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B. 2026 RULES Silver Division

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Changes for 2026 season shown in bold, italics, like this example.

Changes for 2026 SPRING season shown in bold, italics, like this example

A. DRAFT PROCESS 2026 Silver Division

The draft procedure is determined by the Commissioner and can vary from season to season to fit the current desires and needs of the league. The Goal is to create evenly skilled teams.

1. Initial Skill Evaluation/Rating

1.1. New players joining the league will get evaluated on their overall playing skills using the current method in place to accomplish that.

1.2. Ongoing Skill Evaluation/Rating

1.2.1. The Division Director will gather and provide a list of all players who signed up for the seasonal teams being formed, then distribute it to all managers for that season.

2. Protected Players ***There will be no protected players for the 2026 season.***

B. 2026 RULES Silver Division

Note: The league does follow Senior Softball USA (SSUSA) rules, but as long as the league has standard rules of our own, such as those in this document, the league rules take priority over the SSUSA rules. SSUSA Rules govern all play except any rule stated within this entire document. ***Proposed rule changes are presented to team managers for possible editing. After review of rule change recommendations by the managers, they are passed on to the BVSSA Board to be approved or disapproved.***

1.0 **ELIGIBLE PLAYERS** (also referred to as "rostered players" or "players")

1.1 Eligible players are Male players who are in good standing with the league and:

1.1.1 Men of at least 60 years old in the year of play and capable of proving, upon request, their legitimate age with a valid Driver's License.

1.1.2 Registered with the league (i.e., signed waiver and paid the current league registration fee) prior to the draft. *Nonplaying scorekeepers shall fill out an application, with no fee required, they are not allowed on the playing field.*

2.0 NUMBER OF PLAYERS PER TEAM

2.1 There is a goal of 14-15 players on a Silver Division team. The BOARD may add more players if NEEDED, but it is not mandatory. Each team gets sufficient shirts for the players, with 1 shirt going to the sponsor.

3.0 NUMBER OF PLAYERS REQUIRED FOR A LEGITIMATE GAME

3.1 Every team must field a minimum of 9 players. If neither team can field 9, the game will be rescheduled.

3.2 If a team can field only 9 players, the other team can lend ONLY one defensive player ***of their choice***, either a catcher or right fielder, if available.

3.3 If a team can field only 10 players AFTER the other team lends them one, that team will play short one defensive player (either in the infield or outfield). They cannot borrow another player.

3.4 The overall league general understanding is:

A. All available rostered players are placed in the batting order for the entire game. No minimum defensive playing time. (See Section 6.0)

B. There must be **mutual consent between both managers prior to the start of the game** for players, line-up, ground rules, number of game innings, game start times, or any other deviations from the standard Silver Division rules.

C. The home team manager is still responsible for setting up (and then removing) all field equipment prior to start of game.

D. The league commissioner will determine if any or all games are cancelled due to field conditions or weather.

E. If one game is cancelled due to conditions, all games will be cancelled.

3.5 No penalty for empty positions in the batting order for teams with only 9 or 10 players.

4.0 **LEGITIMATE REGULAR SEASON GAMES** A legitimate regular season game is a game scheduled by the league whose outcome counts in divisional standings.

4.1 Scheduled regular season games, double headers and rainout double headers will all begin at **10 AM.** Game times can change with mutual consent from both managers.

4.1.1 Teams should be ready to play 10 minutes before the scheduled start time.

4.1.2 Teams unable to field a 9-player team 15 minutes after the scheduled start time will forfeit the game.

4.1.3 The Home team is responsible for field setup (and removal) in time for the scheduled start time of the game including placement of all bases (1 strike mat/defensive home plate, 1 scoring plate, 1 courtesy runner's starting plate, 2 First bases, 1 Second base, 1 Third base, and a Pitcher's plate), a Commitment line, and Outfield foul line cones (if available).

4.2 All single games will be 9-inning games.

4.3 Double headers will be two 7 inning games, with a 5–10-minute break between games. All games played with 0 ball, 0 strike counts. Make-up games will be played the next time the teams meet. Standard SSUSA rules apply when determining a complete game.

4.4 Games are considered to be an "official game" upon completion of 4 ½ innings when the home team is leading, or upon completion of 5 innings when the visiting team is ahead in the score.

