

We have the best view of the game.

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

CLINICS FOR UMPIRES

Because of the overwhelmingly positive reaction to the 2024 Clinics, we will again host Clinics this Spring.

The League believes in their value to the point of allowing me to count attendance in the annual 'mileage reimbursement' for any umpire attending Clinics and then working games this season.

Again this year, we will meet on both a Monday and a Wednesday, providing the opportunity to men who may have a Monday conflict.

Mark your calendar now:

Noon to 2 PM

Monday March 10

Wednesday March 19

CAPS Fieldhouse -- no admission charge

You may attend **either** session. Or **both**.

Although we won't make attendance mandatory, all are strongly encouraged. Even veteran umpires have commented that these reminders are helpful. And I would like to pair up a few of you with new and less-experienced men, to be available to handle questions or clarify.

We will discuss the (significant number of) rules change requests approved for HnP 2025 play. Address points of difficulty from 2024.

Then review the best mechanics to help you be in the best location to easily make the correct call. Finally, get up on the turf for some practice of moves.

In the meantime, USA Softball has not changed any Rules that affect our play. Therefore, the **2024 Rulebook** (in the link below, as always!) is still a valid reference. I strongly encourage all to spend some time with it during this off-season.

There are also many helpful hints in the **Umpire Manual**, also linked below.

Let's face it: the better one is at doing this job, the more fun he has.

BAT WARMING

Under USA Softball Rule 3.7.A: "Warming devices for bats are not approved."

Bat warming devices are not legal in USA (or SSUSA) play.

As SSUSA published this winter: "bat testing conducted at multiple 2024 tournaments showed that heating a bat alters its compression test results. Directors sometimes had to let "hot" bats cool down before the bats could pass the test. In addition, multiple teams competing at Winter Worlds in Phoenix were using propane-powered heaters to warm

bats. Opponents cried foul -- for good reason.

'Science has proven heating of bats with warming devices adds to batted ball speed,' the ASA Softball rule book stated in 2012, the year ASA (now USA Softball) reintroduced a ban on bat warmers after allowing them for two seasons. That ban remains in place.

As both SSUSA and USA Softball rules say, a bat or ball is considered altered when its physical characteristics have been changed."

An insulating sleeve is allowed, as long as it **does not add** heat to the bat.

PLEASE CONFIRM

This message was sent to my current list -- which I need to confirm.

Please hit "Reply" and type "Yes" to let me know that you will be returning to serve your fellow players again in 2025.

And let me know if either email address or mobile phone have changed?

If you have any questions, limitations, or issues to discuss, don't hesitate to shoot me a note, see me at a winter meeting, or give me a call?

IN CLOSING:

The guys can't have nearly as much fun unless we do what we do.

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

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

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