

Welcome to Softball Training



Session 2 Agenda

Jan 27, 2025

- Welcome – Jeremy
- New Rules for 2025 – Rich
- Points of Emphasis – Rich
- NFHS Resources – Jeremy
- Additional Clinics by State UIC
- Professionalism – Karen
- Working as a Team – Jeremy
- Escalation vs De-escalation - Jeremy



New Rules for 2025



- **Use of One Way Communication to the Catcher**

- 1-8-6 EXCEPTION & PENALTY: A high school softball coach will be able to use electronic devices in the dugout for one-way communication to the catcher while the team is on defense beginning in 2025. This change is the result of analysis of current data, state association experimentation and a positive response from the membership. The committee has made these changes to support the use of emerging technology within the sport of softball. Being a permissive rule, the use of this one-way electronic communication will allow those who choose to embrace the technology an additional option to communicate with the catcher while on defense. It will also maintain the ability for those who prefer a more traditional approach to communicate using signals or a playbook/playcard to continue that approach. Accommodating one-way communication to the catcher brought new language to two different sections of the NFHS Softball Rules Book, starting with Rule 1-8-6. Devices such as earpieces, electronic bands and smartwatches are now permitted as an EXCEPTION within the rule provided the player does not utilize said device to return correspondence to the coaching staff. Since both rules were updated for this change, the penalty from Rule 3-6-11 was added to Rule 1-8-6 as well, with violators subject to ejection unless the offense is ruled to be of a minor nature. This penalty has been in place for Rule 3-6-11 allowing the umpire to issue a warning if the offense is minor and then eject if the offense is repeated.

New Rules for 2025

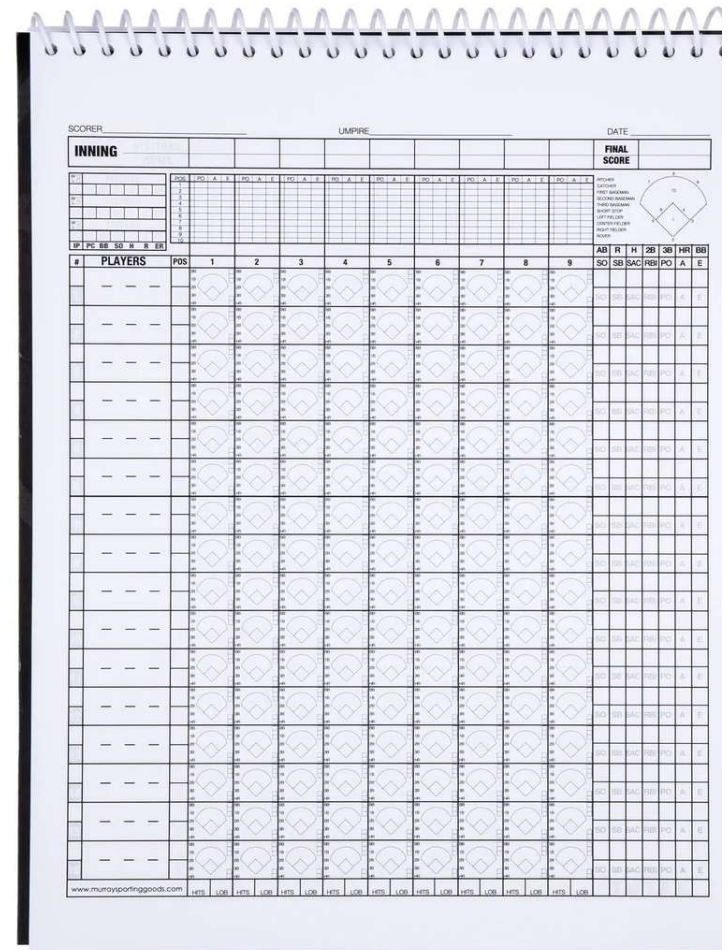
- **Adjustment of penalties for Using Communication Devices**

- 3-6-11: This penalty has been in place for Rule 3-6-11 allowing the umpire to issue a warning if the offense is minor and then eject if the offense is repeated. In addition to permitting the one-way communication devices, the updated version of Rule 3-6-11 regarding Bench and Field Conduct specifies that coaches are prohibited from using the device to communicate with any other team member while on defense or any team member while on offense and the coach cannot use the device outside the dugout/bench area.