4.4.1 The home team scorebook is the "official" book. Managers should frequently check the score with the opposing manager. The game will not continue until the score issue, or any other score book-related issue, is resolved.

~~5.0~~ **BATTING ORDER** Substitution/Re-entry rules are no longer used. All players on both teams who show up are automatically put into an active batting order position and remain there for the entire game. Both teams will exchange line-ups before the start of the game (This way the teams can keep an accurate count on courtesy runners and possible late-arriving players) and identify the player(s) who show up but will not be in the batting order.

5.1 If a player becomes unavailable (physically unable to play, emergency, etc.) during a game, he is dropped from the batting order and cannot play for the rest of that game even if that game is discontinued and continued at a later time. No penalty.

5.1.1 ***Players borrowed from the opposing team for defensive purposes are not eligible to bat for that team.***

5.1.2 If a player becomes unavailable during a game and his non-availability leads to his team having less than 9 players, his team forfeits the game.

5.1.3 If player(s) arrive after the first pitch of the game, they are immediately placed at the bottom of the batting order, and if their turn to bat comes up in that half of the inning, they may bat. There is no guarantee of offensive or defensive playing time for late arrivals.

5.1.4 Player injuries, emergencies, and health-related issues.

5.1.4.1 ***If a batter is unable to complete his at-bat for any reason (injury, sickness, emergency, etc.), the manager's choice is to either call the batter out and the next batter comes up, or to allow the next batter to continue the count for the at-bat in place of his normal at-bat.***

5.1.4.2 If a defensive player is unable to continue playing (injury, sickness, emergency, etc.), an available player from his team can take his place defensively. If no player is available, the team can borrow a player (if available) for the catcher's or right-field position only. If a borrowed player is not available, the defensive team will play short one position, and the person's batting position is skipped going forward. No penalty.

5.1.4.3 If a player is injured and cannot bat or play in the field, and there is no player to take his place, the injured player's time at bat is skipped (No penalty). If a player must leave early, this must have the approval of the opposing manager prior to the start of the game. If a player leaves without prior approval, or leaves without informing his manager, an out is recorded for each at-bat going forward in the vacated batting position.

5.1.4.4 If a player's injury is serious or he has medical reasons not to continue play for the rest of the season, he may be replaced on the roster with a qualifying eligible player.

Note: Players replaced on the roster cannot come back to the roster for the rest of that season. The replacement player must play in at least 50% of the regularly scheduled games from the time the roster change occurs, in order to be eligible for the playoffs.

5.2 Batting out of order can be challenged by the DEFENSIVE team only, via an appeal. If the appeal is successful, the batter will be called out, and all other runners will return to their previous bases unless the out is the last out of the inning. The DEFENSIVE team forfeits its right to appeal batting out of order when a legal or illegal pitch is made to the following batter, or when the pitcher and all infielders have clearly vacated their normal fielding positions and have left fair territory on their way to the dugout or bench.

5.2.1 If the OFFENSIVE team discovers the batting order error PRIOR to a defensive team appeal, the correct batter may take his place and legally assume the ball and strike count. There is NO penalty when the OFFENSIVE team makes the correction.

5.2.2 If the correct batter is on base as a courtesy runner when his time at bat occurs, standard courtesy runner rules apply, per Section 7.4.

5.3 Bunting of any sort and intentionally chopped balls are illegal. PENALTY: The batter is out and the ball is dead. This is a judgment call by the Home plate umpire, subject to appeal.

6.0 DEFENSIVE PLAYING TIME/DEFENSIVE POSITIONING

6.1 No minimum defensive playing time is required for all available players.

6.2 Minimum of 9 and maximum of ***12*** defensive players allowed on the field at the same time.

6.3 ***Maximum of 5 infielders and 5 outfielders allowed.***

6.4 Only the catcher (catcher's box) and pitcher (pitcher's box) have defined defensive positions.

6.5 All defensive players except the catcher must be in fair territory.

6.5.1 Outfielders cannot cross the imaginary arc into the infield until the ball is batted.

6.5.2 Infielders ***must stay on the infield dirt BEFORE the ball is batted but can go on the infield grass After the ball is batted. Infield dirt and grass lines may vary from field to field.***

6.5.3 A maximum ***of 3 infielders and outfielders can play on one side of the diamond (between 1st and 2nd base or between 2nd and 3rd base). The centermost player (if five infielders and outfielders) must be within ARMS LENGTH from the player to the left or right until the ball is hit.***

7.0 **COURTESY RUNNERS** Unless there is an injury during the game, batters for whom courtesy runners will be used due to prior injury or other physical problems must be declared before the start of the game. Both managers must agree, and once declared, they must always be run for. If there are no more eligible courtesy runners for batters, the batter is out.

