



November 2020 Plays and Clarifications

From the Director of Umpires

Well 2020 is almost over and I think we can all say it was one crazy year. The pandemic played havoc with the National Championship season. We were able to hold about 25% of our National Championships which included all our higher-level Championships in both Fast Pitch and Slow Pitch. With some states opening sooner than others and the hosts really taking the extra measures to try and keep everyone safe, those Championships that were held were very successful.

We now move forward hoping and praying that 2021 will be a better year. We start our Virtual Council Meeting next week with some of the breakout meetings starting this week. Even though we will not have a new rule book in 2021 we are still looking at what needs to be done to the 2022 rule book. Next week we will have several meetings normally held at council, virtually to keep 2020 as normal as possible.

Bottom line we survived 2020 and look forward to a big 2021. We need to continue to train our umpires in mechanics and rules. We must reach back out and sign up those umpires we lost in 2020 due to the pandemic. Safe Sport has a new refresher for 2021 and it is imperative we better explain what Safe Sport means to our program, not only as umpires but as members of USA Softball. As usual, we are the leaders. We started Safe Sport several years ago with the knowledge other organizations would come along. It has taken a little longer than we expected but most of the other alphabets in softball must now also do Safe Sport. They are to do so, or they lose their insurance and are violating Federal Law. However, as usual we were first.

We need all our umpires to stand strong, fight through and make 2021 the comeback year we all know and hope it can be.

National Umpire Schools:

National Umpire Schools are set and posted on the website. Our first school will be held in Southern California and will be virtual. The balance of the schools will be held on site in the regions listed. The schools will continue to adapt to the needs of the host association along with covering the rules and mechanics that affects all of us nationally. Please go to USA Softball.com and click on the umpire tab to see the dates and locations for all the schools. Find a school and attend some of the best training you can receive.

2021 UIC Clinic: As we all know the 2021 UIC Clinic will be virtual. The National Umpire Staff is working on the agenda and time frame the virtual presentations will be held. We are putting together plans and will be meeting on those plans on Monday the 9th of November with the National Umpire Staff. We are looking at all virtual platforms, including zoom and Facebook live

to have a clinic and share a lot of the information. We will keep everyone updated once we have more information so stay tuned.

Rule Book: It has been brought to our attention that the “Effect” for a violation to Rule 6A, Section 1 and Rule 6B, Section 1 was inadvertently left out of the 2020 rule book. The Effect should be as it was in 2019 and read:

Effect - Section 1[A-E]: *Illegal pitch; refer to Rule 6A Section 11 for penalty*

We apologize for the error and we will make sure it is added to the 2022 rule book when printed.

Play: R1 on 3B with one out. B3 hit a fly ball to F5. Thinking there were two outs, R1 takes off and crosses home plate scoring a run. F5 throws the ball to F6 who is covering 3B but throws the ball to left field. R1 still not in the dugout now realizes there was only 1 out. R1 retouches home plate and returns to 3B prior to the defense getting the ball back to 3B.

Ruling: R1 is safe at 3B. R1 can return to a base left too soon as long as they retouch home plate since they had crossed the plate. **Rule 8, Section 3A**

Play: Over the fence catch. Link

Ruling: In this play F8 makes a great catch by leaving her feet in live ball territory, crashing into the fence, catching, and securing the ball. In doing so F8’s momentum carries her over the fence where she touches the ground beyond the fence with her glove and other parts of her body. This is an unintentional catch and carry. The ball would become dead and runners would be awarded one base from the last base touched at the time the fielder left live ball territory. **Rule 8, Section 5J**