

USA SOFTBALL MINNESOTA

HOW THE USA SOFTBALL PLAYER RATING SYSTEM WORKS?

Each player is assigned a rating. The ratings that can be assigned are:

- RPL (Restricted Player List)
- A+
- A
- B+
- B
- C+
- C
- D+
- D
- E
- No Rating (Player hasn't been assigned a rating)
- SUSP (Player has been placed on Suspension)

HOW WERE THE PLAYER RATINGS ORIGINALLY ASSIGNED?

Each player is assigned a rating of the highest level they have played at or bumped to from the five (5) sanctioning softball bodies listed below:

- ASA – Amateur Softball Association
- NSA – National Softball Association
- USA Softball -
- USSSA – United State Specialty Sports Association

Note that for ISA and WSL only championship teams and players are available and those teams and players are also reclassified to the next highest level.

For ASA, NSA, and USSSA almost all Mandatory and Restricted rosters have been acquired dating back to 2005. Most of those rosters have been recreated on this website.

WHAT DOES “R” OR “M” NEXT TO MY TEAM NAME STAND FOR?

An “R” stands for restricted which means your team finished with a 2-2 record at Nationals or Worlds and it means that you and your team were “competitive” in that class. It also means you are not eligible to drop a class.



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An “M” stands for mandatory which means your team was bumped (moved up) to the next highest classification. This means your team must compete in the next highest classification for a term of at least one season and participate in a National or World at that level.

GETTING BUMPED OR MOVED UP IN CLASS

If your team finishes in the top 10% of your National or World Tournament, you will be bumped/moved up to the next highest classification.

Think about 10% as one (1) team per ten (10).

1-10 teams at Nationals or Worlds = 1 team gets bumped up

11-20 teams = 2 teams get bumped up

21-30 teams = 3 teams get bumped up

31-40 teams = 4 teams get bumped up

41-60 teams = 6 teams get bumped up (increase in teams due to tie in finishing order)

61-80 teams = 8 teams get bumped up (increase in teams due to tie in finishing order)

81-120 teams = 12 teams get bumped up (increase in teams due to tie in finishing order)

121-160 teams = 16 teams get bumped up (increase in teams due to tie in finishing order)

161-240 teams = 24 teams get bumped up (increase in teams due to tie in finishing order)

240 or more teams = 32 teams get bumped up (increase in teams due to tie in finishing order)

If an individual player has been bumped from the same class twice they will get the next highest classification and a “+” rating which means they must play in that class for at least a term of one season and play in a National or World tournament.

HOW CAN I GET MY RATING ADJUSTED?

You can fill out an appeal form. A panel of local and national experts will review your appeal and render a decision in approximately two (2) weeks. Fill out the form completely. If you are not completely honest on the form your appeal will be denied. You may only appeal once per playing season.

Please be warned that appeals are only granted in cases of extreme hardship which you must demonstrate in your appeal form. There are a dozen reasons why your appeal will not be granted. Don't bother to mention any of those reasons because they are not valid in our opinion. At the end of this document there is a list of why appeals will be denied.

WHY BOTHER CREATE A RATINGS SYSTEM AND WEBSITE FOR THIS?

In case you haven't noticed softball team registrations are slowly declining. More teams register in class E and D than ever. There is nowhere for new people and teams to our sport to compete on a level playing field. Class D used to be the entry level of the sport. Now it is filled with highly competitive teams and players. If we never give entry level competitors a place to play, then the game will cease to exist within twenty (20) years.



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Teams have been taking advantage of the game and the lack of a handicapping system. They won or have been highly successful at a level in an association and left the association because they were moved up in class. At the new association they played wherever they wanted to, more often than not at the original level or lower. We believe if you can compete at one level in an association that you will be competitive at that level in the next. If you and your team have been bumped in one association, you should be bumped in all associations.

FRIENDLY ADVICE

If you want to play at the level you are playing at currently then you should never play in a State, National, or World tournament again. By playing in those tournaments you put yourself and your team at risk of getting bumped/reclassified.

CONCLUSION

Associations have let the teams and players dictate the classification and reclassification rules. Based on the decline of teams playing softball and registering, letting teams and players do what they want is accelerating the death of our game. This website is attempting to unify player and team ratings nationally, independent of association and to increase participation in our sport.

If you think it is unfair to have to play against higher classified teams, put yourself in the shoes of the people that want to start playing the sport but have nowhere to play with mild success because you as the career softball player have to play in D or E.