7.1 Barring an injury, emergency, or sickness, a courtesy runner for a current base runner can only enter the game BEFORE the 1st pitch is made to the batter. The Courtesy runner is in the game once he touches the starting plate or base and cannot run again in the same inning. This constitutes a courtesy event.

7.2 Courtesy runners from home plate cannot advance past second base on a hit, error, fielder's choice or overthrow to first base, or any other circumstances during the at-bat. The play is considered dead upon reaching 2nd base. Other runners can only advance to the next base.

7.2.1 Courtesy runners of any age, from the plate or the bases, can be part of a double play.

7.3 Courtesy runners may courtesy run only once per inning and are automatically out if running more than once per inning. Each courtesy runner can only run a total of 3 times per game as either runner from the plate and/or a pinch base runner. A courtesy runner will be called out if running for the fourth time. SA batter/runner, who has been a courtesy run for, cannot himself be a courtesy runner for someone else in the same inning. **PENALTY:** The runner is out.

7.4 A courtesy runner on base when it is his turn to bat will be declared out. The runner will be removed from the base he occupies, and a second courtesy runner cannot be used. Replacing the original player will not prevent this out. The courtesy runner called out does not lose his turn at bat.
EFFECT: The out occurs at the base the courtesy runner abandoned to take his turn at bat.

7.5 ***Courtesy Runner (CR) starting plate. Can use a 4-sided square plate or a 5-sided home plate with the back point facing toward the backstop.***

7.5.1 The runners base shall be aligned with the strike mat facing the pitcher. From the lower right side of the strike mat.

7.5.2 ***Courtesy runner must have the front of the lead foot just touching the back edge of the plate***. If foot is off the plate before ball contact with the bat is made, the batter is out. They may NOT leave the starting plate until the batter makes contact with the pitched ball (a fair batted ball, foul ball or foul tip). Courtesy runner MUST remain on the starting plate at all times. **PENALTY:** The batter is OUT if the courtesy runner leaves the starting plate early (including a swing-and-miss or a check swing). No warnings.

Note: Refer to Section 11.3.4 Base Running, for base runner rule.

7.6 Refer to Section 10.6.1.1, Commitment Lines for additional batter penalty.

~~8.0~~

8.1 Infielders must play even with or behind the bags of 1st and 3rd base baselines, not in front of them.

9.0 EQUIPMENT

9.1 **ILEGITIMATE SOFTBALL BATS IN THIS LEAGUE.** ALLOWED: 1) All SOFTBALL wood and any single or double-walled metal bats. 2) Composite handle and metal barrel hybrid bats.

9.2 NOT ALLOWED:

3) Any wood/metal HARDBALL bats. 4) Full composite bats. 5) Any bat with a composite barrel.
6) Any Bat that has a crack or a dent.
EXCEPTION: Players ages 80 and over can use "Senior bats" (full composite). Players turning 80 anytime during the calendar year are eligible for the full year. Full composite bats are allowed as long as they are on the list of approved bats posted on the SSUSA web site https://seniorsoftball.com/?page=36). Managers will have the list.

Note: All composite bats are required to be visually identified by wrapping a piece of ½ inch wide **RED** tape completely around the top of the barrel. No exceptions. COMPOSITE BATS NOT IDENTIFIED VISUALLY ARE CONSIDERED ILLEGAL. **PENALTY:** Players under age 80 using full composite bats (by accident, "I didn't know", etc.) will be subject to the rules listed below**.** No exceptions, no warnings.

9.2.1 **Bat specifications:** Shall not exceed 34 inches in length, 38 ounces in weight, and have a BPF (Batting Performance Factor) no greater than 1.21.

9.2.2 ***Only managers can request that all bats be checked*** before the start of a game to determine if any are illegal. Those that are determined as illegal may not be used in that or any other league game.