New Rules for 2025

- **Adjustment to Scorekeeping for a batter-runner when a baserunner is declared out for being hit by a fair batted ball** (Doesn't really apply to us as umpires, but be aware if you are asked)
 - 9-3-2b: For the purpose of official scorekeeping, if a baserunner is declared out for being hit by a fair batted ball the batter-runner is credited with a fielder's choice in the scorebook. A runner being hit with a batted ball is a form of interference and is covered in Rule 8-6-11 which specifies that the runner is out and it also lists that the batter-runner is credited with a fielder's choice. Previously, this play was scored as a base hit for the batter.



Points of Emphasis for 2025

- **Team's Role in Pace of Play**

- After a couple of years of POEs for umpires on pace of play (enforcing the number of pitches, 60 seconds between innings, etc), the NFHS is giving coaches some tips.
- Educating players on the 60 second rule between innings.
- Having a teammate warm up the pitcher if the catcher was caught on base at the end of a half inning.
- Having the first batter of a half inning warm up while huddling with the rest of the team
- Remember the penalties for violating the 60 second rule
 - Strike on the batter if on the offense
 - Ball on the batter if on the defense



Points of Emphasis for 2025

- **Situational Awareness**


- Participant's wellbeing is paramount
- Know who is allowed to be outside the dugout
- Understand field structure and dugout protection
- On deck batters look out for errant pitches and overthrows
- On deck batters must use the on deck circle closest to their dugout



NFHS Resources

nfhs.org/activities-sports/softball/

Home | UnitedHealth... T. Rowe Price - Wor... American Funds - In... AssetMark - Login CVR Hub | Microsof... CVR Hub - Home Planning Center Ser... Whistle - VHSL ArbirerSports.com - ... Beach District



NFHS AllAccess View Print Books

app on the App Store or Google Play Store. All NFHS publications can be purchased on [NFHS.com](https://www.nfhs.com).

Softball Resources

General	Rules	Safety
Bat Certification Marks and USA Softball Non-Approved Bats with Certification Marks	Major Rule Differences - NFHS, NCAA, and USA Softball	NAERA Standards for Reconditioning - 2024
DP/FLEX Strategies for Coaches	Softball Comments on the Rules - 2025	NFHS Concussion Courses
Rule 3 PowerPoint - DP FLEX	Softball Field Diagram	NOCSAE Reconditioners - 2024
Rule 3 PowerPoint - Substitutes and Lineup Card	Softball Illegal Player Penalty Chart	
Rule 4 PowerPoint - Pre-Game and Post-Game	Softball Points of Emphasis - 2025	
Rule 5 PowerPoint - Dead Ball and Suspension of Play	Softball Rules Interpretations - 2024	
Rule 7 PowerPoint - Batter	Softball Rules Poster - 2025	
Rule 7 PowerPoint - Batting Out of Order	Softball Signal Chart	
Rule 8 PowerPoint - Lookback Rule	Softball Uniform Rules	
Softball Pitching Videos	Softball Virtual Casebook	

Additional Clinics by State UIC Joe DeFranco

- Session 1 – Feb 10th or 13th at 6-830pm

- Feb 10th : Meeting ID: 863 6040 0302 Passcode: 080232
- <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86360400302?pwd=DIM9ae4UUQtIroLkq6XtzRCWYQKPxT.1>
- Feb 13th : Meeting ID: 848 1558 8610 Passcode: 716254
- <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84815588610?pwd=X2mGYnmtsS0qroQADdbra27gHoNqSa.1>

- Topics

- Double First Base, Runner Leaving Early on the Pitch, Action Around the Plate, Strike Zone, and Field&Equipment

Additional Clinics by State UIC Joe DeFranco

- Session 2 – Feb 17th or 20th at 6-830pm

- Feb 17th: Meeting ID: 878 9455 6564 Passcode: 649450
- <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87894556564?pwd=bch5yxZR5pdx2taKwu2UMxwo7r2VzU.1>
- Feb 20th: Meeting ID: 825 8514 3599 Passcode: 089195
- <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82585143599?pwd=F8OpG6xUwOLbFGAJ8leDQaYyOKETar.1>

- Topics

- Fast Pitch Pitching, Appeals, Catcher's Obstruction, Infield Fly, and Action in the Field

Additional Clinics by State UIC Joe DeFranco

- Session 3 – Feb 24th or 27th at 6-830pm

- Feb 24th: Meeting ID: 819 3026 7910 Passcode: 634325

- <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81930267910?pwd=iBBCvk0U6bhCiGDOF8aejHBCji83PR.1>

- Feb 27nd: Meeting ID: 828 0964 5356 Passcode: 731639

- <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82809645356?pwd=Kce8MArPLTbrgiOxJzKMFIjtacl.1>

