



## August Plays and Clarifications

### **Comments from the National Umpire Staff**

The Junior Olympic and other Fast Pitch Championships are in the books for the 2014 calendar year. Congratulations to those of you who have umpired in a National Championship this year. We hope the experience as well as meeting and working with new umpires and renewing old acquaintances helped the Championship become memorable.

Soon, if not by now, you will be receiving your Championship evaluation from your Commissioner, Regional UIC or your Local Association UIC. Now begins the real work. Do not wait until next year to put all the things you learned into practice. Take what you have learned and share it with fellow umpires so they too can expand and improve their umpiring skills. Talk to your fellow umpires about the whole experience of umpiring in an ASA/USA National Championship. Tell them about the friends you met, the good times you had and above all encourage them to strive to be an ASA/USA National Championship Umpire. It is incumbent upon you to share your experiences, so that all of the umpires in your Local Association can understand what it is like to umpire in a National Championship.

If some of your experiences were not good we need and want to know about it as well. Inform your Local Association UIC, Regional UIC, Deputy Director or the Director of Umpires so we can work to make all of our Championships a positive experience.

Above all we want to say thank you for being an ASA/USA Umpire. It is your hard work and dedication to the principles and mechanics of ASA/USA Softball that help make our umpires the best softball umpires in the world.

## Equipment:

### Rule 3, Section 1A:

We have received several questions and concerns about bats that make strange noises when you hit the ball, drop the bat or hit the bat against the ground. We also have reports of umpires pulling bats from games due to a strange noise they may hear. The cause of the “weird sound” in these bats is due to the design and not due to the bat breaking down. The bat manufacturers have come up with designs that will keep the ball from going over 98 MPH batted ball speed, be somewhat tamper proof and still be a good bat for the game of Slow Pitch Softball.

How a bat sounds when it hits the ball or ground does not indicate that the bat has failed. Rule 3, Section 1A, which states “shall be free of .... Rattles...”. This part of the rule should be verified by shaking the bat, not hitting the bat against something. If you shake the bat and it rattles in any way, we should remove the bat from play. If you shake the bat and it does not rattle, but sounds funny when hit, it is more than likely due to the design, not the bat being broken.

### Mismarked Bat:

We have been made aware of an Easton Bat, Model L1.0 Slow Pitch bat that is marketed as an USSSA bat but has the ASA 2103 Certification Mark. This bat is not on the ASA Approved Bat list and we have been assured by Easton that only a small batch of bats was made with the ASA 2013 Certification Mark on them. Please be aware that this bat does not meet Rule 3, Section 1A. We have included pictures for your review. **(See pictures below)**





### **Textured Bats:**

We have received questions about new bats on the market with a textured finish on the barrel. The question is whether or not they meet our rule as being smooth. These bats have been reviewed looked at and we do NOT feel they violate the intent of Rule 3, Section 1F. When reviewing bats before a game, be aware these bats are approved and are on the ASA Approved bat list.

### **2015 Biennial UIC Clinic:**

The Hotel and location of the 2015 UIC Clinic has been selected and contracts signed. The dates are February 5<sup>th</sup> – the 8<sup>th</sup> with the travel day being the 8<sup>th</sup>. An email with all the choices for hotel in the complex hosting the UIC Clinic has been sent out and hopefully you have begun to or have made your reservations for this great event. More information will follow on this in future postings and emails.

### **Line-Up Cards**

There seem to be a lot of contention/confusion and questions about listing the defensive positions on the line-up card. Specifically the issue of the Flex having a defensive position listed on the line-up card given to the Plate Umpire at the home plate conference. By ASA/USA Softball rules, Rule 4, Section 1A[1].....The line-up shall contain the first and last name, defensive position and uniform number of each player.....

This question comes up mostly in the game of Fast Pitch when a team is using the DP/ Flex option. In this case the only player without a defensive position listed would be the DP. The Flex must have a defensive position listed. If the Flex does not have a defensive position listed then the umpire should return the line-up card to the coach and have them list a defensive position.

The Plate Umpire should remind the coach that anytime the DP goes into play anywhere on defense the Manager needs to let the Plate umpire know. The Plate Umpire must keep track so that when the DP does enter the game for the Flex, that the line-up has changed from 10 to 9 players.

### **Clarifications:**

**Play: (F.P. Only)** With 2 outs and R1 at 3B, B4 swings at the pitch and misses for strike three. F2 short hops the ball for a dropped third strike as R1 slides into home safely. B4 stays at the plate observing the action and does not proceed to 1B. F2 retrieves the ball and tags B4 after R1 has scored. The umpire rules the run counts since the R1 scored before the tag out on a dropped third strike.

**Ruling:** Incorrect ruling by the umpire. The run does not count because the batter-runner was put out before reaching first base. **(Rule 5, Section 5B[1])**

**Play: (F.P. Only)** With no outs and R1 on 3B, R2 on 2B and R3 on 1B, B4 hits an over the fence home run. R1 and R2 touch home plate in order but R3 stops short of home plate to pick up a bat and is passed by B4 who touches home plate. While returning to the dugout R3 touches home plate. The defense now appeals R3 for missing home plate.

**Ruling:** B2 should be called out for passing R3. **(Rule 8, Section 7D)** The ball remains live. **(Rule 8, Section 7D EFFECT)** When the defense appeals R3 missing home plate, the umpire should rule R3 safe since R3 touched home plate on the way back to the dugout before the appeal. **(Rule 8, Section 8P)**

**Play: (F.P. Only)** With no outs and R1 on 3B, R2 on 2B and R3 on 1B, B4 hits an over the fence home run. R1 and R2 touch home plate in order but R3 passes home plate without touching it and turns and watches B4 touch the plate. On the way back to the dugout R3 steps on home plate. The defense now appeals that R3 missed home plate.

**Ruling:** Even though R3 has touched home plate, R3 did so after B4 had already touched the plate and scored. Therefore, R3 should be called out on the appealed and their run nullified. **(Rule 8, Section 3G)**