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## TEAM CLASSIFICATIONS USSSA GREAT LAKES REGION

Below, please find the criteria for New Season and In Season classifications, and the appeal process for teams who wish to dispute their classification. The below criteria has been developed to create a competitive, enjoyable and safe playing environment for all teams.

### **New Season Classifications:**

Below are guidelines to assist you when sanctioning your teams for a new season.

If you are staying in the same age bracket (9U to 10U, 11U to 12U, 13U to 14U, and 15U to 16U is considered the same age bracket), these are the starting criteria for your classification:

If you were a C team the previous year, you must begin in B or higher.

If you were a B team the previous year, you must begin in A.

If you are moving up an age bracket these are the starting criteria for your classification:

If you were a C team the previous year, you may begin in C.

If you were a B team the previous year, you may begin in B or A.

If you were an A team the previous year, you must begin in A.

In the event your team does not remain intact and has turnover:

If you return 6 players from the previous season, you are subject to begin where the classification dictates, per the previous standards.

Teams returning 5 or less players will be subject to the same criteria above after a committee review of your new players. Your team will start in the classification equivalent to the majority of your players previous teams' classification.

Ultimately it is the decision of the Great Lakes Region Committee, and they reserve the right to place teams within a classification they feel is for the betterment of the program and all teams.

### **In-Season Reclassification:**

Team classifications are based on power ratings, tournament results and by overall team performance on the field. Team classifications will be reviewed throughout the season to ensure we have teams in the appropriate class of play. Please note that teams may be reclassified at any time by the Play It Forward Sportz State Office, the Regional Committee or by the National Office.

Classification Guidelines: If ANY of the below benchmarks are met by your team, there is a strong chance your team will be moved up or down to the next higher/lower classification.

**Criteria to Move Down:** (A minimum of 8 scored games)

If your team has a power ranking of 400 or less.

If your team's in class record is .300 or less.

If your team has a run differential of -4 or more.

**In Season Classification Guidelines:**

Classification Guidelines: If two or more of the below benchmarks are met by your team, the team will be moved up or down to the next higher/lower classification.

**Criteria to Move Up:** (A minimum of 2 events and/or 8 total games played. If, after playing in two events, the team has not played 8 games, a third event may be required to evaluate a team.)

- If your team accumulates an 1,100 power ranking or higher - team should, at a minimum be on a watch list.
- If your team accumulated a power ranking of 1,275+
- If your team has an in-class record of .700 or higher
- If your team finished 1st or 2nd in 3 or more events, regardless of sanction (Number of teams in the event and competition will be considered)
- If your team has an in-class run differential of 5 or more
- If your team is playing in 2-3 consecutive tournaments at a higher class, team likely views itself at a higher level and will be moved up.

**Criteria to Move Down:** (A minimum of 2 events and/or 8 total games played. If, after playing in two events, the team has not played 8 games, a third event may be required to evaluate a team.)

- If your team has a 400 or less power ranking
- If your team has an in-class record of .300 or less
- If your team has an in-class run differential of -4 or more
- If your team consistently finishes in the bottom 25% of their events (3 events or 12 games played)

When a team's classification is changed, they will be grandfathered for 1 week at their previous classification level. This will prevent teams from having to find tournaments at the last minute if the event they are entered in doesn't have the higher level of classification.

**Rosters:**

Upon sanctioning your team with USSSA, coaches will be required to input their roster withing 14 days of sanctioning a new team. Any team without a roster online after 14 days will be classified as an "A" team until their roster is input online. Once the roster is added, the team must contact their State Director to be moved to a different classification.

Once a team is reviewed and their classification is determined, their roster will be locked. When a roster is locked, teams will be required to submit any changes (additions/deletions) to the State Director for approval.

### **Appeal Process:**

If you believe your team is classified incorrectly, you must email your State Director to appeal.

- Submit email to State Director
- Provide justification for reclassification. The discussion is about YOUR team, not a comparison of other teams to yours.
- The State Director will submit your appeal to the Regional Committee who will determine if your team should be reclassified.
- The State Director will provide you with the outcome of the committee review within 7 days

### **Classifications and National Tournaments:**

If your team is a bubble team and you feel there is a possibility, at some point during the season, you could be moved up to a higher classification, you need to register your team for a National event that offers multiple classifications for your age division.

### **National Tournament Qualification:**

8U teams through 14B teams are required to meet the below qualification standards in order to attend a national tournament.

- Finish in the top 25% of a USSSA "Qualifier" event OR
- Finish in the top 30% of a USSSA "NIT or State" event OR
- Accumulate 150 points

14A teams through 18A teams, can attend any National event without meeting the above standards. If a team has not played in any USSSA events, they are required to play in the A division at a national tournament.

### **USAES Requirement of A Classification:**

Teams who do not meet the criteria to be advanced to the next level of competition will not be allowed to reclassify as an A or USAES team for the sole purpose of competing in a USAES event. USAES events are for teams who can consistently compete at the A or USAES level.

### **C Program Mission Statement:**

- The C division is designed to provide an environment where teams can be introduced to travel softball, have an enjoyable experience, and develop as players. It is USSSA's hope that the team will at a point in the future, move up in level of play. However, USSSA does not forbid a team from playing at these classifications, if the team continues to fit the model for any length of time as a youth fastpitch team.