



December 2017 Plays and Clarifications

Comments from the Director of Umpires

It is already December of 2017 and another year has flown by. Wow, does time fly when you are having fun! As we all prepare for the Holidays, let us not forget those who help us and allow us to do what we do as USA Softball Umpires. We should thank the following:

First, we need to thank the military for protecting us daily. We thank those who have served and those who currently serve by putting their lives on the line every day to keep us free and safe. We owe them a debt of gratitude that we can only try to pay back. Coming from a family that lost a loved one protecting our country, it has made me even more appreciative of what those in the military do day in and day out. Even though I never met my uncle killed in WWII, my dad made sure I knew about him and what his family went through the day they received the killed-in-action notification. It made me appreciate the military even more. Thank you to all that put their lives on the line every day for all of us by serving in our military.

Next, we thank USA Softball. We thank the leaders of our organization for continuing the leadership started in the past and carried forward to today so we can participate in our passion, umpiring softball. Thank you to the National Office Staff who work feverously day in and day out putting together tournaments, championships and events that allow us to do what we love to do. Thank you for promoting the sport of Softball along with the Umpire Program through out every facet of our game. Without their hard work and dedication, we would not have USA Softball.

Last but not least we need to thank you, the USA Softball Umpire. Thank you to those umpires who continue to grow and improve their abilities to represent USA Softball on the National Stage as well as the International Stage. Your dedication and love for the game is the reason USA Softball Umpires remain at the top of the list as the best umpire program in the United States.

Thank you to the umpires that go out day in and day out and work league play in their local area. They never ask for anything but the opportunity to call ball on a nightly basis. If it was not for them, we would not have a program.

As we move into 2018, we must continue to grow and get better at what we do. One of the ways we do this is by listening to you. We want and need your ideas on how to make the USA Softball Umpire Program better and stronger. If you have ideas for improving the overall program, let your UIC, RUIC or Deputy Director know what they are so they can relay them to us. If you have ideas you would like discussed in this forum, let us know and we will include them. We cannot continue to get better without the help of everyone.

Camps and Schools

Just a reminder we have several National Umpire Schools in 2018 with the first one of the schools, December 8 – 10 in Bowling Green, Kentucky. We also have two advanced camps, one for Slow Pitch and one for Fast Pitch this year. These are camps designed to get you to the next level in your umpire career. If you truly want to get better at what you do and become an even better umpire, I strongly urge you to attend a camp.

Go to <https://www.teamusa.org/usa-softball/umpires/national-umpire-schools> to see a list of all our schools and camps.

Rule Book

We are working hard at finishing the 2018 USA Softball Rule Book. We have a few more days of work and then it will be ready for print. During the 2018 season, we need and want your help. If you see something that is incorrect or something that does not read right, bring it to our attention. We constantly look at the book for errors and try to fix them the following year. Your help would be greatly appreciated.

We are also looking at revamping the rule supplements. We want them to be a tool to help on difficult rules. We do not want them to simply restate what is already in the rule but they should be an explanation of the tough rule. We are looking at removing some items that we do not need and adding some we may need. If you have specific rules you feel we need to address, let us know.

Umpire Manual

As you may be aware, the USA Softball Umpire Manual will not be printed starting in 2018. It will be in PDF form and posted on the web. It should be posted by January 1, 2018. This allows us to make needed enhancements to the umpire manual easily and at any time. It also allows us to update any errors on an ongoing basis, highlight things that we may see being done incorrectly during the year and hopefully make it a much more useful product for our umpires. Once it is posted, let us know your thoughts. We want to continue to make it a better manual and a better product for our umpires.

Plays and Rulings

Next year, we want to concentrate on rules that may give you problems. In order to do this, we need your input. Let us know what rules we can discuss or plays that you have issues with. We always get questions on Obstruction and Interference and will have several videos posted next year on this subject. If you have other troublesome rules or plays, let us know and we will discuss them in this document.

Holidays

Last but not least, on behalf of the National Umpire Staff, we wish all of you a Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, and Happy Holidays. Enjoy your time with family and friends as this is what the Holidays are all about, and have a safe and prosperous New Year!