



## 2017 MRPA/MN-USSSA Player/Team Classification Guidelines

The Minnesota Classification Committee (MNCC) primarily reviews rosters of tournament teams. The committee consists of coaches, managers, players, league directors, umpires and the state director having the authority to reclassify a team's classification at any time. Members of the MNCC include 7 members. They are **Troy Mickelson** (MN-USSSA State Director), **Jerry Ruegemer** (MRPA RSC Chair & League Director), **Mike Fluegge** (MN-USSSA State Umpire-in-Chief), **Mark Dallenbach** (USSSA National Conference Umpire & MN-USSSA Umpire), **Scott O'Neil** (USSSA National Conference Umpire & MN-USSSA Umpire), **Pat O'Connell** (MN-USSSA Conference Commissioner & MN-USSSA Hall of Fame), and **Allan Ouellette** (USSSA National Conference Player).

The Minnesota Classification Committee (MNCC) determines player and team classifications and address any other issues pertaining to their roster. The Minnesota Classification Committee primarily reviews rosters of tournament-active men's, women's and mixed competitive and recreational teams. The State Director has the authority to reclassify any team during the current season except when a team has been reclassified by USSSA National By-Laws or USSSA National Classification Committee.

**NOTE:** USSSA National Classification Committee has final authority on classification of all teams.

The winner(s) and/or top finishers of any post season tournament (State, Nationals, and Worlds) that includes: Men's, Women's and Mixed programs may be required to compete the following year in the next highest classification. The top finishing six (6) teams from any 2016 USSSA sanctioned tournaments (MRPA, Father Hennepin, Tower Day's, Fridley 49er Day's, Dudley Classic, Blaine Festival, Columbia Heights Jamboree, Pan-O-Prog, Duk Duk Daze, and Crystal Frolics) with at least 10 or more teams may be required to compete the

following year in the next highest classification. Those teams affected will be announced at the 2018 Town Hall Meeting in January and posted on the MRPA web site at [www.mnrpa.org](http://www.mnrpa.org)

Teams that want to appeal their classification may do so through the Minnesota Classification Committee. Teams that want to appeal their new classification may do so in writing between April 1<sup>st</sup> and July 1<sup>st</sup>. Teams reclassified by appeal between April 1<sup>st</sup> and July 1<sup>st</sup> may be reclassified by the State Director and Minnesota Classification Committee after the team plays three (3) MRPA/MN-USSSA sanctioned tournaments.

Teams may appeal their classification in writing to the MN-USSSA State Director by April 14<sup>th</sup>. After April 14<sup>th</sup> to be reviewed by the Minnesota Classification Committee. Teams must play in at least three (3) MRPA/MN-USSSA sanctioned tournaments before they can appeal their Classification.

Teams may only appeal to drop 1 Class!!! Teams are classified on the overall strength of their roster.

## **TEAM CLASSIFICATION**

Teams not classified by USSSA National By-Laws and USSSA National Classification Committee will be classified by their respective State Director. The State Director will decide on an acceptable method to control team rosters and classifications of all programs in the state of Minnesota.

The main criteria for classifying teams is the overall strength of the team offensively and defensively regardless of whether the team has any home run hitters. The MNCC and State Director will review rosters and decide on an acceptable team classifications of all programs.

The Minnesota Classification Committee (MNCC) along with the Minnesota State Director has the authority to reclassify any team at any time during the season.

Any team found in violation by exceeding the player classification limit of four (4) or more set forth by the MNCC will be reclassified to the higher classification by the state director and cannot appeal their classification.

Team Classifications for the 2017 season were set based on your finish in the National and World Tournament, National By-Laws and the USSSA National Classification Committee. Minnesota USSSA Classification Committee factored in the above placement to the best of their knowledge based on your teams 2016 finish in qualifiers, state, and national tournaments. Minnesota USSSA also took into consideration USSSA sanctioned tournaments such as: Tower Day's, Father Hennepin, Dudley Classic, Fridley 49er Day's, Blaine Festival, Columbia Heights Jamboree, Pan-O-Prog, Duk Duk Daze, and Crystal Frolics.

