



# Western New York Umpires Association



## Memorandum

To: WNYUA Membership  
From: Norb Schmalfeld – President & UIC  
CC: WNYUA Board of Directors

It has come to my attention that there are some people that feel the 'Clinic Attendance' is something that doesn't need to happen. Let me explain that this isn't a personal issue with me but one that is mandated by The State. I want to post this message received yesterday from Brad White - VP of NYSSO.

### A MESSAGE FROM BRAD WHITE

Please distribute to our NYSSO chapters:

Several chapters have asked whether it is necessary to purchase new manuals this year. The quick answer is "YES!"

There were a number of changes in 2019. For 2020, there are many changes in both the 2-umpire and 3-umpire systems, as well as general umpiring guidelines and mechanics. These constitute the first "overhaul" since 2014. Any 2014-based manual will be significantly outdated.

While there may be changes over the next few years, they will not necessitate the need to purchase new manuals for those who already have them. Chapters need not have financial concerns about this over the next several years.

As an aside, many umpires who attend the NYSSO Umpire School in September inform the staff that they have never received a manual from their chapter. This has been an ongoing issue and concern for many years. Every chapter purchasing new manuals this year will help prevent further inquiry by the NYSSO executive board as to why this unacceptable practice is occurring...

Please place your orders immediately.

Yours in sports,

Brad White  
NYSSO VP

I want everyone to know that we have purchased 125 of the new Manuals that will be distributed at future meetings. These will only be given to umpires that work Softball or a combination of Baseball & Softball. We will also retain a number of copies for the New Recruits that will be attending the WNYUA Academy beginning in February. Also note that as an Association, we will be following the NYSSO Mechanics for ALL Summer Recreation and Tournament games that we assign. We are working to secure a venue for a field clinic. The old ASA/USA Mechanics taught and preached by the Old Board is now done. We are a NYSSO Association. Why the change - NYSSO has mandated it for all High School competition. In Summer Softball, we do not have any leagues or tourneys that are registered with USA except the Lackawanna Men's League. Even there, they don't follow the USA rule book as they freelance and do what they like. As Edju often says - in that league - pitchers pitch and hitters hit - period!

We will still need to join NSA to work their tournaments and it is also advised that if you work HS Softball, joining USA Softball should also happen. Even though we no longer do USA leagues or tournaments locally, the High Schools utilize the USA Rule Book for their seasonal play as do some of our 'non-sanctioned' tournaments with modifications. We need to be current on rules in those games as well. This year, USA Softball has changed their pitching rules so we need to know them. The High Schools will be following them this season. There is also an updated "Bat List" which I'm sure can be found online. Having updated rule books is necessary and by joining USA Softball, you receive one for free.

In the baseball world, the mechanics have also changed in the past 4-5 years. We have never followed them as an Association because our Old Board didn't want to be bothered trying to teach them. That is also changing as we begin to incorporate youth and Membership into our Baseball Umpire ranks. The new mechanics mirror collegiate mechanics with a few very minor differences. Maneuvering in 'A' and positioning in 'B' & 'C' have changed. Plate coverage of 3rd base on a '1st to 3rd' runner have changed. Some of us still haven't figured out "The Wedge" positioning on plays at the plate. This is now used and preached in both Baseball and Softball. We need and will, adapt. This will also include learning the new pitching rules specifically the illegal 'Hybrid Stance' - a point of emphasis in the past and even more so this year in High School and Collegiate baseball. Since most of our Summer Recreation Youth Leagues play by HS Rules, these also need to be enforced in our Summer season. We are bringing in trainer(s) from NYSBUA to teach our Classroom session and put on a field clinic. Date and time for the field clinic is TBA as we work to get a facility to handle it. There may be a fee involved to attend so be prepared.

In closing, change is always a difficult thing to handle especially if you are a veteran umpire. However, under the old Board, training was NOT emphasized. This Board IS emphasizing training. We need to be better because right now, we are behind the rest of the State in both mechanics and techniques. We can no longer take an idle approach. The level of umpiring we provide needs to get better and it will.

Thank-you!  
Norb