9.2.3 Any batter discovered using an illegal bat during a league game, **which was previously declared illegal prior to the start of the game,** shall be declared out and gameplay will revert to the situation before he batted. The batter will immediately be ejected from the game and face possible disciplinary action for future games.

9.2.4 Any batter discovered using an illegal bat during a league game shall be declared out and gameplay will revert to the situation before he batted. If a batter commits a second violation in the same game, he will be immediately ejected from that game and face possible disciplinary action for future games.

9.2.5 The batter can file a protest after the game and must surrender the bat in question to his manager, and the manager will give the batter a receipt acknowledging he received it. The player then has the responsibility to prove that bat is in fact legal at a subsequent official hearing involving the 2 Managers, the Silver Division Director, and the Commissioner. The

Silver Division Director and the Commissioner will determine if the player will receive any disciplinary action if the bat is indeed illegal per SSUSA rules.

9.2.6 In the interest of safety and fair play, the league trusts that all managers will closely enforce the rules regarding illegal bats.

9.3 SHOES: Metal cleats are not permitted. Player(s) found wearing metal cleats will be called out, if on base; then ejected from the game immediately.

9.4 UNIFORMS: ***It is requested that each team player wears a like colored shirt with a number unique from other team players (supplied by the league).***

9.5 SOFTBALLS: The home team will provide a regulation new game ball, and one in very good condition for the alternate game ball. The ball is yellow in color, with specifications of 12 inches in circumference, COR rating (Coefficient Of Restitution - how much bounce the ball has) of 0.44, and compression rating (how hard the ball is) of no more than 375 lbs.

9.6 PITCHING SCREEN: OPTIONAL for one or both teams' pitchers to use for the entire game. ***Relievers can start using the screen, even if the starter did not use it at the beginning of the game.*** Relievers have the option to remove it or continue using it ***if used by the starter***. The screen remains on the field if used by both pitchers. If only one pitcher uses a screen, that pitcher will remove it after his inning is over, and then put it back in place before his next inning begins.

9.6.1 The screen will directly face the home plate 6 feet in front of the pitching rubber. The left or right frame edge is aligned with the center of the rubber, not at the ends of it. The screen remains in place and cannot be re-positioned for the entire half-inning.

9.6.2 For safety reasons, the pitcher MUST immediately go behind the screen after he releases the ball. PENALTY: The BATTER will AUTOMATICALLY be awarded first base and this will not count as a walk. After each pitch, the pitcher will go behind the screen for safety reasons. The pitcher is allowed to come out from behind the screen to field his position for slow ground balls, pop-up fly balls, foul balls, cover bases, etc. at his own risk.

9.6.3 Batted balls, line drives, etc. striking the screen mesh or frame are declared a "dead ball, no pitch". No penalty. Runners cannot advance. Batted balls (no half-swings or tapped balls), line drives, etc. hitting the screen a second time in the player's same at-bat is considered a hit and batter is awarded first base. This can only happen once per inning by Team.

Batted balls hitting any player's glove or part of their body FIRST, and then hitting the screen or frame, are live balls. All calls are made by the Homeplate umpire, ***who can confer with base umpires if needed.***

9.6.4 The screen must not be moved or knocked down to allow throws from the infield or outfield.

9.6.5 Balls thrown from the infield or outfield that hit the screen mesh or frame are live and remain in play. Runners can advance at their own risk.

9.7 GLOVES and MITTS: Any glove or mitt can be worn by any player in any position. When the webbing is laid down flat, the TOP width (distance) of the webbing cannot exceed 5 inches as measured end to end. If it does, it is illegal to use.

10.0 THE PLAYING FIELD

10.1 STRIKE MAT/DEFENSIVE HOME PLATE: A strike mat is placed precisely with its front edge over the front edge of an existing home plate.

10.1.1 Any pitched ball hitting the ***strike mat*** including the black border of the mat is a strike. Strike mat dimensions are 19" wide, 34.5" long.

10.1.2 Defensive plays at home must be made only on the defensive home plate. A base runner shall be called out only via a force play at Home (i.e. No tag plays at Home).

