

A couple of early softball season issues have arisen and we all need to be aware so that similar mistakes are absolutely limited and not made in the future.

We can never lose sight of our ultimate objective:

Umpires are paid to professionally enforce the rules of the game in as safe and fair manner as possible so that players and teams can compete, spend time with friends, and enjoy a fun night of recreational softball. Ultimately the players, teams and sponsors are footing the bill for our Northern Colorado cities to spend tens of thousands of dollars on recreational sports activities of which we as Umpires are direct recipients of that funding. No matter how long the games or the night may get we have to remember that if players or teams go home upset and unhappy with the Umpire's attitudes on the field they may not come back and ultimately their entry fees and our funding will eventually fade away.

Note: Windsor games on Mon & Fridays begin at 6, 7, 8 & 9 PM, not 6:15 PM like in Fort Collins and Wellington.

Before ending any game before the official run rule (20 after 3 innings) (15 after 4) & (10 after 5) call both Captains or team reps in along with your partner and fully explain the justification for calling a game early. Explain it tactfully so that everyone is in agreement before just walking off the field.

We trained our new 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year Umpires to put both hands in the air over their shoulders when calling time especially on every "Foul Ball" call so that when a ball is fair there is no question or players asking...."What is it?" We also reinforced the need to vocalize the number of outs before each batter. We are seeing a lot of veteran Umpires not doing this and not setting very good examples for our younger Umpires.

In Wellington, whenever a runner in their Co-Ed leagues touches the chalk surrounding the Catcher's plate and not the scoring plate it is an automatic out, and no appeal is necessary by the defense. This is a stricter safety enforcement than Fort Collins or Windsor in avoiding all contact.

Pitchers were told they had to be in contact with the rubber when delivering a pitch, when all cities have a six foot extension behind the pitching rubber.

International Tie Breaker is only used if the game is tied. In a recent incident the home team was behind by six runs and the inning ended with four seconds left on the clock. It was explained they had to finish the game using the international tie breaker rules with one pitch format. Only if the game is tied after 7 innings or time has expired will the International Tie Breaker be used with the one pitch format. If both partners agree with the team representatives' concurrence the one pitch format could be used in other unique situations again only with everyone's understanding and concurrence and never because one umpire is demanding it.

It is always worthwhile to have a conversation or write out any odd situations or plays so that we all are communicating the proper application of rules in each of the City's we are umpiring. All emails will be given an online link found at <http://www.csor.info/softball/carl-s-corner/> each new update or correspondence will be labeled by date.

We are adding a rules clarification page as well at <http://www.csor.info/softball/rule-clarifications/> each new clarification will be labeled something like, "orange scoring plate" to reference the particular rule.

Please take the time to weekly review any updates so that we continue to improve our education and overall performance on the field for our customer, "the teams".

Carl P