

# Regional and State Tournaments

## Regions:

The state is divided into **four** regions for Men's "D" Tournaments.

## Qualifying:

A sports community must conduct a MRPA registered league in order to qualify representatives for an MRPA post-season tournament. Teams registered only for weekend tournaments will be allowed into a post-season tournament only after all sanctioned leagues are accommodated or if a team wins a qualifying tournament.

## Advancement:

- **The top two teams in all regionals** automatically advance to the state tournament. The tournament will then be filled out by taking 3rd through 8th place teams on a pro-rated basis from the regions that register the most teams. These teams plus all qualifier winners who have submitted an entry form and have paid for their berth will play for the State Championship.
- **Men's D** will have Competitive and Recreational Regional and State Tournaments. League directors place teams that play in the weekend tournaments and more competitive teams in the D Competitive Tournament. Teams that do not play in the weekend tournaments will be placed in the Recreational Tournament. There is **NO** advancement for Recreational teams beyond the State Tournaments. The winner of each Class D Region will get a paid berth to the Class D state tournament. All other teams advancing through the Regions will pay a \$100 entry fee.

## Tournament Structure:

**Adult Tournaments** — double elimination

**Youth Tournaments** — three-game guarantee

**Insufficient Number of Teams** — MRPA reserves the right to combine two or more classes of competition when an insufficient number of tournament entries exist to conduct a specific class of play. When there are not enough teams to conduct a Regional Tournament, two or more regions may be combined or the teams may be sent directly to state.

## Registration and Penalties:

- League Directors will receive written notice of tournament berths awarded along with a tournament entry form after their team registrations are received and processed by MRPA. To claim these awarded berths, the director must complete and return the tournament entry form along with payment or purchase order.
- **Deadline:** July 8 (*June 17 for youth slow teams*). A late charge of \$10/team is assessed on all entries not paid by deadline. Once a tournament entry fee is submitted and a Tournament Berth reserved, no refunds will be made. Furthermore, any team notifying the MRPA later than noon on the Tuesday before the tournament or any team who simply fails to appear at the tournament are not permitted to return to an MRPA softball tournament for one year.

## Entry Fees and Deadline:

Adult Slow Pitch - \$160

Youth Slow Pitch - \$160

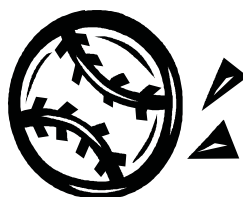
- **Team Award**—presented to the first, second, third, and fourth place finishers in all tournaments.
- **Individual Award**—to participating members of the first and second place teams in each tournament.
- **Most Valuable Player Trophy**—awarded in each tournament.
- **All-State Plaques**—15 awards at all state tourneys. (The first place team has six representatives, second place has four, third place has three, and fourth place has two.)
- **Youth Tournaments**—Individual awards to the top 3 teams. **NO** All-Tournament or MVP awards.

## Rosters:

### Filling Out the Form:

- **All entries on the official tournament roster must be completed and legible.** Players' names must be entered on official tournament roster by League Director who will cross out blank spaces and sign their name.
- **Each player who appears on the official tournament roster must sign his/her name in the provided space.** No additional names may be added to the tournament roster at the tournament site, although players who have been previously listed by the League Director may complete the signature block if they have not already done so. These players, however, must present a valid Minnesota Driver's License at this time. Players who participate without completing the signature block will cause their team to forfeit out of the tournament.
- **Teams with incomplete or illegible rosters may be eliminated from the tournament.** Rosters must be verified and signed by both the Team Manager and the League Director.
- **A player may not play on more than one tournament team in the same division.** However, s/he may play in a tournament in each of the following divisions:
 

• Open	• 35 & Over	• Mixed	• Corporate
• 40 & Over	• Youth Slow	• Church	• 60 & Over
• 45 & Over	• 50 & Over	• 55 & Over	
- **The sports community, classification and division listed on the tournament roster must match the original team registration as submitted by the League Director.**
- **Addresses are required on all tournament rosters** for MRPA-USSSA tournament competition. Players who claim eligibility through employment must provide their work address and players who claim eligibility through their residence must provide their home address.
- **A copy of the team's roster must accompany the Regional or State Tournament roster.**



### Proof of Eligibility:

- **Community Teams** - Players appearing on the official roster should be prepared to immediately prove their eligibility upon request of the Tournament Director. A valid Minnesota Driver's License or picture/signature ID with material substantiating their eligible address. Teams will be picked randomly to prove their eligibility.
- **Corporate Team Rosters** - Must be accompanied by a letter on company letterhead that verifies that players on the official tournament roster started employment before June 15 and they are still employed. The letter must be signed by the company's personnel manager and include both his/her work and home phone numbers.
- **Church Team Rosters** - Church Team Rosters must be accompanied by a letter written on church letterhead and signed by the head of the church which validates the church participation of the players listed on the official tournament roster. Church membership must have been established prior to June 15.
- **Youth, 35 &Over, 40 &Over, 45 &Over, 50 &Over, 55 &Over, 60 &Over, 65 &Over, 70 &Over** - Players participating in these programs must verify their ages using one of the following documents, which must be available at the bench area:

1. valid Minnesota Driver's License      **OR...**
  2. a picture ID\* and one of the following: birth certificate or hospital certificate of birth, baptismal certificate or military separation papers
- \* A school yearbook with applicable pictures may be used in lieu of a picture I.D.

