



March 2015 Plays and Clarifications

Comments from the National Umpire Staff:

We are off and running in the 2015 ASA/USA Softball Season. A lot of us have started calling ball already while others are still stuck in the cold weather of winter. As we enter the 2015 season let's not forget one of our goals as an umpire family. Recruit, Train and Retain. It is incumbent on all of us to reach out of our comfort zone and find those teams that we can get back into ASA/USA Softball. Find those umpires that have left and get them back and find those that want to start and get them started.

We mentioned several times at the UIC Clinic we need your help. However we also indicated that it has to start with you. I took notice when seeing the report on the National Umpire School held in Manteca Ca., Greater San Joaquin ASA, that we had several young umpires at this school. We had an eleven year old, a nineteen year old and several umpires in their early twenties. How great is that. These are the umpires of the future and those that will carry the ASA/USA Flag in the next generation ASA/USA Umpire Family.

Remember find them, train them and then give them the opportunities to succeed when they are ready. This is the way we will grow our ranks and bring the umpire family back into the 30,000 members. Anything you can think of share and we will see where it goes. Have a great start to the season.

2015 Biennial UIC Clinic Recap

The 24th Biennial UIC Clinic was held from February 5th through February 8th at the Sheraton Midwest City Hotel/Reed Center. Four other Hotels, centrally located to the Sheraton, housed the 441 participants in this year's Clinic.

The event started with the New UIC session followed by a meeting of all our Local UIC's. Many topics were discussed at this get-together. The afternoon on Thursday was dedicated to getting as many people who wished to visit our Hall of Fame Complex, to and from the complex, while giving ample time to view the stadium as well do a some shopping. Thursday evening started with a session on harassment awareness that all who wish to be UIC's at a National Championship were obliged to complete. It ended with a hospitality party hosted by Region 13.

The official start of the UIC Clinic kicked off on Friday morning. This was highlighted by a presentation by A. J. Morgan from Bollinger Insurance and followed by a message to all of us from our Executive Director, Craig Cress.

Six breakout sessions were offered at one time this year facilitated by an increased number of rooms available for that presentation. The topics were as follows; Dominant Eye Tracking, Diagramming plays, Technology, Planning and Organizing Local Association Clinics,

Focus-Get back in the game and proud to be ASA/USA. A general session was held to end the presentation portion of the clinic which talked about the new rules and equipment.

In 2013, we began to use people other than National Staff and Deputy Staff members to help in our presentations. As in 2013, the addition of these talented individuals was a positive step in creating new ideas and renewed interest in our teaching sessions. This year's participants were: Dave Chandler – Indiana ASA, Dora Martinez – San Antonio – ASA, Brian Crane – Georgia ASA, Roger Garcia – Alaska ASA, Sue Sawyer – Southern California ASA, John Orlovski – Kansas ASA, Kayleen Dunson – Seattle ASA, Jim Sanderson – Southern California ASA and Steve Huskin – Piedmont ASA.

The attendance this year included over 25 Commissioners for all over the Country. Thanks to those Ladies and Gentlemen for their continued support of the Umpire Program.

The Banquet was again held at the end of the Clinic. Awards were given for years of service and each Region presented their Award of Excellence. The National Award of Excellence went to former National Umpire Staff member, Walt Sparks. Walt recently completed 32 years as a member of the National Staff. The inaugural Tom Mason Award for Rule Excellence was given to Central Virginia Commissioner and former Deputy Director of Umpires, Henry Pollard.

In closing a special thanks goes to the 2015 UIC Clinic Committee who put this Clinic together, the National Office Staff who worked extremely hard to ensure the success of this Clinic and finally to ASA properties who donated \$2000.00 for our Hospitality Party. See you in 2017!!!

New Rule Clarification

This year the ASA/USA Council passed a new rule for 2015 allowing for up to all players on the roster present to be able to bat in all Junior Olympic Classifications of Play during Pool Play. The rule passed added a clause for how the shorthanded rule would be handled. The new rules as listed in the 2015 ASA Participant Manual reads as follows:

- **Rule 4, Section 1D[2A] Exception:** In all Junior Olympic Fast Pitch Pool Play Only; When a team elects to bat more than nine batters the game will continue with the skipped batter being recorded as an out whenever a player leaves the game for any reason other than an ejection. Teams cannot play with less than 8 players.
- **Rule 7 Section 2F:** (Fast Pitch) In Junior Olympic Pool Play only, teams have the option of having up to all players on the roster present bat. The Shorthanded Rule that applies to Junior Olympic Fast Pitch will apply. Rule 4, Section 1 [a-d] and 2 [a-g] Exception

This new rule did not address all the other aspects of our rules like Substitutes and Courtesy Runners. Based on the intent of the rule being that all players may bat and those over the 9 starters in the batting order could be substitutes and based on our Courtesy Runner rule as defined we have the following interpretation on how this rule should be administered during Junior Olympic Pool Play.

