

**Subject:** Huff-N-Puffers Umpires -- "View From Behind The Plate" Issue 40

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**BCC:** umpires

We have the best view of the game.

Here are a couple thoughts to make it even better? Hopefully this helps:

### **HOME PLATE**

We are back to wooden boards. The rubber mat experiment has failed.

Be attentive that they don't rock excessively (eg: Field 2), which could be difficult for a catcher receiving a throw.

We've had some luck pushing dirt under the back edge to steady it.

### **SPEED OF PLAY**

Games are running long. We can help.

- 1) To your Pregame Meeting with Managers: I suggest adding "Teach your In-The-Hole Batter to pick up the Batter's bat so the On-Deck Batter can simply get in the box."
- 2) Encourage outfielders to move quickly to start an inning. Be ready to call for a Batter.

### **UNIFORMS / JACKETS**

Jackets for 10+ games in 2024 that I've been carrying around since the Banquet: Kilburg, Kulka, Maskovyak see me after games.

Shirts: if you still need one, message me your size and the day you'll meet up with me?

Hats: Same.

### **PITCHER'S SCREEN**

"Over the screen" is judged not by the bowed-out hips of the screen, but by the tips at the top (like a football field goal).

Ball hitting Weight Bag is same as the Screen. Pitch hitting Screen is Dead Ball and Ball.

### **D3 DESIGNATED HITTER**

Apparently there is confusion: Brought to our attention: "gentleman's agreement my team and fellow opponents have used, DH stays in the box until he hits the ball". But the writer shared: "No two managers agree, no two umpires agree."

I couldn't have said it better myself! That's why "gentleman's agreements" have no place in softball. Gentlemen who have a question should read the Rule, apply the Rule, then move on and play the game.

DH is governed by USASoftball's Rules: To paraphrase: 3 strikes = out; 4 balls = walk.

### **IN CLOSING:**

a thought from Chief Instructor Michael Blades:

How we look and sound is 85% of our job.

We are important to the game. But we are best when we are a tiny part of the game.

We let a lot roll off our back.

**AND TO END ON A HIGH NOTE:**

A student of the game, reflecting on Opening Day, encouraged "umpires to take charge and not let the players run the show."

Take it for what it's worth.

With respect and appreciation, Peter

Huff-N-Puffers Umpire-In-Chief

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Video of the 2024 Clinics, Schedules, Rules, Umpire Information, and the Umpire Guide are *always* at [www.huff-n-puffers.com/Rules-and-Regulations.html](http://www.huff-n-puffers.com/Rules-and-Regulations.html)

The USA Softball rulebook can be downloaded as a PDF from [www.usasoftball.com/official-rulebook/](http://www.usasoftball.com/official-rulebook/) and the USA Umpire Manual at [https://cdn1.sportngin.com/attachments/document/0144/3128/2023\\_Umpire\\_Manual.pdf](https://cdn1.sportngin.com/attachments/document/0144/3128/2023_Umpire_Manual.pdf)

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