



# SSUSA 2012 Rules Committee Report Minutes • Decisions • Other Actions SSUSA Annual Convention Sessions Mesquite, Nevada • November 28-29, 2012

## COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP –

**Bill Ruth** (WA - SSUSA President - Chairman), **Terry Hennessy** (CA - SSUSA CEO), **Fran Dowell** (CA - SSUSA Executive Director), **David Barnes** (NV - LVSSA), **Michael Boone** (NJ), **Don Brooks** (TX), **Dave Dowell** (CA), **George Fernandes** (NV - LVSSA), **Carl Gustafson** (CA), **Jerry Jackson** (IL), **Otis Rowland** (CA/OK), **Rick Seifman** (AZ) • Vacant (position not filled): **Steve Simmons** (MN)

The Rules Committee met in open sessions on Wednesday (9:00 AM-12:00 noon) and Thursday (8:30-10:00 AM). During the first hour of the Wednesday session, unrestricted public comment was received from Convention attendees who were not a part of the actual committee. Thereafter, the meetings were conducted in open session for the public to observe, but not participate for the record.

## EFFECTIVE DATE –

The effective date for all Rule Changes shall be **DECEMBER 1, 2012**.

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## DAY 1 SESSION – WEDNESDAY

### PLAYING RULES CHANGES • APPROVED OR REJECTED

- **RULEBOOK § 2.4 – BASE DISTANCE** – Official base distance, for ALL ages and divisions **changed to 70'**. Also permits, at Tournament Director's sole discretion, utilizing 65' bases only for Age 75+ and 80+ Men and Senior Women's divisions (50+ and older), if feasible. • ACTION: **PASSED** 10-1
- **OFFICIAL FIELD SPECIFICATIONS – PITCHER'S BOX** – The Pitchers Box was enlarged as to a ten (10) foot depth. The front of the box remains two feet wide at 50' from Home Plate, and extends back 10' therefrom to 60' from Home Plate. • ACTION: **PASSED** 11-0

### TECHNICAL RULEBOOK CORRECTIONS/CLARIFICATIONS

- **RULEBOOK § 1.23 – FAKE TAG** – Definition of Fake Tag makes no reference to a penalty for same. Added language to refer to **RULEBOOK § 8.4(10) A** for Penalty. • ACTION: **PASSED** 11-0
- **RULEBOOK § 8.4(6) – GAME WINNING HOME RUN** – Language clarified to implement intent of 2011 SSUSA Rules Committee to prohibit Home team from going "1-Up" in any Open Inning. • ACTION: **PASSED** 11-0 • (NOTE: Committee action rendered moot by subsequent Day #2 Session actions.)
- **RULEBOOK § 8.6 – SLIDING OPTIONAL** – Language clarified to implement intent of 2011 SSUSA Rules Committee to prohibit player from sliding into 1<sup>st</sup> Base or the scoring line unless it is to avoid a collision with a defensive player (Umpire's sole judgment, not subject to appeal) • ACTION: **PASSED** 11-0
- **RULEBOOK § 8.9(1) – NON-FORCE SITUATION and § 8.10 – SCORING PLATE** – Language clarified what constitutes a run scoring in a scoring line situation (runner's foot down on or past the scoring line) or in a scoring plate situation (touching the Scoring Plate). • ACTION: **PASSED** 11-0 • (NOTE: Committee action regarding §8.10 rendered moot by subsequent Day #2 Session actions.)

## COMMITTEE GENERAL DISCUSSION SESSION

The Chairman opened the floor for general committee member discussion of the “significant” issues facing the committee as he determined from responses he had received over the past few weeks. Those topics included:

- Home Run Rules (Maximums by division, treatment of excess HR’s, the 1-Up provisions)
- Roster Composition issues (Out of Region players, Snowbirds, States & Bordering States, CA/FL Borders)
- Competition issues (Major/Major+ Issues, transitions between divisions with respect to ratings)

Following this discussion, the Chairman adjourned the meeting with an instruction to the Committee to carefully consider these items, talk amongst each other, ponder the issues and be ready to act effectively and decisively on Thursday morning.

