



SSUSA 2018 NATIONAL RULES COMMITTEE

Official Minutes

November 28 - 30, 2018

Las Vegas, Nevada

MEMBERS PRESENT • Donna McGuire (MO/Chair/ Regional U.I.C.) • Terry Hennessy (CA/SSUSA C.E.O.) • Bill Ruth (WA/SSUSA President) • Fran Dowell (CA/SSUSA Executive Director) • Michael Boone (NJ/National Director) • Don Brooks (TX/National Director) • Dave Dowell (CA/National Director) • Carl Gustafson (CA/Regional Director) • Mike Hula (NV/LVSSA) • Tim McElroy (MD/National Director) • Felix Mendiola (NV/LVSSA) • Otis Rowland (OK/National Director) • Rick Seifman (AZ/National U.I.C.)

ALTERNATES • Jerry Jackson (IL/National Director) • George Moreno (SSUSA Office) • Randy Rowe (MO/Regional Director) • Paul Cochet (CA/National Director) • Cal Allison (FL/National Director) • Doug Robbins (CA/National Director) • Ron Grassi (WA/National Director)

RULES COMMITTEE OPEN PUBLIC SESSION - November 28, 2018

GENERAL ITEMS –

- Welcome remarks from Committee Chair Donna McGuire and Agenda overview.
- Self-introductions by Committee Members and the public membership attending.

NEW BUSINESS –

- General discussion and review of approximately 45 [1] correspondence items received from the membership via email, written correspondence and [2] public attendee topics for consideration submitted during this session.

PRIOR YEAR BUSINESS –

- Approval of 2017 Rules Committee Meeting Minutes (reading of Minutes waived, followed by unanimous vote to approve) for both the 2017 Convention sessions and the special telephone conference call meeting of January 9, 2018.
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GENERAL PUBLIC DISCUSSION AND COMMENT TOPICS

BAT TESTING TECHNOLOGY UPDATE – Don Cooper and associated bat manufacturer representatives discussion of the evolution of compliance testing (BPF: 1.21) comments for the future.

MAJOR++ ISSUES – Jason Kendrick (Team Kitty) regarding opposition to receiving the equalizer at the WMC and winning under peculiar, and unfair, competitive advantage.

QUALIFYING ROSTER FOR MAJOR+ – Jon Kramer proposing time limitation(s) for Major+ teams “loading up” for the World’s.

NIGHT GAMES ISSUE – Prefer to not play at night per Jon Kramer.

OUT-OF-RATING EXEMPTION ISSUES – Do we adjust the allowance? Proposing relaxing the out-of-region exemption to three or four. Jon (“Bully”) Kramer also supporting more out-of-region allowances.

RULES COMMITTEE WORKING SESSION #1 - November 29, 2018

§6.2 • PITCH COUNT – Multiple proposals were considered and acted upon, including:

- Proposal to remove “trial basis” from last year’s implementation/approval • **PASSED: 13-0-0**
- Proposal to allow 40+ Masters to play WITH courtesy foul • **PASSED: 9-4-0**
- Proposal to remove “WITH” courtesy foul from 40+ through 60+ Major+ • **FAILED: 6-7-0**
- Proposal to extend “1-1” count WITH courtesy foul to all divisions of play • **FAILED: 5-7-1**

§1.29 • FOUL TIP – The second sentence of §1.29 was moved to Definition §1.28 of FOUL BALL as a new subsection **F. Goes directly from the bat, not higher than the batter's head to any part of the catcher's body or equipment other than the hand(s) or glove.** The EFFECT sentence is amended to read: **EFFECT: The ball is dead on all foul tips and the batter is out if it is the third final strike.** • **PASSED: 10-0-2**

§7.4 C. • STRIKE CALLED BY UMPIRE – A FOUL TIP is clarified as eligible to be a courtesy foul in divisions that use the “1-1” starting pitch count. Amended language to be consistent with the immediately above item: **C. For each foul tip. EFFECT: The ball is dead on all foul tips and the batter is out if it is the third final strike.** • **PASSED: 11-0-1**

§6.16 • WIND OR SUN AFFECTING BOTH PITCHERS – Proposal to expand this rule to allow play stoppage when sun affecting 1B or 3B defenders, at Director’s discretion • **FAILED: 5-7-0**

