



# Iowa Amateur Softball Association Classification Code

Revised February 23, 2009

2009 Changes in **Red Bold Type**

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## Article 306 Classification

### General

1. The Iowa ASA's classification philosophy is our mission is best achieved by grouping together teams within our state who are similar in caliber to one another.
2. In judging teams we examine their ability to compete within that class and not their ability to win that class in ASA Championship play. Teams are to be classified at the highest possible classification level using this standard.
3. A teams desire to play in a state tournament or local invitational tournament will have no bearing on Iowa ASA Classification decisions.
4. Team classification shall be based on the roster that is submitted.

### **B. Classification Board**

1. The Classification Board shall be appointed by the Iowa ASA Commissioner and will consist of three (3) or more members, one of which should be the Player Representative and District Commissioner in which the team registers.

Meetings: The Classification Board will meet at least once a year, or any such time as deemed necessary to hear all appeals, and review all classifications. They shall determine the proper athletic proficiency for teams.

Authority: Iowa ASA will designate a Classification Board to evaluate, classify and review team competitive levels according to the classification guidelines. The Classification Board shall have the authority to act on the following:

1. Classify players and teams prior to the beginning of the regular season play based on past performance and current season roster.
2. Review players and teams for possible reclassification prior to the appropriate ASA deadline.
3. Hear properly filed appeals of players and teams on their classification status by the appropriate ASA deadline.
4. Develop additional guidelines and regulations as the need arises.

Appeals: **Teams classified in accordance with this article have the right to appeal their teams**

**classification to the State Classification Board. The State Classification Board will assist the National Classification Board for Adult Men's, Women's and Co-Ed Slow Pitch by providing information to assist in these decisions. When called upon to make a determination regarding a player classification Iowa ASA officials will examine a variety of factors including but not limited their history in ASA championship play, history with other associations, softball skill level and past athletic accomplishments outside of softball and to the National Classification Board for final review.** All appeals must be submitted by the team manager and contain the following information on the Appeal Form and include:

1. A copy of the team's current Championship Roster.
2. A brief statement stating the reason for your appeal.
3. Evidence to support the reclassification appeal

**Example:** Team Names, Game Scores, and Classification of other ASA registered teams played in the current softball season.

Board Objectives: To determine proper athletic proficiency for teams, the Classification Board shall be limited to an overall comparison of all teams within the state.

### **Mandatory Reclassification/Restricted Classification**

#### **C. Women's 11" and Co-Ed Slow Pitch Classification**

According to Article 507 G 2 of the ASA Code any team that has four or more players on a roster, including pick-up players, from a team or team that was reclassified, must play in the next higher classification for the teams next ASA season. **In all Adult national Championships, the top finishing 10% ( plus ties ) will be reclassified to the next higher classification.** Fractions will be rounded up to the nearest whole number.

NOTE: If a team fails to participate in Championship play the next calendar year this restriction will remain in effect until the team participates at the higher classification.

**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 June 30 and at that time appeals will not be accepted until January. We have taken our team procedures 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 classified players. With the player classification 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 procedures 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.**

**The following teams may have up to the following number of players on their roster:**

- A. Women's Class Open Any female player.**
- B. Women's Class C Three (3) Open classified players.**
- C. Women's Class D Three (3) C classified players.**
- D. Co-ed Class Open Any female player and two (2) male players from the ASA Restricted Player's List.**
- E. Co-ed Class C No Open classified female players and no male classified players above Class C.**
- F. Co-ed Class D Two (2) female C classified players and two (2) male classified players.**

**A PLAYER MAY NOT PLAY IN MORE THAN ONE CLASSIFICATION LOWER THAN THEIR CURRENT PLAYER CLASSIFICATION. A PLAYER IS CLASSIFIED TO A SPECIFIC CLASSIFICATION, UNTIL RECLASSIFIED BY THE NATIONAL CLASSIFICATION BOARD.**

**Team Restricted Classification**

Returning teams with two or more wins, excluding forfeits, in a state tournament must play in the same or higher classification in their next ASA playing season and shall be considered the same team for restricted and/or mandatory reclassification purposes.

