

USSSA Player Altered Bat Policies and Procedures

1. **Inspecting Bats.** USSSA rules provide for the inspection of any bat in a USSSA facility. Please be clear that this right to inspect a bat is not limited to bats used in USSSA play, but includes any bat that is found in a USSSA facility. As such, even if you just forget and bring your altered "practice" or "home run derby" bat into a USSSA facility and do not use it in USSSA play, you can still be suspended under the USSSA altered bat rules.
2. **Damaged/Worn Bats.** If a bat upon inspection by USSSA is determined to be worn or damaged, it is to be removed from play immediately. No penalty is imposed on the owner or user of such bats.
3. **Continued Use of Damaged/Worn Bats.** If, however, a damaged or worn bat that has been removed from play is ever used again in USSSA play, the owner and user of such bats may be suspended for up to one year for unsportsmanlike conduct.
4. **Altered Bats.** USSSA has the right to request to take any bat found in a USSSA facility to determine whether a bat is altered. In most cases, USSSA will send the bat in question to the manufacturer of that bat to make the determination of whether the bat is altered or not.
5. **Bat Owner Options-Sponsored Team or Player.** For a sponsored team or player, there are no options. Per agreement with the bat manufacturers, USSSA has the right to a) take any such bats, b) determine if they are altered, and c) not return the bat to the player or team in question. The owner/users of such bats that are determined to be altered may be suspended from USSSA play up to one year for first time offenses. Second time offenders, however, may be suspended for life.
6. **Bat Owner Options-Not a Sponsored Team or Player.** For an Owner of a bat that is not provided by a bat sponsor, the Owner has a decision to make when USSSA desires to determine whether a bat is altered. The bat is his property and he does not have to let USSSA take it to determine if the bat is altered. If an Owner decides not to let USSSA take the bat, however, the Owner and any Users of that bat are immediately suspended for one year from all USSSA play and must leave the USSSA facility immediately. There is no appeal from this suspension. If the Owner allows USSSA to take the bat, the player may continue to play in USSSA events until a determination is made. If the bat is determined to be altered, the bat is returned (usually within 10-14 days after it is taken) to the Owner and the Owner and all Users of the bat are suspended from USSSA play for a period of up to two years. Second time offenders, however, may be suspended for life.
7. **Cooperation or Unsportsmanlike Conduct.** In addition to the potential for altered bat suspensions, anyone who does not fully cooperate with such USSSA bat inspections will be subject to suspension for unsportsmanlike conduct for up to one year. This includes other players, coaches, sponsors, team owners or even fans who argue with USSSA about an inspection or taking of a bat. When a bat is taken, the Owner, Users and the Team are entitled to an explanation, but are not entitled to attempt to intimidate or otherwise show disrespect to the USSSA, its directors, officials or employees.
8. **Assisting Those Using Unauthorized Equipment.** In addition, teams, bat doctors, managers or bat manufacturers (or their employees or associates) who in any way participate or assist in the use of unauthorized equipment can also be suspended for up to a year for unsportsmanlike conduct.
9. **No Fault Liability.** Everyone needs to remember that the Altered Bat rules are no-fault rules. The Altered Bat suspensions do not require knowledge that the bat was altered. Own one, use one, and you will be suspended. You are responsible for making sure your equipment is legal, and if not you will be suspended.
10. **When Will USSSA Take A Bat?** Effective immediately, spot bat inspections will occur at all Conference events. The inspection decision will be made by the USSSA. The inspections may be random or they may be made because the bat looks sounds or performs suspiciously. In short, they may be taken for any reason that the USSSA deems in its complete and absolute discretion is appropriate.