



CIF PLAYOFF GUIDELINES

PLAYOFF DATES:

June 1	Tuesday	Wild Card	(Home Unit to umpire)
June 3	Thursday	1 st Round	(Home Unit to umpire)
June 5	Saturday	2 nd Round	(Home Unit to umpire)
June 8	Tuesday	Quarter-finals	(Home Unit to umpire)
June 10	Thursday	Semi-finals	(Will travel out of area)
June 18 & 19	Friday	TBD	
	Saturday	TBD	

The official uniform for a CIF play-off game prescribed by the Southern Section is:

1. **HAT:** Clean navy blue felt or mesh hat with no logo or previous CIF Finals hats are acceptable.
 - a. Crew wears the same style hat.
 - I. No logo or CIF Finals hat.
 - b. Those officials accepted to the 2021 finals will be provided hats.
2. **Shirt:** Powder blue pullover shirt, short or long sleeve, as set forth by CSOA-SS, with the softball patch on the **left** sleeve.
 - a. Those officials accepted to the 2021 finals will be provided a shirt.
 - b. If an undershirt is worn, it shall be white.
3. **SLACKS:** Heather grey or navy blue slacks with belt loops and a black belt (no gaudy buckles).
 - a. No faded heather grey shall be worn.
 - I. **No** other shade of grey pants.
 - b. Pleaded pants are acceptable.
 - c. All members of the crew are to wear the same color slacks.
4. **SOCKS AND SHOES:** Black or dark navy blue socks and black shoes (shined and no white or racing stripes).
5. **ACCESSORIES:** The plate umpire may wear one or two heather grey or navy blue ball bag(s), the face mask may have either black or tan pads.
 - a. All umpires shall have a brush and indicator.
 - b. All other equipment is optional, but highly recommended for safety purposes and to be comfortable behind the plate.
 - c. Nothing visible should be in the shirt pocket.
 - d. If a jacket and/or sweater is worn, it shall be navy blue or navy blue with the powder blue piping.
 - e. The only logo should be that of the CSOA-SS Softball Official patch.
 - I. **CSOA-SS will provide a jacket that is to be worn at the finals.**
6. **JEWELRY:** The only jewelry an official may wear on the field is their wedding ring. **No** watches, earrings, etc. **No** pagers, cell phones, etc.
7. **COVID protocols:** The current protocols are still in place but may change in early June.
 - a. County health department and/or school district may implement additional protocols.
8. You are to arrival at the game site **no less than 45 minutes** prior to game time. This gives you time for your pre-game and discuss either the 2-person or 3-person system you are using that game.

- a. If you are unable to arrive at the game site 45 minutes early, do not accept the assignment.

Be neat, in uniform and dignified in manner.

Announce all decisions promptly in a clear, distinct voice and use proper hand signals.

Be alert, fair, prompt and accurate in all decisions. Work to be ahead of the play. If an error is made, correct it promptly.

Display confidence, work with the teams and keep the game under control.

Avoid arguments, personal comments about the game or players and anything else that might interfere with judgment.

Keep apart from players and coaches, as well as spectators. **DO NOT** socialize. **DO NOT** offer an opinion of a decision, by a fellow umpire regardless of whether it is based on the rules or judgment. **DO NOT** become a clinician.

Use signals to assist each other in calling plays if either umpire is blocked out of the play. (catcher obstruction, batted ball hitting the batter, runner interference, etc.)

Call illegal pitches immediately in a loud enough voice to be heard but not loud enough to stop play and give the delayed dead ball signal.

CIF Tournament Rules

1. All playoff games will be conducted under the 2020 National Federation Softball Rules, except where Blue Book rulings or this bulletin supersede. All playoff games after round 2 will be a minimum of seven (7) innings duration.
 - ☞ Run-ahead rule will only be for the wild card, 1st round and 2nd round games.
 - ☞ Games shall end after 4½ or 5 innings if visiting/home team is behind by 10 runs.
2. Teams entered in the softball playoffs **WILL NOT** be permitted to take batting practice on the day of the scheduled contest.

