

SJUA

The Relief Pitcher

Behind The Plate by Gerard Malamisura, SJUA President

2025 has left us and the Executive Board is looking forward to 2026 in preparation for the new season. You may have seen our signs around your town as part of our recruitment efforts. We have been talking to prospective new umpires and we are expecting an infusion of new energy into the group by these new members and our new Supervisor of Officials, Matt

Scalise. Now, while it is true we have hit a few bumps in the road this offseason with a departure, we are happy to welcome a new school into the fold for us, Mastery High School of Camden. We are also very happy to welcome a new group, West Deptford Storm, that we will be umpiring for this spring and summer. The Executive Board in conjunction with the

hard work of the Assignor, Gary "Doc" Schmitt, is working to expand our independent baseball footprint and get more work the umpires in our group. I have been telling who ever would listen, we just need to keep moving forward and slow progress is still progress. Happy New Year to everyone and I look forward to seeing you very soon. ⚾



Important Dates

Register With NJSIAA NOW

SJUA Meeting 2/18

SJUA Meeting 3/4

Competition Begins 3/16

SJUA Meeting 3/18

SJUA Meeting 4/1

SJUA Meeting 4/15

SJUA Meeting 5/6

SJUA Meeting 5/20



"I've been hit with mudballs and whiskey bottles, and had everything from shoes to fruits and vegetables thrown at me. I've been hospitalized with a concussion and broken ribs. I've probably experienced more violence than any other umpire who ever lived."

**Joe Rue
MLB Umpire
1938 to 1947**

The A Position by George Sanders, Vice President

We are proud to announce a very successful cadet recruitment class to kick off the new season. Interest and participation have been strong, with over 20 cadets enrolled in this year's class. This is an accumulation of two months of a combination of social media, signage and word of mouth recruitment. This year's class is especially noteworthy as it marks the first recruitment class led by Matt Scalise in his new role as Supervisor of

Officials. Matt has brought great energy and organization to the program. The cadet class officially began on January 6th and will conclude on February 24th. The curriculum is designed to provide new umpires with a solid foundation in rules knowledge, mechanics, and on-field expectations, preparing them for success once the season begins. In addition to welcoming new cadets, the Association encourages any 2nd and 3rd year umpires who would

like a refresher to sit in on the classes. This is a great opportunity to reinforce fundamentals, ask questions, and stay sharp before the season. Those interested are encouraged to reach out directly to Matt Scalise with any questions regarding the topic for a given evening. The South Jersey Umpire Association looks forward to another strong year on the field and is excited about the future with this impressive new group of cadets. ☘

Rules Lawyer by Joe Rosenberg, Rules Interpreter

Some food for thought as we prepare for the upcoming season:

1. Know the rules of competition. We do several leagues and tournaments. Each may have their own take on the rules. The Assignor should have those and will disseminate them to you.
2. NFHS rules a more focused on safety and participation than pro rules. We must keep the student athlete in mind.
3. There are rules we do not like. That is no excuse for not enforcing them. There are rules as written, as interpreted and enforced, which may be subject to your judgement. Please understand this is a fine line.
4. When explaining things to players and coaches, use rulebook terminology.
5. The game is not about you as an umpire; it is about the players. You are there to make sure the game is played fairly. Be humble, professional, and respectful.
6. Help your assignors. If you work for more than one group, make sure your blocks are in place and your availability is up to date.
7. Pre and post-game with your partner. Understand what went well and what did not work so well. Self-evaluate if you can. If you don't understand something talk to a more experienced official; your mentors and crew chiefs are there to help you. Or bring it up for a discussion at a meeting.
8. Know the rule book. Know proper positioning (mechanics) to make the call. This will help you to get the call right. We, as umpires, know that we will not get all of them correct, but proper positioning will give you the best shot. If you need help go to your partner. That said, know what calls you can go for help on. Coaches will ask you to go for help; they do not know that in some cases you can't go. So, in these cases, know your priorities.
9. Communicate with your partner prior to the game, during the game and after.
10. Have fun out there. The Supervisor of Officials and I will be introducing rule quizzes this year. Suffice to say, we will have a weekly quiz containing say 5 questions or so. We want you to open the book and look. Rules will be based on the NFHS book. Introduction date is planned for February 1st. ☘

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Baseball Talk by Matt Scalise, Supervisor of Officials

I hope everyone had a great offseason. As the baseball season quickly approaches, I want to remind all officials to ensure that their equipment and uniforms are properly fitted and in good condition. We also want to continue presenting ourselves in a professional manner on and off the field, as each

of us represents the South Jersey Umpire Association. Maintaining that standard helps support one another and reflects positively on our entire group. Training classes are currently underway at Burlington Township High School. If you are interested in attending, please let me know. This season, our focus will be

on providing opportunities for training and evaluation so everyone can continue to grow and improve.