**D. Men's 12" Slow Pitch (Class A, B, C, and D)**

**G. New Team**

A NEW team is defined as being a team with no more than 4 members from a team's roster in their previous season in ASA. **A PLAYER MAY NOT PLAY IN MORE THAN ONE CLASSIFICATION LOWER THAN THEIR CURRENT PLAYER CLASSIFICATION. A PLAYER IS CLASSIFIED TO A SPECIFIC CLASSIFICATION, UNTIL RECLASSIFIED BY THE NATIONAL CLASSIFICATION BOARD.**

- A. A NEW Class B team may not have more than 3 members who are classified as Class A Players.**
- B. A NEW Class C team may not have more than 3 members who are classified as Class B Players.**
- C. A NEW Class D team may not have more than 3 members who are classified as Class C Players.**
- D. A NEW Class E team may not have more than 3 members who are classified as Class D Players.**

For purposes of this provision players subject to mandatory reclassification will be treated as though they played their most recent ASA season at the level to which their team is being reclassified to.

## **2. Returning Teams**

Returning Teams shall be defined as team that returns with 4 or more players (including pick-ups, players from any other reclassified teams of the same level, and up to **three players from one classification higher than their current player classification.**

## **3. Team Restricted Classification**

Returning teams with two or more wins, excluding forfeits, in a state tournament must play in the same or higher classification in their next ASA playing season and shall be considered the same team for restricted and/or mandatory reclassification purposes.

**Returning teams with one or fewer wins, excluding forfeits, in a state tournament may not drop to a lower classification without district commissioner and State Classification Committee approval.**

## **4. Player Classification**

**All men's slow pitch players participating in championship play will be individually classified. The National Softball Player Classification Board will oversee all aspects of adult slow pitch classification including those for both teams and players. Iowa ASA representatives will assist the board by providing information to assist in these decisions. When called upon to make a determination regarding a player classification Iowa ASA officials will examine a variety of factors including but not limited their history in ASA championship play, history with other associations, softball skill level and past athletic accomplishments outside of softball.**

**Player Rosters for championship play may include higher classified players. Players who were members of a team subject to mandatory or restricted reclassification must maintain the same classification as assigned by the mandatory or reclassified rule in their next ASA season. The number of players shall be as follows:**

- a. **A Class B team may not have more than 3 members who are classified as Class A Players.**
- b. **A Class C team may not have more than 3 members who are classified as Class B Players.**
- c. **A Class D team may not have more than 3 members who are classified as Class C Players.**
- d. **A Class E team may not have more than 3 members who are classified as Class D Players.**

**NOTE: A PLAYER MAY NOT PLAY IN MORE THAN ONE CLASSIFICATION LOWER THAN THEIR CURRENT PLAYER CLASSIFICATION. A PLAYER IS CLASSIFIED TO A SPECIFIC CLASSIFICATION, UNTIL RECLASSIFIED BY THE NATIONAL CLASSIFICATION BOARD.**

#### **5. Mandatory Reclassification**

Returning Teams and Players must play in the next higher classification of championship play in their next ASA playing season if they finish in the:

- 1. In all Adult National Championships, the top finishing 10% (plus ties) will be reclassified to the next higher classification.**
- 2. The Top (2) two finishers in the Iowa ASA Men's C Slow Pitch State Tournament for two consecutive years.
- 3. The Men's Class D and Class E (Rec.) Slow Pitch East Champion, West Champion, and Championship Series Champion (if different than the East or West Champion).**

Mandatory reclassified teams must play at the next higher classification for one year before appealing to play in another classification level. NOTE: If a team fails to participate in Championship play the next calendar year this restriction will remain in effect until the team participates at the higher classification.