10.2 **SCORING PLATE*:*** The scoring plate will be placed 9 feet from the top, left corner of the strike mat/defensive Home plate, in foul territory, as viewed from behind the catcher's box. It will be located *even in alignment with first base*. from the front of the strike mat/defensive Home plate. A square base can be used as the scoring plate.

10.2.1 All scoring must take place on the scoring plate.

10.2.2 A score occurs when a base runner has any part of his body in contact with the scoring plate before a defensive player in full possession of a ball in play has any part of his body, or the fully possessed ball (in his bare hand or in a worn glove) in contact with the defensive home plate.

10.2.2.1 If a runner touches the scoring plate before a non-force play 3rd out is made someplace else on the field (e.g. tag-out), the run counts.

10.2.3 A base runner who touches or crosses over any part of the defensive home plate shall be declared out and the ball is immediately declared dead (Other base runners must return to their previous, safely earned base and may not advance if an overthrow occurs as a result of the infringement).

10.3 DOUBLE FIRST BASE: Two 1st base bags are used.

10.3.1 The Defensive 1st base bag is placed in the field of play.

10.3.1.1 All defensive plays at 1st base are made to this bag.

10.3.1.2 Batter/runners may run from Home plate to and through this bag only if there is no defensive play attempted at this bag.

10.3.1.3 If a defensive play is attempted at the **defensive 1st base bag,** and a base runner runs to or through this bag from Home plate, the base runner will be called out and the ball is immediately declared dead (Other base runners must return to their previous, safely-earned base and may not advance if an overthrow occurs as a result of the infringement).

10.3.2 The Base Runners' 1st base bag (safety base) is placed parallel to the defensive 1st base bag, in foul territory, 1 foot from the defensive 1st base bag, and equidistant from Home plate.

10.3.2.1 Base runners must run to or through this bag if there is a defensive play attempted at the defensive 1st base bag.

10.4 FOUL LINE MARKERS AND THE IMAGINARY ARC

10.4.1 Plastic cones are placed on each foul line, (70) feet behind 1st and 3rd bases to serve the following purposes. a) A visual aid that assists in determining the foul lines more accurately. b) Prevention of a "pinched defense" by all outfielder positions. c) Defines the start of the outfield line. An imaginary arc is drawn between the cones on the left and right field foul lines. No outfielder can position himself inside that arc for any batter/runner. Applies to all batters/runners, regardless of age.

10.4.2 Location of imaginary arc in center field area:

THE PITCHER'S PLATE AND PITCHER'S BOX:

10.4.1 The pitcher's plate is placed in line between home plate and 2nd base.

10.4.1.1 The distance between the back point of the Home plate and the front edge of the pitcher's plate is 50 feet.

10.4.2 The pitcher's box extends back from the front of the pitcher's plate a distance of 6 feet.

10.4.3 A legal pitch is a ball thrown underhanded by the pitcher:

10.4.3.1 When the ball is in play *and*

10.4.3.2 when the batter is in the batter's box (In play) *and*

10.4.3.3 when the pitcher delivers the ball from behind **(not in front of)** the pitcher's plate **OR** with at least one foot on the pitcher's plate *and*

10.4.3.4 with an arc between 6' and 12' (not too low or too high)

10.4.4 A "no pitch" or illegal pitch will be called by the umpire at the top of the arc and before it reaches the strike mat or ground. Home plate umpire's judgment call without dispute.

10.4.4.1 The batter/runner can swing at an illegal pitch at his own risk; otherwise, the pitch is counted as a ball.

10.5 THE COMMITMENT LINES: Two commitment lines will be drawn, one along 1st base, and one along 3rd base. A commitment line 3 feet long is drawn in foul territory perpendicular to the 1st and 3rd base foul lines and 30 feet from the front of the ***strike mat***.

10.5.1 The first base commitment line serves two purposes.

10.6.1.1 If the batter being courtesy run for, starts running along with the courtesy runner via batted ball or walk, and goes past the 30-foot commitment line, the courtesy runner is declared out, the ball is dead, and all other base runners remain on their previously earned base, unless the out is the 3rd out of the inning.

10.6.1.2 If a regular batter does not release the bat after hitting the ball and carries it past the 30-foot commitment line, the batter is declared out, the ball is dead, and all other base runners remain on their previously earned base unless the out is the 3rd out of the inning. Does not apply to a foul ball.

