



**2021 SSUSA National Rules Committee
Official Minutes
Tuesday – Thursday, November 30 – December 2, 2021
Sacramento, Calif. – Holiday Inn Sacramento Downtown Arena**

Members Present (13 total members): Donna McGuire (Chair/MO/Regional U.I.C.), Terry Hennessy (CA/C.E.O.), Fran Dowell (CA/Executive Director), Michael Boone (NJ/Director), Don Brooks (TX/Director), Dave Dowell (CA/Director), Mike Hula (NV/Director), Tim McElroy (MD/Director), Felix Mendiola (NV/Director), Doug Robbins (CA/Director), Rick Seifman (AZ/V.P. Umpires)

Alternates: Ron Grassi (WA/Director) and Randy Rowe (MO/Director)

NOTE: Committee Members Otis Rowland (OK/Director) and Don Reddig (CA/Director) were unable to attend and replaced by Alternates.

Secretary (non-voting): Anthony Ramos (SSUSA Home Office)

2021 RULES COMMITTEE SESSIONS

Tuesday, November 30: Open rules meeting

Introductions/announcements

General discussion on when/how to determine need for rule changes (Terry Hennessy)

Overview of recommendations submitted for the agenda in advance

Open floor to additional recommendations from committee members, attendees

Wednesday, December 1: Rules committee meeting

Voting session

1. Expanding Alaska region

Recommendation: Group Alaska, Washington, Oregon, Hawaii and Western Canada together as a region/state.

12-0 passes

2. Player reclassification issues

Motion to change medical reclassification waiting period to 120 days minimum (currently 45 days due to COVID)

12-0 passes

3. Increase the number of teams that move up following the Worlds (Effective for 2022 season)
Recommendation: Move up more teams, particularly in the larger brackets, at the conclusion of the World Championships.

Following discussion, motion amended to champions with no appeal from 2 years to remain current 1 year

Brackets of 36 or more:

Top 20% move up, bottom 10% move down

Champions move up for 1 year (no appeal), Remaining top 10% bumped up for 1 year (no appeal), next 10% bumped up for 1 year (appeal after June 15)

Bottom 10% offered a move down with roster restrictions.

Brackets of 20-35 teams:

Top 15% and bottom 5% moved.

Champions bumped for 1 year (no appeal). Remaining Top 10% bumped for 1 year (no appeal). Next 5% bumped for 1 year (appeal after June 15). Bottom 5% offered a move down with roster restrictions

Brackets of 10-19 teams:

Top 10% moved.

Champions bumped for 1 years (no appeal). Second and third place bumped for 1 year (appeal after June 15).

Brackets of 6-9 teams:

Champions bumped for 1 year (no appeal). Additional changes at staff direction.

Passes 10-2 (Effective for 2022 World Championships)

4. Noise Makers and Music

Recommendation: Prohibit artificial noise-makers and establish rules governing playing of music from dugout areas and/or the spectator areas. Motion made to adopt ISA rule

ISA Rule

Artificial Noise Maker - Radios, Cell Phones playing music, Jam Boxes are all examples of artificial noise makers. These are not allowed in the complexes/parks during ISA events/tournaments. Any noise, other than the voices of players/umpires/spectators/etc. could be determined an artificial noise maker.

Effect: Artificial noise makers are not allowed in the park during any event. Ejections could occur if the director sees fit to do so.

0-12 fails

Additional conversation on noise makers.

Motion: artificial noise makers, including music, are not allowed if they interfere with any games being played, or if they contain vulgar or inappropriate language. If team refuses to eliminate source of complaint, after a team warning, a violation will involve a manager ejection or game forfeiture.

10-1-1 passes

5. Clarify Open Division Rules

Recommendation: Define an open team, as any team with a player from both sides of the Mississippi River on its tournament roster. Open teams shall give a 5 (or 7) run equalizer to any non-Open Division team.

12-0 passes

6. Pitching Screens

Recommendation: Allow protective pitching screens for 75 and over divisions on a one-year trial. Both teams must agree and provide own screens. Must follow rules put in by SSUSA

Fails 0-12

7. Illegal Softball Rule Language

Recommendation: Add to Rule §3.5.F.1: If the illegal softball is discovered after a player has completed his turn at bat, and before the next pitch, the batter is out, all outs stand, and other runners must return to the base held prior to the pitch.

