

USSSA Rule Changes 2018

2.5 (p 10) The JEWELRY rule has been modified to allow players to wear jewelry in some instances. It also requires batters to wear play indicators (coach's wristbands) properly.

3 (p 16) ABSENT PLAYER has been defined to support Rule 5.2 (Playing Short-Handed).

3 (p 19) CONFINES OF THE PLAYING FIELD has been defined to support Rules 2.2 (Catcher's Equipment) and 14.6 (Umpire's Jurisdiction).

3 (p 23) SHORT-HANDED has been defined to support Rule 5.2 (Playing Short-Handed).

5.1 (p 28) The rule governing lineups has been modified to permit ROSTER BATTING as an option in non-Elite Select play

5.2 (p 28-29) The SHORT-HANDED rule has been modified to allow a team to drop one player from its batting order FOR ANY REASON, creating an Absent Player (automatic out) position. In non-Elite Select play, multiple Absent Players are allowed.

8.3.B (p 40) The Courtesy Runner Rule has been modified (in non-Elite Select play) to allow the Last Completed At Bat to serve as the courtesy runner IF no eligible substitute is available.

11.2.E (p 56) The Rule has been modified to support the jewelry rule change."

2018-1 JEWELRY

Revised Rule 2.5:

"Sec 5. JEWELRY (Youth only - 18 & Under and younger)

Exposed jewelry, which is judged by the umpire as dangerous, is not permitted and must be removed. Medical alert items are not considered jewelry. If worn, they must be taped to the body so medical alert information remains visible.

Flat, unadorned items with no sharp edges or points, such as bobby pins, barrettes, and hair clips (no longer than 2 inches) may be worn as hair control devices.

Coaches wristbands (play indicators) are legal but must be worn as designed when batting.

Violations are penalized per Rule 11 - Sportsmanship."

Supporting Revised Rule 11.2.E:

"E. Wear jewelry or any exposed ornament which in the umpire's judgment is dangerous while participating in the game."

2018-2 CONFINES OF THE PLAYING FIELD

New definition in Rule 3:

"CONFINES OF THE PLAYING FIELD. The confines of the playing field includes the field of play, the designated dugout/bench area, and any enclosed or clearly marked area that is designated as a warmup area that is adjacent to the field and within the view of the umpire(s)."

2018-3 LAST COMPLETED AT BAT (LCAB) COURTESY RUNNER OPTION (Non-ELITE SELECT DIVISIONS ONLY)

Revised Rule 8.3.B:

"B. Players who have participated in the game in any other capacity are not entitled to serve as a courtesy runner (i.e., the courtesy runner must be an unused substitute).

(Non-ELITE SELECT divisions): if, and only if, no eligible substitute is available, then, and only then, the Last Completed at Bat (LCAB) may serve as a courtesy runner, subject to all other applicable restrictions (cannot run for both positions in the same inning, etc).

The LCAB courtesy runner is determined at the time the courtesy runner is requested, skipping batters

- 1) currently on base,
- 2) who are the pitcher or catcher of record, or
- 3) who have already courtesy run for the other position in the same inning.

In the first inning, if no eligible substitutes are available to courtesy run, the LCAB courtesy runner shall be the person furthest away in the batting order (i.e., the LCAB courtesy runner for the lead off batter is the last batter listed in the lineup)."

2018-4 SHORT-HANDED RULE

Revised Rule 5.2

"Sec 2. SHORT-HANDED RULE:

Playing short-handed is an exception to Rule 5.1 above. A team shall be allowed to play with one batting position unfilled, provided they have a minimum of 8 batters present. The vacant batting position will be designated as the absent player. Whenever the absent player is scheduled to bat, an out shall be declared. A team may play short-handed under the following circumstances:

A. A team may continue a game with one fewer batter than is listed in the starting batting order, whenever a player leaves the game (for any reason) and no substitutes are available. If a team falls below 8 batters, a forfeit shall be declared.

1. If the absent player is the batter or a runner, she shall be declared out. Exception: if the absent player was injured while a batter-runner or runner, the absent player may be replaced by the last completed at bat (LCAB) as defined in Rule 8.3.B, to fulfill her baserunning responsibility. However, this exception does not apply to any future at-bat.