10.5.2 Third base commitment line

10.6.2.1 A base runner who safely earns 3rd base and then touches or crosses the commitment line with his foot must continue to the scoring plate. A base runner who passes the commitment line then returns across it towards 3rd base is immediately out. The ball is declared dead and other existing base runners return to their previously earned base.

10.6 THE BATTER'S BOX: Is a rectangle-shaped area, 3 feet wide, 7 feet long.

10.6.1 Front end extends 3 feet past the front of the strike mat towards the infield.

10.6.2 Back end extends one foot past the rear of the strike mat towards the backstop.

10.7 FOUL LINE MARKERS: Plastic cones are placed on each foul line (70) feet behind 1st and 3rd bases to serve the following purposes.

10.7.1 Visual aid that assists in determining the foul lines more accurately.

10.7.2 ***Prevention of a "pinched defense" by all outfielder positions.*** An imaginary arc is drawn between the cones on the left and right field foul lines. No outfielder can position himself inside that arc **for any batter/runner.** This rule applies to **all players, regardless of age.**

11.0 GENERAL GAME RULES SSUSA Rules govern all play with the exception of any rule stated within this entire document.

11.1 **WALKS***: Only 1 walk per defensive inning allowed, intentional or non-intentional. No exceptions.*

11.1.1 For intentional walks, the batter being walked will proceed to first base after the defensive manager informs the home plate umpire. No need to pitch 4 balls.

11.2 SLIDING: Sliding or diving is permitted.

11.2.1 A base runner may slide or dive when returning to a previous safely-earned base.

11.2.2 A base runner is permitted to slide into 2nd or 3rd base, but is not allowed to slide into either the safety bag at first base or the safety scoring plate at home plate. The runner will be called out.

11.3 BASE RUNNING:

11.3.1 Defensive players cannot block the base under any circumstances, nor stand in the middle of it if not making a defensive play.

11.3.1.1 A base runner must avoid making contact with any defensive player (Illegal contact) unless the base runner slides or dives directly at a base and makes contact with the playing surface prior to making contact with any defensive player (Legal contact). Umpires will make the call.

11.3.2 If there is illegal contact, that runner will immediately be called out, and the other runner will also be called out if a double play is being attempted. Also, if a base runner is forced out at any base and fails to avoid interfering with an attempted double play (i.e. not giving himself up after being forced out and the defensive player has the ball), the other base runner is automatically declared out. The ball is immediately declared dead and other existing base runners return to their previous, safely earned base, if applicable.

EXAMPLE: Scenario is for when a runner is on 1st base and an infielder throws to 2nd base for the force out.

a) On a ground ball hit to the infield and the infielder throws to 2nd base for the force out, the runner must "give himself up" to avoid any contact with defensive players.

b) "Give himself up" means you MUST slide, or yield to avoid contact and be completely out of the way of the infielder before reaching 2nd base.

c) Any player intentionally making contact with a defensive player will be removed from the game and a possible 2 game suspension applied

11.3.3 If an errant throw draws the defensive player into the path of any batter/runner, and the batter/runner takes evasive steps to avoid contact with the defensive player and fails to touch the base, or touches the regular base in fair territory, the batter/runner will **not** be called out.

11.3.4 All baserunners currently on base must not leave the base until the batter makes contact with the pitched ball (a fair batted ball, foul ball or foul tip). **PENALTY:** Runner(s) will be called out for leaving the base early. NO PENALTY if batter swings-and-misses the ball or checks his swing and the runner(s) come off the bases (1st, 2nd, 3rd). The runners are NOT OUT. *Courtesy runner from Homeplate must stay in contact with the plate until the ball is hit. Stepping off base when there is no contact, runner will be declared out.*

11.3.5 Penalty for a thrown ball going out of bounds, such as when the ball is in play and is overthrown beyond the field's boundary lines. **EFFECT:** All runners will be awarded two (2) bases (the base they were running toward but did not yet earn, and one additional base). The award will be governed by the positions of the runners when the ball left the fielder's hands, NOT WHEN IT GOES OUT OF BOUNDS. If two runners are between the same bases the award is based on the lead runner.

11.3.6 Base runners crossing the 3rd base commitment line can ONLY be out via a force play by any defensive player (pitcher, catcher, infielder or outfielder), at the defensive home plate/strike plate. No tag plays at Home. Runner CAN be tagged out BEFORE crossing the commitment line.