I look forward to seeing everyone at our first general meeting in February. As always, please don't hesitate to reach out to me with any questions, concerns, or needs along the way. ⚾



The Bank Vault by John Henderson, Treasurer

Treasurer's Report

Opening Balance 6/1 \$13,041.03

Money In:

Tournaments	\$26,466.12
Assessment Fees	
Collected	\$1,697.24
School Fees	\$1,506.00
Cadet Fees	\$1,330.12
McDyre Donation	\$250.00
Donation	\$100.00
Interest	<u>\$2.33</u>
Total In	\$31,351.81

Money Out:

Stamps	(\$46.80)
State Fee	(\$50.50)
Signs	(\$535.00)
Golf Outing	(\$570.00)
Insurance	(\$651.96)
NJSIAA Rule books	(\$720.00)
Outside assigner Fees	(\$661.00)
Party	(\$1,308.10)
Stipends	(\$3,280.00)
Assessments paid to Assigner	(\$6073.94)
Tournament Game Fees	<u>(\$26,249.00)</u>
Total Out	(\$40,146.30)
12/31 Balance	\$4,246.54

Stay Sharp (answers to the last page)

With the bases loaded and one out, B5 hits a ground ball to F3, who attempts to throw home to force out R3. F3s throw hits B1, who is running toward first base outside the three foot runners lane:

A. The ball is immediately dead, B5

is guilty of interference and is ruled out, and all runners are returned to their previous bases.

B. The ball is immediately dead, R3 is ruled out and B1 is awarded first base.

C. The ball is immediately

dead, and both R3 and B1 are ruled out.

D. There is no interference and the ball remains live.

"Why is it they boo us when we call a foul ball correctly and they applaud the starting pitcher when he gets taken out of the ballgame?"

**Jerry Neudecker
MLB Umpire
1966 to 1985.**

Your Assignment by Gary Schmitt, Assignor

Can you believe in less than 2 months we will be back on the field again. Please begin to complete your registration, and concussion certification. Everything is now uploaded directly into Arbiter when completed.

Scrimmage season begins March 16!!!!

I am pleased to announce that we picked up a youth travel league this year, West Deptford Storm. Most of their games will be played on the weekends with 2 tournaments during their season.

We were asked if we would be willing to

umpire the Marlton Rec Softball League, the response is always YES. I am awaiting word if they accepted our bid.

Back to High School, we were asked if we would service Mastery High School in Camden this year. We agreed to service this high school.

Please remember we are committed to 2 tournaments already, the GVAA tournament which begins the Thursday of Memorial Weekend and the following weekend the Medford Youth Tournament that also begins on Thursday .

We will again have the Over 70 league. They play Wednesday and Sunday mornings either at Delran Middle School, Vincentown (Harry Thompson Field) or Pennlyn Wood Field in PA

I want to thank you all for your support, bottom line, as long as I am your Assignor my goal will be to get us more baseball/softball GAMES, which in turn keeps you busy and making money.

If you have any issues with Arbiter, please reach out to me.

Play Ball! ⚾

Secretary's Desk by Matt Korang, Secretary

Happy 2026 to all our members and cadets! Lots of change in the air this year. We have a large cadet class, a school leaving and a new one coming, a new SOO and Cadet instructor as well as a new Rules Interpreter. But, Baseball will always be baseball and you will be needed to arbitrate rules for each game. Stay sharp and be as available as possible!

Additionally, we are back to Arbiter for assignments as well as other important things.

For one—you will be registering with NJSIAA through Arbiter. To Register, log in to Arbiter (make sure you go to #114548 account—not

the old South Jersey one). Once in, locate the "ELIGIBILITY" header and click it. You will see a sub header for "Registration". Click on "NJSIAA 2025-26 Registration" and then "Baseball". This will take you down the path of registration.

Secondly, the concussion certificate course is also taken through Arbiter. Click the "ELIGIBILITY" header again and then the sub header "Eligibility". Under Current Eligibility, click "2025-2026 Baseball Active". A page will be presented that has all your current eligibility items. One of them will be "NJSIAA Concussion Protocol Training". There

is a blue link "Take Online Clinic". Once completed, that part of eligibility will eventually be updated in Arbiter. Make sure you keep a copy of your completion certificate for your own records in case the system does not update properly. There is no need to send me the certificate.

Finally, please take note of the important dates on the front page. All of the meeting dates are listed. Meetings will be held once again at the Westampton Rec Center (50 Springside Rd, Westampton Township) starting at 7:00pm. Hope to see everyone there. ⚾

South Jersey Umpire Association

www.sjumps.com

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Stay Sharp Answer

I. - D (NFHS 8-4-1g)