

UMPIRE TRAINING 2023 CORRECTED

Couple of ideas that occurred after some guys left – added here in color.

Sign In at games – equipment room: sign in to get paid.

PHILOSOPHY

I deeply appreciate Keating, Dew, Dempsey, Blades, Brooks, Wootan and a couple others who tried – in my first year – to save me from myself. Thank you.

I'm still the new kid in school. So I truly will listen to anything you say that might help me.

But I recently volunteered at Clague Playhouse – and had the VP say to me “You're kind of intense”.

I believe in what WE all do. Players can't play unless we do what we do. And better is better.

AGENDA

Your Governing Board, in the off-season, investigated bringing in outside umpires. It's true that availability and cost were factors. But, in the end, they believed in you.

Everyone wants to *Play Well*. You take the steps to learn how to play better – the best YOU can. When you bat, you do little things to try to hit better.

Similarly: I want you to be The Best Ump You Can.

Don't have to like me. Or use My Style.

But there are little things you can change to do the job better. Because, like when you hit better, I believe you'll feel better when you ump better.

Few tools to share.

Some of you may not agree: do the best you can.

But just listen.

I hope we can inspire everybody to learn these things and use them.

USA Softball

VALUES

- Teamwork
- Fair Play
- Sportsmanship & Civility

What *we do* makes that happen!

REFERENCES

“HnP Umpires Guide” – some of the ‘opportunities for excellence’ that arose last season, wrote them down, on website for you.

Our Rules: Copy on every diamond – in the white net bag.

Speaking of which: return your marker, rag, clicker, and red/white stick to the bag.

USA Rulebook – 222 pages – excerpted copy will be in the Equipment Room.

My philosophy about Rules:

There must have been a situation.

Somebody spent the energy to write down a rule.

My life is easier if I just enforce the rule.

I will email all the following. Some notable changes from last year.

Questions as we go.

GENERAL

Protests (cf USA, Rule 9, Section 1):

Umpire's Judgment: Not allowed.

Misinterpretation of Rule: before next pitch (legal/illegal).

Illegal Player: before leaving field.

Ineligible Player: any time.

Appeals:

Not need “ball to pitcher, ball to base...” When ball becomes dead, *Manager* verbally appeals.

Exception: If batter-runner misses the orange bag at 1st, that must be appealed before he returns – so any defensive player can do, live.

Talking to Umpires:

Because some managers play outfield, impractical to be the only one. They *may* introduce, at the plate meeting, an infielder to represent them. No other player talks to umps.

Next Of Kin:

List in equipment room.

RULE 1.5 PITCHER'S SCREEN

16-feet, *centered* on rubber, cord, don't stretch it, confirm it after the pre-game meeting, then players can't touch it.

RULE 2.4 UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS

“proper uniform. Pants or shorts must be dark blue or black”

Not “used to be”, not “almost”, not “just this one time”. > “dark blue or black”

So, no: “blue jeans” are “denim”, not “dark blue”.

Effect: If before Ump calls “Play Ball”, replace him in lineup without penalty. If after, he's in the game, and out every time his turn comes up!

RULE 7.1 LEGAL PITCH

The pitch need not pass **over** the screen (like a field goal). But must be six feet from the ground *when it passes the screen*.

You still need to call “Illegal” if higher than 12 ft.

RULE 8.1 COURTESY RUNNER

Any guy, any number of times per game. *Once* per inning.

Some base ump's carry a notebook, note who runs each inning, allows them to be quickly in control if someone challenges a runner.

- batter-runner leaving base before “Time” is called = out
- runner taking base – USA: isn't “on” until first pitch

RULE 8.2 RUNNER-FOR-BATTER

D 1& 2 “declare ... *one* Player”

He “must stop a 1st” (last year was “2d”)

- if he's off first, you can tag or force him out (USA – liability: off base)
- if reaches 2d safely: he's still not allowed there, the defense must appeal, then he's out

RULE 8.8 OUTFIELD PLAY

Division III added “throw to 1st must be relayed through an infielder”

Remember USA defines by where he stands at pitch: Infielder = dirt, Outfielder = grass.

RULE 10.4

Late change: we do **not** observe the USASoftball rule of a runner being placed on second base.

RULE 10.7

Never was a time limit. Now we agree.

RULE 13 PROTESTS

The “defending” Manager must now write up his side of the story.

RULE 18.3 CONDUCT

I shared with Managers, not a *note* but the *Rule* in its entirety: take the hint. Hoping they will coach their team?

“We subscribe to USASoftball's Zero Tolerance Policy Against Abuse: ‘3 Emotional abuse or verbal abuse is also prohibited. These include, but are not limited to such forms of abuse as: yelling, insulting, threatening, mocking, demeaning behavior, or *[of course]* making abusive statements in regard to a person's race, gender, religion, nationality/ethnicity, sex or age.’

“Umpires will issue written warnings to violators, which will be reviewed by the Governing Board for potential additional discipline.”

Be nice.

DIVISION III

RULE 32.1

Seven on dirt. If you want the eighth “infielder” (really: ‘defender’) – anywhere on the grass.

32.2 NON-RUNNING BATTERS

“hearing is a problem” – Use our new visual signal to indicate “Non-Running”:

- Batter must announce each time he approaches the plate
- Plate Umpire will step in front of the plate, face the pitcher, extend both arms over his head, cross his wrists, hold a couple seconds
- Base Umpire will acknowledge by repeating
- Outfielders should also acknowledge (except for short-fielders who have already turned away and are high-tailing it to the depth of the other outfielders!)

Outfielders do not creep in.

RULE 36.1 INFIELD FLY

Clarified: it’s a dead ball, nobody moves.

Now, let’s get up and go learn things.

Michael Blades, new to us last year, from Solon Babes, called games at about every level shy of MLB, taught at Umpire School. Governing Board made him Chief Instructor. He has some thoughts.

[And has volunteered to work with any Umpire who requests it.](#)

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