

2019 GOPHER STATE OFFICIALS ASSOCIATION SOFTBALL/BASEBALL UMPIRES MEETING

~NOTES FROM RICK DEGARDNER~

RICK DEGARDNER - ASSIGNER

CELL - 651-252-8197

EMAIL - rickdeg@comcast.net

#1 PRIORITY FOR 2019 IS ENSURING THAT UMPIRES HAVE PROPER CERTIFICATION. It's crucial that anyone who umpires a varsity contest is currently certified with the MSHSL. For JV, B, C, 9th grade, and Middle School games, every umpire is REQUIRED to complete Concussion Management Training through the MSHSL. The Minnesota Legislature passed and the Governor signed legislation that requires each official (licensed, registered, or volunteer) working at the MSHSL varsity, junior varsity or b-squad/sophomore level to receive initial online training and online training at least once every three calendar years. The MSHSL has created a database for non-registered MSHSL officials who work lower level games. To be added to the list you must watch the online training and enter your information after completing the online quiz. Go to www.mshsl.org and click on "Officials/Judges" to watch the online video. There is no charge to do this and must be completed prior to working any games so do this soon! ***Umpires, schools, and Officials Associations will get censored if umpires are assigned that haven't completed the training so this is VERY IMPORTANT. Call me if I assign you a varsity game and you are not currently MSHSL certified (can happen with rainouts, etc.)***

2019 UMPIRE FEES – \$1 increase from 2018 (Posted on our website www.gopherstateofficials.org). Non-varsity pay (even Middle School!) is same as varsity for metro area (Baseball \$78, Softball \$70). If get wrong amount contact me or Bozo, not the school.

GAME COVERAGE - All Gopher State Umpires are expected to help cover games. We understand everyone wants to work close to home. However, with Gopher State Officials covering a wide geographic area (including, Hastings, Glencoe, Forest Lake, St. Michael, Howard Lake, etc.) we expect all umpires to help out and travel to various sites when assigned. We try to keep this to a minimum for each umpire, but we need to get these games covered.

PROVIDING UMPIRES TO SCHOOLS IS A BUSINESS! - There are several Officials Associations that are competing to assign games. Each year some conferences and schools switch associations for various reasons. All Gopher State Umpires need to do their part to make sure administrators, coaches, and players know that Gopher State provides dependable, respectful, knowledgeable umpires that hustle regardless of the level of game. If you don't meet Gopher State's expectations, we can't afford to keep you around. Other associations are just waiting for an opportunity for problems to arise so they can tell the schools that they can provide better umpires. We will assign umpires that schools want to see. It doesn't take too many unprofessional umpires before schools will look elsewhere.

ALWAYS CONVEY PROFESSIONALISM - This includes:

- Contacting partners prior to each event
- Always contacting schools with professional emails stating you are with Gopher State Officials, providing contact info, and verifying date, time, exact location, sport, level, and number of games
- Look professional on the field – clean shirt tucked in, decent hat, stay off cell phone
- Always treat coaches and players with respect and professional attitude
- Take care of the little things to show everyone you are there to do a worthy job – (be approachable, dust plate off, talk to relief pitcher)

NOTIFYING SCHOOLS - Need to contact home school 2 days in advance by email to verify date, time, location, level, number of games, BA/SB. Varsity games only one umpire sends email to athletic director and secretary. This protects you if you show up and there is no game (still get paid). Provide phone numbers in case of cancellation, rain, etc. Number one complaint from athletic directors is umpires not calling in. EMAILING SECRETARY MORE IMPORTANT THAN AD. Another good reason to contact school in advance is if game is cancelled, then I have some time to reassign you to a different game.

March 19, 2019

ASSIGNER NEEDS YOUR COOPERATION - The most valuable help you can provide me is to keep your availability updated on GotOfficials. A day or two of bad weather makes reassigning games very chaotic. The process breaks down when I assign an umpire to work a game for the following day (because GotOfficials shows they are open), then I get a turnback that evening. It's also helpful when I need same day umpires so I know who to call. Please bring your equipment to work, even if you aren't scheduled to umpire that day. I understand open dates are a fluid process, but I would appreciate it if everyone would do their best to keep "My Availability" updated.

It's important to check often for new game assignments. If umpires do not accept games within 1-2 days, the games may be reassigned. Check accepted assignments a few days prior to the game for any changes in time, partners, location, etc. Umpires may want to consider verifying game information on Conferences websites.

GOTOFFICIALS ON-LINE SYSTEM

- All umpires are expected to upload a photo under "My Profile." This allows coaches, other umpires, Board Members, etc. to recognize our umpires. DO THIS TONIGHT.
- Message Board - Shows past emails I have sent out
- Turnbacks can be done online 3 days prior to the event date. Less than 3 days you must call Rick at 651-252-8197 to turn back a game.
- Self Assign - Check periodically for games that need umpires. Clicking on a particular game simply notifies the assigner that you are interested; It doesn't necessarily automatically assign you to the event.
- Check accepted assignments few days prior. Regardless of what you might think, you need to go by what is on GotOfficials. Call me with questions.

RAIN OUTS - Call school prior to 2:00pm if inclement weather. Provide them your cell number. Umpires must show up to the assigned game unless positive knowledge of game cancellation. Paid ½ game fee if you contact the school to confirm, show up for the game, and it gets rained out. Send Rick an email if you get notified that the game is cancelled.

WANT MORE GAME ASSIGNMENTS?

- Check Self Assign on GotOfficials. I will be relying on this more in 2019 to get games covered
- Email me Sunday evenings indicating what dates you are available the upcoming week
- Call me at home on rain days after 6:00pm if open the following day (651-490-5940)

2019 CLINICIANS

- Scott Schimetz - Softball 612-636-7268 scott.schimetz@va.gov
- Tim Litfin - Baseball 612-910-6200 tim.litfin@minnetonka.k12.mn.us

MISCELLANEOUS

- Complete paperwork at field. Some schools are using Refpay (electronic pay) via email.
- Mpls Games – (NEW FOR 2019) Gopher State will submit an invoice to the Mpls schools at the conclusion of the season, then send out checks to umpires. Umpires do not need to submit any paperwork!!
- Complete vouchers legibly – Schools can't pay you if they can't read your name or address!
- Getting assigned for tournaments is considered a privilege. Umpires will be assigned that have demonstrated they hustle, make themselves available during the week, and don't turn back games. Don't expect free food at concessions.
- Some umpires choose to not work any Mpls. games, non-metro games, Middle School games, etc. That's fine, but they will likely not be getting a full schedule, especially if they have further restrictions (ie. Only will want games within 10 miles of home, etc.) Typically, the more restrictions placed on games an umpire is willing to work, the fewer games an umpire will be assigned.