§7.3(1) • OBLITERATING THE BATTER’S BOX – Removes the “out” for first offense, with an automatic ejection for first offense, to read: **Any player A batter, in the umpire's judgment, deliberately erasing any portion of the batter's box will be called out. A second offense by the same player will result in the player's ejection ejected from the game.** • **PASSED: 10-1-1**

§8.5(5) • COURTESY RUNNER OFFICIALLY IN GAME – The first sentence of the rule is amended to read: **A courtesy runner must report to, and be acknowledged by, the umpire before play resumes.** • **PASSED: 12-0-0**

§8.7(1) • OVER-RUNNING SECOND AND THIRD BASE – Proposal to allow this occurrence for ages 75+ and more senior age divisions. • **FAILED: 2-10-0**

§4.2 • ROSTER RESTRICTIONS – The maximum number of players permitted on a team’s roster is amended and defined as twice the number of players on that team’s defensive alignment. For all teams playing 10 on defense, 20 is the limit. For teams playing 11 or 12 on defense, the maximums are increased to 22 and 24, respectively. • **PASSED: 10-2-0**

§13.1(1) A. • DIVISIONS OF THE SSWC – Major-Plus Division – General discussion regarding effects that Major-Plus teams have on a cascading effect down through the ratings. • **Referred to Staff** for further analysis and recommendation(s). **NOTE:** Was reopened for discussion and action (See below)

§12.5(2) • ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGE • Develop procedural guidelines regarding roster deadline at “end of manager meeting” instead of “before first pitch” • **TABLED** with instruction to Staff to clarify.

ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGE proposed for **MAJOR+ WORLD CHAMPIONS TEAMS** • Winners of Major+ Divisions at the World Masters Championships would be required by rule to GIVE the “equalizer” for the following season • **FAILED: 1-6-5**

RECONSIDERATION – §13.1(1) A. • **DIVISIONS OF THE SSWC** – Proposals to allow Major+ teams east or west of the Mississippi River to roster up to four out-of-region players from their half of the U.S.

- Eastern Teams Proposal • **PASSED: 6-5-1**
- Western Teams Proposal • **PASSED: 7-3-2**

RECONSIDERATION – §13.1(1) A. • **DIVISIONS OF THE SSWC** – Proposal to eliminate the concept known as Major++ and defer any potential reinstatement until after a review of game and tournament results from the start of the 2019 Season. • **PASSED: 10-1-1**

§5.4C.1. • **FORMAT MODIFICATION** – In a complete round robin format tournament division, the game time(s) shall be **65 minutes** (plus open inning) for all games. • **PASSED: 12-0-0**

§5.5(3) • **MERCY RULE FOR 40+ THRU 70+ MAJOR-PLUS (ONLY)** – Rule is amended for clarification to read: If a team is ahead by 15 or more runs **at any time after five innings have been completed, or 22 runs after four innings (or four and one-half innings with the visiting team ahead)**, the game shall be declared a complete regulation game. • **PASSED: 12-0-0**

§3.4(3) • **APPROVED BATS** – The language in the SSUSA online “Bat Policy” statement is inconsistent with the language in this rule – **ACTION:** Rule Book is to be amended to conform the Rule Book to conform with the online version.

§4.2(6)B. • **PLAYING IN TWO AGE DIVISIONS** – Section was amended for clarity to read: **B. A player can only play on a team in the same or equivalent skill level when playing in two age divisions or one skill level higher or lower. EXAMPLE: A player on a 55-Major division team cannot play on a 50-AA division team.** • **PASSED: 12-0-0**

INFORMATION ITEM • Bat Testing Standards – With impending changes to the provider of official bat testing services, discussion of potential changes to the technical specification(s) is likely appropriate. • **ACTION:** Deferred for further study until when/if those changes occur.

