



## December 2022 Plays and Clarifications

### From the Director:

We are asking for more participation in the Plays and Clarifications. In response to my conversation with the staff Steve Nelson, A Deputy Director of Umpires has written the information below.

### From Deputy Director Steve Nelson:

We hope that everyone had a great Thanksgiving, and as we approach the end of the year we would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas, Blessed Holiday season, and a Happy and Prosperous New Year. From a softball perspective we look forward to 2023 and the complete resumption to normalcy after having to deal with COVID effecting the last three seasons in various degrees depending on your location in the country.

We are resuming the monthly Plays and Clarifications after taking a break for a few months. During the break we wanted to determine from our umpire membership if this is a useful tool to reach you with umpiring information, rules, and mechanic discussions as well as plays submitted from throughout the Country and throughout our various games. We did hear from some of the membership missing the publishing of Plays and Clarifications and the information contained within them. So, we will restart the monthly editions and we ask for your help in giving us the plays or topics you would like us to cover. Short of us just coming up with plays, we really would like to use some of the actual plays that have occurred in the field during your games. We feel your reality is much better than our creativity. So please, if you have had plays in your games or have questions about a play you witnessed send it to us at [kryan@usasoftball.com](mailto:kryan@usasoftball.com) or too any member of the Regional UIC's or the Deputy Director Staff.

### Biennial UIC Clinic:

The biennial UIC Clinic returns to Oklahoma City on February 2-5 at the Sheraton Hotel in downtown OKC. Due to COVID we were forced to alter the 2021 UIC Clinic into a 4-night virtual event. While it was the best we could do under the circumstances it was just a necessary substitute for the UIC Clinic you are accustomed to having, and one that we are proud to produce for you. This year's clinic will have no formal events on Thursday night February 2, but we know there will be plenty of informal activity on Thursday night as our attendees begin to arrive and gather throughout the day. The action- packed agenda will start at 8 am on Friday February 3 and will continue through Saturday night. Sunday is a travel day and no formal activities are scheduled. The theme for the Clinic is "USA Softball: Leading by Example". We will have general sessions on "What do you want out of your umpire career?" and "What does it mean to be a UIC". We will also have six Breakout Topics on subjects including Rules, Game Management, Mechanics, Technology, Pre-Pitch Planning and All Eyes are on You. Due to space limitations at our venue, we are limited to the first 350 attendees and there are still spots available but sign up as soon as possible to make sure you do not miss this extraordinary event.

There are links for registering for the Clinic as well as reserving rooms at the Sheraton on the USA Softball website under the umpire tab. If you need help registering or have any questions about the Clinic you can reach out to Steve Nelson at [bubbatheump@windstream.net](mailto:bubbatheump@windstream.net)

### **2022 USA Softball Council Meeting:**

USA Softball held its Annual Council Meeting November 13-15 in Shreveport, LA. This Council Meeting set the stage for our 2023 season with the addition of new rules, new code measures and locations for our future National Championships. Some of the events at the Council Meeting that involve/affect our umpire program occurred at the Hall of Fame Induction ceremonies and the closing session of the general Council.

At the Hall of Fame Banquet leading into the Council meeting there were 11 inductees and one of those was from our umpire family. Mike DeLeo, who was a long-time umpire, Metro Detroit UIC and a Regional UIC for Region 6 for many years was inducted in the Meritorious Service Category. Also in the 2022 class of inductees in the Umpire Category was Jeff Hansen of Fremont, NE, who worked many National Championships as an umpire and UIC as well as working the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta. At the conclusion of the banquet the 2023 inductees were announced and there were two umpires included in this class. Jim Craig from Tonawanda, NY and Joe Massaro from Colonia, NJ. Jim has been a member of the National Umpire Staff since 1996 in the roles of Regional UIC and Deputy Director in addition to his own umpiring career. Joe is a longtime umpire from New Jersey who worked many Regional Fast Pitch Championships and three Women's Major Championships. Congratulations to Mike, Jeff, Jim and Joe on their inductions/selections!

The General Council passed seven rule changes effective in 2023. We will have a thorough review and explanation of the changes in the January edition of Plays and Clarifications.

### **Plays:**

Play - (Slow Pitch) After the 1<sup>st</sup> pitch to B1, F2 returns the ball to F1, and the plate umpire has a silent count of 10 and the pitch is not released, and the plate umpire calls an illegal pitch.

Ruling - This will not always be ruled an illegal pitch. The rule was changed in 2022 reducing the time that a pitcher has to release the ball to 5 seconds, but this rule has the provision "the pitcher has 5 seconds to release the ball after receiving it or after the umpire has indicated "Play Ball". We know in the game of Slow Pitch that the batter sometimes dictates the pace of play, and the plate umpire is constantly suspending play. The 5 second "clock" would not start until the batter is ready and the ball has been put into play by the plate umpire. **Rule 6C, Section 3J**

Play: - R1 on 1B, B2 hits a flyball that is caught by F8 who throws to F3 attempting to pick off R1. R1 goes back to 1B standing up and over runs 1B but dives back in touching the contrasting color portion of the base prior to F3 catching the throw from F8. R1 is ruled safe, but the defense appeals that R1 is out for returning to the wrong portion of the base.

Ruling: - The original ruling by the umpire was correct and would not change on the appeal. The runner may return to and the defense may use either portion of the base. *Rule, Section 2N [7 & 8] and Rule 8, Section 8P*