

The Indicator

Association Newsletter

Serving Hunterdon, Morris, Sussex, Warren, Essex, Union, Middlesex, Somerset Counties

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1



JANUARY
2025

Message From The President

Dear Fellow RVUA Members,

Welcome to the 2025 season. A lot of things happening in the off season for baseball and softball.

I would like to introduce the new Rules Interpreters for the Chapter.

Scott O'Brien will be taking over for Softball Rules Interpreter

Joe Marateo will be the new Baseball Rules Interpreter.

Both are committed to help with these big roles in the RVUA.

We are going to need to elect a new Vice President, as after many years of Chapter service Paul Chardoussin has stepped down from that position. In the meantime, Kurt Althoff will help assume some of those responsibilities and Keith Hoffman is interim Chapter Secretary and helping Kurt with some administrative duties.

Now that winter is coming and I urge you all to consider starting SRING TRAINING NOW....

- This includes physical and mental preparation for the Base ball/Softball season.
- Go through your gear too and maybe upgrade your umpire wardrobe.
- We still have a few chapter hats in Blue and Black for sale, \$20. I will be bringing them to meetings.

With my best wishes.

Gary Peckman

RVUA President

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Presidents Message	1
2025 RVUA Dates	1
Membership Update	1
Meeting Dates	2
RVUA Dues	2
NFHS Deadball	3
Softball Case Plays	4
Baseball Case Plays	5
BB Rules Changes	6
SB Rules Changes	6
Jewelry Up-date	7
Pause - Read - React	7
NJSIAA Dates	8
Concussion Training	9
Calling Time?	9

Membership Information Up-date

Has any of your personal information changed in the last 6 to 8 months?

Did you get a new phone number, email address, or move to a new mailing address?

If so the RVUA would like to know about it.

The RVUA roster is being finalized for the 2025 season and is given to Members, Assigners and Athletic Directors. Make sure to send any roster changes to Keith Hoffman.

His email address is KHOFFCRAN@aol.com

The roster is being updated on the RVUA website.

RVUA 2025 Meeting Info & Dates

First Meeting for the RVUA will **Wednesday Jan 15 at 7:30 pm @ JP CASE MIDDLESCHOO.** There will be a virtual option via Zoom, but we always like to fill the room.

Additional Meeting Dates

- Wednesday 1/22 (Cranford)
- Wednesday 1/29 (Flemington)
- Wednesday 2/12 (Flemington) **Baseball & Softball Interpretation Meeting**
- Wednesday 2/19 (Mount Olive) **Baseball & Softball Interpretation Meeting**
- Wednesday 2/26 (Flemington)
- Wednesday 3/12 (Flemington)
- Wednesday 3/19 (Mount Olive)
- Wednesday 3/26 (Flemington)
- Wednesday 4/2 (Cranford)
- Wednesday 4/9 (Flemington)



Flemington Meetings will be at **JP Case Middle School** in the cafeteria.

- 301 Case Blvd. Flemington NJ

Cranford Meetings at **Cranford Community Center** room to be determined.

- 220 Walnut Avenue, Cranford NJ

Mt Olive Meetings at **Mt Olive Middle School** in the cafeteria.

- 160 Wolfe Rd, Budd Lake

RVUA 2025 Dues

Dues are always paid for the following year. Dues for the 2025 season will again be \$40 for the year. To make it easy for we have established three different ways you may pay your dues to RVUA via.

Paypal: MUST change the payment type to “Sending to a Friend” or we will get charged a fee @RVUAdues

Venmo: @RVUAdues

USPS Mail:

Rocco Fornaro

39 Ditmars Circle

Hillsborough, NJ 08844

Should you have any questions please contact Rocco Fornaro at rvuatreasurer@gmail.com

NFHS Dead Ball Territory

NFHS Baseball and Softball have two different definitions of a catch when it comes regarding the Dead Ball Territory.

Baseball: Rule 2.9 ART. 1 . . . A catch is the act

It is considered a catch if a fielder catches a fair or foul ball and then steps or falls into a bench, dug-out, stand, bleacher or over any boundary or barrier, such as a fence, rope, chalk line, or a pregame determined imaginary boundary line from the field of play.