A potential batting practice violation is not a violation under NFHS rules that can be protested. If the situation occurs the coach must bring the issue to the attention of the home plate umpire at the [pre-game meeting](#) and ask that it be recorded. The umpire will then forward that information in a report to our office after the game is over. The game is not played under protest.
3. Fields with baseball pitching mounds may **NOT** be used for any CIF softball playoff contest.
4. Typed ground rules on a card with copies to both umpires and the opposing coach prior to the game. Some do this and others don't. If not treat like you have all season.
6. Game ball: The home team provides the game balls per NFHS Rules. The Dudley CFP12Y NFHS will be the game ball for ALL playoff rounds and championships.
 - If the home school does not have the Dudley CFP12Y NFHS, check with the visitors.
 - If neither have the official ball, play the game with a NFHS certified ball and notify CIF.
 - **IF** neither team has a NFHS Certified game ball(s), you are **NOT** to play the game and notify CIF.
7. Game time is 3:15 p.m. on the designated date. A school may play at other times or on other days if it is mutually agreeable to both competing schools.
8. Umpires: The umpires shall receive \$79.00. Mileage and meals will be paid when authorized by CIF-SS. Three officials will automatically be assigned beginning with the quarterfinal round.
9. Cheering Sections: Fan/Student cheering sections are encouraged to cheer and support their own team and should display proper sportsmanship with respect to the opposing team and the game officials. They are expected to follow the following guidelines and failure to do so may lead to removal from the contest and/or forfeiture of the contest.
 - ☐ Noisemakers (the use of artificial noisemakers, ball buckets, air horns, horns, cow bells, bells, victory bells, sirens, chimes, wooden blocks, thunder sticks, etc. and electronic amplifiers) by student-athletes and team personal is prohibited while on site for competition. For this rule, the field, bullpens and dugouts are considered "on site". Megaphones may only be used by the school's uniformed cheer squads.
 - ☐ Cheering devices such as rally towels, pom-poms and pennants are acceptable when used within the bounds of good sportsmanship.
 - ☐ It is the expectation that cheering section behavior will be monitored by the assigned school staff of the school that they represent. All improper behavior/language should be addressed and corrected immediately by school staff supervisors.
 - ☐ No standing or jumping on the team benches in the dugout. Please do not drag bats against the fencing in the dugout. In addition, any artificial noise that the umpire deems interferers with the
11. **Protests (rule interpretation). There will be no protests entertained by CIF following the conclusion of the game. That means that if a coach believes there is a misinterpretation of the rule(s), they are to direct their questions/concerns to the game officials per NFHS guidelines. If that happens, listen to the coach and if necessary, go to the rulebook for clarification. Be approachable.**

CIF Southern Section – 562-493-9500 and mikem@cifss.org

3-man Umpire System Pre-Game

Prior to entering the field, crews should hold a pre-game meeting to cover the ground rules, positioning, coverage for unusual plays, rule questions, handling of disagreements between players and/or coaches and end of game procedure. The plate umpire should check the location of the score keeper(s), coordinate time and check to make sure everyone has brushes, indicators and other necessary equipment. If you wish to have water during the game, please bring your own drinking bottle or container.

The following are points to be considered at the pre-game with your partners. There might be additional points to cover by the crew.

- Plate meeting, PU to lead the conference. Set-up a comment from each of your partners to build validity for them. (i.e., sportsmanship, jewelry inspection by the captains, proper wearing of the uniform, etc.)
- Half-swing help, go to the umpire with the best angle.
- Go over umpire-to-umpire communications and be sure that each umpire looks at his/her partners.
- Positions between innings. The field umpires are to meet behind 2nd base where the dirt meets the grass. Allows for discussion and keeps you out of the way of the players.
- Fair/foul signal of the ball bounding over the bag. Plate umpire to make the call.
- Inside umpire or 3U cleans the pitcher's plate as needed.
- Glance to see if the umpire is going out or moving to their next position. PU has ultimate observation.
- Fly ball coverage. We go out on ALL fly balls.
- Fly ball coverage. Discuss coverage by the 1U, 3U and PU.
- Fly ball coverage. If you go out, stay out but turn and watch the play develop and be aware that you might be in the best position for a play, especially at 2nd base. Communication is important if you have to come back in.
- 1U helps with the pitcher warming up.
- PU is not to release until one of the base umpires are in position.
- Appeal play. The proper umpire should be ready to make the call. If the wrong umpire is asked, point to the correct umpire.
- 1U should be ready to cover home plate.
- Double call; don't let it happen. If it does happen, all umpires need to get together and decide. PU to state the result.
- Observe all positions before calling "time" and after each out.
- TALK...TALK...HUSTLE...
TALK...TALK...HUSTLE

Pre-Game Conference with the Coaches

**The conference with the coaches and captains should take 3-5 minutes.
Here are some points to consider:**

- The PU is behind the plate and both base umpires are on the infield at the top of the batter's box facing the PU.
- The PU introduces himself/herself and his/her partners.
- Have the home team coach review the ground rules.
- Review the lineup cards and then allow the coaches to review the lineup one more time before they become official.
- Ask the coach if their players are legally uniformed (need a verbal answer).
- Ask the coach if their equipment is legal (need a verbal answer).
- Ask your partners for their input. (already set up at your pre-game)
- Wish both teams good luck.
- After the conference, the PU should establish the position of the official scorer.

Game Control and Management

To be a successful umpire, you will have to be proficient in appearance, rule knowledge, mechanics, and game control. Your ability to control the game and to handle the situations as they arise is the one subject that is most difficult to teach. There are guidelines an umpire should or should not follow, but what works for one umpire may or may not work for another.

