



IGHSAU Softball Umpire Newsletter

2018 Vol. 4



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

We are one week in to the 2018 high school softball season!! Please ensure you read each newsletter and all communication from me and the IGHSAU throughout the season. It is your responsibility to stay informed, up to date, and in the game as an umpire.

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!

Evaluations

Evaluations are going really well! Observers have been out in full force watching Umpires. The Umpires that have been evaluated have appreciated the feedback. Work every game like you are being watched. Remember, we are attempting to watch many umpires at different levels of play. You may be evaluated even if you have not requested. Be cordial to the evaluators – they are there to help you be a better umpire. When you are evaluated, the feedback is to help you become a better umpire. Pay close attention to the notes – they give you specific mechanics to improve or to add to your game.



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General Observations from Evaluators

Dressing before games: If schools do not have a dressing area for you, be cognizant of your surroundings while changing in parking lots. Come prepared with your undergarments. Also, there is a portable locker room that you can buy online.

Be professional: Talking to fans before games is discouraged. Talking to players other than something that needs to be addressed during the game should not happen. Giving coaches a scouting report on a common opponent is not professional.

Sweeping the home plate and pitchers plate: Turn your back to the outfield when sweeping home plate, bases and the pitchers plate. Bases do not need to be swept every inning.

Body Language: Hands on hips, arms crossed, etc... are **not** good body language. Keep arms relaxed down to your side.

Wearing Proper Uniform and Equipment: Mask, chest protector, shin guards, two ball bags (to keep the game moving) on the plate. Umpires must wear an umpire hat. No bandanas. The players cannot wear them – we do not either. Put your watch in your pocket.

Pitching: If the pitcher is illegal, call it. Call it early. Tell the pitcher why she is illegal and tell the coach if they ask. Know the rule and how you will explain to the coach. Watch every pitch from the first pitch of the game to the last pitch. Some pitchers are legal to start the game, but tire and become illegal later in the game.

Rules explanations: Do not explain rules to fans. Inform the Coach and move on to the next play.

Reporting Substitutions: Do not walk all the way to each dugout unless there are multiple changes. Make eye contact with the Press Box (if used as Official Scorer), Coach or person keeping the scorebook and say “11 for 20”. Make eye contact, turn away and get ready to play ball. Be quick but be efficient and accurate.

Walk up music: Teams may have music during the regular season. Please make sure the music is appropriate and the music must stop when the batter steps in the batter’s box. During the Regional tournament, if the visiting team requests walk up music, the home team must be able to provide it to them as well.



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Time between innings: A reminder that we have a 1-minute time limit between half innings. Umpires should use a stopwatch (not a wristwatch) to monitor this. When play starts, put the stopwatch in your pocket.

Take care of yourself and your partner: The summer heat is here already. We had umpires go down from the heat this past weekend. Drink water starting several days prior to your games. Bring your own water jug. Eat a little something prior to your game and between games. Watch your partner, the players and the coaches and ask for refills – the teams offered us Gatorade this past weekend. It was great!

IGHSAU policies

Lightning: If you can see lightning or hear thunder, stop the game. This is IGHSAU policy. Don't assume that it is just heat lightning or its too far away. This starts a 30-minute delay. If you see lightning or hear thunder again, the 30 minutes starts over. Do not leave the site until you know the status of the game. Consult with the AD – they have weather monitoring equipment.

Before the game, sign the book! Now that we do not have to check equipment, this is a good time to locate both scorebooks and sign. Be sure and print so the coaches can read your names. Coaches now must evaluate Umpires on Quik Stats when they enter their stats. Electronic score books have a place to sign – in the notes or comments.

Definition and rules review:

Rule 5-1-1 – Dead Ball

ART. 1 . . . Ball becomes dead immediately when (Table 5–1):

a. a pitch touches a batter or the batter's clothing. (8-1-2b)

NOTE: (F.P.) The ball becomes dead even though the batter strikes at it.

b. the ball is illegally batted (7-4-8, 7-4-2) or comes in contact with the bat a second time. (7-4-13)

c. the batter enters the batter's box with an illegal bat.

d. any batted ball, while on or over foul ground,

1. touches any object other than the ground or any person other than a fielder;
2. goes directly from the bat to the catcher's protector, mask or person without first touching the catcher's glove or hand; or
3. becomes an uncaught foul.



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Rule 5 – Dead Ball and Suspension of Play:

5.1.1 SITUATION A:

(F.P.) R1 is on first when B2 receives a fourth ball. F2 (a) drops the ball or (b) ball four is caught and, while B2 is walking to first, it is thrown to F1 who drops it. In either case, R1 advances to third and B2 advances to second. Is the ball dead after ball four?

RULING: No. These are legal advances. (2-63-1; 8-1-1c)

5.1.1 SITUATION B:

With two strikes on B3, B3 swings at and misses a pitch. The ball strikes her arm or person.

RULING: This is a dead-ball strike and B3 is out. (7-2-1g, 8-1-2b Penalty 2)

Post Season:

To be eligible for post season every umpire must:

- Register with the IGHSAU

- View the IGHSAU rules meeting

- Pass the IGHSAU test with at least 76% – test closes May 31 at 11:59 pm. If you need help on your test, call your regional advisor!

- Complete the custom fields:

 - How many varsity softball games are you working this season? (Minimum of 15 varsity games for state tournament)

 - List your regular umpiring partner(s)?

 - List any schools you should not work in the regional/state tournament series.

NOTE: to access custom fields:

- Go to your arbiter account “IGHSAU”

- At the top right, click “Profile”

- On the top left, click on “Custom Fields”

- Scroll to find IGHSAU. Softball should be at the top. Complete the 3 fields listed above.

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.

Keep working hard!

Cathy