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UMPIRE NEWS

Jan / FEB 2023



UIC JAMES COLE



Meet Your Staff

Nor Cal Umpire-In-Chief

James Cole

530-415-8795

jcole@inreach.com

District 1 UIC

Jim Rodondi UIC

jimrodondi@comcast.net

Spencer Schulz DUIC

calling002@aol.com

District 2 UIC

TBA

District 3 UIC

TBA

District 4 UIC

Kevin Hager UIC

kevinhager@comcast.net

District 5 UIC

James Cole UIC

District 6 UIC

James Cole UIC

District 7 UIC

Jeff Pratt UIC

jpratt54@hotmail.com

District 8 UIC

James Cole UIC

District 9 UIC

Jill Suico UIC

ladyuic@comcast.net

Rich Valdix DUIC

richardvaldix@gmail.com

Youth Development

Stan Angel

norcalump@sbcglobal.net

Uniform Sales

Ed Wong

edwardwong_99@yahoo.com



Where Is All The Rain Coming From?

2023 has started with a bang or should I say splash? With all this rain we're getting, it is already pushing things to later dates from our Field Mechanics Clinics to teams getting practices in and getting ready for those first games and tournaments.

We will only have our State 'B/C' at Twin Creeks this year, June 23-25. The 8U State Championship will be in Salinas at a date to be determine, but not Father's Day. We finally get that weekend off.

With the 2023 12U-18U "B" National Championships all in Sacramento, I will try to get as many umpires assigned there as I can in is this order: 1st to those who were canceled out the last 2 years; 2nd to those who need a third tournament for their NIF Award; 3rd to anyone else who wants to work.

If you haven't been in your Rule Book / Mechanics Manual yet, you are not starting the year off right. Before you know it, you will be doing games and that is not the time to guess about interpretations / penalties / awards. If you want to send a message, send a great one!

Hope to see some of you on the field this year.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James". The signature is stylized with a large, flowing 'J' and a cursive 'ames'.



2023 NOR CAL CLINICS

Contact your District UIC for
specific details.

DISTRICT 1

Jan 21, 9am-12pm, San Mateo
2-5pm, Pacifica

DISTRICT 2

Jan 29, 9-11am, Rohnert Park
1-3pm, Petaluma
Feb 12, 9 -11am, Rohnert Park
1-3pm, Petaluma
March 5, 10am-12pm, Marin
March 2, 11am-1pm, Marin

DISTRICT 4

Feb 19, 10am-12pm, Community
Park, Benicia
Mar 19, 10am-12pm, Community
Park, Benicia

Please let me know as soon as you
have other dates finalized so I can
get them posted on our Web Site.

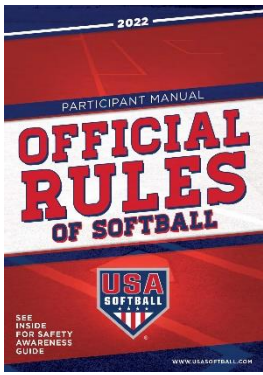
Nor Call Commissioner Vince DeFriese has appointed Mike Machado the new District #4 Commissioner. That means we have an opening for a new District #2 UIC. If you are interested in the job shoot me an email and we'll talk.

Stan Angel, our Youth Development Program UIC / Manager will be retiring at the end of this year. I can't say enough about the amazing job he has done for the youth umpires and for the Nor Cal umpiring program in general. This is a very important area of our Training and continuous increase Youth Umpire registrations. If this is something you would be interested in, we can definitely use you. Send me an email and let me know.

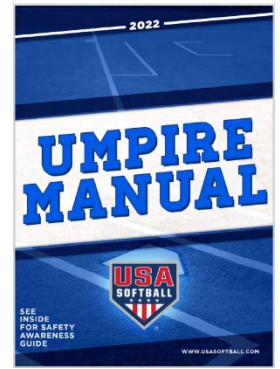
The 2023 Official Rules of Softball are now on the USA Softball web site, <https://www.teamusa.org/USA-Softball.aspx>. Click on the picture of the Rule Book and the PDF File will automatically download to your device. The digital version of the 2023 Official Rulebook has been posted under the "Menu" navigation on [USASoftball.com](https://www.teamusa.org/USA-Softball.aspx). As a reminder, the digital version enables the "Ctrl+F" search method to allow you to search for any key words throughout the document. Our printed versions of the 2023 Official Rulebook is expected to ship by the end of January.



