

Subject:	Fwd: Huff-N-Puffers Umpires -- "View From Behind The Plate" Issue 56
Date:	Thu, 30 Jul 2026 18:36:29 -0400
From:	Peter E. Toomey
To:	HnP Governing Board

Gov Bd --

Sent to all Managers and Umpires. FYI.

Suggestions for improvement always welcome.

PET UIC

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

Subject:	Huff-N-Puffers Umpires -- "View From Behind The Plate" Issue 56
Date:	Thu, 30 Jul 2026 18:34:45 -0400
From:	Peter E. Toomey

Managers --

As always, to help you lead your guys.

And today: a big ask that I got from *one of you*.

Please read (at least) first two paragraphs of "CONSULTATION REQUESTS"

PET UIC

We have the best view of the game.

Here are a ~~couple~~ *bunch of* thoughts (oh, this is a long one!) to make it even better? Hopefully this helps:

COMMITMENT LINE

Runner on 3B, breaks for home, foot *just touches* the line -- does he have to go?

HnP 8.2

Once any part of a Runner's body touches the ground **on or beyond** the Commitment Line...

So: he has to go!

And we remember: "No tags by a defensive player are allowed on Runners that have crossed ..."

BU MECHANICS

Thanks to the ump who noted: "Nobody on base, I'm set up behind 1B, I have nothing to do but watch the pitcher's foot [contact with the pitching plate] and the top of the screen [that pitched ball clears it]."

Good advice -- and yes: BU can call "Illegal" or "Dead Ball / Ball".

"CONSULTATION" REQUESTS

Couple of big todos today.

-- Manager "approached the PU" to talk to the BU.

A very typical impulse -- you want *him* to get involved. But a partner has --

-- no authority (ever) to overturn someone else's call

-- no right or need to involve himself in someone else's call

-- much better luck with managers and hugely more respect from partners if he stays out of the fray until **invited** by the man who made the call

A Manager who wants Umpires to "consult" should approach the man who made the call.

-- *Should* we consult?

Some managers/players think we should. But it takes time and for some creates the illusion that this is a consultative business.

If an ump is *not sure* or was *blocked*, heck **yes**: ask for help.

Otherwise "I had the angle. I saw the play. The call will not change. Play ball."

-- "Whose call?" As you've likely seen in the USA Umpire Manual, there are recommendations on which calls fall primarily to which umpires. That's to keep things organized and avoid PU and BU *both* calling on the same play. But I feel either umpire CAN make any call.

-- The key is communication. Just last week, a BU standing just to RF of 2B had his PU point at him to make a call at 3B. The question was whether the 3Bman tagged the runner coming in. Because the defender was on the plate side of 3B and the runner came in on the outfield side. So the PU was screened by the defender's body.

The PU knew he was screened, without hesitation he pointed to his BU (who could always decline) who had the perfect angle and made the call.

They had communicated flawlessly.

-- Good mechanics:

Today an ump notes "I watch every runner touch every base" and "move" and "as PU get halfway to 3B". Excellent.

His suggestion that I focus more in next year's Clinics is welcome and will be.

Now if we could only **get** some guys to *be more mobile*!

AND TO END ON A HIGH NOTE:

Overheard:

PU to Manager: "Partner is still playing, I'll start us working solo."

Mgr to PU: "You're good. You can do this."

Yeah. That's why we work hard to improve our craft!

What do you want, I haven't sent you anything in ... oh, 18 hours.

With respect and appreciation, Peter

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

peter.e.toomey@gmail.com

440-669-0750

Schedules, Rules, Umpire Information, and the Umpire Guide are *always* at 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/

and the USA Umpire Manual from https://cdn1.sportngin.com/attachments/document/0144/3128/2023_Umpire_Manual.pdf

Please consider the environment before printing this e-mail -- but if it makes you a better umpire ...