### Gate Fees: Admission / Parking Policy:

The host community may charge spectators admission for parking or onto the field, **but not both**. The maximum charge cannot exceed \$4.00 /car for parking or \$4.00 /person for field admission. Hosts are required to disclose these fees in their tournament cover letter. Admission and parking is free to all participants, **if there is at least one player, umpire, or tournament personnel in a car, the parking fee must be waived.**

### Violations/Incomplete Credentials:

Teams with roster violations or incomplete credentials are given the option of either posting a \$250 eligibility deposit at check-in or voluntarily dropping out of the tournament. For those teams who choose to post the deposit, their tournament credentials will be checked according to their violation(s). If the credentials check out satisfactorily, the deposit will be returned. However, if their team is found to be ineligible, they will forfeit the deposit and be suspended for one year from the date the money is received.

### Illegal Player Participation:

Any player(s), and the MANAGER, along with the entire team, may be suspended up to an entire year for roster violations.

# Tournament Rules

**General Playing Rules:** All play is governed by USSSA rules

**Ball Count:** A 3-ball, 2-strike count with one courtesy foul rule will be used in all tournaments.

**Coin Toss:** The home team is always determined by the toss of a coin.

**The Run Rule:**

**Women & Youth** - 20 after three innings, 15 after four innings & 10 after five innings

**All other programs** - 25 after three innings, 20 after four innings & 15 after five innings

**Suspending Games:** Games suspended due to inclement weather or any other reason will be resumed from the exact point of suspension.

**State Tournament Rain Guidelines:** (also suggested for Weekend Invitational Tournaments)

- **Two-hour Delays**

Any time a 2-hour delay(s) occurs, games will utilize any or all of the following depending on the length of the delay: a 3-ball, 2-strike, no courtesy foul rule; 5 inning games; 45-minute time-limit; and the 10-run rule after 4 innings. These rules will stay in effect until the tournament is back on schedule.

- **Sunday after 12 Noon**

The losers bracket teams will be eliminated.

- **Undefeated Teams**

⇒ If there are 8 or more state tournament teams, they will play single elimination the following Saturday.

⇒ If there are 8 or more regional tournament teams, they will play the next day (Monday) only so far as needed to fill the qualifying berths for the following weekend's state tournament.

⇒ Seeding for state will be by lottery.

⇒ If there are 4 teams, they will play single elimination the next day (Monday).

⇒ If there are 2 teams, they are given 2 days to agree upon a suitable date to play. If they cannot agree on a date, the game will be played the following Saturday at 1 p.m. at a location selected by the State Director.

⇒ In all cases, teams who cannot play at these assigned times/dates will forfeit out of the tournament.

**No Smoking or Drinking:**

No smoking or drinking of alcohol allowed in, near, or adjacent to the designated team areas.

**Team Bench:**

Only coaches, managers, and individuals listed on the official tournament roster may occupy a position on the bench.

**Grace Period / Forfeit:**

A ten-minute grace period is permitted on a team's first scheduled game before a forfeit is declared. Game time is forfeit time for all other games.

**Schedule Postings:**

Following completion of the first round of tournament play, the official tournament schedule becomes the bracket

board posted at tournament headquarters.

### **Starting Line-up:**

- A minimum of 9 players can start a game in tournaments that advance teams to national competition. However, an out shall be declared when the tenth position in the lineup is scheduled to bat.
- A tenth player may be added in the tenth position any time before the end of the game.
- Any team that starts a game with 10, 11 or 12 players may drop to the minimum of 9, 10 or 11 players to finish the game.
- All vacant spot(s) in the lineup will be declared an out every time that lineup position is due to bat.
- If the team starts with 9 or 10 players, they are not allowed to add the 11 or 12 at a later time.

### **Youth Tournaments & Tournaments that Do Not Advance Teams to National Competition:**

They may start and finish the game with 9 players with no penalty. You may bat 10, 11, 12 or your entire roster and use courtesy runners.

### **Unsportsmanlike Behavior:**

Any player, coach, or manager ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct will be suspended (prohibited) from participating in the remainder of the game and a minimum of one (the following) game. An individual's second ejection will eliminate that individual from any further contests in the tournament.

After the first ejection, the tournament director will determine whether the penalty should be greater than the one or two game suspension.

### **Protests:**

Protests on the interpretation of game rules are decided on the field. The Umpire-in-Chief's decisions are final.