MRPA/MN-USSSA classification projections for the 2017 was a general observation from the Minnesota Classification Committee (MNCC), tournament directors (TD), and the state director based on the outcome from the 2016 season and potential returning teams with the same rostered players to determine this year's classification, however; this is based on judgment and subject to change based on roster review from the MNCC unless your team was affected by the reclassification from USSSA By-Laws and National Classification Committee.

### **MEN'S PROGRAM**

Team classifications can be found on the Minnesota Recreation and Park Association (MRPA) web site at [www.mnrpa.org](http://www.mnrpa.org) . Any team or roster with four (4) or more previous and/or current USSSA National Conference players cannot play below "C" classification (Path Back from USSSA National Conference Rule), in addition any players listed on the USSSA National Major Player or Major Watch List cannot play below the classification "B" (per National rule) unless the player in affect appeals his own classification and needs approval by the Minnesota Classification Committee and Minnesota USSSA State Director. If approved by the MN-USSSA State Director the team affected will be eligible for "C" worlds only.

### **Path Back from USSSA National Conference Rule**

- Any team with one (1) player from the USSSA National Conference from the previous or current year will be classified as "C"
- Any team with two (2) players from the USSSA National Conference from the previous or current year will be classified as "B"
- Any team with three (3) players from the USSSA National Conference from the previous or current year will be classified as "A"
- Any team with four (4) or more players from the USSSA National Conference from the previous or current year will be classified as "AA"

Team classifications are recognized by two (2) tiers:

- **COMPETITIVE:** Gold Division (Classifications: “AA”, “A”, “B”, “C”, and “D+”)
- **RECREATIONAL:** Silver Division (“D-“ and “E”)

The **COMPETITIVE** division consists of any team that is interested in playing any post season tournaments. Teams in this division are highly competitive that have several years of experience playing competitive softball and who have a high level of tournament experience that prefer to compete locally at a high level but, not at the highest level unless playing in National USSSA tournaments. Teams are heavily skilled in the fundamentals of softball. Teams in this division have the capability to hit home runs, have speed on the bases and out in the field. Errors are limited on defense, usually few overthrows or missed plays. Base runners are very aggressive and persistent on the bases. Teams are fundamentally sound on both defense and offense with situation acumen.

#### **“B” TEAM’S**

Any class “C”, “D” and/or “E” team that has a roster of two (2) USSSA National Conference players must play in the “B” program.

#### **“C” TEAM’S**

Any class “D” and/or “E” team that has a roster of one (1) USSSA National Conference player must play in the “C” program.

#### **“D+” TEAM’S**

Any “D+” team with 1-3 rostered “C” players may remain “D+” but are subject to change and can potentially be reclassified to a “C” team depending on the outcome of any USSSA sanctioned tournament(s) from the previous year and the overall strength of your roster from the previous or current year. Any class “D+” team with at least one (1) rostered USSSA National Conference player will automatically take a higher classification and are now sanctioned as a class “C” team in Minnesota. If you carry more than one (1) USSSA National Conference player your classification is subject to change to a higher classification based on the strength of your roster. It is highly discouraged to have USSSA National Conference players on a class “D+” roster and will change your classification to a higher classification.

The **RECREATIONAL** division is the most popular. These teams do not have an interest in playing post season outside of the state tournament; however if these “D-“ teams do want to continue onto post season play (National and Worlds) they can be reclassified to play up in the “D+” program or down in the “E” program to qualify for the National and World tournaments.

The “D-“ division is best described as an intermediate division and are semi-competitive who have some experience in recreational softball and are less committed. Teams have knowledge of softball and want to compete at a higher level and want to have fun. Several players on the team can hit home runs, have an aggressive defense but not all players have a high skill level. Base runners are aggressive. Teams played at least some recreational softball in the past and are looking to play for the enjoyment of the game.