- **The first nine players** listed on the line-up card must be the starters on defense and must have their defensive position listed with the exception of the DP/FLEX. The DP must be one of the first nine players and the FLEX must be listed last on the line-up card.

- **Batting Order:** All players on the roster **up to the total amount** of players present on the roster may bat. Whatever number you start with must remain the same unless you lose players as mentioned in the rule. EXAMPLE: If you start with 12 batters you cannot increase to 13 batters or decrease to 11 batters.
- **Shorthanded Rule:** When a team elects to bat more than nine batters the game will continue with the skipped batter being recorded as an out whenever a player leaves the game for any reason other than an ejection. Teams cannot play with less than 8 players. If a team loses a player from the batting order due to an ejection the game would end in a forfeit. EXAMPLE: If a team bat's 15 and all they have are 15, no subs, and they lose one batter due to ejection, the game would end in a forfeit.
- **When using a DP/FLEX:** If a team uses the DP/FLEX Rule the Flex will still be listed at the end of the batting order. If a team decides to bat the FLEX they may do so. However, the FLEX may only bat for the DP in the DP's batting position. Then DP would be then considered out of the game and may re-enter one time. EXAMPLE: A team is batting 12 and using the DP/FLEX. They would list their 12 batters with the DP being in one of the first nine positions and the FLEX listed in the 13th spot.
- **Defensive Substitutes:** Players not listed as a starting player or DP/FLEX, first 9 spot in the batting order, may be used as a substitute on defense. The batting order will not be changed and the Re-Entry Rule would still be in effect. EXAMPLE: Batter number 11 goes in to play defense at shortstop for batter 3. Batter 11 has now entered the game and batter 3 has left the game. They still bat in the 3 and 11 positions as they originally did. Re-entry rule still in effect
- **Offensive Substitutes:** Players not listed as a starting player, the first 9 spots in the batting order, may be used as a substitute on offense as a pinch runner. The batting order will not be changed and the Re-Entry Rule would still be in effect. EXAMPLE: Batter number 4 gets a hit and batter 12 goes in to pinch run. Batter 4 has left the game and batter 12 has entered the game. They still bat in positions 4 and 12 as they originally did. The Re-Entry Rule still in effect.
- **Pinch Hitters:** No player listed in the batting order may pinch hit for any of the first nine players listed or anyone else listed in the batting order. They must stay in the batting order position they started in. The only players allowed to pinch hit are those players not listed in the batting order.
- **Courtesy Runner:** No player starting in the batting order may be used as a Courtesy Runner for the Pitcher and or Catcher. In order to be a Courtesy Runner a player cannot have participated in the game in any fashion. EXAMPLE: If a team has 15 players and wants two Courtesy Runners they can only bat 13 players.
- **Time Limit / Tie-Breaker in JO Pool Play:** Our rules state that in JO Pool Play **Rule 5 Section 10 C** if the game is still tied after the time limit has expired, the Tie-Breaker Rule shall be in effect at the start of the next inning. **Rule 5 Section 11A:**...The offensive team shall begin its turn at bat with the player who is scheduled to bat last in that respective half inning being placed on second base. This would include all batters in the batting order. Example if batter 14 is the player who is scheduled to bat last the batter 14 starts at second base.

We hope this addresses any and all issues in regard to batting all players in Junior Olympic Pool Play. If other situations arise we will use the same thinking to resolve them.

Umpire Exam

The answer sheet has an error on it for Question 31. The answer shows false to be the answer however the answer is true. Please note this when reviewing umpire exams with your umpires.

Rule Book and Umpire Manual

We hope you have received your new 2015 Rule Book and new 2015 Umpire Manual. We need your feedback on several items.

- Do you like the new layout for the umpire manual?
- Do you see any other ways to improve it?
- Is there anything not in the Umpire Manual that should be or needs to be added?

Please let us know as we will begin work on the Umpire Manual in a few weeks.