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MESSAGE FROM: Greg Schmidt, CCSUA Chairman, SUP Regional Advisor

Hello Everyone,

As the season comes to an end the next couple of weeks I must congratulate everyone for a job well done.

We need to remain focused for these last few games. Teams are fighting for that last spot to possibly make the post season and umpires really need to continue to bring it to the field every game.

Focus, with a relaxed intensity. Relax between pitches and refocus when you are back "in" the game. There are times when strike zones get tight during critical situations in a game. When you bring your focus back for the next pitch be sure you don't have tunnel vision which would make the zone tighter; but rather relax and see the entire strike zone that was established during the game when there seems to be less pressure. This is relaxed intensity.

This method may help some people who are struggling at times during a game and maintain a more consistent strike zone throughout the game.

The SUP continues to evaluate potential umpires for post season play.

Bring your best game to the field **every time with every pitch on every play.**

Finish strong for the student athletes, the game and yourself.

Greg Schmidt
CCSUA Chairman
NCAA SUP Regional Advisor

FOCUS AND PREPARTION

WOW! Season is over! Where did the time go???

Well, fellow umpires regular-season is over for all levels, except D-1, and that will be ending on May 11th. For many of us we will say that was way too short, for others it will be right on time and a needed break.

But wait a minute! Before we pack our gear away for a couple of weeks or a month and get ready for summer/travel ball and/or ASA tournaments, some of us will receive post-season assignments at different levels, which means that your "A" game is still needed more than ever.

If you have been selected for any post-season assignment from JC to D-1, it's because you earned it by your hard-work, dedication and commitment to staying focused and prepared throughout the duration of the season.

Take a moment to **SMILE** and **PAT YOURSELF ON THE BACK!** But after you have given yourself a well deserve Kudo, come back down to earth re-focusing and preparing to step-up to your next greatest challenge - Post-Season. Go in with confidence, but not cockiness and bring your "A+" game to each Post-Season assignment capping your season off with a big **CHEER!**

IMPORTANT ASSIGNORS and TRAINING STAFF REMINDERS!!

From our Training Staff

The CCSUA training program is active all year long with game observations, mass emails on important items, our mentor program, new posts on the CCSUA Locker Room, and these monthly Newsletters.

The official start for our annual training cycle for new umpires, 2nd year umpires, and selected veterans begins with our Fall Clinic. The 2013 Fall Clinic is scheduled for Saturday, September 7, at the Glendale Sports Complex.

If you know of excellent high school or travel ball umpires who may be ready for college, please contact John Bennett or Joanne Venditto. Remember - if you recommend them, you will work with them. We prefer umpires who have been working at a high level of travel ball for at least 3 years and/or at the high school level of at least 2nd round playoffs.

We are especially looking for umpires in the Ventura, Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, Santa Maria, Bakersfield, San Jacinto, Palm Springs, and El Centro areas.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT CORNER

You will never improve, if you can't admit your mistakes. Learn from them, so that you can help yourself and others. There is no "I" in "Team/Crew/Partners." We all need each other to be successful on the field.

REALITY vs. PERCEPTION

The Mission of Officiating - Commitment to the game-is unique.

"When you officiate, for whom are you working? The teams? The coaches? The assigner? The league or conference?"

In a way, yes, to all of the above. But when it comes down to it, you are working for the game. Not just the game you are working, but every game everywhere.

When your efforts result in a game that is played within the bounds of the rules, enforcing penalties when appropriate and ensuring that neither team gains an unfair advantage over the other, you advance the game and respect its traditions. You also honor the many officials who have preceded you by maintaining the standards they established."

The above-mentioned statement is the last principle from the Referee Magazine article regarding REALITY vs. PERCEPTION. Its meaning is simple: Umpire for the "Love of the GAME!"

RULES CORNER

The answer to last month's rule question regarding: Can a player temporarily station herself at a different location on the field and it does not constitute as a defensive change can be found on page 69, Rule 6.5.4.

This month rule's trivia question is: There are four rules noted for when a batter, batter-runner or base runner is entitled to advance **the number of bases that the umpire judges** to be appropriate. Can you name them without researching it, HMMM?

The answer will be noted in our June Newsletter.

If a pitched ball is rolling on the ground and the catcher, while trying to retrieve it, accidentally kicks the ball into the dugout, is it still a pitch with only a one base award? Does it matter if the pitch is no longer moving when there's contact with the catcher?