The “E” division is best described as a beginner division and may have older players who continue to participate in the game that they love. Teams in this division are still learning the game of softball, have little experience in softball, less committed, or cannot compete in the competitive divisions, but play for the enjoyment of the game. Usually the best league for those teams that will be playing in their first season of organized softball. Teams have minimal knowledge of softball and want to compete at an equitable level in a recreational environment. Teams participating in the Men’s “E” program are provided an opportunity to participate in post season play.

The “D-“and “E” divisions cannot have any past or current USSSA National Conference players on their roster. Any player(s) who is/are rostered on a competitive team cannot play down in the recreational program unless that player appeals/petitions his/her case by submitting the USSSA Appeal Form to the State Director. Players who participate and are on a team roster in the recreational program; can play up in the competitive program but once he/she makes that transition that player now becomes frozen in the competitive program and cannot play down or go back to the roster he/she was released from.

### **WOMEN’S PROGRAM**

The Women’s softball teams will be classified by strength of team roster. These classifications have been set at the USSSA National level for 2017. Any ASA women’s teams wanting to crossover or participate in any MRPA/MN-USSSA softball tournaments, rosters will need to be reviewed by the Minnesota Classification Committee and approved by the USSSA State Director.

Minnesota USSSA Women's Softball Program, teams may consist of:

- Women's Class "A" program: No women's major players.
- Women's Class "B" program: No more than four (4) rostered "A" players from the previous year and/or current season.
- Women's Class "C" program: No more than four (4) rostered "B" players from the previous year and/or current season.
- Women's Class "D" program: No more than four (4) rostered "C" players from the previous year and/or current season.
- Women's Class "E" program: No more than four (4) rostered "D" players from the previous year and/or current season.

### **MIXED PROGRAM**

The Mixed program shall feature five (5) divisions that will consist of the: Mixed Major, "B", "C", "D" and "E".

Teams or individuals not reclassified by USSSA By-Laws will be classified by their respective State Director.

- Mixed Major teams shall be allowed any number of players whose name(s) appear on the Associations Major Player List (Men's or Women's).
- A Mixed class "B" team shall be allowed to carry any combination of four (4) players whose name(s) appear on the Associations Major Player List (Men's or Women's)
- Mixed class "C", "D" or "E" teams shall not be allowed to have any male and/or female players whose name appears on the Associations Major Player List and Major Player Watch List or competed during the season on a class "B" team or higher.

Mixed class "C" teams shall only be allowed to have male players whose current and previous year's classification is "C" and female players whose current and previous years classification is "B", "C", "D", and "E". No player who has appeared on a roster from a higher classification can be added or approved after August 1<sup>st</sup>.

Mixed class "D" teams shall only be allowed to have male players whose current and previous year's classification is "D" and female players whose current and previous year's classification is "C", "D" and "E". No player who has appeared on a roster from a higher classification can be added or approved after August 1<sup>st</sup>.

Mixed class "E" teams shall only be allowed to have male players whose current and previous year's classification is class "E" and female players whose current and previous year's classification is "D" and "E". No player who has appeared on a roster from a higher classification can be added or approved after August 1<sup>st</sup>.

## PLAYER CLASSIFICATION

There are NO player cards in Minnesota USSSA. The main criteria for classifying teams is the overall strength of the team offensively and defensively regardless of whether the team has any home run hitters. Depending on the strength of the offense and defense, a team with no home run hitters may be classified Major, "AA", "A", "B", "C", "D", or "E".

A player is eligible to compete in the Minnesota USSSA program as long as he/she abides by the USSSA National Constitution, USSSA National By-Laws, and USSSA National Playing Rules, when listed as a member of an eligible team.

The method to be used to classify a player as a participant in all programs will be governed by rules made within Minnesota USSSA, USSSA National Constitution, and USSSA National By-Laws.