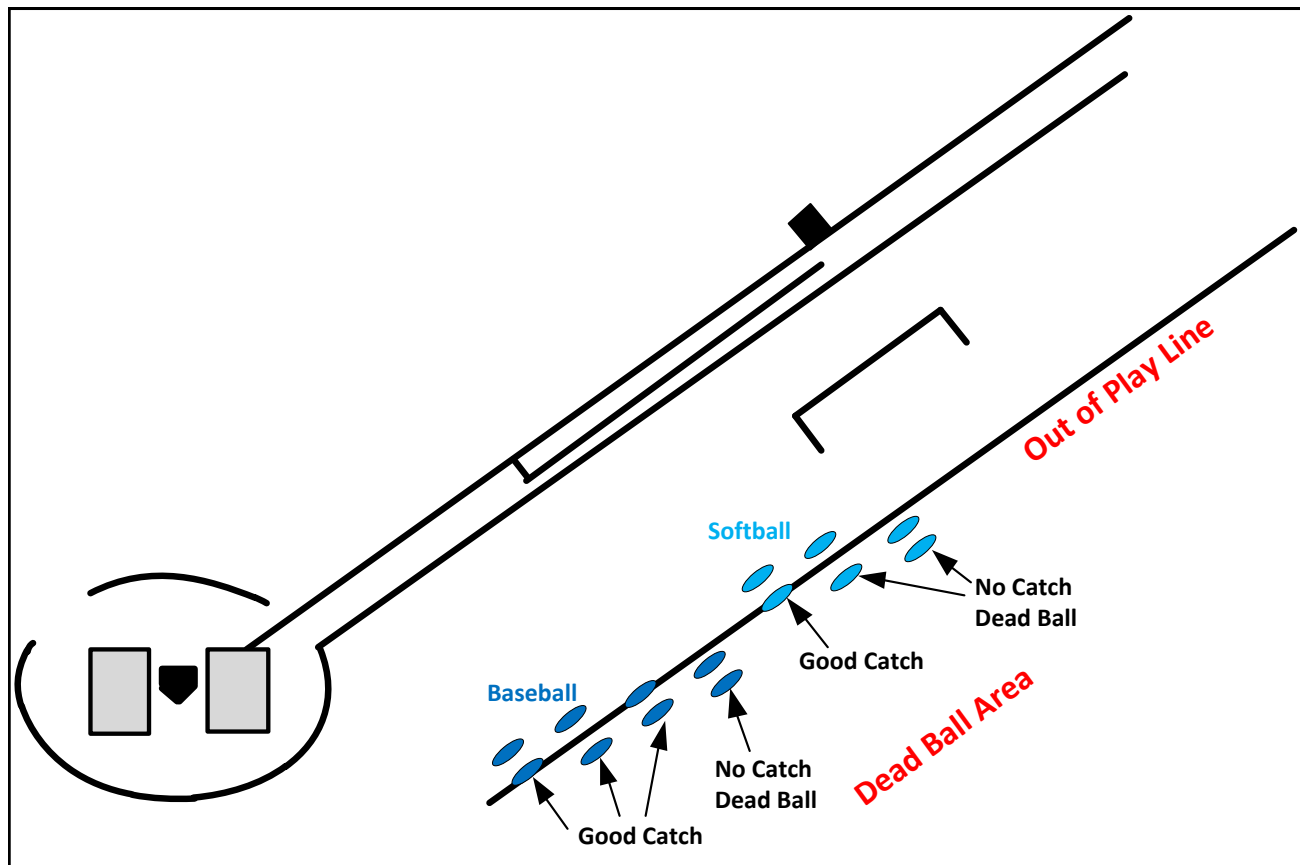
Softball: Rule 2.9 ART. 5 . . . A catch shall not be credited if:

- d) An entire foot is touching dead-ball territory at the time of the catch.

Umpires will use a fielder's status, by determining the location of the fielders feet, and when a foot is touching a boundary line or the playing field inside the boundary line.

In Baseball fielder has not left the playing field, even though one other foot might be in contact with the area beyond the boundary line. In Softball the fielder is considered to be in dead ball territory with one foot in dead ball territory .

