

SJUA

The Relief Pitcher

Behind The Plate by Gerard Malamisura, SJUA President

The South Jersey Umpire Association had a very successful high school season in 2025. All of our umpires worked hard this season to make sure our schools were serviced with the highest in quality. As we progressed into the summer, the year also brought change. Long time Supervisor of Official, Cadet Supervisor, mentor, and our friend, George Joo, a 35+ year veteran

decided it was time to retire. The South Jersey Umpire Association Executive Board held interviews to find a replacement and draw a new path for our umpiring group. After interviewing several qualified candidates and much deliberation, I am to announce that Matt Scalise will now be the Supervisor of Officials. Matt is a very qualified candidate and will bring much enthusiasm to the position. However, the

South Jersey Umpire Association Executive Board didn't stop there. We also decided to bring in veteran umpire Joe Rosenberg to lead our group as the Rules Interpreter. These two moves are very important for our group as we progress forward. Please welcome them in their new roles and support them when necessary. ⚾



Important Dates

Register With NJSIAA	ASAP
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Marlton Halloween Softball Tournament	10/25-26
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2026 Cadet Class Starts	1/6
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"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

Off-Season Preparation Tips for Umpires

For umpires, the off-season is more than just downtime, it's the perfect opportunity to sharpen skills, stay in shape, and return to the field confident and ready for the next season. Here are a few ways umpires can prepare during the off months:

1. Stay Physically Fit

Umpiring requires stamina, agility, and focus. Off-season conditioning with cardio, strength training, and flexibility exercises helps maintain endurance and prevents injuries once games begin.

2. Review Rule Books and Updates

Rules often change from year to year. The off-

season is a great time to review the rule book, study any updates, and revisit tricky scenarios that caused challenges last season.

3. Attend Clinics or Training Sessions

Many organizations offer umpire clinics or workshops in the off-season. These sessions provide refreshers, new perspectives, and opportunities to learn from experienced officials.

4. Watch Games and Analyze Situations

Reviewing game footage or watching professional broadcasts can sharpen judgment. Observing positioning, mechanics, and how situations are managed helps reinforce proper techniques.

Take time to think about

strengths and weaknesses from the past season. Set goals on whether it is improving strike zone consistency, communication with coaches, or positioning.

Committees

Member participation in committees is going to be key in the growth of this organization. Following are committees that could use some participation. Please email me if you would like to join one of these committees.

- By-Laws
- Grievance
- Recruitment
- Social Media & Webpage
- Get Together
- Tournament 

Rules Lawyer by Joe Rosenberg, Rules Interpreter

For the 2026 high school season the following rule changes will apply. Please note that some of our tournament ball will use Federation rules with local modifications. Make sure you are versed on the rules as the "Rec Ball" coaches may not know them. When addressing rules, remember to use proper rule book terminology. Also, with more softball, I will email

those changes and Points of Emphasis shortly.

1-2-9, 2-5-1h, 2-16-1h, 8-2-1, 8-2-2(a)1-7, 8-2-7, 8-4-1g(1)

– Modified that the double first base will be mandatory effective January 1, 2027 and associated rule changes.

1-4-4 – Clarified what is allowed on a school's official baseball uniform.

1-6-3 – Clarified what is not allowed to be worn by a

player to record or transmit audio or video feeds.

2-10-3 – Clarified the definition of a player-to-player defensive meeting.

3-4-6 – Clarified the difference from a player-to-player meeting and a charged conference. 

Baseball Talk by Matt Scalise, Supervisor of Officials

I would like to begin by sincerely thanking the Board for entrusting me with the opportunity to serve as Supervisor of Officials and Cadet supervisor for SJUA. It is truly an honor, and I am humbled to step into this role.

I also want to take a moment to thank George Joo for his many years of hard work, dedication, and leadership within our association. When I first started umpiring at the age of 18, George was not only my trainer but also my mentor. He has been a steady presence

for all of us, serving as Supervisor of Officials, Cadet Supervisor, and Rules Interpreter. To wear so many hats with such consistency and excellence is no small feat, and I think we can all agree that George had that "something special" that left a lasting mark on SJUA. Beyond being a great umpire, George has been an even greater person and example for us all.