A player shall not compete in any sanctioned USSSA tournament of the Association with more than one team during the season. Once you have played in a USSSA sanctioned tournament or on the roster with that team you cannot participate on another team unless you are released by that manager and added to the other team's roster and must be approved by the MNCC. Once you are released from a roster you cannot go back to that team roster.

## APPEAL TEAM CLASSIFICATION

**National USSSA:** Teams reclassified by the By-Laws, or the National Classification Committee must participate in their new classification for a period of one (1) year. Teams that fail to participate the following year will remain at the new classification until such time as they participate and meet the requirements below.

**NOTE:** Any team reclassified by the By-Laws, with four (4) or more players from the previous year's roster (Mixed teams are permitted a maximum of two (2) males and two (2) females) must participate in their new classification for a period of one (1) year; however, teams reclassified by USSSA National Classification Committee and/or By-Laws may make an appeal to be reinstated to its former classification only after the

team has played a minimum of four (4) tournaments for the Men's programs, and two (2) tournaments for the Women's and Mixed program. Such an appeal can only be made between June 1 and July 1 and must be submitted on the proper form, except the Mixed program, which is no later than October 1<sup>st</sup>. For the Men's and Women's program, the appeal must be made jointly to the State Director and forwarded onto the USSSA National Program Director, Vice President, and Assistant Executive Director.

**Minnesota USSSA:** Teams not reclassified by the USSSA National By-Laws or the USSSA National Classification Committee that want to appeal their current classification status may do so through the State Director and Minnesota Classification Committee between April 1<sup>st</sup> and July 1<sup>st</sup>. Teams appealing their current classification status between April 1<sup>st</sup> and July 1<sup>st</sup> may be reclassified by the State Director and Minnesota Classification Committee only after the team plays the three (3) required MRPA/MN-USSSA sanctioned tournaments and who have submitted their Appeal Form to the State Director. Appeals must be filled out in writing on the official USSSA National Appeal Form and submitted to the State Director for review. The appeal will be reviewed by the State Director and Minnesota Classification Committee. A decision on all appeals will be rendered within 10 days. All decisions on appeals are final!

## ROSTERS

Managers/Coaches registering a team on USSSA Nationals website bypassing the MN-USSSA Guidelines puts your team at risk when entering a USSSA sanctioned event. Tournament Directors are requiring for their tournaments that all rosters be online and must be approved by the state office. Not following this procedure puts your team in jeopardy to participate in that event. Your team classification for the 2017 season is not confirmed nor approved until you have submitted your roster online (USSSA-ISTS) and the Minnesota Classification Committee along with the State Director has reviewed your roster to be assigned a USSSA classification letter of (Major, "AA", "A", "B", "C", "D", or "E") for the 2017 season. Once you have been assigned a classification letter your roster will be locked so no other moves can be made without approval from the state office. The sooner you have your roster online will allow for a smooth transition in classifying your team to allow you to play the program.

USSSA Minnesota teams are asked to submit their rosters on-line (USSSA-ISTS) by April 1, 2017. Once your roster is online notify the State Director so your roster can be reviewed by the Minnesota Classification Committee. The State Director will assign a "team classification letter" to your team of (Major, "AA", "A", "B",



“C”, “D”, or “E”) for the 2017 season. Teams that respond by the deadline will be assigned their team classification letter by the Minnesota Classification Committee and State Director.

Teams wishing to submit their rosters to the Minnesota Classification Committee for the 2017 season may email them to the State Director, Troy Mickelson at [mickelson@mnrpa.org](mailto:mickelson@mnrpa.org)

If you are a new team and have new players to USSSA; once rosters have been approved by the Minnesota Classification Committee and State Director, the manager can upload their roster into USSSA-ISTS by following the steps below.

