team disqualified from the tourney (All fees are lost)
4. Manager suspension

\*\*\*\*NO PARENTS ARE ALLOWED TO QUESTION ROSTERS OR RULES. MANAGER'S ONLY\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*PLEASE CALL OR EMAIL US IF YOUR ROSTER DOES NOT COMPLY WITH THE ABOVE RULES. JUST DON'T ADD PLAYERS AND ASSUME WE WILL APPROVE. YOU MUST GET APPROVAL\*\*\*\*

### **Frozen roster period (begins May 1st)**

When a roster is frozen we will abide by the USSSA National rules. Any roster moves outside of these rules must be approved by the Arizona USSSA State office. Be aware we will not approve many moves outside the National rules.

\*\*\*\*PLEASE CALL OR EMAIL US IF YOUR HAVE ANY QUESTION ABOUT YOUR ROSTER\*\*\*\*

**REFERENCE:** Sporting News Rules shall apply, along with USSSA National By-laws and slight modifications listed below.

[Click Here for Sporting News Rules](#)

[Click Here for USSSA National By-Law Rules](#)

### **PITCHING LIMITATIONS:**

7U-12U = 6 innings in a day and 8 in the tournament

13U-14U = 7 innings in a day and 8 in the tournament.

A player that pitches more than three (3) innings in one day MUST rest the next day

15U-18U = No Limit (Use Common Sense and pitch count)

One pitch in a new inning is considered a full inning no matter how many outs.

Violation of this rule will result in the pitcher being removed from the mound. The manager will be ejected from the game and forfeit participation in the next scheduled game. If a Team violates this rule a second time in a tournament, that game will be forfeited.

Managers will be given a pitching log at check-in, this log must be updated at all times and shown to the other

team before each game at the home plate meeting. Scorecards that are signed by each manager at the end of the game will also be used to determine pitching infractions, make sure when you sign them that the score and pitching is correct.

Teams must monitor the opponents pitching and report any violations.

Once a pitcher is removed from the mound, that pitcher may not pitch again in that game.

**DISTANCES:** 7U/8U = 40' mound/60' bases, 9U-10U = 46' mound/65' bases, 11U-12U = 50' mound/70' bases, 13U = 54' mound/80' bases, 14U-18U = 60.6 mound/90' bases.

**FORCE PLAY SLIDE RULE:** A runner may slide in any direction away from the fielder to avoid making contact or altering the play of the fielder. Runners are never required to slide, but if a runner elects to slide, the slide must be legal. If contact is made on either side of the bag or behind the bag, the ball is immediately dead. The runner is out, interference is called and the batter/runner is also called out.

**COLLISSION RULE HOME PLATE:** If a defensive player has the ball in hand ready to make a tag, the offensive player must apply one of the following:

1. Proper Slide going into the base
2. Go around the defensive player
3. Give your-self up
4. Go back

#### **LINE-UP OPTIONS:**

7U-14U

(1) Bat 9 players

(2) Bat 10 players using an Extra Hitter. The EH is considered a defensive player and may switch in and out defensively.

(3) Bat entire roster – Free defensive substitution. If a player is injured or ejected, that spot in the batting order will be an automatic out.

Starters may re-enter one time only in their original batting order.

15U-18U

(1) Bat 9 players

(2) Bat 10 players using an Extra Hitter. The EH is considered a defensive player and may switch in and out defensively.

(3) Bat entire roster – Free defensive substitution. If a player is injured or ejected, that spot in the batting order will be an automatic out.

(4) 15U-18U Only may use a DH in place of an EH but not both. No DH option in 9U-14U.

Starters may re-enter one time only in their original batting order.

Teams may play with 8 players, but an out will be recorded each time the 9<sup>th</sup> spot comes up. 9<sup>th</sup> player may be added in the 9<sup>th</sup> spot at any time during the game.

#### **Bat Regulations: (Click on this link)**

**14U can only use -5 with USSSA Stamp, BBCOR or Wood.**

(Teams playing up in age must use bats for that age group that they are playing in)

#### **Illegal Bat Penalties**

If an illegal bat is discovered after a fair batted ball and before the next pitch legal/illegal or play, the offended coach has the option of selecting the outcome of the play or the penalty. If he chooses the penalty then the batter is out, bat removed and all runners return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch. Should a second infraction occur, then the manager is ejected, and the offended coach gets to choose the outcome of the play or the penalty again as stated.

**NOTE:** There shall be no penalty for discovery of an illegal bat until a fair batted ball occurs. If an illegal bat is discovered during the ab, the bat is then removed from the game.

**TIME LIMITS:** Divisions 7U-8U will play 6 innings with no new inning after 1:30. Divisions 9U-12U will play 6 innings with no new inning after 1:45. The 13U-18U divisions will play 7 innings with no new inning after 2:00. No time limits in Championship games except in Silver or Bronze div's.

**TIE GAMES:** Playoffs will be played out in extra innings or after time limit has expired using the California Tie Breaker - except in Championship Games unless needed for park curfews due to lights or league play. A runner will start at second base. Runner cannot be a player who is or was in the game, even if they are a starter with

reentry remaining. If a team has no substitution, then last batted out will be the runner. Game will be played until a winner is determined. In Pool Play a tie stands and will not be played out.