See diagram below.



Softball Case Plays (2024 Case Book)



Question 1: 6.2.2 SITUATION B:

After walking B1, F1 walks out of the 16-foot circle and licks the fingers on the throwing hand. With the ball in the glove, she walks on to the pitcher's plate and begins her delivery.

Question 2: 6.2.2 SITUATION C:

With R1 on third base and R2 on first base, B3 hits an illegal pitch to deep left-center field. R1 scores, R2 reaches third base and B3 stops at first base.

Question 3: 6.2.2 SITUATION D:

R1 is on first base with no outs and a 1-1 count on B2. R1 legally leaves first base in an attempt to steal second base as the plate umpire calls an illegal pitch on F1. B2 swings and misses the ball, which gets past the catcher as (a) R1 advances safely to third base, (b) R1 is thrown out at third base, or (c) R1 is safe at third base, but the throw from F2 sails over F5 into left field and R1 subsequently scores.

Question 4: 6.2.6 SITUATION:

R1 is at second base, R2 at first base and B5 is at bat with a 1 and 2 count and two outs. During F1's windup, the ball slips from her hand and (a) the ball rolls back toward second base, (b) the ball rolls across the foul line halfway between home and first base or (c) the ball is rolling toward home plate and has an opportunity to be hit by B5. In all cases, B5 swings at the ball.

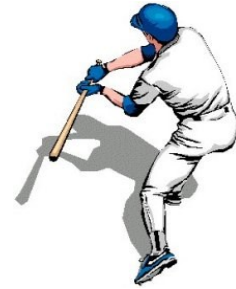
Answer 1: *Any time F1 licks the fingers on her pitching hand, she shall wipe them before touching the ball, otherwise an illegal pitch shall be called. The umpire shall declare the ball dead immediately.*

Answer 2: *Since the batter-runner reached first base and each other runner advanced at least one base, all play stands, the illegal pitch is nullified and no option is offered to the coach. (6-1-1 Exception 1)*

Answer 3: *The coach is given the option to take the result of the play or the penalty for the illegal pitch. In (a), the result of the play is R1 is on third base and the batter has 1 ball, 2 strike count; but if the coach chooses the penalty then R1 is placed on second base and the batter has a 2 ball, 1 strike count. In (b), the result of the play is R1 is out and batter has 1 ball, 2 strike count; but if the coach chooses the penalty then R1 is placed on second base and the batter has a 2 ball, 1 strike count. In (c), the result of the play is R1 scores and batter has 1 ball, 2 strike count; but if the coach takes the penalty R1 is placed on second base and the batter has a 2 ball, 1 strike count. (6-1-1 Exception 3).*

Answer 4: *In (a) and (b), the ball remains live and runners may advance at their own risk. A "ball" is called on B5. In (c), the batter has an opportunity to hit this pitch. The ball is live and runners may advance at their own risk. If B5 swings and misses the ball, she may attempt to advance to first base on the dropped third strike rule. If she chooses not to swing at the pitch, a "ball" is called. (8-1-1b; 8-4-1)*

Baseball Case Plays (2024 Case Book)



Question 1: 6.2.1 SITUATION C:

The umpire notices F1 (a) wearing an adhesive strip around his index finger on his pitching hand or (b) tape on the palm of his hand.

Question 2: 6.1.1 SITUATION F:

Switch-hitting B1 steps in against ambidextrous F1. B1 assumes a position in the batter's box as a left-handed hitter, prompting F1 to prepare to pitch left-handed. B1 quickly changes to the other batter's box to bat right-handed. F1 then switches to pitch right-handed. How is this situation prevented?

Question 3: 6.1.5 SITUATION:

With R1 on third base and R2 on first base, F1 steps and feints to third and then steps and throws to first attempting to pick off R2. The throw goes into dead-ball territory. The offensive team's coach wants a balk to be called because the pitcher never threw the ball toward third.

Question 4: 6.1.3 SITUATION Q:

With a runner on first, Team A right-handed pitcher is in the set position, bent at the waist and his pitching arm naturally hangs down slightly in front or to the side away from his body. As he looks to the catcher for a signal, a) the pitcher's arm is stationary or b) the pitching arm rocks slightly from side to side.

