## **Season Structure:**

1. **All USSSA teams play a 30-game (15h/15a) schedule starting in October and ending in January:**
   1. i.e. i.e. Home-and-Away series with the other 15 in-conference teams or double round-robin.
   2. All games will be played on Saturday evenings & Sunday afternoons to help accommodate those with other full-time jobs.
2. **Each team will receive premier points for entry into the post season:**
   1. Each team will receive 2 points for a win, 1 point for a tie, and 0 points for a loss.
3. **The USSSA postseason is a 5-team round robin tournament hosted at Space Coast Stadium complex *(8,100)* in Viera, FL:**
   1. The team with the most premier points will be selected for the tournament.

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|  | **Round #1:** | **Round #2:** | **Round #3:** | **Round #4:** | **Round #5:** |
| **Game #1:** | 1 vs 4 | 3 vs 1 | 5 vs 3 | 2 vs 5 | 4 vs 2 |
| **Game #2:** | 2 vs 3 | 4 vs 5 | 1 vs 2 | 3 vs 4 | 5 vs 1 |
| **“Bye” Team:** | Bye = 5 | Bye = 2 | Bye = 4 | Bye = 1 | Bye = 3 |

1. All players will be paid a season salary of US $1,100/month maximum.
2. All teams must play in a baseball stadium with at least *500* seating capacity but no more than *15,000*.

## **Length of Game:**

1. Each team has 2 innings.
2. An inning ends when all 10 players are either dismissed or stranded on base.
3. All games can end in ties; this is because most players should probably have other full-time jobs in addition to playing in this league & they shouldn’t be forced to miss work if they can avoid it.

## **Number of Players:**

1. There is a minimum of 24 & a maximum of 30 players on the roster, and all of them are active; 12-15 players must be men and 12-15 must be women.
2. **There are 10 defensive players on the field, with either of the following:**
   1. Option #1 = a rover or shortfielder.
   2. Option #2 = a left center and right center fielder.
   3. 5 must be men and 5 must be women.
   4. When a player off the bench substitutes in for a starter, the manager of the team must notify the score keeper; the starting player may re-enter the game only once for any of the players currently in the game.
3. **Each team will hold tryouts in early September, with the first 100 players to register (i.e. 50 men & 50 women) in addition to the players from the prior season being selected:**
   1. Registration will be held in August.
   2. Any player from the previous season may lose their spot to another player (i.e. no spot is guaranteed).
   3. Teams are not allowed to trade players whatsoever.
   4. The maximum age for any player is 55, regardless of gender.

## **Equipment:**

1. The ball = 12 or 11 inches (305 or 279 mm) in circumference.
2. The bats should be no longer than 34 inches (864 mm); the bats are most commonly made of composite materials, also aluminum, though wooden bats may be used.
3. No player is allowed to wear cleats made of metal. A player's cleat may have soft or hard rubber spikes.
4. All teams must have their equipment checked and approved by the USSSA Equipment Performance and Safety Standards Committee; they have the right to deny the use of equipment if it fails to meet current safety standards as set by the committee

## **Field:**

1. Baselines = 90' (27.3 m).
2. Fences are set at a minimum of 300' (91.4 m).
3. Pitching distance = 50' (15.2 m).
4. Pitcher's area = Flat circle, radius of 8' (2.4 m), marked with a white chalk circle.
5. Batter's boxes = 5.5' x 3' (1.65m x .91m) rectangle.
6. Traditional softball fields may be used for the postseason tournament.

## **Batting Rules:**

1. Starting Count = 1-1.
2. Bunting = Not allowed; batter is out if contact made.
3. Foul ball with two strikes = A batter is allowed one foul ball with two strikes, with the second being an automatic out.
4. Hit by pitch = Not awarded first base.
5. Base stealing = All baserunners are permitted to take a lead after the ball leaves the pitcher's hand, but must return to base between pitches if the ball is not put into play; Any baserunner can be called out for taking a lead before the pitch.
6. Any pitch that lands on the plate will automatically be ruled a ball.
7. Three strikes will result in an out and four balls will result in a base on balls.
8. Any foul ball is considered a strike.
9. If the batter already has two strikes and hits two foul balls they are out.
10. **The batting order for each team must be submitted to the official score keeper before the start of the game:**
    1. The batting order must alternate between a man & a woman or vice versa.
    2. In the case that an official score keeper is not present, the line up is to be turned into the umpire-in-chief.

## **Delivery:**

1. Underhand; must travel in an arc between 6 & 12 feet (1.8 & 3.7 m) above the ground.
2. The umpire can call a pitch "illegal" while in flight.
3. The pitcher must be in the circle when the pitch is released.
4. Any windup or arm motion is allowed as long as the pitch is thrown underhand.
5. Pitchers must show the ball in front of their bodies for at least one second before starting the delivery, and the pitcher must always face home plate during the pitch.
6. The entire pitch must be made within five seconds; however, quick pitches are illegal.
7. The general warm-up between innings may not be longer than one minute or three pitches.
8. If a pitcher wishes to intentionally walk a batter, no pitches need to be thrown; however, they will give up 1 run if they choose to do so.
9. Illegal pitch = The ball remains live. If the batter does not swing, the pitch is automatically called a ball.
10. 20-second pitch clocks are in use, with 15 seconds pitch clocks being in use when no runners are on base.
11. pitchers are required to face a minimum of 2 consecutive batters.

## **Scoring System:**

1. A player scores a run for every base he/she reaches after hitting the ball.
2. He or she will not subsequently score when moving around the bases on another player's hit.
3. The equivalent of a home run scores 4 runs + the number of baserunners.
4. All teams are limited to 18 home runs per game (i.e. 9 for men & 9 for women); Any home run hit beyond these limits will be recorded as outs.

## **Flip/flop Rule:**

1. In an inning when the run rule (45 runs for the 1st / 35 for the second) for a particular game is exceeded and the home team is losing, the home team will stay up to bat and bat as the visiting team. If, after three outs, they were not able to reduce the run difference, the game will be over.

## **Ties & Forfeits:**

1. If a tie occurs after the last inning or the time limit (both determined by the local governing league), teams may continue play until one scores more runs in their half of the inning before the third out is made.
2. If a game is forfeited — due to the failure of a team to show up, a refusal to play, or not having enough players to start — the score will be recorded as 7-0 in favor of the team that did not cause the forfeit.

## **The Pitcher & Catcher:**

1. The pitcher must be in the circle when the pitch is released; when pitching the pitcher must have one foot on the pitcher's mound, and the free foot is allowed to be anywhere
2. Any windup or arm motion is allowed as long as the pitch is thrown underhand.
3. Pitchers must show the ball in front of their bodies for at least one second before starting the delivery, and the pitcher must always face home plate during the pitch.
4. The pitcher may hold the ball any way they choose, but they must deliver the ball in an underhand motion at a slow speed. The pitched ball's arc must be at least 3' high from release and cannot exceed 10'.
5. The entire pitch must be made within five seconds; however, quick pitches are illegal.
6. The general warm-up between innings may not be longer than one minute or three pitches.
7. If a pitcher wishes to intentionally walk a batter, no pitches need to be thrown; however, they will give up 1 run if they choose to do so.
8. The catcher must remain inside the designated catcher's box when the pitcher is in position and remain until the ball has passed home plate.

## **Ticket Prices:**

1. Suites & Clubhouses (if available) = no more than $40 per person.
2. Adult (i.e. 18-64) = no more than $12.
3. Child (i.e. 4-17) = no more than $6.
4. Senior (i.e. 65 & up) = no more than $6.
5. Children 3 and under are FREE