

USA SOFTBALL™

2019 USA Softball Code Changes with Comments as of November 30, 2018

NOTE: All changes below are EFFECTIVE January 1, 2019 unless otherwise noted.

Article Number **Change**
Article 301 C 02 b b. **Armed Services Teams.** The Women's Armed Services team must play in Women's Class Open Slow Pitch and the Men's Armed Services team **may play in the Men's Class A and/or Class B Slow Pitch.**

Comments: Allows Men's Armed Services to play in Men's Class A and/or Class B Slow Pitch

Article 301 C 02 c 02 c. **Fast Pitch.**

02. In all adult Fast Pitch, no USA Men's National Team Member may participate below the Major level.

EXCEPTION: A member of the USA Junior Men's National Team may participate below the Major level in a National Championship Final. **Non-pitching members on USA Softball Men's National Team may pitch at the Open level, but cannot bat or assume any other defensive position.**

Comments: Allows non-pitching members of the USA Softball Men's National Team to pitch at the Open level, but not bat or play any other defensive positions.

Article 301 C 02 e 02 e. **Slow Pitch.**

02. A restricted slow pitch player list will be compiled by a USA Softball committee representing slow pitch. The restricted slow pitch players list will be available on the USA Softball website and this list will be updated, modified and/or revised on a regular and continuous basis but will be finalized by August 1 each year for the current year's National Championship Finals. Players on the USA Softball restricted slow pitch player's list may only play Class A and Super. Any team that participates in the **Men's** Class A may not have more than **five (5)** players from the USA Softball restricted slow pitch player list. Any appeals regarding this list can be made through the National Office to the slow pitch sub-committee.

Comments: Increases the number of restricted players on a Class A team from three (3) to five (5).

Article 301 D 06 06. **Industrial Qualifications.** Deleted from Code

Comments: Removes Men's Industrial Slow Pitch as a USA Softball National Championship. This also removes Men's Industrial Slow Pitch from Articles 306, 309 and 315

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Article 303 A 05

05. Pick-up players must be from the team's same or lower classification. **(Adult Slow Pitch Only) A Player who is individually classified may be picked up by a team with the same classification. Said classified players may only play one Class lower than their current team's classification. For those players who are not individually classified, their current team's classification applies.**

Comments: In Adult Slow Pitch, a player who is eligible by their individual player classification may be picked up by a lower classified team. For example, a Class D player playing on a Class C team may be picked up by a Class D team.

Article 306 A 10

10. Military / First Responders Slow Pitch

NOTE: The Military / First Responders playing guidelines, championship dates, and location will be established by the USA Softball Executive Director.

Comments: Adds a Military/First Responder Slow Pitch National Championship, with dates and location established by USA Softball Executive Director.

Article 309 C 01 I

- I. **Open Co-ed. This National Championship Final shall have dates established and approved by the Executive Director.**

Comments: The Executive Director will establish and approve dates for Open Co-ed.

Article 309 C 01 m

- m. **Class C, Class D and Class E Co-ed. This National Championship Final shall have dates established and approved by the Executive Director.**

Comments: The Executive Director will establish and approve dates for Class C, Class D and Class E Co-ed.

Article 310 B

- B. **At-Large Berths.** Deleted from Code.

Comments: Teams qualify through their local association; there are no berths to be awarded.

Article 310 F

- F. **Fill-In Procedure.** Deleted from Code.

Comments: Teams qualify through their local association; there are no berths to be awarded.

Article 312

- National Qualifier Tournaments.** Deleted from Code

Comments: Teams qualify through their local association; there are no National Qualifiers

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Article 313

USA SOFTBALL GOLD QUALIFYING TOURNAMENTS (Junior Olympic 16-Under and 18-Under Gold Only)

A. Eligible Teams.

01. **Registrations.** All USA Softball registered Girls' 16-Under Gold and 18-Under Gold Fast Pitch Teams within their respective age groups **may participate in any Gold National Qualifier.**
02. **Previously Qualified.** Teams previously qualified for the National Championship Finals are eligible to compete in any **Gold National Qualifier.**

B. **Assessment Fees.** A \$15.00 per team assessment fee to be paid to USA Softball.

C. **Site.** The site of these tournaments shall be determined by a vote of the council members within their respective **regions.**

D. **Region Administrator.** **The Regional VP** will appoint a **Gold Administrator for their respective Region. This individual, along with the Regional VP, is responsible for ensuring all Gold National Qualifier information is posted on the TournamentUSASoftball.com website & for communicating the dates/sites of their events to the National Office.**

E. **Notification.** **All Gold National Qualifiers must be posted on the TournamentUSASoftball.com site by January 10 each year. Associations who have not posted their events by Jan 10 may lose berths allocated to their Region, and the berths will be redistributed.**

F. GOLD Qualifying Tournament Procedures.

01. National GOLD Qualifying Tournaments.

- a. **Qualifiers within a region will be based on mutual agreement from the associations with the region. Only associations within the region that have Gold teams will be allowed to host a National Qualifier. If**

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multiple sites are selected to host a qualifier within a region, those events cannot be held on the same weekend. Gold National Qualifiers may be held during the week if agreed upon by the association JO commissioners within the region.