11.3.7 Base runners to 1st base that safely touch the safety bag then turn left into the infield ***and do not attempt to advance to 2nd base will not be in jeopardy of being tagged out as long as they get back to 1st base quickly. Those showing an attempt to advance are in jeopardy of being tagged out***. Base runners who safely touch the safety bag and then turn right into foul territory will not be in jeopardy of being tagged out.

11.4 FOUL OUTS/FOUL BALLS:

11.4.1 1st or 2nd strike FOUL BALLS and/or FOUL TIPS caught behind the batter, REGARDLESS OF HEIGHT, is an out.

11.4.2 3rd strike fouls and foul tips are automatic outs. The ball is immediately declared dead and other existing base runners return to their previous, safely earned base without advancement.

11.4.3 Foul ball definition. A batted ball shall be judged according to the relative position OF THE BALL AND THE FOUL LINE, and NOT as to whether the fielder is on fair or foul territory at the time he touches the ball. ***(If a player is in fair territory and touches a ball also in fair territory and the ball bounces out of the glove and lands in foul territory, the ball is still a fair ball).*** Also, the entire strike plate is considered fair territory.

11.5 INFIELD POP-UPS/FLY BALLS/LINE DRIVES: (Infield Fly Rule no longer used)

11.5.1 Standard put-out rules apply. No automatic outs.

11.6 RUNS PER INNING: There is a maximum of 5 runs allowed per team per Inning. Once the 5th run is scored, the half-inning ends. **Note:** The "catch-up inning" is not used anymore.

11.6.1 The last inning of any game is an open inning, and each team is allowed to score an unlimited number of runs within their 3 outs. The standard game ending rules apply.

11.7 TIE BREAKER RULES: If, at the last inning of a game, the score is tied, **the game continues as usual** until one team has more runs than the other team at the end of the bottom (home team) half of the inning.

11.7.1 There is no limit to the number of runs scored in extra innings.

11.7.2 Each batter/runner comes to bat with a 0 Ball 0 strike count.

11.7.3 Play continues until a winning run has been scored and the home team has had a final at bat.

11.8 UMPIRES:

11.8.1 The team batting provides umpires.

11.8.2 Managers are responsible for ensuring their coach/umpires and Home plate umpires understand the rules of the game and the associated league rules.

11.8.3 Balls, strikes, illegal pitches, commitment line calls, pop fouls to the catcher, batters hitting a pitched ball while out of the batter's box, bunting/chopped balls, ***courtesy runner from plate leaving early or on a swing and miss,*** and calls at the scoring plate are some examples of the Home plate umpire's call.

11.8.4 Fair or foul balls are the home plate umpire's call regardless of where the ball falls on the entire playing field.

11.8.5 The 1st base coach will call all plays at 1st base.

11.8.6 The 3rd base coach will call all plays at 2nd base and 3rd base and may ask for assistance from the Home plate umpire with calls involving over-running of 2nd or 3rd base.

11.8.7 If the batting team fails to provide umpires, calls will be made by the defensive player closest to the position.

11.8.8 ***Only both managers will settle all questionable calls. Managers can appoint a player more knowledgeable concerning the rules, in his place, but the original manager must still control his team. Players other than managers arguing a play or rule will be subject to a one game suspension. Managers who cannot control their team and keep them out of the discussion will also be subject to suspension. All occurrences must be reported to the Silver Div. Director to render a decision.***

11.8.9 Managers and any rostered player may be coach/umpires or Home plate umpires.

11.9 WARM-UP PITCHES: Pitchers may have up to 5 warm-up pitches in the 1st inning, and up to 3 per inning after that. Relief pitchers may have up to 5 warm-up pitches when first taking the mound.
Note: Warm-up pitches are allowed during game delays, conferences, injury time-outs, etc.

11.10 MERCY RULE: If a team is ahead by 15 or more runs at any time after 7 full innings of a 9-inning game, or 5 full innings of a 7-inning game, THE TRAILING TEAM has the option of ending the game at any time before the last inning of the scheduled game. At that point, the game is over. No "resets".

