



# News for Blues

COLLEGE COLLEGIATE SOFTBALL UMPIRES ASSOCIATION

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## MESSAGE FROM: Jim Sanderson, CCSUA Chairman

This month I will use a time-tested and popular agenda for umpire post game taken from the Clint Eastwood classic, *The Good, Bad and Ugly*. Just as we can discuss what went good in a game, then the areas for improvement (the bad) and hopefully there will not be and game aspects that were ugly. Of course, any ugly will take the most time and effort as a plan should be put into place by the crew and each individual umpire for “the ugly” to not be repeated.

First, the good. The season has started and we get to put into practice what we have studied from the rule book, mechanics manual, Locker Room, camps, past observations and training meetings. Umpires, for the most part have embraced the new rules, mechanics and points of emphasis. Umpires are using the language from the rulebook to explain their rulings. The situational mechanics are being discussed in pre/post games and used on the field. Umpire to umpire communication and reading each other to cover a play seem to have improved. Umpires are using **PUBGAR(P)** as they move to their calling positions. Chase decisions have been good, giving good quick reads and communication to partners. Movement has been parallel with the flight of the ball and the calls have matched some spectacular diving catches. Overall it is just good to finally get to put into practice the tools that will help us shine as we perform on the field.

Second, the bad. Some umpires continue to do things their way which makes us all wear the inconsistent label used by coaches, players and fans. Please have the integrity and professionalism to support your fellow umpires that are making the guts call and enforcing the rules. Two specific examples are the time between pitches and the two second pause (simulate taking a sign from the catcher) rules. Another is noisemakers; the rule is to be enforced when the opposing team brings it to our attention, but a proactive umpire could prevent the problem and get teams to comply with the rule by discreetly between innings informing that coach that if the other coach complains then the rule will be enforced and now there are no surprises. This is also an opportunity to teach the rule.

The bad, continued: What does “move with purpose” mean? What does it look like? When do umpires have problems showing that they are moving with purpose? Why is this perception of moving with purpose so important? All of these questions can set the tone for a game and be used to help each umpire become better. Some games have presented unusual situations that can be labeled as missed opportunities to shine for the covering umpire or the umpire crew. A bounding batted ball that goes out of play is a rule book two-base award from

the time of the pitch. Come up big and sell the situation. Show shine and confidence. There should be none or very little discussion with coaches following this play.

Third, the ugly: A catch and carry through an outfield fence with a runner starting on second base would result in a one base award ending with an out and the runner awarded third base. The covering official had an opportunity to shine and sell the call and make the correct award. A run was scored on this play with the former rules interpreter sitting in the stands. The ugly is that it makes us all look bad. The other ugly is that the coach did not protest. A rules was missed. This stinky sandwich still has a bad taste. Confidence and creditability was lost.

Please include the following in all post games. What could each individual umpire and the umpire crew have done differently today to better serve the game of softball?

Jim Sanderson  
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## ASSIGNORS MESSAGE

The more we talk, the more we give someone a chance to criticize us.....  
Perception is reality.....  
First impressions.....  
He said....She said.....

We could come up with a few more, but the point is.....Don't give coaches, players, or fans an opportunity to criticize you. The simplest comment or question to a partner can get overheard and taken out of context. What if they heard only the last phrase of your complete statement? We encourage partners to discuss when needed, but that's between the two of you between innings or when walking away from the contest. Don't let event staff, spectators, players, coaches hear the comments.

Then if you slip don't try to compound the problem by explaining what you really did say. You are digging a hole, as they don't care. Good umpires get in trouble with their mouth, and it's something that's difficult for the Assignors to defend.

As in life, actions speak louder than words. Show your good work with your skill.

Your Assignors,  
Joanne, Terry, Jim, Rich, Dale

## TRAINING STAFF INFORMATION



### Locker Room Updates:

Here are the new additions to our Locker Room since the last Newsletter:

- Article *Communications* has been added in the Game Management Corner under the Game Administration section. It includes excerpts from Dr. Ross Flowers as presented at the NCAA/SUP Clinic, Palo Alto, Jan. 17, 2016
- Article *Scrimmages Practices Games* in the Game Management Corner
- Article *Corrections to the CCA Manual – Updated* in the Mechanics Corner
- Article *Mechanics for Plate Umpire after Batter Hit by Pitch* has been added to the Mechanics Corner under the Mechanics for All Umpires section.

And the Search function in the Locker Room has been enhanced. For example, if you are looking for the template for Game Report, click on the magnifying glass which appears on almost every page and enter the words “game report.” Let John Bennett know if there is something you search and could not find.

### Backstop Padding:

The latest news we have is that **neither NAIA nor CCCAA will waive the rule for backstop padding**. So if they play on a field that is not padded according to rule 2.2, declare the game “no contest”, call the assignor immediately and send the Game Report as soon as possible.

### What Is The Procedure When A Major Injury Occurs From A Batted Ball During The Game?

This question arose at one of our Annual Meetings. See the reply we received from Vickie Van Kleeck in the Locker Room, posted in the Game Management Corner.

### Projected Substitutions:

We recently submitted two plays to Vickie Van Kleeck regarding projected substitutions. See her rulings in the Rules Corner, Game Participants section.

## What's Happening On The Field Which Must Be Addressed?

- Too many pitchers stepping outside the pitcher's lane and the violation is not being called. We must watch for this and be consistent in calling it.
- Additional interpretations have been issued for the pitcher's pause rule and it confirms what was presented at our Annual Meeting. Umpires need to use common sense: do not penalize a team with a slow two-second count. The intent of the clarification is not to have a pitcher "quick pitch" to catch the batter and or umpire unprepared for the pitch.
- Incorrect ruling on a runner who left the vicinity of her base during a defensive time-out. She was called out instead of an offensive conference being charged. And the plate umpire allowed it to happen without intervening! We need to know these rules!!
- Incorrect ruling on a batter who ran to her base coach for a second offensive conference in an inning. The head coach was ejected instead of the batter. We need to know these rules!!

John Bennett  
CCSUA Chairperson of Education and Training

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## What's New at the SUP?



### News and Announcements:

- Test Review
- 2015-16 NCAA Softball You Make the Call #2
- 2015-16 NCAA Softball You Make the Call #1
- Notes from the National Coordinator – February 2016  
(This includes an update to the Chasing Situational Mechanic)
- Notes from the National Coordinator – March 2016
- Notes from WCWS Umpires
- 2016 Clinic Presentations
- "Working the Plate" and Working the Slot" articles in the General Umpiring Information section

### NCAA Rule Information:

- 2016 and 2017 NCAA Softball Official Rules Interpretations, Clarifications and Situations (As of 2/5/2016) – Padded Backstop Clarification
- 2016 and 2017 NCAA Softball Official Rules Interpretations, Clarifications and Situations (As of 2/23/2016) - iWatches

### **General Umpiring Information:**

- Rule 10: Pitching Procedure – Clarification of the 2-second Pause by Pitchers

### **Umpire Wellness:**

- Concussions and College Sports
- Medical Concerns

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## **We Need Your Help**

This is a general request for articles to be included in future newsletters. Let us know what is on your mind. The only requirement for an article is to keep it under 200 words.

Please send photos of our umpires working for inclusion in future newsletters.

Any articles and photos should be sent to [mgkblue@aol.com](mailto:mgkblue@aol.com)

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