- Topics

- Batting Out of Order, Courtesy Runner, Lineup Cards, DP/Flex, Communicating with Coaches, Scoring of Runs, and Pre/Post Game

Additional Clinics by State UIC Joe DeFranco

- Session 4 – Feb 26th Only at 6-830pm
 - Feb 26th: Meeting ID: 885 0895 3890 Passcode: 442845
 - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88508953890?pwd=czb7RwSwoqcg7HdwsKrhIzEAu2wCLy.1>
- Topics
 - Interference, Obstruction, and USA vs High School Differences

Professionalism

- **Please Listen Carefully and Think About Your Role in Keeping the Game Professional**
- Karen Benton to provide professionalism reading



Professionalism Dos and Don'ts

Do

- Treat each other with respect
- Communicate professionally
- Greet each other in a friendly and respectful way
- Talk to each other about the game
- Use the Golden Rule. Treat others well and expect to be treated well

Don't

- Disparage one another
- Put down or curse at another official in person or writing
- Touch another official without their permission
- Talk about sensitive subjects

Working as a Team

- There are three teams on the field: home team, away team, and officiating team
- We need to treat each other with respect and work with each other to call the best game possible



Working as a Team

Ten Ways to Work Together as a Team

1. Communicate with Each Other Before the Game
2. Communicate with Each Other at a Pre-Game Conference
3. Communicate with Each Other In-Game
4. Communicate with Each Other Post Game
5. Communicate with Each Other to Get a Call Correct
6. Communicate with Each Other to Get a Rule Correct
7. Communicate with Each Other to Control the Game
8. Communicate with Each Other when Addressing Coaches
9. Communicate with Each Other when the Unusual Happens
10. Communicate with Each Other!!!!