### DAY 2 SESSION – THURSDAY

#### PLAYING RULES CHANGES • APPROVED OR REJECTED

- **RULEBOOK §§ 8.4 (2) thru 8.4 (6) – HOME RUNS BY DIVISION** – The following are the Home Run Rules for the 2013 Season, including the maximum Home Runs by Division, the treatment of ‘excess’ Home Runs after the limit, and the 1-Up Rule. Changes noted in ***Bold/Red/Italic***. • ACTION: **PASSED** 10-1

2013 HOME RUN RULES • 2012 SSUSA RULES COMMITTEE				
RATING CLASSIFICATION: AGES 50+ TO 70+	AA	AAA	MAJOR	MAJOR +
Maximum HR’s per game	1	3	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>
Excess HR’s over limit scored as:	OUTS	<b>OUTS</b>	WALKS	WALKS
1-Up Progressive Home Run structure?	<b>NO</b>			

- **RULEBOOK § 5.5 (2) – RUNS PER INNING (MAJOR+)** – Changed from nine (9) to ***seven (7)*** and coverage extended to include age 70+ Major+. • ACTION: **PASSED** 10-1
- **RULEBOOK § 12.1 – PLAYERS MUST PLAY IN REGIONS** – Extended availability of 70+ Major+ teams to have up to two (2) out of region players on their roster and prohibited 70+ Major+ teams from having “Snowbird” players on their roster. Practical effect was to conform 70+ Major+ division roster rules to those of 50+ through 65+ Major+ teams. • ACTION: **PASSED** 11-0
- **RULEBOOK § 5.8 – MERCY RULE** – Amends Major+ Mercy Rule for ages 50+ thru 70+ to be 15 Runs after 5 innings, only. Repeals former 20 Runs after 4 Innings component due to lesser allowable runs per inning and home run maximums. • ACTION: **PASSED** 10-0
- **RULEBOOK § 1.66 – UNEQUAL AGE OR RATING (MEN’S 40-MASTERS)** – Equalizer provisions for teams in the Men’s 40-Masters division amended to be runs only and not an 11<sup>th</sup> Defensive Player. • ACTION: **PASSED** 10-1
- **RULEBOOK § 2.3 D (3) & (4) – ORANGE ‘SAFETY’ BASE** – Amends these subsections to allow the base runner (after ceasing to be a batter-runner) to utilize either the white base OR the orange base, or both, while on 1<sup>st</sup> base. The practical effect is that the two bases are ‘merged’ for both offensive and defensive purposes once the batter-runner becomes solely a base runner. • ACTION: **PASSED** 6-3 (abstained: 1)
- **RULEBOOK § 5.5 (3) B. – FLIP-FLOP RULE** – Amends the flip flop rule to mandatory application at a ten (10) run (or more) deficit in Bracket play entering the open inning. • ACTION: **PASSED** 6-2 (abstained: 2)

- **RULEBOOK § 8.10 – SCORING PLATE** – The Scoring Plate is removed as a scoring option, leaving only the Scoring Line as an official field marking. • ACTION: **PASSED** 6-3 (abstained: 1)
- **RULEBOOK § 5.2 – HOME TEAM** – Motion was made to have the higher seed, in the Winner’s Bracket only, be given the option of being Home or Visitor. All other Bracket games, including the “If game” would have the choice of Home or Visitor be made by the winner of a pre-game coin toss. • ACTION: **FAILED** 2-6 (abstained: 2)

### **TECHNICAL RULEBOOK CORRECTION/CLARIFICATION**

- **RULEBOOK § 8.5 (5) – COURTESY RUNNER OFFICIALLY IN THE GAME** – Section amended to add clarification language that a team may appeal an illegal Courtesy Runner at any time while the runner is on base illegally. This is a continuing violation and not subject to the “next intervening pitch” Appeal process. • ACTION: **PASSED** 9-1