#### **Team Protests: Player Eligibility**

The protest must be lodged prior to or during, but not after, a game. The team filing the protest must first prove the eligibility of its entire roster before the protest will be considered. They must then post a \$25 /protested-player fee. At that time, the tournament director will check the credentials of the player(s) in question and a decision will be made as soon as possible. In a case where eligibility cannot be resolved at the tournament site, the protested team will be given the opportunity to either voluntarily withdraw from the tournament with no further sanction being considered, or they may post a \$250 fee, continue to play with the understanding that they will be checked and if found in violation, their team will be suspended for one year and forfeit their \$250 fee.

#### **Officials' Protests: Player Eligibility**

If a Minnesota USSSA director, tournament director, tournament umpire-in-chief, or tournament umpire suspects a player(s) or team might have an eligibility problem they will notify the tournament director; and at that time the tournament director will check the credentials of the player(s) or team in question and a decision will be made as soon as possible. When eligibility cannot be resolved at the tournament site, the protested team can either:

- Voluntarily withdraw from the tournament with no further sanction being considered
- or -
- Post a \$250 deposit and continue to play, knowing that they will be checked and if found in violation, will lose the \$250 deposit and their team will be suspended for one year.

### **Injury:**

All teams should have a first aid kit containing bandages, tape, etc., in order to treat any player who may become injured or sustain an open wound.

Guidelines for a participant to continue playing after an injury, bleeding, or open wound:

- Any person injured or who has an open wound shall be prohibited from participating in the game until the bleeding is stopped and the wound is covered.
- If treatment can be administered within a reasonable amount of time, he or she will not be required to leave the game. A “reasonable” amount of time is in the umpire’s judgment and if more time is involved, the re-entry rule applies.
- If, in the judgment of the umpire, there is an excessive amount of blood on the uniform or if a bandage becomes blood soaked, the **uniform/bandage must be changed** before the individual may participate.

### **Equipment:**

All game equipment must be in accordance with USSSA specifications and approved for use by the tournament’s Umpire-in-Chief.

## **B. Specific Playing Rules**

### **Mixed 11/12” Program:**

Refer to the current USSSA Rule Book for classification guide lines **except** for the following MRPA modifications:

- **Mixed “C”:** Made up of male players that play no higher than Men’s “C” and female players that play no higher than Women’s “B”.
- **Mixed “D”:** Made up of male players that play no higher than Men’s “D” and female players that play no higher than Women’s “C” (there will be Mixed “D” Competitive & Recreational State Tournaments.).
- **Mixed “E”:** Made up of male players that play no higher than Men’s “E” and female players that play no higher than Women’s “D”.
- **Mixed World Tournaments:** Teams will be allowed to add up to three players of higher classification. All add ons for world tournaments must be approved by the state director.
- **Unsportmanlike conduct** and unnecessary roughness are not tolerated. **Violation:** disqualification.
- **Base Lines:** No player from the defensive team, except for the pitcher, can be in front of the base line until after the ball is hit. **Violation=** No pitch.
- **Defensive players cannot switch positions** during an inning unless there is a pitching change or injury resulting in a player substitution. Players cannot physically overlap before the ball is hit. Fielding positions can only be changed between innings or whenever the lineup is changed due to a pitching change or injury.
- **An 11-inch softball is used for a woman batting and a 12-inch softball is used for a man.**  
An appeal play is when the wrong ball is pitched to a batter. If the appeal is allowed, the batter returns to home plate with the same ball and strike count s/he had at the time of the pitch. All base runners must return to the base they occupied at the time of the pitch.

### **Youth Slow Pitch:**

All youth rules will be the same as listed in the USSSA Rule Book **except** for the following modifications:

- **State Tournament Rosters:** Teams will be allowed to “pick up” three players for state tournament play due to injuries and/or vacations. It must be approved by your league director.
- **Girl’s 19 & Under, Girls’ 16 & Under, Girls’ 14 & Under and Girls’ 12 & Under:** are divided into Competitive and Recreational Levels (Girls’ 10 & Under will have only one class). Recreational teams must come from a local league and be considered an “in house” league where players do not try out, but are randomly selected to be on various teams of approximately equal ability. Competitive teams are handpicked teams, traveling, all-star type teams.

**To Advance to National Competition:**

Teams must compete in the Competitive Division.

- **Substitution** - Substitution rules allow teams to start a batting lineup of 9, 10, 11, 12 or all (bat entire roster) in all youth divisions.
- **Injuries** - If a player is injured, the team can skip over him/her in order with no penalties.
- **# Players** - You may start and finish a game with nine players in all youth programs with no penalty.
- **Count** - All youth games will utilize the 3 balls, 2 strikes count with a courtesy foul for state tournaments.
- **Softballs** - The 12" softball will be used in the Boys' 19 & Under and Boys' 16 and Under.