FROM USA SOFTBALL CODE

G. Mandatory Classification

01. Mandatory Player Classification. Starting January 1 each year will start a player appeal process where each player can submit an appeal to have their player rating dropped. This process ends August 1 and at that time appeals will not be accepted until January. We have taken our team guidelines and based it on the ASA Code in which a team could have 3 Mandatory players from the next higher division on their roster. We consider our list equal to Mandatory rated players. With the player rating system that we have in place helps create a fair and level playing field for all of our teams not only at a local but also at a national level. Below are the guidelines that we use on how to classify a team. Players on the ASA Restricted List can only participate in the Men's A or Coed Open Programs. A Player may have a + (plus) designation, this player cannot play down a class.

Men's Slow Pitch

01. Men's A = Three (3) player's from the ASA Restricted Players List.
02. Men's B = Three (3) A rated players and no players Class A+ or from the Restricted Player List.



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03. Men's C = Three (3) B classified players and no players from Class A, Class B+, or the ASA Restricted Player's List.

04. Men's D = Three (3) C classified players and no players from Class A, Class B, Class C+, or the Restricted Player's List.

05. Men's E = Three (3) D classified players and no players from Class A, Class B, Class C, Class D+ or the Restricted Player's List.

Women's Slow Pitch

06. Women's Open = Any Female Player

07. Women's C = Three (3) Open classified players.

08. Women's D = Three (3) C classified players and no Open classified players.

Co-Ed Slow Pitch

09. Co-Ed Open = Any Female Player and two (2) male players from the ASA Restricted Player's List.

10. Co-Ed C = No Open classified female players and no male classified players from Class A, Class B, or the ASA Restricted Player's List.

11. Co-Ed D = Two (2) female C classified players and two (2) male C classified players. No Open classified female players or male players from Class A, Class B, or the ASA Restricted Players List.

12. Co-Ed E = Two (2) female D classified players and two (2) male D classified players. No Open classified female players or male players from Class A, Class B, Class C, or the ASA Restricted Players List.

NOTE: Players that have no ASA playing history should be handled in the following manner. If a track record of a player can be verified in another National Association that player can be rated at that level or higher.

REASONS WHY YOUR APPEAL WILL BE DENIED

1. Player can't compete because they are in their late 30s to mid-40s.

Players can be outstanding softball players well past their mid-30s.

2. Player has added weight and is out of shape.

Players can quickly get back into shape.

3. Player lacks power hitting ability.

Power hitting is not a required to be an effective and useful player in any classification. Home runs do not always win games or tournaments.



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4. **Player claims they are a below average player at the level they are classified at.**

Just being below average does not mean your classification is inappropriate. By definition someone needs to be below average.

5. **Player claims there are players better than him at the classification level he wants to move to.**

No system is perfect so there are bound to be some inconsistencies. Also, if this rationale were accepted it would create a circular problem where nearly all appeals could be justified. There are always better players.

6. **Player wants his classification status changed so he can play with his friends.**

Teams do not need to reject their friends who happen to be higher classification players. If they want the appealing player on their team the team needs to enter at a level where the appealing player is eligible to play once the appeal decision is made. Ultimately if classification issues are a problem a team will need to decide whether playing together in championship play is a priority for them. In making fair and consistent decisions the Appeal Committee cannot allow friendship issues to influence their decisions.

7. **Player wants classification changed so he can play on a team that is not required to travel as far to play in various tournaments throughout the year.**

In making fair and consistent decisions the Appeals Committee cannot allow one's inability to travel to influence their decisions.

8. **Player competes at a lower level in other association's championship play.**

Where you play in other associations is of interest to us, it will not dictate the Appeal Committee's decision.

9. **Player has suffered an injury or a medical problem.**

Unless it can be clearly demonstrated the injury or medical problem has diminished a player's level of play in a manner obvious to all the Appeal Committee will not grant an appeal for this reason. Medical problems can be overcome and injuries can be cured. Surgeries often lead to improved performance following rehabilitation.



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10. **Player does not play frequently due to conflicts.**

Regardless as to how often a player is able to play the Appeal Committee's responsibility is to place the player in the classification appropriate relative to their current skill level.

11. **Player has never played at the level of their rating.**

While the player may not have played at that rating, they got that rating because of a high level of success at the level below. It's time for you to play at the higher level.

12. **Sponsor has been sponsoring teams for many years.**

Sponsorship loyalty is not criteria for allowing teams/players to drop in classification. While everyone is thankful sponsors are willing to put money into an amateur sport for basically no return on investment, the committee would be foolish to allow sponsorship duration to dictate classification.

13. **Need to be rated lower to play in another association.**

Our player and team ratings only apply in ASA. How another association conducts their business is beyond our scope of responsibility.

14. **Appeal filled out by someone other than the player.**

If the player wants to drop in class the least they can do is fill out a quick form. If you are filling this out for someone, consider it denied.

15. **Social Media/Communication Issues (NEW)**

If you take issue with the process via email, text, messenger, message board, Facebook, Twitter or any other social media outlet, and in the opinion of the committee it is detrimental to the game, your appeal will be absolutely denied.

