



USSSA RELEASES 2018 FASTPITCH RULE CHANGES

While celebrating 50 years as an association at its annual convention in Daytona Beach in November, the leadership in Fastpitch for USSSA announced several rule changes. They will be effective January 1, 2018 and will be included in the online rule book update in December, 2017. "An association needs to be progressive and thorough to make sure that their rules are evolving with the game," said Jeremy McDowell, Executive Vice-President for USSSA Fastpitch. "These changes liberalize participation opportunities, support player safety, and will add to enjoyment of the game for our players, while not compromising core elements of the game."

SUMMARY OF RULE CHANGES:

JEWELRY RULE -

Modified so as to allow stud earrings, while continuing to prohibit dangling hoops, necklaces, bracelets, rings, etc. judged by the umpire to be dangerous. Also requires batters to wear play indicators as they were designed to be worn.

CONFINES OF THE PLAYING FIELD -

Clarifies that warm-up catchers outside of live ball territory in bullpens must wear a catcher's helmet/mask by including those areas in the definition of the confines of the field.

ROSTER BATTING OPTION (not applicable to the Elite Select Program) -

Allows a team the option to bat its entire roster (all players physically present) in lieu of a "traditional" lineup. Teams choosing to roster bat may disperse additional players - starters who aren't listed as defensive players - anywhere in their batting order to bat everyone present. If a player leaves the game for any reason, it creates an absent player (automatic out) situation.

LAST COMPLETED AT BAT COURTESY RUNNER OPTION (not applicable to the Elite Select Program) -

Teams may now use the last completed at bat if no unused substitute is available. Under this change, a team will always have a courtesy runner option, even if using roster batting.

SHORTHANDED RULE MODIFICATION -

Clarifies that multiple absent players (automatic outs) are allowed. This is not applicable in the Elite Select Program. In the Elite Select division, teams may have a maximum of 1 absent player (automatic out) position.

USSSA is headquartered in Brevard County, Florida. USSSA is the world's largest multi-sport organization. Founded in 1968, USSSA has grown to over 4.2 million participants, competing in 14 nationally sanctioned sports including Baseball, Fastpitch, Slow Pitch, Karate, Basketball, Soccer and more! For more information on USSSA and to register your team visit usssa.com