



## IGHSAU Softball Umpire Newsletter

2018 Vol. 5



### **Cathy's Corner: Message from IGHSAU Softball Coordinator of Officials**

We are well into the 2018 high school softball season! Please read each newsletter and all communication from me and the IGHSAU. There are important dates, rule and policy clarifications and case plays. Be professional as an IGHSAU umpire to be knowledgeable and in the game as an umpire.

#### **Tournament Dates to remember:**

##### Regional Dates

1A/ 2A

July 2, 3, 6, 9

3A

July 3, 6, 9

4A/5A

July 5, 7, 10

State Tournament

July 16-20

Post season assignments will be made the last week of June. Keep your Arbiter up to date!



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### Evaluations

Evaluations are being collected from across the state. Remember, the purpose of the evaluation is to help choose for post season as well as to improve your game. The feedback from umpires who have been evaluated has been mostly positive – we are not being overly critical. Work every game to the best of your ability – you never know who is watching. There are specific comments to improve your umpire experience.

### General Observations from Evaluators

**Prior to game day:** Be sure and contact the school prior to your games to verify game day details. Contact your partner to arrange a meeting time and place – at least 30 minutes prior to game time.

**Be professional:** We as umpires no longer need to check equipment. The dugouts belong to the players - umpires do not belong in the dugouts. If you need a drink of water, or Gatorade, the players or trainers will be happy to accommodate you.

**Approachability:** If there is a play the coach wishes to talk about, make sure live ball action is complete and time has been granted. Walk to meet the coach – take off your sunglasses (unless they are prescription). Listen to the coach's question. If coach thinks you are blocked out or missed a bobble or a dropped ball, or a pulled foot, think about whether you were blocked. If you were right on top of the call or it was just a safe/out where the coach did not agree – then tell the coach "I had everything I need to make the call". If you think you missed a dropped ball etc., the calling umpire will ask for the other umpires' input. Then the calling umpire will make the final decision. This is standard protocol in umpiring. Under no circumstances is an umpire to overrule another's decision unless asked by the calling umpire. Rule 10.1.4

**Wearing Proper Uniform and Equipment:** Our gray pants are heather gray, not charcoal gray. Navy blue ball bags and navy blue hats – preferably with the logo. Powder blue shirts with dark blue and white stripes on the sleeves. Navy blue shirts with red and white stripes on the sleeves are an option, but not required. Umpires must dress alike.

**Ejections:** If a coach or player is ejected, umpires must file a report with me. Coaches or AD's file with the IGHSAU.

**Sign the scorebook:** Umpires must sign both scorebooks. Please print your name legibly.



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### IGHSAU policies

**Weather: I cannot stress this enough:** If you can see lightning or hear thunder, stop the game. This is IGHSAU policy and is NOT optional. This starts a 30-minute delay. If you see lightning or hear thunder again, the 30 minutes starts over. There should be game administration on site to assist you – work with them.

**Weather prior to and during the game:** Game administration decides if the game will start. Once the game is in progress, coaches, administration and umpires have the responsibility to keep the student athletes safe from weather. The umpires have jurisdiction once the game starts whether the field becomes unplayable.

### Rules review:

Our biggest challenge is to call illegal pitches. No one really wants to call them – the penalty is severe. Runs could score. So be sure you know when you see an illegal pitch. And call it. It is better to call the pitch illegal now and have them correct the problem before post season. Read rule 6.

Specific note: if the pitcher licks her fingers, she must wipe them off prior to touching the ball. Rule 6.2.2. Rosin does not have to be wiped off.

### Rule 3-3-6 – DP Flex

We have had many DP Flex questions. Note the key to understanding DP Flex is when the **player leaves the game. If the player leaves the game and comes back in – that is her re-entry.**

ART. 6 . . . (F.P.) A team may use the DP/FLEX option provided it is made known at the pregame conference.

- a. The DP's name is indicated on the lineup as one of the nine hitters in the batting order.
- b. The name of the player for whom the DP is batting (FLEX) will be placed in the 10th position in the lineup.
- c. The DP must remain in the same position in the batting order for the entire game.
- d. The DP may be substituted for at any time by a legal substitute or the FLEX may play offense for the DP. In either case, the DP **will leave the game**. If replaced by a substitute, the DP position remains in the lineup. A starting DP may re-enter one time, provided the DP returns to the original position in the batting order.

1. If replaced by the FLEX, this reduces the number of players from ten (10) to nine (9). The game may legally end with nine (9) players.



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2. If the DP re-enters or a substitute enters as the DP and the FLEX was batting in the DP's spot, the FLEX can: a) return to the number 10 position and play defense, or b) leave the game if the DP plays defense for the FLEX.

e. The DP may play defense at any position. Should the DP play defense for a player other than the FLEX, that player will continue to bat but not play defense and **is not considered to have left the game**. The DP may play defense for the FLEX and the FLEX is considered to have left the game, reducing the number of players from ten to nine.

f. The FLEX may be substituted for at any time by a legal substitute or the DP may play defense for the FLEX. In either case, the FLEX **will leave the game**. If replaced by a substitute, the FLEX position remains in the lineup. The FLEX may re-enter the game one time provided she returns to the tenth position in the lineup.

1. If replaced by the DP, this reduces the number of players from ten (10) to nine (9). The game may legally end with nine (9) players.

2. If the FLEX re-enters or a substitute enters as the FLEX and the DP was playing defense in the FLEX player's spot, the DP can return to batting only, play defense for another player or leave the game if the FLEX plays offense for the DP.

g. Placing the FLEX into one of the first nine positions for someone other than the DP's position is considered an illegal substitution. The illegal substitute shall be removed from the game and restricted to the dugout/bench. (2-57-3, 3-4 PENALTIES)

### Post Season:

Softball is a short season. We will start assembling umpire's names for regional and state tournaments the end of this week and next week.

**NEW IN 2018: all regional finals and semi-finals will be using 3 umpires. Practice your 3 umpire skills!**

Questions, rule questions and comments should be directed to the IGHSAU Softball Coordinator of Officials: Cathy Creighton at [cathy@ighsau.org](mailto:cathy@ighsau.org).

**Have fun, keep hydrated, keep in good physical condition and work every game like someone is watching.**

Cathy