#### ***How do I register my team on the USSSA website?***

Go to [www.ussa.com](http://www.ussa.com) and click on the sport your team or member plays to enter the site. Click on Create ID. This is located across the top of the page in blue. You will be required to fill in required information indicated by red arrows to the side of the fields. After filling out all required information, click on submit. Your log in ID will be displayed. (Be sure to write down your log in ID and password and keep it in a safe place, or simply print the page.) You will then be given the option to log in for the first time. Click on Create a Team or Member to register your team or member. Once you have filled out all required information, click submit. A big yellow box will display asking you to register the team on line. Click on the button inside the box to go to the payment page. Fill in all required fields on this page and click on Submit Payment. After your credit card has been approved, you will receive a confirmation page. It's also a good idea to print this page. Click on Return to USSSA to go back to your team/member page. You will then be given the option to purchase team insurance on line. You will find your registration number to the right of your team class.

#### ***How do I create my roster?***

You will need your log in ID and password to access your team manager menu. If you do not have one, please email Stacy Hobbs with USSSA National at [stacy@ussa.com](mailto:stacy@ussa.com) with your registration number, first and last name, state you are from and sport your team plays. Your team must be registered to enter your on line roster. Go to [www.ussa.com](http://www.ussa.com). Click on the sport your team plays to enter the site. Close to the top of the page, you will see a link that says Log In / Log Out. Click on that to log in. You will see your team listed in the middle of the page. Highlight the team name by clicking on it if it is not already highlighted. Below that, there is an option that says Roster Adds and Updates. Click in the circle next to it and click submit. An affidavit page will display. After reading the page, click on I Agree. This will bring you to the page where you enter your

roster. In the add player box, type in the player first name, last name and then date of birth. Click add player. On the next page you will be required to select the player state. Save Player. Click View Team to enter your next player. When you have finished, you have the option for your printable roster on your team manager menu. Note: Make sure that you enter player's date of birth in this format – 4/25/1973 If a player name has an apostrophe in it, leave it out. **Do not add quotes to names.**

**New for 2017 USSSA National Slow-pitch Softball. No player can be added by a manager that currently does not exist in the USSSA National database (ISTS). To have this player and/or players added please contact your state director. In order for the State Director to add these players to your roster you must provide the following information:**

1. What team(s) he/she played on last year.
2. What classification he/she ended the season with.
3. List team names that they played on (USSSA and/or ASA).

If these players are approved by the MNCC to play on your team you must also provide the following information:

1. Attach and/or scan players driver's license for verification
2. Players Full Name (as it appears on his/her driver's license)
3. Mailing Address
4. City
5. County
6. State
7. Zip Code
8. Date of Birth
9. Phone Number
10. Email Address

Player(s) can only be on one (1) Men's and Women's roster. If that player wants to play on another team for that weekend, the manager must release that player to be added to his/her new team. NOTE: Once that player is released from that team he/she cannot go back to that team.

For reclassification purposes, a player must be on a team's online roster prior to April 1, 2017 and must play in at least three (3) MRPA/MN-USSSA tournaments with that team prior to the state tournament. If a team

wishes to appeal their classification for 2017, they must contact the State Director in writing by submitting the USSSA National Appeal Form. It is the manager's responsibility to be able to prove to the Minnesota Classification Committee and State Director that their team should be reclassified. A meeting will be arranged to hear the petition for reclassification.

It is a player's responsibility to make sure that his/her name is only on the roster he/she thinks it should be on. If a manager puts your name on a roster and you aren't playing for that manager/team, YOU, the player, need to be checking on a daily/weekly/monthly basis to make sure which roster your name is on. Unless a team's roster is frozen, the manager DOES NOT have the right to keep your name on a roster unless you the player has a financial obligation to the team. If you, as a manager, have a question regarding a player's classification, please send an email to the State Director, Troy Mickelson at Minnesota USSSA via email at [mickelson@mnrpa.org](mailto:mickelson@mnrpa.org) your request must be made in the form of an email. If the appeal is denied, the team will be required to participate in at least three (3) MRPA/MN-USSSA tournaments prior to making additional appeals.