- b. If no agreement can be reached, the **association** with the most Gold participation will set their date first followed by the **association** with the next highest participation.
- c. **Qualifiers may be held for the following year at any time after the conclusion of the current year's National Championship, with agreement from their respective Region.**

02. **Sites / Number of Teams.** **Any associations hosting Gold Qualifying Tournaments must do so** at sites that can accommodate all Gold teams **who have entered** prior to the tournament entry deadline.

03. **Tournament Bracket.** In accordance with **Article 311 (A) (Exception)** of the USA Softball Code, **the official double elimination or three-game bracket** is to be utilized for all Gold National Qualifiers.

04. **Tournament Entry Procedures.** **Sites** may accept entries at any time after the event is listed on the USA Softball tournament website. Any teams wishing to enter **must** submit the following to the respective **tournament directors** the following:

- a. **Approved** – USA Softball Official Tournament Entry Form
- b. **Approved – USA Softball Championship Roster**
- c. **Tournament Entry fee.** Receipt of the **entry fee** and roster does not guarantee a team a spot in the tournament.

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05. **USA Softball Website Posting.**
- a. **Tournament directors must follow** Procedural Manual **Article 105 (D) (14) with regard to posting and** using www.tournamentUSAsoftball.com
 - b. **Tournament directors must submit, to the National Office,** an official order of finish and tournament bracket within 24 hours after the conclusion of the tournament.
 - c. **Tournament directors** will scan/email the original rosters and official tournament entry forms (completed) to the National Office and the host director for the National Tournament.
 - d. Failure to submit paperwork on time will result in assessment fees to be raised from \$15 per team to \$50 per team to be paid to USA Softball.
06. **Master List of Qualified Teams.** The National Office will maintain a master list of all Gold teams who have qualified and accepted berth(s) for the National Championship Finals. Maintaining this list will require each **Tournament Director** to submit **on Monday following the event they have hosted,** a list of teams that qualified **at the event they hosted. Inclusive in the report will be the following:** Team Name, as it appears on their USA Softball Official Tournament Entry Form, Manager's Name including Street Address, City, State, Zip Code and Telephone Numbers.
07. **Notification of Unfilled Berths.** **Tournament directors must advise the Regional VP and Regional Gold Program Administrator immediately if any Gold berth goes unclaimed from the event they hosted. In the event regional berths are not awarded, the following process will be used:**
- a. **Unused berths will be added to the next remaining qualifier scheduled within their respective region. Unused berths will continue to be passed down until all remaining qualifiers within a region have been held.**
 - b. **In the event all qualifiers within a region have concluded and unfilled berths remain, the**

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unallocated berths will be returned to the National Office for distribution to other regions.

08. **Entry Fees. Tournament** directors are asked to review the tournament fees in light of the double elimination **or three-game bracket** format and adjust accordingly.
09. **Awarding of Berths.** Weather permitting; teams must participate in order to receive a berth.
- If the tournament has fewer entries than the number of berths, then the number of berths will be reduced for that tournament. **The number of berths shall always be at least one (1) less than the number of teams entered.**
 - Berths shall be based on the number allowed by the USA Softball Code for each **Region** and by the number of teams participating.
 - Regions** will retain the option to offer less **berths** but cannot offer more than allowed by the USA Softball Code **without permission from the National Office.**
 - Unused berths will revert back to the National Office for distribution **to other associations.**

Comments: Adjusts regulations for USA Softball Gold Qualifying Tournaments

Article 314 H

All teams are eligible to qualify for the USA Softball Class A Fast Pitch National Championship Finals through their Local Association.

Comments: Eliminates a limit on number of berths. Allows all teams to qualify for Class A National Championship finals through their Local Association.

Article 314 I

**Girls' Class A USA Softball Fast Pitch Regional National Championship Finals.
18, 16, 14, 12-Under**

USA Softball shall conduct one **Regional National** Championship Finals in each age classification of Junior Olympic Girls' Class A Fast Pitch in each of the following regions, in accordance with **Article 203, Regions** of this Code.

Note: Nothing in this Code should preclude the Regions from combining 2 or more Regional National Championship Finals.

01. **Eligible Teams.** All teams within a USA Softball **Regional National** Championship

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Finals **Region** that have not qualified for a USA Softball Junior Olympic Girls' Class A Fast Pitch National Championship are eligible to qualify for the USA Softball **Regional National Championship** Finals through their local association. Teams may play in the **Regional National Championship** of their choice.