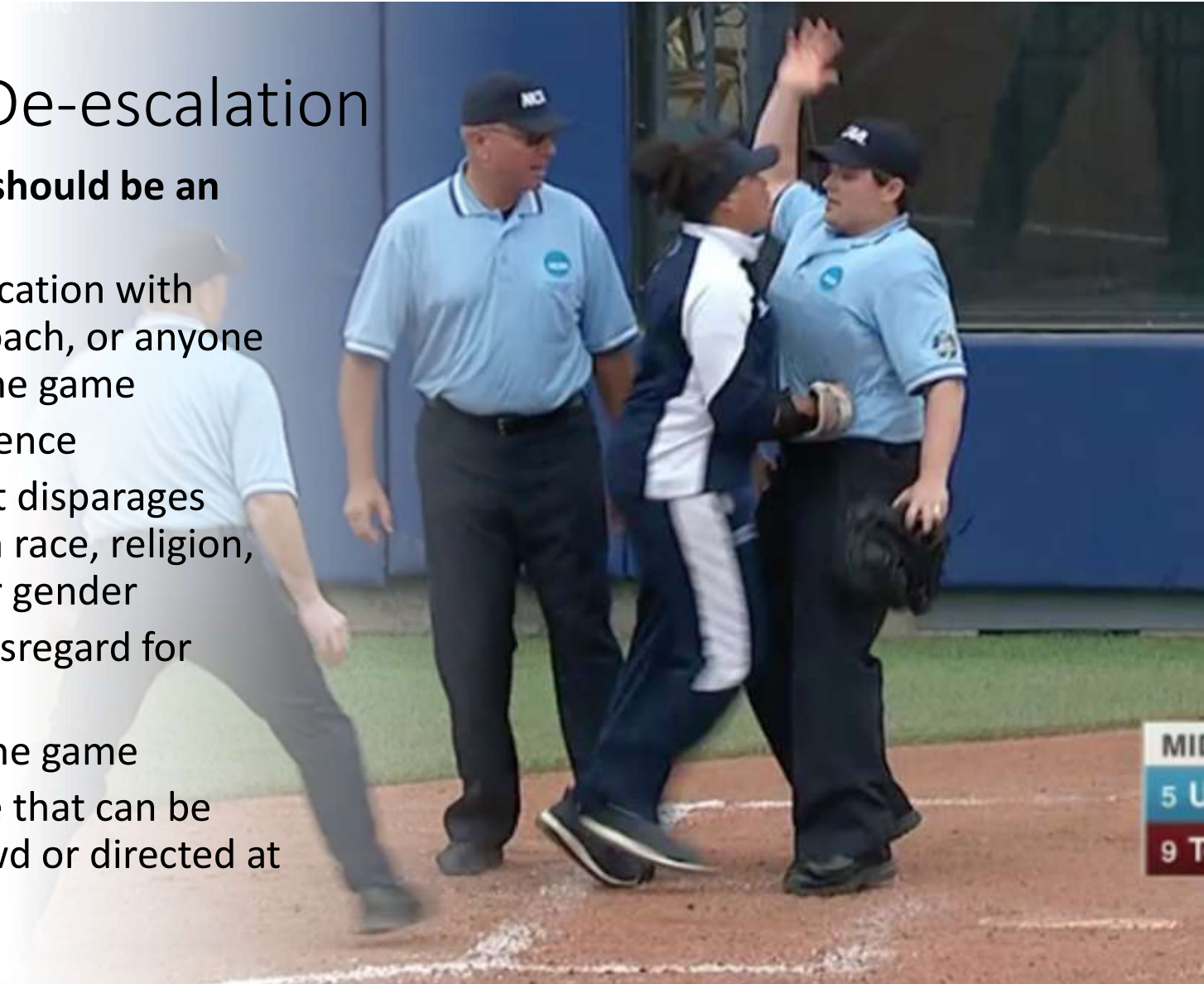
Escalation vs De-escalation

- The officiating crews play a large role in whether or not an on-field situation escalates or not.
- We are not only arbiters of the rules. We must control the game.
- Always be the adult on the field.
- Every umpire must know their line for ejection, but there are many things that can be done prior to that point



Escalation vs De-escalation

- **Deadly Sins – These should be an automatic ejection.**
 - Any physical altercation with umpire, player, coach, or anyone else involved in the game
 - Any threat of violence
 - Any language that disparages another based-on race, religion, national origin, or gender
 - Any intentional disregard for safety
 - Any mockery of the game
 - Any foul language that can be heard by the crowd or directed at an official



Escalation vs De-escalation



- **Situations** – For each of these decide if the umpire escalated or de-escalated the situation
 - Coach comes out to the base umpire and asks the umpire if he would go for help to his partner on a bang bang play at first base. Base umpire responds with “I saw the play fine and the batter runner is out.”
 - Coach comes out hollering after a potential interference play between first and second. The plate umpire calmly walks over to the coach and reminds him to call time before coming out on the field to speak to an umpire.
 - Umpire overhears the short stop say “Sh!&” to herself after botching a ground ball. The umpire immediately calls time and ejects the shortstop



Escalation vs De-escalation



- **Situations** – For each of these decide if the umpire escalated or de-escalated the situation
 - Parents are yelling in stands about how the umpire stinks and is terrible. Umpire turns around and offers the parents the ability to come to the next umpire training.
 - Coach comes out between innings to talk about a call made 2 innings ago. Umpire yells at him that the play is over and to get over it.
 - Third base coach has been complaining about pitch location for 3 innings. Plate umpire calls time and tells the Third base coach that one more complaint will get her thrown out of the game.



Escalation vs De-escalation



- **Situations** – For each of these decide if the umpire escalated or de-escalated the situation
 - Batter/Runner takes off her helmet after getting called out on a bang bang play. The base umpire yells at her to put her helmet on until she is in the dugout.
 - There is a legal, but strong collision at home plate that results in the ball coming loose and a safe call. Plate umpire calls time after play is complete and brings both coaches together to explain what occurred and why there was not a ruling of malicious contact. He further asks both coaches not allow for any escalation.
 - Catcher is constantly moving into the batter's box area. Umpire tells the catcher to move back. Coach yells at the umpire to not coach his players. Umpire yells back "Fine! I will call catcher's obstruction on the next one."



Escalation vs De-escalation

- **The De-escalation Tool Kit**

- Use your partner. Sometimes it is better for your partner to step in.
- Walk away after discussion.
- Never bait a coach or player.
- Keep your voice level and calm. Be the adult in the situation.
- Tell the coach what you saw and don't be secretive.
- Don't engage in unnecessary conversation.
- Be polite, but direct. Less is more.
- Address situations early. Set the tone.
- Know the rules and quote the rules when needed.



Escalation vs De-escalation

- **What to do After an Ejection**

- Take a moment and just breath. The game won't restart until you are ready.
- Write down pertinent details of the ejection. Those will be needed for a report. Discuss with your partner if needed.
 - Who, what, when, where, why, and any other mitigating details.
- Gather yourself and officiate the rest of the game to the best of your ability
- Don't hold it against the team where the ejection occurred.
- Complete the game and then call the SB Commissioner.
- Prepare a written email with the details gathered above. We will have to submit a report to the VHSL if it involves a scholastic game. We may have to do the same for LL and Rec depending on the league.

Questions?

