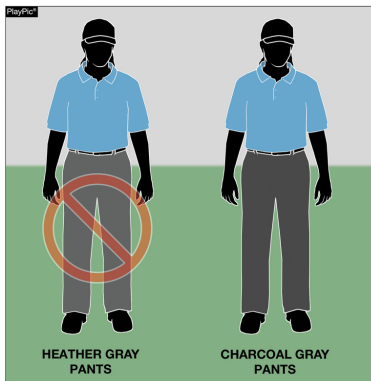




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Charcoal Gray Pants



Navy Blue



Powder Blue

Cathy's Correspondence: Newsletter - IGHSAU Softball Coordinator of Officials

May has arrived and IGHSAU softball has started! It is time to complete your registration, rule meeting/clinic, test and pack your car.

Post Season Dates to remember:

| | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| Regional - 1A/2A | July 6, 8, 10, 13 |
| Regional - 3A/4A/5A | July 9, 11, 14 |
| State Tournament – Fort Dodge | July 20-24 |

Registration/books/test/clinic – The clinic/rules meeting and test are open on Dragonfly. BEFORE taking the test, watch the rule meeting. There is a study guide on the IGHSAU with general rule references on the IGHSAU website along with the Iowa Adaptations. Rule books, either paper books for the first-year umpires or the NFHS digital version which is included in your registration are needed. Email Elise at the IGHSAU for access. You will need all of this to pass the test. The test consists of NFHS generated questions (including the videos) – I altered none. However, I added questions concerning the IGHSAU Adaptations since these are



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specific to IGHSAU softball. There are no “trick” questions, so don’t read too much into these questions. All the answers are in the material listed. Test closes May 29.

Pitching –Pitchers may use dirt, powdered rosin and a towel with a comparable drying agent, such as Gorilla Gold. Once they touch these items, which are LEGAL, they DO NOT have to wipe their hands before touching the ball. This is specific to NFHS softball and is NOT what you see on TV. However, rock rosin is not legal, under any circumstance. Pitchers may lick their fingers but must wipe it off before touching the ball. Coaches are responsible for their team being properly equipped, including rosin. Powdered rosin is very easy to spot, when the pitcher throws down the bag, it should “pouf”. No need to check if this is the case. Rock rosin, if the umpire needs to check, please don’t make a show checking it. Between innings, before pitcher leaves, be quick to brush off the plate and when the pitcher arrives in the circle, politely ask her to let you see the bag. If the bag feels like marbles, bring it to the coach. Now it is time to check the ball. If it has any sticky substance on it, simply remove it from the game. Use the coach to check the towel in the pitcher’s pocket. If that is the source of the sticky substance, have the coach remove it. Under no circumstances are you to touch the pitcher or her towel. (6-2-2)

Electronic device – Note this clarification: pitchers are permitted to utilize electronic devices. In the rule meeting, it was stated that the pitcher’s communication device must be worn on the glove hand. This is correct if the pitcher is wearing a communication device that is worn on the wrist. Teams utilizing the head set communication devices may still wear the devices in the ear. Umpires are not to wear electronic devices to communicate.

Post season – Requirements for state tournament are register with the IGHSAU for softball, watch the rule meeting/clinic, and pass the test with 75% or better. The clinic is incorporated into the rule meeting and has been for 2 years now. So



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no in-person clinic is required to go to state. However, it is advantageous to have an advisor, or an evaluator watch your live games. They will provide instant feedback, to enhance your game. Contact me at cathy@ighsau.org or contact your regional advisor to provide us with your schedule. We will do everything possible to see you work.

Photographers - 1.1.7 SITUATION A: During the game, a photographer takes up a position in foul territory beyond first base to take pictures. The umpire directs the photographer to return to dead-ball territory. The photographer prefers to remain in live-ball territory to shoot. RULING: The home team or game management may designate an area for the media, but it must be in dead-ball territory.

Positioning – This year, I am allowing more flexibility into softball mechanics. NFHS mechanics remain the standard, but umpires may adjust when needed to be in the best position for a call. There is no designated spot for every situation that would occur in a game. The priority is to get the call right by moving efficiently and using the best angle available. Do not require your partner to use your preferred mechanics. This approach makes a pre-game discussion about your coverage essential. If you review common plays and communicate responsibilities with your partner before the game, exact positioning matters less. Focus on getting the call right.

Uniforms – This year, both heather gray and charcoal gray pants are permitted. Partners should match, so contact your partner before the game. You may also want to keep both colors in your car. Because manufacturers have discontinued heather gray pants, charcoal gray will be the only option allowed beginning in 2027. Pleated pants are acceptable.

Cheering in the Dugout - Dugout cheers are encouraged if they are positive in nature. Cheers that are negative in nature and directed at the opposing team will



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not be tolerated this season. NFHS Rule 3-6-13-b (Page 39) states: “Unsporting acts shall not be committed including, but not limited to ... b. use of profanity, intimidation and/or deceitful tactics, baiting or taunting ...” If officials working at the game are notified about negative cheers during the game, they will be instructed to issue a warning to the offending dugout. Any subsequent offenses will result in the head coach being restricted to the dugout, followed by ejection.

Rule questions, mechanics of the game and such questions should be directed to the IGHSAU Softball Coordinator of Officials: Cathy Creighton at cathy@ighsau.org. I will take phone calls most of the day and emails (preferred method). I will check a couple times per day. 563-940-0164. Remember, I am a part-time independent contractor for IGHSAU. I work from home, and I am not in the IGHSAU office full time so do not call me there. You must identify yourself as an umpire, as I try not to respond to parents (that is the coaches’ responsibility) Please be patient, as I receive a lot of correspondence during the season. Feel free to contact your regional advisor, too (see contact info below).

Player eligibility questions are to be referred to Jason Eslinger at jasoneslinger@ighsau.org.

Regional Advisors and their areas of coverage:

Tom Burger, Northeast, and eastern Iowa, tomburger88@gmail.com.

Pat Pacha, Southeast, and eastern Iowa, patepacha@gmail.com

Jim Doyle, Southwest, and south Iowa, doylefloor@hotmail.com

Craig Snider, Northwest, and western Iowa, craigdsnider@gmail.com

Tom Sullivan, North Iowa, some northeast, and northwest. tsullivan@stacsd.org

Cathy Creighton, Central Iowa (including the DSM metro), cathy@ighsau.org, or ccreighton48@gmail.com



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Many schools now stream games online, and some of my advisors watch those broadcasts regularly. I catch a few myself, but I also attend games in person—often without notice—to observe umpires. The message is simple: work every game as if we are watching. Cathy