11.11 PROTESTS: If the 2 managers cannot reach an agreement on a rules decision, the protest process ensues.

11.11.1 The protesting manager must sign the opposing manager's scorebook.

11.11.2 Protests must be submitted in writing within 24 hours of the protest to the Commissioner and Division Director and must state the SSUSA or BVSSA Rule that is being challenged.

11.11.3 A Review Committee composed of managers not involved in the protest and the GOLD Division Director will handle all protests.

11.11.4 Judgment decisions will not be heard.

11.11.5 Review Committee decisions are final and irrevocable.

11.12 DIVISION STANDINGS: Division standings are updated after every completed game.

11.12.1 At the end of regular season play, if 2 teams end up with identical records, the winner of the division will be determined by the "head-to-head" records of the 2 teams in question. If the 2 teams' "head-to-head" records against one another are equal, ***the tie breaker for first place will the team that scored the most runs in the regular season during their games against each other.***

11.13 DIVISION PLAYOFFS: At the completion of the regular season, all teams in the division will participate in the division playoffs.

11.13.1 The schedule for division playoff games will be determined by the Commissioner.

11.13.2 A player needs to play in at least 50% of the scheduled regular season games in order to qualify to play in the division playoffs. Opposing managers can challenge playoff eligibility of all players.

11.13.3 ROUND 1: Based on the number of teams in the division, the Commissioner determines the format of this round, the teams that play each other, and who the Home team is for each game. Managers will be informed once the decision is made.

11.13.4 ROUND 2: Winning teams from Round 1 play a best-of-3 series for the Division Playoffs. The top-seeded teams are the home team for first and third (if necessary) games in the best of 3 series.

11.13.5 ROUND 3: Winning teams from Round 2 play a best of 3 series for the League Championship. The highest seeded team is the home team for first and third (if necessary) games in the best of 3 series.

11.13.6 All games are played to completion as 9 inning games.

11.13.7 No doubleheaders during any round of the division playoffs.

12.0 CONDUCT

12.1 ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES ***AND ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES*** ARE PROHIBITED IN ALL COMPLEXES AND RECREATIONAL AREAS THAT BVSSA UTILIZES.

12.2 ***FOUL, ABUSIVE OR DEROGITORY LANGUAGE OF ANY SORT WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.*** ALL MANAGERS ARE EXPECTED TO ENFORCE THIS PROHIBITION WITH THEIR OWN TEAMS.

12.3 FAILURE TO USE THE RESTROOM AND PORTABLE TOILET FACILITIES TO RELIEVE YOURSELF WILL BE DISCIPLINED BY SERVING A 3 CONSECUTIVE GAME SUSPENSION STARTING IMMEDIATELY WITH THE NEXT SCHEDULED GAME. NO EXCEPTIONS.

12.4 A Review Committee, determined by the Commissioner, will review any and all unprofessional and/or inappropriate conduct not in the best interest of the league or the game of softball.

12.5 Disposition and/or discipline will be determined by the Commissioner after consultation with the Division Directors and a thorough investigation is conducted.

12.6 If players engage in physical contact (shoving or pushing), ***or physical aggression without contact,*** they will be ejected from the game and told to leave the field. **PENALTY:** 1 game suspension for 1st offense.

12.7 If players engage in physical assault (fist fighting /throwing punches) they will be ejected from the game and told to leave the field. **PENALTY:** Suspended for the remainder of the season for 1st offense.

12.8 Any player receiving a 2nd offense will come under review by the Commissioner, Director of Gold, and Director of Silver before he is let back into the league.

13.0 PLAYING FIELD GROUND RULES

13.1 EAST BRADFORD GROUND RULE: Any batted ball (grounder, fly ball, or line drive) hit beyond an imaginary line between the metal sign in Right field and to a 90-degree point on the 1st base line (into the ravine) is a ground-rule double. Any batted ball hit to the left of the metal sign is all the batter can get. Any batted ball striking the metal sign or signpost is a ground rule double.

13.1.1 East Bradford Township does not permit ball playing any time before 9 AM due to noise restrictions. Please observe this.

13.1.2 Concord Field. Any Ball hit over high left field fence is a Home Run, over the short center field fence is a Home Run.

13.1.3 Fly Balls hit past the out of bound lines at East Bradford, Concordville or Thornburry, and caught, are considered an out. Runners may advance at their own risk.