

Subject: Fwd: Huff-N-Puffers Umpires -- "View From Behind The Plate" Issue 55

From: "Peter E. Toomey" <peter.e.toomey@gmail.com>

Date: 7/29/2026, 19:22

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Gov Bd -- to all Managers and Umpires

PET UIC

----- Forwarded Message -----

Subject:Huff-N-Puffers Umpires -- "View From Behind The Plate" Issue 55

Date:Wed, 29 Jul 2026 19:20:08 -0400

From:Peter E. Toomey

To:All Division Managers

CC:Barb Rauckhorst

Managers -- so you can help your guys.

Especially in the "In Closing" example -- I hope one of my guys never has to toss one of your guys.
Your calming tempers and corralling language contributes to making that so!

I invite you to contribute names to Barb for "Sportsmanship"?

Good luck in the final weeks' run-up to Playoffs.

PET UIC

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We have the best view of the game.

Here are a couple thoughts to make it even better? Hopefully this helps -- because the "*situations*" keep on a comin' :

### **BALL HITS THE FOUL POLE**

USA Definitions, page 18:

FAIR BALL: A legally batted ball that:

H. Hits the foul pole.

USA 8, 5, H: "ball strikes the foul pole above the fence level ... home run"

(And, because someone will ask:

Rules Supplement 26:

A. A batted ball hitting a foul pole above the fence is a home run.

B. A batted ball *hitting the top of the fence and bouncing over* in fair territory is a home run.)

## THE PITCHER'S SCREEN

We need to be observing the Pitcher.

Sure: more than 12 feet = a loud and early "Illegal", left arm out horizontal (the Delayed Dead Ball signal).

But both PU and BU need also to be aware of:

- foot in contact with the Pitcher's Plate at time of release
- pitched ball clears the screen (and that's a toughy because if it even nicks the net it's a dead ball!)
- Pitcher pauses one second before releasing the pitch

## GENERAL MECHANICS

PU gets out from behind the Plate on every batted ball -- get a better angle on watching a pulled foot at 1B or not get blocked by a runner coming in from 3B.

Call a loud, clear, early "FOUL" on balls close to the line.

But *not* call "Fair", we just extend our inside arm and fielders run because they did not hear "Foul".

BU sets up behind 1B (when no runner on), then comes inside the diamond for his angle on "four elements" of his play: base, ball, runner, defender.

## SPORTSMANSHIP AWARDS

Barb Rauckhorst appreciates the few who have sent her names. And hopes others will?

Barb Rauckhorst    [<RocksDog4@yahoo.com>](mailto:<RocksDog4@yahoo.com>)

## IN CLOSING:

a thought from Chief Instructor Michael Blades:

Controlling the field

If guy comes at you loud, I would put up a hand and say "stop". If he is still loud and keeps coming, he has to go.

This still takes some judgement -- each situation will be different. As umpires, we must remain calm. We do not want to put players out of the game -- as players we know what it means to play.

Where the line is that gets crossed will be different for each umpire. But sometimes there is no other way to control the situation.

## AND TO END ON A HIGH NOTE:

Thanks to those who sent me their August travel plans and un-avails.

That schedule is finished and on its way as soon as Division Directors give me All-Star rosters so I know which of you are playing (congrats, btw).

With respect and appreciation, Peter

Huff-N-Puffers Umpire-In-Chief 2022-

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Schedules, Rules, Umpire Information, and the Umpire Guide are *always* at [www.huff-n-puffers.com/Rules-and-Regulations.html](http://www.huff-n-puffers.com/Rules-and-Regulations.html)

The USA Softball rulebook has not changed *for us* from 2025-25, but can be downloaded as a PDF from [www.usasoftball.com/official-rulebook/](http://www.usasoftball.com/official-rulebook/)

and the USA Umpire Manual from [https://cdn1.sportngin.com/attachments/document/0144/3128/2023\\_Umpire\\_Manual.pdf](https://cdn1.sportngin.com/attachments/document/0144/3128/2023_Umpire_Manual.pdf)

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