### **PLAYING RULES DISCUSSED WITHOUT VOTE TO IMPLEMENT, AMEND OR REPEAL**

- **RULEBOOK § 6.2 – PITCH COUNT** – The annual discussion of implementing the “1-1” starting pitch count occurred. • ACTION: **MOTION TO TABLE PASSED** 8-3 – SSUSA Staff was instructed to prepare a membership preference survey, to be completed and tabulated by the end of December, on this issue for study and potential action in a Special Session by Telephone of the Rules Committee in early January
- **RULEBOOK § 1.62 – STRIKE ZONE MAT** – A general discussion occurred regarding potential increase in the dimensions of the strike mat. • ACTION: **MOTION TO TABLE PASSED** 10-0 Further study, if appropriate, pending receipt of the survey results mentioned in the immediately preceding item above regarding starting pitch count.
- **SNOWBIRD / OUT OF REGION / BORDER CLOSURE ITEMS** – These items were discussed in some depth during the Wednesday General Discussion forum (See **Exhibit “A”**). They were not further discussed or considered in any depth on Thursday. • ACTION: **NONE** – Issues moot for lack of an appropriate motion, a second, or both.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Dave Dowell*

Recording Secretary



# SSUSA 2012 Rules Committee Report

## Selected Data • Exhibit “A”

### SSUSA Annual Convention Sessions

#### Mesquite, Nevada • November 28-29, 2012

#### **MAJOR PLUS • OUT OF REGION PLAYERS –**

LVSSA/SSUSA World Masters Champions 2012 – Roster Composition – Out of Region Players

- **50's - NORTHWEST LEGENDS (WA)**      **0** • TWO bordering states players
- **55's - MTC SOFTBALL CLUB 55's (CA)**      **0** • NO bordering states players
- **60's - HOLLIS APPRAISALS 60's (FL)**      **2** (Cregar & Kotzelnick) • NO bordering states players
- **65's - HAMEL BUILDERS/TURN 2 (VA)**      **2** (Davide & Smith) • SIX bordering states players

#### **BORDER CLOSURE –**

The “Border Closure Rule” affecting the states of California and Florida was in effect for the 2011 Tournament Season. The rule was repealed at the 2011 SSUSA Rules Committee meetings. The following table updates and reports to the Committee the World Champions by gender for 2010 (last year of open borders), 2011 (the year of closed borders) and 2012 (first year of re-opened borders).

<b>CHAMPIONSHIP RESULTS REGARDING BORDER CLOSURE RULE • 2010 THROUGH 2012</b>						
<b>Results by Year by Gender</b>	<b>2010 №</b>	<b>2010 %</b>	<b>2011 №</b>	<b>2011 %</b>	<b>2012 №</b>	<b>2012 %</b>
Men’s Division CA/FL Champions	9/3 (12)	<b>39%</b>	15/1 (16)	<b>48%</b>	6/4 (10)	<b>30%</b>
Women’s Division CA Champions	3	<b>60%</b>	2	<b>33%</b>	6	<b>100%</b>

The incidence of Men’s Division California and Florida World Champions increased by 9% in 2011 over 2010, rather than the intended reduction result at the time the “Border Closure Rule” was enacted, and decreased by 18% in 2012 from 2011 in the first year immediately following the repeal of the Border Closure Rule.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **2010 Winners** – CA (9), AZ (6), FL (3), CAN (2), CO (2), MI, NM, OR & WA (1) each  
**2011 Winners** – CA (15), TX (2), CO, FL, KY, MA, MI, NJ, NY, OH, RI & VA (1) each  
**2012 Winners** – CA (6), FL (4), CAN (3), WA (3), NJ (2), NY (2), AZ, HI, MD, MN, TX, VA & WI (1) each