It's a new year and that means a new revision of Safe Sport is now posted. Log on, take the new Revision Course and you are good to go again. Like it or not, Federally Mandated is Federally Mandated. If we want to work USA, we have to do it. If you need help, my Staff and I will help you get it done.



KNOW THE RULES!



THREE MAJOR KEYS TO SUCCESS IN THE TWO-UMPIRE SYSTEM

ANGLES:

In the two-umpire system, the ability to obtain good angles on plays is paramount. Angle beats distance every time when covering a play. You'll work to get an angle where all the elements of the play will be in front of you. The elements of plays usually include the ball and the fielder; often the runner and the base — and sometimes the location where all the elements come together.

When covering a play, work toward getting your best possible angle first and then continue hustling to reduce your distance to the play. The old adage, "There is a close correlation between closeness to the play and correctness of the call," is an effective method of covering a play.

Avoid "straight-line" officiating whenever possible. Unfavorable straight lining occurs when the ball, the runner, the fielder, the base and the umpire are all in a straight line. The umpire must work an angle to avoid straight-lining.

A good angle and a proper distance determine your proper calling position. Yet your work is far from over. Once you have arrived at your calling position be sure to focus on the vital elements of the play before announcing your decision. A good calling position from a stopped set position goes for naught if you are not focused on the proper elements of the play. You must see the essentials.

Umpires should strive to pause, read and react on every play situation and then apply "stop, set, focus, hold and call" to announce their decision.

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COMPROMISES:

When **two umpires** are responsible for covering the entire field, your crew must cooperate by making intelligent compromises and strive to keep the field in proper officiating balance. The best way to accomplish that is by communicating and reaffirming with your partner what your intentions are, where you are and where you will be going. You can do that with good verbal communication and effective hand signals between you and your partner. Never smother a play at the expense of being out of position for any ensuing play.

PRIORITIES:

There are two types of priorities for umpires to understand. Priority Type A is that the crewmembers focus on the more important events of the play. That is, ball-strike, safe-out, fair-foul, catch-no catch and live ball-dead ball are priority calls that require more attention and focus than whether a batter is possibly out of the batter's box, the pitcher commits a technical infraction, a runner possibly misses a base by half an inch or whether a runner tagging up leaves a base a whisker before a caught fly ball is first touched by a fielder. Never turn away from a catch-no catch situation to view a tag-up as that is usually when the ball drops to the ground.

Priority Type B is that it is essential that both umpires of a crew decide whether the runner or the fielder has priority on every play that occurs and know when that priority may change from the offense to the defense or vice versa.

EX: The runner or runners have priority when running the bases while a batted ball is being played in the outfield and a fielder who impedes a runner's progress has committed obstruction. Unless there is an overt infraction by a fielder, the defense cannot commit obstruction when a fielder has the ball or is in the act of fielding a batted ball in all codes.

When obstruction occurs, the play will continue under the delayed-dead ball provisions and the umpire is to nullify the act of obstruction at the conclusion of the play by awarding bases as necessary. Conversely, the fielder has priority when the fielder has possession of the ball or is in the act of fielding a batted ball. A runner who illegally complicates a play for a fielder has committed interference. When interference occurs, the ball is immediately dead, the offending runner is declared out and other runners are entitled to the bases reached at the time of the interference.

A player who is granted "priority" by the rules on a play becomes the privileged player and as a privileged player she is protected by the playing rules. Priority, Privilege and Protection are the three "P's" of obstruction and interference to help guide umpires through difficult play situations.



All plays are for USA Softball. What is the correct result of the play and what is your Rule Reference / Justification?

DECEMBER 2022

PLAY #1: B1 hits a ground ball in between first and second. F3 fields the ball and tosses it to F1 trying to cover the base. B1 slides headfirst into the first base bag and beats F1 to the bag. B1 overslides the bag and loses contact with first base and is tagged by F1.

