



## USSSA BASEBALL BAT STANDARDS NOT CHANGING

Updated December 1, 2016

USSSA is aware that several youth baseball associations have announced or are planning to announce that they are going to a new wood-like bat (marked with a USA Baseball mark) as the performance standard for bats in their association sanctioned activities beginning January 1, 2018. USSSA has been asked on a number of occasions in recent years if it is considering lowering its bat performance standards to make bats perform in a more wood like manner.

USSSA is not currently considering any such changes to its bat performance standards. USSSA has had a formal 1.15 BPF standard for baseball bats used in 14U and below (allowing diameters of up to 2<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>"") for over 10 years and a formal 1.20 BPF standard for softball bats (allowing diameters of up to 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>"") for over 20 years. Under its BPF standards, USSSA Baseball and Softball sanctioned events are played at a near perfect competitive balance for defense and offense that has led to continued dramatic growth in USSSA Softball and Baseball sanctioned events. In the view of USSSA, to lower the current bat performance standards at this time would harm the competitive balance and drive down participation in the American pastimes of softball and baseball now being played under USSSA rules.

While the 1.15 BPF standard is not changing for USSSA 14U and below baseball, the High School Federation use of the BBCOR standard (and the use of that BBCOR standard in USSSA 15U and older programs) has led our customers to request USSSA better prepare its 14U participants for High School competition. As such, USSSA has begun to run certain 14U tournaments as BBCOR bats only and beginning January 1, 2018, USSSA 14U (and only 14U) will add a minus 5 (-5) or below (weight to length differential ounces vs inches) requirement to its current bat standard rules.

In addition with over 20 years of insurance and playing history (with more than 2 billion at bats and 40 million games played) under its BPF performance standards, USSSA is in the unique position of having the historical data to determine the actual accident/injury levels of its sports. It is clear from that history that USSSA baseball and softball are among the safest amateur sports that are played in the United States. Because accidents do happen and a low statistical probability of accidents/injuries does nothing to protect a person that does get injured, the use of protective gear is not only permitted but encouraged for those wishing to have such additional protection in USSSA sanctioned events. In addition, the purchase of personal or team insurance is always a prudent action and is encouraged by USSSA and is made available by USSSA for its participants, coaches, etc. For more information on USSSA standards, risk of injury, protective gear and insurance, please see our [Important USSSA Baseball and Softball Standards, Risk of Injury, Protective Gear and Insurance Announcement](#) last updated on June 1, 2016.