

02-12-14

FEBRUARY PLAYS AND CLARIFICATIONS

Comments from the National Umpire Staff:

It is 2014 and the ASA / USA Softball season is in full swing. New rules have been submitted and passed at the annual council meeting. New rule books have been printed and shipped to several Local Associations. We have had several ASA / USA Tournaments, including an Adult Men's Fast Pitch event in Altamonte Springs FL. participated in by the USA Men's Fast Pitch team.

New Management is in place, Craig Cress as Executive Director of ASA /USA Softball, Southern California Commissioner Phil Gutierrez as President of ASA/USA Softball and Ohio Commissioner Warren Jones as President Elect. All three have been a vital part of the umpire program in the past. We are now poised for great things in the ASA/USA umpire program except for one major obstacle, the number of registered ASA/USA umpires. I know all of us from the Deputy Director Staff, National Umpire Staff and all Local Associations are working hard to regain our umpire registrations. I am confident we will succeed.

How will it happen? First, we must make our program appealing so that our younger talent will want to stay as an umpire. By this I mean, use them to the fullest extent of their abilities. We must find those who can help us better serve our umpire program through recruitment, being a clinician and even a mentor. We should continue to award loyalty to the ASA/USA program and involve our younger talent. We should focus more on recruiting younger people to the umpire program. Give them the tools to succeed, help them to succeed and thank them for helping the ASA/USA Umpire program.

This does not mean forgetting our talented group we have today. We as the leaders of the umpire program must continue to work for ASA/USA umpires while show leadership in finding local talent who can help us grow the program. We currently have the best umpires in the world because of the leadership we have shown in the past. We must to continue down that path of being good leaders, and as good leaders recognize the ones who can step up and umpire in National Championships, who can share their knowledge and experiences in a way to help others succeed, and become the leaders of the future to carry the torch for years to come for the ASA / USA Umpire Program.

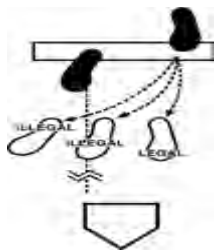
I ask you to reach out and find someone who may want to learn to umpire. We have 76 Local Associations. If each association brings in 10-20 umpires we would grow by over 1000 umpires this year. Let's all get out and add umpires to the program, promote our umpires, promote new teachers and instructors, and continue our leadership to make our umpire program the best available for years to come.

National Umpire Schools / Training:

The 2014 National Umpire Schools have started even with the weather being somewhat difficult around the country. We continue to offer the best training available to our umpires. We have had a successful school in Houston Texas and, as of this past weekend (February 7-9), had successful schools in Altamonte Springs FL, Chattanooga TN and Oakland CA. Three more are scheduled the weekend of February 21st in NJ, MO and Arizona. We round out February with 2 schools in Massillon OH and one in East Moline Ill. Please go to the website for the balance of the school dates and locations. We are also offering a Slow Pitch Camp in Oregon and a Fast Pitch Camp in Indiana this year. Both camps will offer the best instructors in Fast Pitch and in Slow Pitch to help train our umpires to polish their skills. Please go to the website and see the dates, locations of the camps and schools, and plan on attending one. You will not regret it.

Rule Book Issues:

- Page 62 of the Umpire Manual and the Participant Manual under Rule 6 Section 2 of Fast Pitch Pitching there is a drawing in the incorrect spot. The drawing should be in the Modified Pitching Rule on page 67 of both Manuals. See Image below:



- Page 60 in both books, Rule 5 Section 10C Time Limit. This was passed by a code proposal and was entered incorrectly into the code and therefore also into the rule book. The rule should read as follows:

In all Junior Olympic Pool Play Class A 12- Under, 14-Under, 16-Under, 18-Under, 16-Under Gold and 18-Under Gold pool play in Fast Pitch, no new inning shall start after a 1 hour and 40 minute time limit. In Junior Olympic Fast Pitch elimination play Class A 12-Under, 14-Under, 16-Under, 18-Under fast pitch no new inning shall start after a 1 hour and 40 minute time limit. If the game is still tied after the time limit has expired, the tie breaker shall be in effect at the start of the next inning. **EXCEPTION:** There shall be no time limit in elimination play beginning with the winner's bracket final.

By the correction of the code change there is a time limit to Junior Olympic Class A 12-Under, 14-Under, 16-Under, 18-Under, elimination play except beginning with the winners bracket final. **There is no time limit in 16 Under Gold and 18 Under Gold in any elimination play.**

E Rule Book:

We are offering for the first time an Electronic Rule Book for Android and I Phone users. It has been completed and available for the Android and soon to be released for the I Phone. The Android/iOS rulebook App will be the complete rule book. The cost will be \$15.00. We will still offer the "ASA Rules Mobile Search" as a search engine for a specific rule question. You can access the E Rule Book by going to the Google Play Store on your device and then search for "ASA Rulebook" and they'll see both programs. The blue icon is the Umpire version. This is how customers will find the Apps in the store, when they're already there searching. Or you can go to:

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.asa.umpireerulebook&hl=en>, that they can click on to open the item in the store and we'll use this as a link from a few different places. I think we should add this link in the Mobile site and add a new "Apps" products page on the other websites.

Clarifications:

Slow Pitch Ball:

In 2013 the ASA/USA Council voted to have the 12 inch 52/300 ball as the only approved ball for ASA/USA Adult Slow Pitch Play, except for Senior play. There have been several questions on if the seniors have to play with the 12 inch 44/375 ball or can they play with the 52/300 ball. The way the rule book is written one might conclude that Seniors must play with the 44/375 ball. Seniors may play with either ball, the 12" 44/375 or the 12" 52/300 ball.

2013 Bats:

Has the ASA/USA Equipment Testing and Certification Committee changed the 98 mile per hour batted ball speed requirement for 2013 bats and beyond?

The quick answer is no. The 98 batted ball speed requirement established many years ago has not changed. All bats whether bats with the 2004 or 2013 Certification mark still have to go through the same process and cannot exceed a 98 mile per hour batted ball speed.

New Information:

There has been a bat added to the list of bats that have an ASA Certification Mark but are no longer approved. Please go to the website and review the list. The bat added is the bat listed on the top of the list.

Umpire Program:

As additional information we are including a few of the items we are working on for the future:

- One rule book for both Umpires and Teams and a second book for the Umpire Manual strictly outlining ASA Umpire Mechanics.
- New agenda and teaching methods for 2015 National Umpire Schools.
- Better ways of getting National Championship Evaluations into the umpires hands quicker.
- 2015 UIC Clinic, new location and new format.

Congratulations:

The following umpires from around the country have successfully completed and passed the ISF Certification requirements to become ISF certified in game of Slow Pitch Softball.

- John Hinz - FL ASA
- Paul Drake - Ohio ASA
- Paul Bosshardt - FL ASA
- Scott Anderson - MN ASA
- Darryl Brunson - TX ASA

We also had three current ISF Certified Umpires attend the Championship and they are:

- Art Dietrich Central - VA ASA
- Mike La Grave - Indiana ASA
- Don Newsted - Michigan ASA

Congratulations to all who attended and represented the ASA / USA Softball Umpire Program.