Answer 1: In (a) and (b), this is illegal because contact with the ball could occur. There is no penalty. The tape shall be removed. .

Answer 2: The umpire shall call "Time" and require the pitcher to face B1 as either a left-hander or right-hander, but not both. Only after B1 is put out, reaches base, is replaced by a substitute, or a third out ends the inning, may F1 change to the other hand to face the next batter.

Answer 3: When the pitcher stepped off the pitching plate in his feint to third, he became an infielder. Hence, when his throw goes into dead-ball territory, all runners are awarded two bases. R1 gets home and R2 gets third. Had F1 stayed on the pitching plate during his feint to third and his throw to first, all runners would be awarded one base. R1 would get home and R2 would get second. This would not be a balk as F1 made a legal feint and a legal pickoff attempt with no prior motion to pitch. .

Answer 4: In a), the position of the arm is natural and can be considered by his side in meeting the rule. Any movement would then start the pitch. In b), any movement of the arm is considered the start of the pitching motion and a pitch must be delivered to the plate so this motion results in a balk.

NFHS Baseball Rule Changes for 2025

1-3-2c1: Modified that resin, pine tar or any other drying agent is permitted on the bat in a specific area.

4-4-1c: Modified the definition of forfeiture.

2025 BASEBALL POINTS OF EMPHASIS

1. Use of NFHS Authenticating Mark Program Balls
2. Pitching Positions
3. Bench Decorum
4. Use of Props
5. Improper Use of Communication Equipment

NFHS Softball Rule Changes for 2025

1-8-6 EXCEPTION & PENALTY: A high school softball coach is now able to use electronic devices in the dugout for one-way communication to the catcher while the team is on defense. 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.

Rationale: 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.

3-6-11: This rule change 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.

Rationale: Clarifies that a coach may use an electronic device for one-way communication to the catcher while the team is on defense.

9-3-2b: When a baserunner who is declared out for being hit by a fair batted ball, the batter-runner is credited with a fielder's choice in the scorebook.

Rationale: This change corrects an error in the rules book that awarded a base hit in this instance

2025 SOFTBALL POINTS OF EMPHASIS

Team's Role in Pace of Play

Situational Awareness

NJSIAA Jewelry Up-date

The NFHS updated its rules to allow jewelry to be worn during competition in certain sports. Jewelry includes, but is not limited to, necklaces, bracelets, earrings, and watches. Medical alert medals are not considered to be jewelry and must be taped to the body.

The following sports allow jewelry to be worn during competition unless the official rules the jewelry is potentially dangerous. Jewelry is prohibited for those sports not included on this list below.

Info taken from the 2024—2025 NJSIAA Officials Handbook

Baseball	Softball
Golf	Tennis
Bowling	Swimming
Cross Country *	Track & Field *



*NJSIAA modifications prohibit the wearing of a watch during the regular season and post-season competitions.

PAUSE - READ - REACT

These are the most fundamental elements of successful umpiring. Good timing is essential. From the set position, observe the ball, pause to read the situation, see the developing action and react in the appropriate manner. The few extra moments can be the difference between proper reaction and running off in the wrong direction. Take advantage of that extra second before calling a strike. Wait and see if that throw pops out of the glove. You'll be a better umpire, have fewer problems and will avoid some of those embarrassing situations, such as making an out call and then seeing the ball rolling away on the ground.

Selling the call is a matter of the game situation and each umpire develops a feeling based on experience and reputation. Selling the call is a required aspect of your game, when appropriate on close calls. Knowing when to sell it and then doing so can be a great help in avoiding unpleasant situations. The call sequence is hands-on-knees-set, pause, read, react, CALL, return to the set position. This forces that extra second so allowing more time for proper judgment or for that inevitable unexpected occurrence, such as a dropped ball. Slow and proper timing should be an integral part of your mechanics. You also look better, make fewer errors in judgment and will have less problems on the field.

Concentration at all times during the contest is essential. A mind wandering for a few seconds can quickly turn your game into a disaster.