RULING: It is considered a pitch until it becomes a batted ball or is thrown by the catcher.

The award to base runners would be one base and it does not matter if the ball, at the time of the contact with the catcher was moving or stationary (Dee Abrahamson-NCAA SOFTBALL RULE INTERPRETATIONS, APPROVED RULINGS, AND Comments-April 2, 2013).

MECHANICS

As we enter the Summer months, take this time to work on both 2 and 3 umpire mechanics and sharpen your skills. It is important to keep the different associations' mechanics separate, showing respect to the organization you are working for, whether it is ASA, Triple Crown, Little League and others.

Each organization deserves the same respect in knowing their mechanics and rules that govern their body of play. You may however work College Mechanics during your local travel ball friendlies, as long as that assignor approves.

GAME MANAGEMENT

As the season has ended for most and others are preparing for post-season at all levels, let's reflect on different situations that may have occurred during the season and what Game Management tools we could have used to have a different outcome for the betterment of the game.

Here are some Game Management topics and tools discussed throughout the year that should be reviewed in order to gain knowledge on handling difficult situations that someone may have encountered:

1. Pre-Game:

- Did you have a typed or written Pre-game list to discuss with your partner(s) before every game?
- Did you contact the Coaches or Staff Event person to make sure that everyone was on the same page regarding the game time(s) and location, as well as, informing them to have the correct batting list **HIGHLIGHTED** at the time of your arrival?

2. Arrive at site:

- Did you remain in contact with your partner(s) to make sure that both arrived on time or if there was a delay, you remained informed by communicating through calls or text?
- Did you and your partner(s) check-in with the Coach or Staff Event person at the time of your arrival and remind them about the bat list?
- Did you leave your personal issues at home or work?

3. The Game-Line-up Management:

- At your pre-game meeting did you check the line-ups thoroughly to make sure that the names and numbers of the players were listed, as well as, field positions? If there were changes to be made after the line-ups were official, did you make sure that they were legal? For example: If the Flex player was listed as F3 and the coach said, “My number six player, Jones, is now playing first base (F3).” At this point did you respond, “Coach that means your Flex player is out of the game? Is that correct?” And the Coach responded, “That’s correct,” then this would be a legal substitution.
- Did you spend the extra time to assure that any substitution made by the coaches was properly documented with the coach standing next to you until you had completed the recording of the substitution? And then report it to the opposing coach and official scorekeeper?
- Did you write down all warnings issued by you or your partner(s) making a short note of the verbiage or ruling that the person was in violation of and that person’s name or player’s number?
- What about going for help when needed to get the call correct prior to or after a coach request if you were missing a piece of information? How did you handle this situation and how could you have handled it better.
- Did you give the proper warnings for arguing ball and strikes according to Rule 13.6 or for any verbal or unsportsmanlike misconduct towards you, your partner or the other team?
- And how did you handle ejections? Could you have de-escalated the situation to prevent the ejection or maybe the person(s) should have been ejected earlier in the game according to their behavior exhibited, but prolonging the ejection increased the animosity of the game?
- Did you handle a pitcher, catcher and/or coach intentionally pitching at a batter or umpire?
- Did you have knowledge of your rules or use the rule book in order to handle a protest on the field, instead of, accepting the protest and completing a report to Dee Abrahamson for a final decision?
- Did you continue to study the rules and mechanics books, as well as, review the NCAA Interpretations document and videos throughout the season to assist you with on how to handle difficult situations on the field?

4. Post-Game:

- Did you discuss different situations or breakdowns with your partner(s) after your

games and how as a crew you could have handled better, instead of using the blame game?

- Did you take notes on different situations that occurred during the game or right after the game so that you could discuss and look-up in the rules and mechanics books, while at the field or on your own time.
- Did you discuss the situation with a fellow umpire for advice on how to handle differently or if you handled the situation correctly?
- After you had digested, analyzed, asked for advice and let it all sink in, were you able to let it go and not continue to beat yourself-up, but recognize the situation as a learning experience, so that you could re-focus and prepare for the next game?

In reviewing all the different Game Management bullets above ask yourself honestly, which area(s) could you improve on for the next season? Once you acknowledge this then it's time to work on the area(s) so that you will fine-tune your Game Management skills in order to help prevent some avoidable situations.

PHOTO CORNER



Photos by Denny

Thanks to John Bennett for contributing to this month's newsletter!

Knowledge is Power and Experience is the best teacher.