11-1 passes.

8. No coin flip in championship games

Recommendation: Add to rule 1.31: EXCEPTION: In all championship games, the undefeated team has the option of being designated home team without a coin flip.

1-10-1 fails

9. Vegas Timing Rule

Recommendation: Call open inning the same way all year using the Vegas rule (Open inning starts immediately if time expires before the first pitch of an inning).

3-8-1 fails

10. Adjust batter's box or strike mat

Recommendation: Add 17 inches to the chalked front of batter's box, or move the mat back behind the plate at turf fields.

2-9 fails

11. Uniform rule transgressions

Recommendation: Enforce our uniform rules.

Policy enforcement

12. Singleton East/West seeding

Recommendation: Repeal the guaranteed No. 1 or No. 2 seed at World Championships to singleton East or West Champions.

Following discussion, motion amended, the award of a minimum No. 2 seed in the Worlds Bracket (for teams without a U.S. National Game), will be to teams who win the Eastern/Western Nationals in divisions of two or more teams.

5-7 fails

13. Courtesy Runners

Motion to add courtesy runner language in rulebook – “Umpire shall prevent entry of courtesy runner after pitch has been thrown to a batter”.

Passes 12-0

Thursday, December 2: Rules committee meeting continued
Voting session continues

14. Men’s 65 Divisions to play with 11 on defense
Recommendation: To make the Men’s 65 Division have a base defense of 11 players.

Passes 12-0

15. Alcohol Policy for Code of Conduct (Expansion of Alcohol Rule)

Motion to prohibit outside alcohol from being brought into the park. First offense warning, second offense ejection for next game.

Passes 11-1

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 sessions. There was committee discussion on all of these issues, but they failed to make it to official Agenda status due to either the [1] lack of a motion for consideration, [2] lack of a second to a motion for consideration, and/or [3] 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.

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1. **Allow 69-Year-Olds on 70s Teams: Recommendation: Allow two or three 69-year-olds to play on 70+ teams.**
 2. **Sync roster rules with other associations: Recommendation: If SSUSA holds dual qualifiers with other associations, sync up roster rules (i.e., age allowances and geographic restrictions).**
**Above two items tabled for further review. Including rosters and other potential rules changes.*
 3. **Replace Bordering State Rule: Recommendation: Replace bordering states rules with a system that uses geographic areas.**
 4. **75+ Geographic Restrictions: Recommendation: Allow 75+ teams to recruit players nationwide (no regional restrictions).**
 5. **Major Plus Recruiting Area: Recommendation: Restrict Major Plus teams to using adjoining states rules followed by the other divisions.**
 6. **Exempted Player Rule: Recommendation: Changing the “exempted players” roster limit to 10 without requiring a managerial release in that given season.**
 7. **End coin flip in bracket games: Recommendation: Give the highest seed throughout bracket play its choice of home or visitor.**
 8. **Intentional walk situations: Recommendation: Change rule 8.2 to allow multiple runners to be walked at once.**
 9. **Adjust foul tip/foul ball rule: Recommendation: Remove rule that foul tip must go above batter’s head to be caught for an out.**
 10. **Women’s 40 Major plus: Recommendation: Consider creating a Major Plus division for the Women’s 40+ age group.**
 11. **Midwestern Championships: Recommendation: Establish a Midwestern (i.e., Central) Championship to match the Eastern and Western National Championships.**
**Item tabled for 2023*
 12. **Major Plus proposal I: Recommendation: Eliminate the Major Plus division at age 70+ and older.**
 13. **Major Plus proposal II: Recommendation: Reduce the Major Plus homerun limit to “three plus one-up” rule.**
 14. **Allow non-batting defenders: Recommendation: Allow anyone on the lineup card (but not necessarily in batting order) to play defense.**
 15. **Increase runs ahead for flip-flop: Recommendation: Change the flip-flop rule to 15 runs instead of 10.**
 16. **Flip Flop Rule: Recommendation: If visitor goes ahead by 1 in the top of the open, game automatically flips.**