RULES COMMITTEE WORKING SESSION #2 - November 30, 2018

§8.(3)C. • **BATTER RUNNER IS OUT** – Amended: **When he fails to advance to first base and enters his team area after a batted fair ball, a base on balls, or catcher obstruction. EFFECT: The ball is dead, the batter-runner is out and runners cannot advance return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch.** • **PASSED: 11-1-0**

CO-ED RULES – Proposal to adopt ISA Co-Ed Rules, with the right of SSUSA office to revise as appropriate. • **PASSED: 12-0-0**

§13.(1)(1)A. • **DIVISIONS OF THE SSWC** – The Major-Plus division eligibility to participate in the Eastern or Western National or World Masters Championships events are amended to conform to the rules present for the major, AAA and AA divisions of play, as follows: • **PASSED: 12-0-0**

1. ~~Need not qualify.~~ **EXCEPTION:** Major-Plus teams in age groups 50+ through 65+ may not play in a younger age group at the Eastern or Western National Championships or the

World Masters Championships without first having participated in an official SSUSA Qualifier tournament in the younger age group and Major rating level.

2. Have a seven-run limit per inning, except for the final inning of the game in which each team may score unlimited runs.
3. Major-Plus players may not compete on AAA or AA teams without written permission from SSUSA.
4. **May be invited to the World Masters Championships based upon their SSWC rating qualifying standing.**

§8.5(4) • COURTESY RUNNER COMING TO BAT WHILE ON BASE – Technical (no vote) amendment to clarify the effect on the courtesy runner who becomes the third out of the half-inning at bat under this rule: **EFFECT: The out occurs at the base the courtesy runner abandons to take his required turn at bat, unless it is the third out, which results in the former courtesy runner leading off the team's next half-inning at bat.**

FIELD SPECIFICATIONS – Proposal to move the strike mat back by 8½" – **FAILED: 1-11-0**

§3.4(7)A • PENALTY FOR USING AN ILLEGAL BAT – Proposal to reduce the penalty for use of an illegal bat. This is in response to the increased frequency of the unintentional use of a bat that has not been approved: – **A. Any attempt to use an illegal bat in SSWC or SSUSA play will result in the batter being ejected from the game. tournament. The second offense by the same team will result in the player and manager being ejected from the tournament.** • **PASSED 10-2-0**

COMMITTEE LEADERSHIP – Donna McGuire graciously accepted the unanimous request that she serve at least one more year, subject to her potential work conflicts, as the National Rules Committee Chair. • **PASSED BY ACCLAMATION**

TECHNICAL RULE BOOK CORRECTIONS

The Rule Book editor was instructed to make minor technical corrections affecting sections §4.3(3), §6.7(E) and related sections §9.1(X) and §9.2(D). Those corrections will be published at a later date.

Respectfully submitted,

DAVE DOWELL
Recording Secretary

EXHIBIT “A” • Other Topics Proposed for Consideration

The following topics were brought to the attention of the Rules Committee for potential Agenda consideration by either public member proposal at the open meetings, prior correspondence received (by email or written letters) from the public, or by Rules Committee members during the course of the sessions. There was committee discussion on all of these issues, but they failed to make it to official Agenda status due to either the lack of a motion for consideration, lack of a second to a motion for consideration, and/or the request to withdraw an active Agenda item by the sponsor and second.

The Committee is pleased with the “State of the Game” from a rules perspective and we sought to make changes only where they were mandated. The failure of any specific topic proposed to result in change has no bearing on the Committee’s perception of their importance to those who brought them to our attention. Thank you to all who took the time to appear or write. Your contributions were significant and invaluable to the Committee.

The following non-agenda items are presented in the chronological order they were discussed during the Sessions.

1. Women’s 50+ Division request to return to 0-0 Starting Pitch Count;
2. Allow underage player exemptions on 70+ age group rosters;
3. Modify and clarify the player/team uniform rules;
4. Add player conduct rule regarding unacceptable language to end of §4.8;
5. Use two-part safety base at 3rd base;
6. Expand mercy rule to all divisions of play at 15 runs after 5 innings;
7. Adverse weather policy rules;
8. 80+ players seeking two additional underage player exemptions;
9. Various batter’s box related issues, including modifying lines up to eliminating entirely;
10. Enlarge pitcher’s box to 4' x 6' instead of 2' x 10';
11. Intentional walk and appeal rights; and
12. Requesting change/clarification to the definition of “in the batter’s box”