



Diamond Notes

The Umpire Newsletter of the Iowa Amateur Softball Association
July 2008

Welcome to the second edition of **Diamond Notes**, the umpire newsletter of the Iowa Amateur Softball Association Umpire Program.

If you have any suggestions for future edition of this newsletter, please email me at emurphy@umpire.com.

Thanks and enjoy.

Ed Murphy, State Umpire-in-Chief
Roger Menke, JO Umpire-in-Chief

Positioning & Timing

Two of the most critical elements of good umpiring are positioning and TIMING. Get yourself in the best position possible and then get stopped when the ball is about to be thrown. Get to a good set and locked down position. SLOW the timing down to see the entire play and find the ball (even on a force play) before making a call. Many times we are in a hurry to make that “big” or close call by anticipating before seeing the play to its completion (see - definition of a catch). **Work on getting set, zone in on your smaller “target” area (whether it is the tag or the bag) and relax, always find the ball, then make a good controlled call.**

Protests

Teams have the right to file a protest during a game. If the word “**protest**” is uttered by a manager or coach during the game, stop the game, get the umpire-in-chief (for rule protests) or tournament director (eligibility). It is now the UIC or TD responsibility to handle the protest, utilize the rule book and show the correct ruling. Judgment can be protested and it is the UIC’s responsibility to show that it is judgment and that the protest will not be allowed. **Do not continue a game in which a team has indicated they want to protest. Protests must be handled on the spot and before the next pitch legal or illegal.**

Bats

Print off and take with you the “non-approved” bat list. If there is a question regarding a bat, summon the umpire-in-chief.

Effective Immediately: aluminum or metal bats which have dents or no longer legal for championship play. According to rule 3, section 1F “The official bat shall be smooth” and section 1G “The bat shall not have signs of excessive wear.” In aluminum or metal bats, dents are signs of excessive wear. **We no longer will allow the use of metal bats with dents regardless of whether the bat ring will go over the bat.**

Checking bats for rattles: Here is a method to check bats for rattles. Hold the barrel end of the bat and from about 4 inches; tap the knob of the bat on the ground. If you hear rattles, the bat is not legal.

Slow Pitch with Stealing

There have been several questions raised regarding the stealing rule in slow pitch.

1. Can they steal on an illegal pitch? **Yes, the pitched ball remains live unless the pitched ball hits the plate, hits the batter or hits the ground prior to reaching the front edge of home plate.** Rule 8-4 F3
2. Can a runner be picked off base after the pitch? **Yes. The ball remains live with the above exceptions. Runners can be put out returning to a base as well as trying to steal the next base.** Rule 8-7B
3. When does the ball become dead? **The pitched ball becomes “dead” when it fails to reach the front edge of home plate, hits the plate or the batter. After the pitch, the ball remains alive**

until the ball is returned to the pitcher in the infield and all Immediate play has apparently been completed.
Rule 8-4 F2

Slow Pitch Shorts Policy

In event that the temperature is expected to reach 90 degrees or above on a Saturday or Sunday of the adult slow pitch state tournaments, umpires **may be allowed** to wear navy blue shorts **with permission from the tournament UIC** and with the following requirements:

- Shorts **must** be the navy blue shorts sold by ASA – no other style of shorts are permitted.
- Socks must be crew or ankle length, solid white or white with the ASA lettering. All umpires on a field must have the same style of sock.
- Long pants **must be worn** for games that have a start time of 7:00pm or later **AND** for the fourth place, third place and championship games.
- All umpires on the field **must** be dressed the same, if one umpire desires to wear long pants, the all umpires on that field must wear pants.
- Compression shorts, if worn, cannot be visible under the edge of the umpire shorts.
- If the temperature is questionable, the tournament UIC must confer with the state UIC prior to allowing shorts.
- Umpires must bring both pants and shorts to the tournament site with the intention of wearing pants first.

Please adhere to and follow the policy regarding shorts. It took several years to get this policy and it can be rescinded if abused.