Feb. 17, 2024 USA Softball of CT Umpires Meeting Summary

Called to order at 10:06 am by UIC Cliff Larose. Attendees introduced themselves. We had a “good” turnout, but we really need all CT Boards to attend this yearly meeting. We will change the weekend of this meeting in future years trying to avoid conflicts with winter CIAC sports. Please note that we would like all boards to be represented even if by proxy. Much good and important information was presented and revealed. We are happy to have Cliff LaRose being able to work with us this year. Welcome to John Cambridge of NJ as our new Region 1 UIC replacing Steve Roscia who retired to Florida. In CT, Welcome to new DUIV Walt Faulkner of East Haven, Jeff Davis, new District Commissioner from North Haven and Lou Penna who is our new player rep. Congratulations to Tom Oliver who has been assigned to the JO Gold National Tournaments and to Brad Sanchez who has been assigned to the Men’s Super Sp national tournament for 2024. Also Congratulations to Walt Faulkner who has qualified for the National Indicator Award.

We had a Special Programs by Craig from Special Olympics CT. USA Softball partners with Special Olympics and supplies umpires for their events. They have tentative dates of Aug. 10 and the also in September presently at the Pratt Whitney complex in East Hartford. They now know that we have to work around date conflicts with both organizations. Once you umpire Special Olympics, you will always want to go back. Officials get treated very well at their events. We had had several CT umpires travel to work games at the National Level and will continue that effort.

Stan Capp reviewed how we register umpires. The CT dues are again $45 for 2024. Stan’s mailing address is 45 Morning side Terrace, Wallingford, CT 06457 for checks or you can pay for your board via Venmo and send to @usasoftball-ct. Congratulations to Stan as he is getting married. His Stag is May 10th. Walt Faulkner has tickets and information

Rule and Score books were distributed. CT now pays for these books. They used to be free. We would like for scorebooks to get delivered to all our registered teams. We have 200 printed rule books. We have 700 teams and 275 umpires. We hand out rule books to some umpires and would like each league to get one rule book. Please know that our rule book is available and easily accessed on the national website. There is plenty of other information on our national website and all persons involved with softball should visit the site often for valuable information www.usasoftball.com

Steve Kolitz presented the 2024 new rules. Please be reminded again that it is permitted for leagues to modify any rule they choose to. The USA Softball rule book covers only USA Softball Championship Play. Important rule changes are Rule 4 Section 8B, If a youth player is ejected, they must be supervised by a responsible adult when they leave the playing area or the park. Rule 8 section 9a now allows a courtesy runner for the pitcher in all levels of play. Hank covered the 2024 Procedural Code changes. Players ejected are now required to “sit” their team’s next game. Managers are to report any unsporting acts or remarks made by players or spectators when observed to the person in charge of the event. The code and rule changes were sent previously and can also be found on our national website.

Let it be known that CT uses [www.usasoftballne.com](http://www.usasoftballne.com) as its tournament website. Most of the teams in the northeast part of our country really like this website. The site is capable of doing more things like scheduling of games and umpires that we are not using.

Hank is also an Official Gear dealer and can order items for you and there will be no shipping costs. I need at least $100 worth of orders to make this cost effective. I will meet people “half way” to deliver items and collect payment. Please know at this time official gear offers charcoal pants. Please also know that we in USA Softball of CT and the CIAC will still wear heather gray pants.

Dave Reno handles adult team and league registrations. Please have your leagues submit the information and payment to Dave by check or use Venmo which comes to me and I will notify Dave when received. See the attached team registration form. Also attached is our roster/waiver form. Teams should have their players on this form and signed. This will be important if and when an insurance claim needs to be submitted. League Directors should save these signed rosters for at leat 4 years. Please remember that our adult teams get liability insurance when they register at no additional cost. Team registration is $40 per team for 2024. This information is on the team registration form.

Reno reported that he will run a limited amount of adult tournaments. We also have JO tournaments every weekend from April thru July. They can be found on our tournament website [www.usasoftballne.com](http://www.usasoftballne.com) All youth umpires must be registered and background checked and Safe Sport certified yearly. The cost for the background check is $19 and Safe Sport in free. These can be obtained at [www.registerusasoftball.com](http://www.registerusasoftball.com) All persons using this website will have to create a profile and will get an ID #. All persons should save and remember their ID # for future references.

We had a discussion regarding issues with “pay at the plate”. We would like to have one policy statewide as to game fees and what happens when weather will not allow games to occur. This did not happen, but will remain an item for future discussion. It was agreed that umpires who show up to umpire and games are canceled deserve reimbursement for their time and commitment to the tournament. Umpires should be paid a “show up fee” of $25 by the tournament director. We also agreed that the minimum game fee for umpires working timed games will be $70 (not $75) each for 2024. Please note that this agreement is not statewide. Hank will contact tournament directors of this change.

Cliff and his umpire staff will create a CT H of F application in the umpire category. This staff will also update our state website umpires tab. This has been on hold for several years.

We have 2 legislative issues that need to be addressed. We ask that you and your board members contact legislatures with your concern and support. Our national concern is that only National Governing bodies are required to have all adults working with children need Safe Sport certification. Why don’t all adults working with children need Safe sport? There is a template letter attached for you and your members to send to our CT leaders working in Washington DC like Blumenthal, Murphy, Himes, Courtney and others. The second issue is that CT needs a law to protect sports officials from abuse. There is a move started by Barry Chasen to get a bill created. It has not been able to get out of committee for at least 2 years. Please get your members to contact their state representatives to consider this bill.

We use the following websites. Please encourage your members to visit them and refer our clients to also visit them. [www.usasoftball.com](http://www.usasoftball.com) is our national office site.

[www.usasoftballne.com](http://www.usasoftballne.com) is our tournament website. Our clients like using this site. Please note that youth tournament will appear as defaults. Change Fast Pitch tab to slow pitch for our adult tournaments.

[www.usasoftballct.com](http://www.usasoftballct.com) is our state website. We get evaluated yearly and have always scored well. It is understood that we need to make some updates to this website. This is an ongoing issue that Hank continues to address. It would be nice to get some assistance with this issue.

[www.registerusasoftball.com](http://www.registerusasoftball.com) is a national website for registration items. All adults must use this site and need to create a profile. This site is for individual team registrations, background checks and Safe Sport certification and other registration items. Users will need to create a profile and get an ID #.

We lost a great friend this past year, Tony Roberto. We will create an umpire award in his memory.

USA Softball of CT will soon release a “Constant Contact” information newsletter. This will assist us in communicating with our clients and send out information about what we do, who we are and push people to use our websites. Pat Patusky will spearhead this venture. At this time please contact her and copy your members so we can create a base of people’s emails to receive this communication. The plan at this time is to send out information about 4 times per year. Her email is ppatusky@slrgroup.com

Respectfully submitted,

Hank Koritkoski