All teams that are automatically reclassified by Minnesota USSSA may appeal their reclassification in writing using the official "USSSA Classification Appeal Form," available at [www.ussa.com](http://www.ussa.com) under "Team Information". Appeals must be approved by both the Minnesota Classification Committee and the State Director. Teams affected by the above rules must compete in three (3) MRPA/MN-USSSA sanctioned tournaments in their new classification before an appeal will be considered. Appeals will only be considered between April 1<sup>st</sup> and July 1<sup>st</sup>. Teams reclassified by Minnesota USSSA must participate in their new classification for a period of one year. Teams that fail to participate the following year will remain at their new classification until such time as they participate and meet the requirements above.

If a team did NOT play State and National's in 2016, then team classification for 2017 will be at the highest level played in 2016.

All rosters are locked the first Monday in May. All roster player adds/drops must go through the Minnesota Classification Committee and State Director. No Exceptions!

All rosters are frozen the August 1 and you can no longer appeal your classification status. No Exceptions!

Rosters should include the team name for the 2017 season, last year's team name if applicable, the manager's name, mailing address, county, state, and zip code. Other requirements include a home and/or mobile phone number, email address and your date of birth, plus a listing of rostered player's names with date of birth and email addresses.

If your name is not on the 2017 Minnesota USSSA Team/Player Classification List, you are classified by the last team in which you played.

Managers must have their roster on-line seventy-two (72) hours prior to the first tournament. Rosters that are not on-line will be considered late and charged a \$50 late fee, will not receive points, default to the lower seed and not qualify for tournament awards, i.e.; (apparel, equipment, plaques, berths and/or payout).

If a team doesn't have a minimum of ten (10) players on its online roster BEFORE it plays a tournament, that team will be considered late and charged a \$50 late fee, will not receive points, default to the lower seed and not qualify for tournament awards, i.e.; (apparel, equipment, plaques, berths and/or payout). It is the manager's responsibility to make sure his/her team's online roster has the minimum number of players at any time.

All teams must have their roster online by April 1, 2017. Tournament directors will be making "roster checks" at various times during a tournament in 2017. A player is required to have his/her ID in his/her possession at all times. You will NOT be allowed to leave the complex to obtain your ID. Failure to produce an ID will result in your team having played an illegal player. Your team will forfeit not only the game being played but will be forfeited out of the remainder of the tournament and the player not on the roster will be placed on probation and/or suspended .

### **STATE/NATIONAL/WORLD TOURNAMENT PARTICIPATION**

If your team wishes to participate in the World tournament(s) in either Florida, Arizona, California, or Nevada in September, we want to do everything possible to help you get there. A winner of a World Qualifier will earn a paid World tournament berth. Depending upon the number of teams entered in the event, travel money could be paid.

Men's "C", "D+", and "E" state tournament winner/champion will receive a paid berth to the Men's Central Division National Tournament. The winner of the Men's Central Division National Tournament will receive a paid berth to the World Tournament. Teams who participate in the MN-USSSA Conference are not required to play in the state tournament and Men's Central Division National tournament; however they must play in the MN-USSSA Conference Tournament of Champions. If your team does not participate in the MN-USSSA Conference you must play in the state tournament and Central Division National Tournament and are not eligible to play in the MN-USSSA Conference Tournament of Champions.

Women's "A-C" and "D" state tournament champion will receive a paid berth to the Women's Central Division National Tournament. The winner of the Women's Central Division National Tournament will receive a paid berth to the World Tournament.

The winner of the Mixed state tournament will receive a paid berth to the Minnesota Fall State Tournament. The winner of the Mixed Competitive Fall State Tournament will receive a paid berth to the World Tournament. We will also offer a non-paid World tournament berth to any team that wants to go to the World tournament that participates in their respective state tournament and national tournament.