2. An absent player may not return to the lineup. Exception: a player who left under the Blood Rule may re-enter, subject to Rule 5.6.

B. A team may begin the game short-handed. The absent player must be listed in the ninth (9th) batting position. Under no circumstances shall a team be allowed to have less than eight (8) players in the batting order.

C. The team may not play short-handed if an eligible substitute arrives. Upon arrival, she must be inserted in the absent player's position in the batting order.

(Non-ELITE SELECT divisions):

A team may drop more than 1 batting position (i.e., may have multiple absent players), provided the lineup is maintained with at least 8 batters physically present. All other restrictions above apply.

If a team has multiple absent players and an eligible substitute arrives, she must enter the game immediately in the first available absent player position due up in the batting order."

Supporting additions to Rule 3 - Definitions:

"ABSENT PLAYER. The absent player is the position that is created in the batting order when a player is withdrawn and no substitutes are available to replace her. The absent player is also the ninth, unfilled position in the batting order when a team begins the game with only eight players. A team who has an absent player is playing short-handed."

SHORT-HANDED. Short-handed refers to a team's status when batting:

- a) fewer batters than listed on the original lineup card presented at the pregame conference, or
- b) less than 9 batters"

2018-5 ROSTER BATTING (Non-ELITE SELECT DIVISIONS ONLY)

Revised Rule 5.1

"Sec 1. PLAYERS A team shall consist of at least nine players, whose positions shall be designated as; (1) Pitcher, (2) Catcher, (3) First Baseman, (4) Second Baseman, (5) Third Baseman, (6) Shortstop, (7) Left Fielder, (8) Center Fielder, (9) Right Fielder. In addition, a team may optionally include a DP/FLEX and/or up to two Additional Players (APs). The maximum number of players in the lineup is 12; the maximum number of batters in the batting order is 11.

A. A team must have the required number of players present in the dugout or team area to start or continue a game.

B. The team's lineup card shall include first name, last name, jersey number, position and batting order of each starting player and should include each eligible substitute. First and last name of eligible player takes precedence over jersey number if there is a discrepancy on the lineup card. All listed starters must be present in the team area. Lineups become official after they have been exchanged, verified and then accepted by the Plate Umpire during the pregame conference.

C. Eligible roster members may be added as substitutes at any time.

(Non-ELITE SELECT divisions):

ROSTER BATTING OPTION -Teams may utilize additional APs to bat their entire roster (i.e., ALL players present; no DP/FLEX allowed) subject to the restrictions of Rules 5.2 and 5.3.

Under Roster Batting, player(s) arriving late shall be placed in the lineup in the following priority:

1) to fill any Absent Player (automatic out) position

2) if no Absent Player position exists, then the late arrival will be placed last in the batting order (i.e. - a team batting 13 will add the late arrival in the 14th batting position)

Roster Batting must be declared at the pregame conference, and all players physically present must be listed in the batting order. If a player is physically present but is unable to play because of injury or illness, that player shall be ineligible for the entire game if the team elects Roster Batting.

Revised supporting Rule 5.3:

"Sec 3. ADDITIONAL PLAYER - up to two Additional Players (APs) can be used to increase the batting order to 10 or 11 batters.

(non-ELITE SELECT divisions) Teams may use additional APs to bat their entire roster, subject to the restrictions of Rule 5.2 and 5.3

The AP(s) will be placed in the batting order in the positions to be occupied. The AP(s) can also be used on defense (only 9 defensive players in the field), but must keep the same position in the batting order. The AP(s), if used, must be selected prior to the start of the game, and their name(s) must be included on the lineup card presented to the Umpire. Failure to declare the use of the AP(s) prior to the game precludes the use of the AP(s) in that game. If a pinch-hitter or pinch-runner is used for an AP, that player becomes the new AP. The original AP(s) may re-enter like any other player under the re-entry rule. If an AP is used, the position must be used the entire game."

Edit to 5.4.G

Change second sentence to read

"If the FLEX player is not playing defense, the non-batting FLEX position is eliminated and the FLEX player is out of the game, unless the FLEX player is playing offensively in the DP's position, then the FLEX player may remain in the game and not play defense."