For seeding purposes, the value of a win is 1 point, the value of a tie is a 1/2 point, and the value of a loss is 0 points.

**RUN RULES:**

15 run rule after 3 innings, 8 run rule after 4 innings in 6 inning games.

15 run rule after 3 innings, 12 after 4 innings, 8 after 5 innings in 7 inning games.

**HOME TEAM:** Will be determined by coin flip and will keep official scorebook with all changes going through home plate umpire. In playoff rounds, the higher seed will be home team. Dugouts are not assigned; first team to arrive has choice.

**METAL CLEATS:** No Metal Cleats allowed in 12U and younger age divisions. No Metal Cleats allowed on portable mounds at any park.

**CATCHERS HELMET:** In age divisions 12U and younger, catchers must wear protective helmet that covers both ears and the back of the head.

**PROTEST:** All protest will be ruled on immediately by tournament director and Chief umpire. Only a rule interpretation can be protested not a judgment call. A \$50 fee is required to protest a call and will be refunded if the protest is upheld.

**COURTESY RUNNERS:** Allowed for the pitcher or catcher at any time. The runner cannot be a player who is or was in the game, even if they are a starter with re-entry remaining. If the team has no substitution left then the last batted out can be used as a courtesy runner. Same runner cannot run for both the pitcher and catcher in the same inning.

**INTENTIONAL WALKS:** A defensive coach simply needs to announce to the home plate umpire that he desires to intentionally walk the batter. No pitches are thrown.

**Intentionally pitch at the batter: Penalty-** If the umpire believes such a violation has occurred, a warning shall be issued to the pitcher and both opposing coaches that future violations by any pitcher will be cause for immediate ejection of the pitcher and the coach from the game.

Furthermore, if, in the umpire's judgment, the situation warrants drastic action to defuse a potentially volatile situation, the umpire may eject the pitcher without warning. Each coach should be warned, but the coach of the offending team should not be ejected at that time unless the umpire believes it is appropriate.

**NOTE:** A warning may be issued to both teams before the start of the game or at any time during the game.

**MISSED BASES:** Requires an appeal play.

**EJECTIONS:** Any player, manager, coach or parent ejected from the game or after a game is concluded may carry an additional game suspension to be served at next scheduled game upon discretion of the tournament director and umpire in chief. Ejected managers, coaches or fans must leave the immediate area of the ball fields; they may remain in the parking lot or out of the immediate area from the field. Managers are responsible for the conduct of his players and fans.

**MALICIOUS CONTACT:** If the official in charge of the game judges that there has been malicious contact initiated by a player, the offending player will be called out and ejected from the game.

Player ejections that results in a team having less than 9 players, game will continue if the team has 8 eligible players, however an out will be taken when the ejected player is due to bat in the line-up. Teams falling short of 8 players due to player ejections will forfeit that game.

**GATE FEES:** Private parks will have gate charges.

**CONCESSIONS:** Will be available at most parks.

**TRASH:** Each Team is responsible for cleaning their dugout before they exit the field

**COACHES BUCKETS:** None allowed outside of the dug outs or on the playing field.

**GAME BALLS:** 2 new game balls will be provided by Top Choice Baseball for every game. Teams will provide one new back-up ball for each game if needed.

**FOUL BALLS:** The Team at bat shall supply a runner to retrieve any and all foul balls; they shall immediately return them to the home plate umpire.

**REFUND POLICIES:** No refunds within 30 days of tournament when dropping out. Exception is a rainout refund which will be refunded minus \$25 Administration Fee unless funds are applied towards another Tournament.

Rainout policy is as follows for 3 game guarantee:

No games played: Full Refund minus admin fee (credits will not have admin fee)

1 game is started: Half Refund

2 games started: No Refunds

Rainout policy is as follows for 4 game guarantee:

No games played: Full Refund minus admin fee (credits will not have admin fee)

1 game is started: 2/3 refund

2 game is started: 1/3 refund

3 games started: No Refunds

No gate refunds, nor rain checks, at any time. Tell your players and fans, if play is in doubt due to inclement weather or rain, to wait until play begins to enter park.

#### **SUSPENDED/COMPLETE GAMES:**

6 Inning Game = 3 innings or 2.5 if home team is ahead or 7 Inning Game = 4 innings or 3.5 if home team is ahead will constitute a complete game during inclement weather or light failure. If the 3-4 innings have not been completed, game will resume from when the game was suspended.

#### **7U/8U & UNDER KID PITCH RULES**

ALL Rules above apply with slight modifications listed below

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

Balk rules will not apply.

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

- Bunting is allowed
- No lead-offs. Players cannot leave base until after ball crosses home plate.
- Stealing is allowed. Runners may advance once the ball is passed home plate at their own risk. If a player leaves early and is thrown out, he is out. If he is safe, he must return to previous base. 2nd offense by same player in same inning will result in out. If ball is hit, the defensive team has the option of the result of the play or dead ball and runner returns and hitter hits again.
- Stealing home is not allowed. Home plate is dead. Runner on 3rd must be forced home by a walk, HBP, or advance on a hit ball.
- Once the ball is thrown back to the pitcher by the catcher or any fielder at the conclusion of a play, at the umpire's judgment, all base runners must return to their previous base if they are not at least halfway to next base.
- No new inning after 1:30