NOTE: Ineligible. Any team that has qualified for a USA Softball Junior Olympic Girls' Fast Pitch National Championship Finals is not eligible to participate in a USA Softball **Regional National Championship** Finals.

02. **Format.** Each USA Softball Girls' Fast Pitch **Regional National** shall be structured so that each team is scheduled to play a minimum of four (4) games – two games of pool play and a seeded double elimination bracket. **(Effective 2020, Each USA Softball Girls' Fast Pitch National and Regional National Championship Finals shall be structured so that each team is scheduled to play a minimum of five (5) games – three games of pool play and a seeded double elimination bracket. NOTE: This is optional for 2019)**
03. **Opening Ceremonies.** Each **Regional** National Championship Finals shall have a pre-tournament luncheon/draw for the managers and opening ceremonies.
04. **Berths.** The first and second place team in each **Regional** National Championship Finals shall receive a berth to the Junior Olympic Girls' USA Softball National Championship Finals in the team's current or succeeding year's age classification provided the team has five (5) participating players from the previous year's roster on the current year's roster and physically present at the current championship tournament site prior to the start of their first game.

Comments: Changes Territorial Championship Finals to Regional National Championship Finals and allows regions the option of combining 2 or more regional events.

Article 314 I 02

02. **Format.** Each USA Softball Girls' Fast Pitch Territorial Tournament shall be structured so that each team is scheduled to play a minimum of four (4) games – two games of pool play and a seeded double elimination bracket. **(Effective 2020, Each USA Softball Girls' Fast Pitch National and Regional Tournament shall be structured so that each team is scheduled to play a minimum of five**

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(5) games – three games of pool play and a seeded double elimination bracket. NOTE: This is optional for 2019)

Comments: Changes the minimum number of games from four (4) to five (5). Three pool play and a seeded double elimination bracket.

Article 314 J

Girls' Class B USA Softball Fast Pitch Regional National Championship Finals.

18, 16, 14, 12, 10-Under

USA Softball shall conduct one **Regional National** Championship Finals in each age classification of Junior Olympic Girls' Class B Fast Pitch in each of the following **regions**, in accordance with **Article 203, Regions** of this Code.

NOTE: Nothing in this Code should preclude the Regions from combining 2 or more Regional National Championship Finals.

01. **Eligible Teams.** All teams within a USA Softball **Regional National** Championship Finals **Region** are age eligible to qualify for their USA Softball **Regional National Championship Finals** through their local associations. Teams may play in the **Regional National Championship** of their choice.
02. **Format.** Each USA Softball Girls' Fast Pitch **Regional National Championship Finals** shall be structured so that each team is scheduled to play a minimum of four (4) games – two games of pool play and a seeded double elimination bracket. **(Effective 2020, Each USA Softball Girls' Fast Pitch National and Regional National Championship Finals shall be structured so that each team is scheduled to play a minimum of five (5) games – three games of pool play and a seeded double elimination bracket. NOTE: This is optional for 2019)**
03. **Opening Ceremonies.** Each **Regional National Championship Finals** shall have a pre-tournament draw luncheon for the managers and opening ceremonies.

Comments: Changes Territorial Championship Finals to Regional National Championship Finals and allows regions the option of combining 2 or more regional events.

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Article 314 K

Girls' Class GOLD USA Softball Fast Pitch National Championship Finals.

18-Under and 16-Under

The berths for each division will be allocated as follows:

Returning Teams **2 (Champion and Runner-Up)**

Note: Returning teams must enter the championship prior to February 1

National Office **8**

Additional Berths **18**

Regional Berths = 2/Region **20**

Maximum Possible Number of Teams **48**

- a. Additional berths will be awarded by the National Office to the Regions with the highest percentage of participation in the previous 2-3 years.**
- b. The National Office has the right to award their eight (8) berths to any team registered with USA Softball. These berths can be awarded to the teams who did not participate in a qualifier.**
- c. Unused berths will be returned to the National Office for immediate distribution to the current year's tournaments with the largest number of Gold teams participating.
- d. Berths from Gold Qualifying Tournaments must be awarded no later than the weekend which includes the 3rd Saturday in June. Extension of the deadline must be approved by the Executive Director.**

Comments: Realigns the berths to be allocated to the Regions instead of Territories. Changes the maximum number of teams from 64 to 48. Applies for both 16-Under and 18-Under. Removes 315 L from Code.

Article 314 M 04

04. **Eligible Players. A Class C team must be comprised of players that are classified by their local association at the Class C or Rec level.**

Comments: Requires a Class C team to be classified by the Local Association.

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Article 315 B

New item – will re-letter as needed

B. Branding. National invitational tournaments cannot use USA Softball marks and logos before the tournament is approved by the Local Association USA Softball Commissioner and the USA Softball Executive Director.

Comments: Adds the requirement of any NIT to be approved by the Local Association USA Softball Commissioner and USA Softball Executive Director before using USA Softball marks and logos.