#### **6. Restricted Player List**

**Any player on the Iowa ASA Restricted Player List will not be eligible to participate in championship play below the B level. The classification committee will be responsible for identifying members of the Restricted Player List.**

#### **Classification criteria for Men's Slow Pitch**

The following factors will be considered when judging a slow pitch team's appropriate classification level:

- 1. The level of competition roster members have competed at and the success they have experienced at these levels in previous years of ASA and non-ASA championship play.

2. The level of success team's judged to be of similar or lesser caliber have accomplished in ASA championship play.
3. Past athletic accomplishments of roster members outside of 12" slow-pitch softball.
4. Results of invitational tournament play.
5. The number of home runs a team can consistently hit assuming normal weather conditions and a fence distance of 300 feet. Teams will generally be placed at the highest level where they can consistently hit the number of home runs allowable.

The following describes the attributes of teams' in each classification level:

**Class B teams:** All or nearly all players are high skilled outstanding experienced players with few, in any, mid-caliber players in the lineup. Several players will have competed in inter-collegiate athletics including some who may have competed in NCAA Division I.

**Class C teams:** There will be a mix of highly skilled and mid-caliber players in the lineup. Very few players will have competed in inter-collegiate athletics and typically at levels below NCAA Division I. The vast majority of team members will have not competed in athletics above the high school level.

**Class D teams:** Teams will consist of predominately of mid and low-caliber players who have either never played inter-collegiate athletics or if they have they are very inexperienced softball players.

**Class E/Rec teams: Teams will consist of almost exclusively low caliber players often with very little softball experience. Players should have little history of success in competitive athletic competition in high school and otherwise.**

#### **E. Men's Modified Pitch – Mandatory Reclassification/Restricted Classification**

- A.** The top 2 finishers in the Class B state tournament shall be required to move up to Class A the following season provided they have a minimum of 4 players on their roster (including pick-up players) from the previous season.
- B.** Any team that wins at least 2 games in the Class A state tournament will not be allowed to compete in the Class B state tournament the following season provided they have a minimum of 5 players on their roster (including pick-up players) from the previous season.

**F. 16 inch and 14 inch Slow Pitch.**

Teams must compete in district competition to be able to compete in state tournament play. Teams will advance to the Major, A and B state tournaments based on their finish in the district tournament. The number of teams that advance from district play to state tournament play in each class shall be based on the number of teams competing in their district tournament. The Top 4 teams from Major 16” State tournament automatically qualify for Men’s Major 16” State Tournament the next year. The Top team from the Men’s 16” Class A State Tournament automatically qualifies for the 16” Men’s Major State Tournament the next year.

**G. Men’s Fast Pitch.**

Teams must compete in district competition to be able to compete in state tournament play. Teams will advance to the A, B and C state tournaments based on their finish in the district tournament. The number of teams that advance from district play to state tournament play in each class shall be based on the number of teams competing in their district tournament. Note: Any Men’s Fast Pitch team may declare that they want to play in the Major classification for the season. If a team declares that they want to play in the Major classification, they are eligible to enter the Major National Tournament without playing in District, State and Regional Tournaments.

**H. Junior Olympic Fast Pitch Teams.**

Teams may classify themselves to levels of competition, be classified by the JO District Commissioner where they are playing league(s), or be MANDATORY RECLASSIFIED based on the following: Note: Girl’s Class B Teams must be made up of players who participate in the same league. A player may participate as a regular rostered player on only one team within a division in championship play during a season. A team may register and participate in more than one division of play, but is limited to only one classification within national Championship Finals play. Exception: Girl’s Fast Pitch 8 & Under Coach Fast Pitch Players may also play in Girl’s 10 & Under Fast Pitch.

A team that wins two or more games, excluding forfeits, in a state tournament or regional tournament may not participate in a lower classification in their next ASA playing season. A team that plays in the same age division that has five or more players on a roster, including pick-ups, from such a team shall be considered the same team.

The top three (3) teams in Class B and Class C from the previous year that plays in the same age division will be classified to the next higher classification in their next ASA playing season if that team has five (5) or more players (including pick-ups) that participated with that team.