Never make a call or a decision while moving. Always get to the best location possible (remember that angle is much more important than distance) and pull up to see the play and make the proper call.

After making the call, one should return to the set position, either standing or hands-on-knees, or gravitate to a better location on the field to be ready for any possible subsequent action.

NJSIAA 2025 Important Baseball and Softball Dates:

BASEBALL:

First Practice:	03/10/2025
Competition Start:	03/17/2025
PowerPoints Close:	05/18/2025
Seeding:	05/20/2025
Regular Season Competition Ends:	06/15/2025

PUBLIC STATE TOURNAMENT

Round 1:	05/27/2025	Higher Seed
Round 2:	05/29/2025	Higher Seed
Round 3:	06/03/2025	Higher Seed
Sectional Finals:	06/05/2025	Higher Seed
State Semifinals:	06/09/2025	North 1 and Central
State Finals:	06/14/2025	Veterans Park, Hamilton

NON-PUBLIC STATE TOURNAMENT

Round 1:	05/28/2025	Higher Seed
Round 2:	05/30/2025	Higher Seed
Round 3:	06/04/2025	Higher Seed
Sectional Finals:	06/06/2025	Higher Seed
State Finals:	06/11/2025	Veterans Park, Hamilton

SOFTBALL

First Practice:	03/10/2025
Competition Starts:	03/17/2025
PowerPoints Close:	05/18/2025
Seeding:	05/20/2025
Regular Season Competition Ends:	06/15/2025

PUBLIC STATE TOURNAMENT

Round 1:	05/28/2025	Higher Seed
Round 2:	05/30/2025	Higher Seed
Round 3:	06/04/2025	Higher Seed
Sectional Finals:	06/06/2025	Higher Seed
State Semifinals:	06/10/2025	North 2 and South
State Finals:	06/13/2025	TBA

NON-PUBLIC STATE TOURNAMENT

Round 1:	05/27/2025	Higher Seed
Round 2:	05/29/2025	Higher Seed
Round 3:	06/03/2025	Higher Seed
Sectional Finals:	06/05/2025	Higher Seed
State Finals:	06/11/2025	TBA

2025 NFHS Mandatory Concussion Training.

Concussion in Sports - What You Need To Know.

Reminder to all RVUA members that each you are required to complete the Concussion is Sports training EACH YEAR.

www.nfhslearn.org

The NFHS has teamed up with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to educate officials on the importance of proper concussion recognition and management in high school sports. This course highlights the impact of sports-related concussion on athletes, teaches how to recognize a suspected concussion, and provides protocols to manage a suspected concussion with steps to help players return to play safely after a concussion.



If you took the course by yourself online and completed the training, please forward a copy of your completion certification to Keith Hoffman at KHOFFCRAN@aol.com.

**We are accepting the certificates NOW,
so don't delay.**

Calling TIME?

Why do you call Time all the Time?

Here are some tips on why not to call time.

Plate Positions Don't call "time" until the base runners touch up. The play is not over until the runners touch their respective bases on an award. Anything could happen.

Don't call "time" every time a defensive player asks for it. It's not needed, makes a long game longer and you are taking a potential advantage away from the offense. A short-stop should be able to throw the ball back to the pitcher from the infield dirt area.

Never call "time" to get yourself back into position. There are umpires that call "time" in every instance so they have to return from the call or to move to another position on the infield. This is a waste of time. Again, the game is held up for no good reason.

You've got a partner out there he or she could watch.



RVUA

Setting The Standard In Officiating

President
Gary Peckman

Vice President
TBD

Secretary
Kurt Althoff

Treasurer
Rocco Fornaro

Baseball Interpreter
Joseph Marateo

Softball Interpreter
Scott O'Brien

Liaison to NJUCA
xxxx

Editor
Joseph Marateo

Reminder

Don't say "Strike three-you're out", "Ball four-take your base" or point the batter-runner down to first. "Strike three" and "Ball" will do just fine.

A dropped third strike may not be an out. The batter should know the count and generally knows the location of first base.

Also, after ball four, pointing the runner to first can easily be interpreted as a called strike.

www.RVUA.INFO