There are no rules etched in stone that will make your umpiring problem-free, for that matter, will work in every game situation. Below are guidelines that have proven to help many umpires control their games while developing character and stature as a respected umpire. Respect must be earned and this can only come from hard work and dedication

DO:

- Hold your position until the play is complete or when the pitcher has the ball in the circle, and then hustle to your position. An umpire keeps and eye on the players at all times.
- Write down all conferences. Announce the defensive conference total to the coach after the conference.
- Sweep the base/plate/pitcher's plate only if it is needed.
- Work as a crew. Tell your partners what you are doing, NOT what they should be doing.
- Be aware and pre-plan for the next play.
- Adjust to the play, as it might change.
- Hustle.
- Use strong distinct signals.
- Be alert and be professional.
- Be ready to play before the players are.
- Know and do your job, not your partner's or the coaches.
- Be in the proper positions in between innings.
- Signal foul/dead balls from the bases.
- Walk on and off the field together.
- Hear everything but react to little.

DON'T:

- Call time out unless you need it.
- Allow team personnel to swarm around your partner(s). One coach and one umpire.
- Get into a shouting match on the field. Be professional in your reply when the coach comes to talk to you.
- Don't ask a player what she called you. If you didn't hear it, then ignore it.
- Stay on top of a close play after you have made the call.
- PUT YOUR HANDS OR ARMS AROUND A PLAYER OR A COACH. Don't let them do this to you.
- Use unnecessary signals.
- Look to see if you are in the vision of the outfielders. If you are move a couple of steps.
- Stopping the runners on a foul ball, just signal so they can see you.
- Don't go for "help" to pacify a coach. If you need help, ask before you make the call. If a conference is needed, all partners get together and make the decision. The original umpire will state the decision.
- Allow the questioning of balls and strikes.

Fundamentals * Good Ideas * Trouble Spots * Considerations

Three starting positions

- ⊗ 1st (1U) and 3rd (3U) base umpires approximately 18-21 feet down the line from 1st and 3rd base when no one is on or when there is a runner on 3rd base only.
- ⊗ With a runner on 1st base only, 1U is still on the line and 3U is straight out from 2nd base towards right centerfield. (This is the rotated position)
- ⊗ With a runner on 2nd base and all other situations, 3U is on the 3rd base line and 1U is off the right or left shoulder of the 2nd baseman. (This is the counter-rotated position).

All base umpires are in a set position anytime runners are on base.

- ⊗ Even on an intentional walk.
 - Even 1U with a runner on 3rd base only.

Rotation on a batted ball (when no umpire goes out)

- ⊗ Plate umpire (PU) moves to 3rd base.
- ⊗ 1U takes the initial play at 1st base then moves (when the lead runner has advanced past 2nd base) to the plate for a possible play there.
- ⊗ 3U moves across the field for a possible play at 2nd base. When 1U rotates to the plate, 3U is responsible for 1st and 2nd base.
- ⊗ **As the 1U, do not leave 1st base to cover home until the lead runner has rounded 2nd base. Possible rundown between 2nd and 1st base.**

Fly ball coverage

- ⊗ Go out on ALL fly balls.
- ⊗ It is acceptable to stay in on an obvious base hit.
- ⊗ With no one on or a runner at 3rd base only.
 - 1U has the call from centerfield to the right field dead ball line.
 - 3U has the call from centerfield to the left field dead ball line.
 - 1U has the “right of refusal” to go out on a ball to centerfield since he/she has the probable play coming at him/her.
- ⊗ With runners on base anywhere except 3rd base only:
 - The rotated or counter-rotated umpire has the fly ball from the left fielder to the right fielder. (called the “cone”)
 - The other field umpire has from the nearest outfielder to the dead ball line.
 - The PU has all fly balls from the other outfielder to the dead ball line.
- ⊗ When you go out on a fly ball, stay with the ball in case it goes out of play. Stay out of the way of the fielders. Run at an angle to the play. Do not return to the infield but stay alert in case you are needed and communicate what you saw.
- ⊗ Do not signal “TIME” with your partners if you have gone out on a fly ball.

Tag-Up Responsibilities

- ⊗ When the base umpire goes out to judge a fly ball, tag-up responsibilities will be the same for the Plate and Base Umpire as they are in the Two-Umpire System.

The PU should go to his/her partner on a checked swing when asked by the catcher or coach

- ⊗ Go to the open umpire – even if he/she is rotated or counter-rotated.
- ⊗ EXCEPTION: with a runner on 1st base that is stealing, go to 1U.
- ⊗ If the PU goes to the wrong partner, that partner should simply point to the other partner who will give the response.

Between innings

- ⊗ PU should be within 15 feet extended base line from the plate. Stand on the side facing the team coming up to bat.
- ⊗ Base umpires should meet behind 2nd base where the dirt meets the grass.

3U or the umpire left in the diamond when the inning ends, will sweep the pitcher’s plate immediately after the 3rd out, if it is needed

Before every pitch, prep yourself on what you will do on all possible situations

- ⊗ The batted ball is a fly ball that you should go out on.
- ⊗ The batted ball is a fly ball that your partner should go out on.
- ⊗ The batted ball is a ground ball to the infield.
- ⊗ The batted ball is a ground ball to the outfield.
- ⊗ If necessary, communicate with signals to your partner