Example - If a team that plays in 10-Under Class B finishes in the top three places in the state or regional tournament and stays in the 10-Under age division in their next ASA playing season they must move up to class A. If the team moves up to the 12-Under age division they may play in either class A or Class B, but are not required to move up to Class A. A team that wins at least two games in a state or regional tournament may not move down a Class provided they stay in the same age division.

Each JO District Commissioner may classify teams in their District according to: a) past performance and current season roster based on a level of play where a team will be competitive b) classification changes made by the District Commissioner will be notified in writing to the affected teams no later than June 1<sup>st</sup> of the current year. Appeals of classification changes must be made in writing within five (5) days of notification, to the State Commissioner, whose decision is final. Note: Teams that are mandatory reclassified shall not be allowed to appeal their re-classification.

The following criteria may be used as **guidelines** when evaluating teams. The JO District Commissioner will have the final say as to what class your team will be placed in based on the level where your team will be competitive, unless your team is mandatory reclassified:

**Class A Teams:** Have numerous skilled players. Pitcher(s) are skilled and show above average control. Players are generally recruited or selected via tryouts. Teams play in five (5) or more Invitational Tournaments, occasionally traveling out of state or more than 60 miles to tournaments. Teams generally place in the upper half of the league or tournaments that they enter, occasionally winning a tournament. Teams may practice in the off-season.

**Class B Teams:** Have a few skilled players. Offense and Defense is limited in ability and inconsistent although Teams may play in invitational tournaments. Pitcher(s) do not control the game. All players who wish to play are welcome. Teams play in three (3) or more Invitational Tournaments, only traveling 60 miles or less to tournaments. Teams may participate in out-of-state tournaments if the location is within a 60-mile radius of the team's origin. Teams generally place in the upper three-fourths of the league or tournaments that they enter. Teams may hold practices in the off-season. Play is mostly recreational in nature, allowing players to participate in other activities and may not devote a large amount of time to softball.

**Class C Teams:** This division has no advancement and is set up for teams that are strictly recreational in nature. These tournaments are designed to give teams with little or no tournament experience a chance to participate in a state tournament. All players must be from the same league. Teams play in no more than 2 invitational tournaments. Players are less skilled and not as competitive as class B teams. Teams do not have a desire to advance to further levels of Regional or National play.

## **I. Appeal Process**

### **State Classification Board**

**Teams/Players will have a right to appeal their classification after participating at the higher classification. The appeal must be submitted in writing to the State Commissioner on an Iowa ASA appeal form and must be fully and accurately completed. The State Commissioner and the State Classification Committee (SCC)**



**will review and forward the appeal with a recommendation to the National Softball Player Classification Board (NSPC) and the Chair of the Tournament Programs Committee. The SCC will consist of members appointed by the Board by the State Commissioner.**

**Given the interconnected nature of team and player classifications, all team appeals shall result in a complete review of each team member's classification status.**

**Appeals can be made starting January 1 and will conclude June 30 with no further reviews until the following January. If a team appeal is approved a roster will be frozen for the balance of the year. If the team adds a player to their roster, except Pick-Up Players pursuant to Article 503 of the national code, the appeal is nullified and the team is reclassified to at least the next higher classification.**

1. The primary factor in the decision making process of the state classification board shall be the players on their roster from the previous season and the players on their roster for the current season.
2. The team must compete in the class that the classification board assigns the team during the next season that they compete in ASA championship play or an ASA sanctioned tournament. If the team skips a season of championship play, they will be required to play in the class that they were assigned for the previous season in ASA.
3. Player classification reviews will involve the consideration varied factors. The claim there are certain players, within the classification level being sought, that are superior to the one requesting reclassification will not alone be sufficient grounds for a successful appeal.
- 4. To successfully appeal for removal from the Restricted Player List a player must demonstrate they have made a bona fide commitment to consistently play throughout the current season with a C level team and they are not involved in playing with a higher classification team regardless of association.**