PLAY #2: During the pregame meeting at the plate, the lineups are reviewed and both coaches state their lineups are official. The plate umpire asks if there are any changes and the home coach says the DP is going to pitch. On that coach's lineup card, the Flex is listed in the 10 spot as the pitcher.

PLAY #3: With R2 on second and one out, B3 hits a ball off the fence in left field for a stand up double. R2 scores on the play. The defensive coach asks for time and tells the plate umpire B3 is listed as No. 8 on the lineup card but is wearing No. 83.

PLAY #4: B1 singles to left field and collides with F3 while rounding first base. The base umpire calls dead ball and advances B1 to second.

PLAY #5: With R1 on first, B2 hits a ball to the gap in right-center field. As B2 approaches second, the base umpire hustles to try to beat B2 to third in case B2 tries to advance. The base umpire's feet connect with B2's feet and both fall to the ground. The ball comes into second and B2 is tagged by F4 about four feet short of second.

DECEMBER 2022

PLAY #1: RULING: B1 is ruled safe.

JUSTIFICATION: R/S 37

PLAY #2: RULING: The change is legal and the team drops to nine players as the Flex has been removed. A substitution is charged against the Flex.

JUSTIFICATION: Rule 4-1a-1, Rule 4-3e

PLAY #3: RULING: The Plate Umpire corrects the error on the lineup card, the offensive head coach is given a team warning, and all play stands.

JUSTIFICATION: Rule 3-4

PLAY #4: RULING: Umpire signals delayed dead ball and waits for the play to conclude. Once the play is over, B1 is awarded the base B1 would have attained had obstruction not occurred. B1 most likely would not have reached 2B, therefore B1 is awarded only first base.

JUSTIFICATION: Rule 8-5b

PLAY #5: RULING: B2 is ruled out. Umpire interference does not apply to contact with baserunners. If there is contact between a runner and an umpire, the ball remains live and runners may advance with liability to be put out.

JAN / FEB 2023

PLAY #1: With R2 on second, B2 hits a ball to right field. As R2 advances toward third, F6 obstructs her. R2 continues beyond third and tries to score. F9 throws the ball to F2 and R2 maliciously contacts F2 knocking the ball loose. R2 then steps on home plate. B2 seeing the ball knocked loose, advances to second.

PLAY #2: In the second inning, Baker hits for Abel. In the fourth inning, Baker injures a knee fielding a ground ball and Abel returns to the game. In the seventh inning, the coach wants to re-enter Baker to hit for Abel.

PLAY #3: With R1 on first, B2 hits the ball to right field. On the swing, B2 makes contact with F2's glove. B2 reaches first base safely and R1 is thrown out at third base.

PLAY #4: In the third inning, Jones hits for Smith. In the fifth inning Smith returns to the game to bat. Smith is hit in the head by a pitch and is removed for medical evaluations. The head coach wants to re-enter Jones for Smith as the team has no other eligible players.

PLAY #5: With R2 on second base and a 1-1 count, F1 commits but delivers an illegal pitch. B2 steps on the plate and hits a foul ball.

JAN / FEB 2023

PLAY #1: RULING:

JUSTIFICATION: Rule

PLAY #2: RULING:

JUSTIFICATION: Rule

PLAY #3: RULING:

JUSTIFICATION: Rule

PLAY #4: RULING:

JUSTIFICATION: Rule

PLAY #5: RULING:

JUSTIFICATION: Rule

BLUE BLOODS



THE GAMES ARE BACK!!

**WE'VE STUDYED THE RULES AND TAKEN
OUR TESTS, GONE TO SCHOOLS JUST TO
GIVE YOU, OUR BEST.**

**SIT IN THE BLEACHERS AND ENJOY THE
SHOW. RUN YOUR MOUTHS AT US AND
YOU'LL NEVER KNOW.**

**YOU'LL BE SITTING AT HOME WONDERING
WHO WON THE GAME, HOW DID YOU GET
THERE AND WHO DO YOU BLAME!!**