I know I can never truly replace what George brought to our association, but I will do my very best to build

upon the strong foundation he has laid. My goal is to ensure that every one of our officials feels supported, represented, and proud to be part of this group. I encourage anyone who ever has questions, concerns, or ideas to reach out to me I will always make myself available.

Thank you once again for this opportunity. I look forward to working with each of you and continuing to grow together as we head into the upcoming season. ⚾



"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.

Stay Sharp (answers to the last page)

1. The visiting pitcher walks the first batter in the bottom of the sixth inning. There have been no previous trips/conferences. The pitching coach makes a trip to that pitcher. After the trip, the head coach of the home team puts in a pinch hitter. The visiting head coach comes out of the dugout to make a second trip and replace the pitcher:

- A. Warn the head coach that he cannot make a second trip. If he continues, he is ejected and the pitcher will be substituted for after he completes the at-bat.
- B. Allow the trip and the substitution.
- C. Allow the trip but not the substitution.

- D. Warn the head coach that he cannot make a second trip. If he continues, he is ejected but the pitcher may remain in the game with no penalty.

2. B1 hits a foul fly near a chalked dead-ball area. F5 steps across the line with both feet and leaps, making the catch with both feet in the air. F5 lands with one foot in liveball territory and one in the dead-ball area:

- A. Foul ball because B1 was last in dead-ball territory before jumping to catch the ball.
- B. Foul ball because B1 landed with one foot in dead-ball territory.

- C. B1 is out and the ball remains live.
 - D. B1 is out and the ball is dead.
3. B1 strains his knee sliding into second base on a double. He is not able to continue and the team does not have a substitute available:
- A. The most recent team B batter not on base is allowed
 - B. An out is declared and the inning continues. to run for B1.
 - C. The game is declared a forfeit in favor of team A.
 - D. The team A coach can choose who runs in place of B1.

Your Assignment by Gary Schmitt, Assigner

I want to start out by once again thanking everyone for allowing me to be your assigner and for all of you helping the association meet our goal of covering scholastic baseball games.

Registration for baseball has already started. I would like to reiterate to please register early. By registering, this helps the recruitment and training committee along with myself, where we stand going into next active season and whether we could cover more assignments. Another important reason to register, quoting from the NJSIAA handbook "All NJSIAA registered officials will be covered under the current liability insurance carrier approved by NJSIAA."

We are now in full swing with Arbiter and many of you have been assigned games since July through Arbiter.

On the horizon is a softball tournament on October 25, 26. This is the Halloween tournament we did last year. It appears that the format will be a little different this year, but I am waiting for the final schedule.

Good news, unlike Zebraweb, I no longer must manipulate the system to provide accurate information. I can put in the proper age group whether it is softball/baseball, so I won't have to go searching for specific notes.

Bases only umpires, I have made a commitment this year to get you more involved with tournament assignments. Lesson learned from last year, 8U games are coach pitched, so only need an umpire to make out/safe calls from near the pitcher's mound. With your assistance, this will

allow other umpires to cover other 2-man games for me and the association. All I ask is to wear a ball bag and have an indicator with you. If you need a ball bag, please don't spend money, let me know, and I will give you one of my extras.

I know that it may appear there are multiple changes from last year and there are. More things are computer generated (Arbiter is much different than Zebraweb) and along with you, I am learning to have to adapt to these changes. If there are questions, ask. Some of you have already done so and are aware that I won't stop helping you until the problem is resolved.

Quote for this newsletter as I close: My SgtMajor in Iraq always said, "Doc, there are no problems, only solutions."

Play Ball! ⚾

Secretary's Desk by Matt Korang, Secretary

We have transitioned from Zebraweb back to Arbiter. While this will be painful after finally getting used to Zebraweb, Doc and I both feel Arbiter is a better piece of software for official administration. Hopefully, once you are used to the interface, you will agree.

A crucial point in the transition will be to remember to use the SJUA account #114548. When you first log into the Arbiter console, you may be presented with two SJUA accounts—#114548 and #101882. The latter is our old account. We may not be able to remove the old

(101882) account from showing.

Make sure you log in to SJUA #114548 going forward.

On a second note—now is a great time to register for the 2026 season. You can register right in the Arbiter website. Log in to the site and go to Eligibility > Registration. ⚾

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Stay Sharp Answers

1. - B (NFHS 3-4-1)
2. - A (NFHS 2-9)
3. - A (NFHS 4-4-1 Note I)