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**District 2 Softball Umpire News – About this Newsletter** - #14 – February/March 2023

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**Editors Comment** – Duane Bakken

Most officials start out as athletes or sports fans or both. We truly enjoy the intricacies of the sports we work. As an official, you won’t just be watching any more, you’ll be part of the game, with the best view in the house. Maybe you want to stay engaged and a part of the game you loved to play, or maybe you are looking get more engaged in the game your kids are playing. Either way, being an official will give you access to, and an appreciation for, the rules and strategies of the games you officiate like nothing else can.

The fellowship and humor officials share with one another are incomparable. You’ll quickly realize there is no community like officials. When it comes down to it, during a game, your only true friends are the officials you’re working with. Many of them will become your closest friends — lifelong friends.

There is no better part-time job or hobby for you to make extra money doing something you enjoy than through officiating. It’s the perfect extra gig for anyone from a high school student, to a parent to a retiree.

Sports officiating is a challenging job, but there are great rewards. To be a successful official, you will need mental toughness, good people skills and thick skin. Sports officiating will inherently teach you all of those skills and much more. More importantly, officiating will teach you how to view the games in a whole new light – one that emphasizes fairness, integrity, decisiveness and sound judgement. Get ready to challenge yourself and start one of the most rewarding jobs you’ll ever have!

**Umpire Clinic Registration**

Please be advised that umpire registration for the 2023 season is now open. Softball Saskatchewan Registration is available at this link:

 <https://www.rampregistrations.com/login?v3=5eac8895>

If you have any questions regarding registration you can contact Softball Sask. at 306-780-9235.

For more information the new handbook for 2023 is available online at:

<https://www.softball.sk.ca/cloud/softballsaskatchewan/files/Membership/2023%20Handbook%202.0.pdf>

Pages 84-87 cover off registration questions.

**Umpire Clinic Date for Regina**

**Date: April 22**

**Where: Martin Collegiate, 1100 McIntosh St. Regina, Sk**

**Time: Registration starts at 8:30 am – Clinics start at 9:00 am**

There will be 2 types of clinics. Fundamental and Intermediate. New and Level 1 umpires will attend the Fundamental. All levels beyond that will attend the Intermediate clinic. Bring a lunch or snack. The fundamental clinic will run until approximately till 2:00 pm. The Intermediate clinic will wrap up around 3:30 pm. There will be classroom and gym sessions combined for both groups.

If you know of anyone new that is interested get them to contact me by email: djbakken@sasktel.net or text at 306-551-3069. New umpires have to be at least 12 years of age.

**Rules Corner**

The Pitching Rule was changed in the 2022 season and is inclusive of all age categories whether it is minor or adult ball. This will be one of the topics at our clinics.

 **Fastpitch:** Elimination of the U15 and below Pitching Regulations. **Why:** Creates a uniform pitching rule across all Fastpitch categories. **What it means:** Players in all age categories may start with one foot on the pitching plate, Pitchers of all age categories may leap in the air, land and then release the ball provided they do not establish a second “push point”, also known as a “crow hop”. What umpires are directed to look for is that the hands must be separated and the arm rotation must be started prior to the pitcher re-establishing contact with the ground. **Rulebook Reference:** See 4.3 Legal Pitch Requirements.

**Blue Convention 2023**

**The Blue Convention** is a major event for umpires organized by Softball Canada every three years. Officials of ALL levels from across the country (and internationally) meet to discuss a variety of topics and participate in a series of workshops to learn and improve their umpiring skills.

The event attracts the top presenters from across the country and the world, discussing interesting topics that are designed to attract both Fast Pitch and Slo-Pitch umpires.

The event is designed for umpires just starting out as well as experienced ones. There is something for everyone. Go to this link for more information.

<https://softball.ca/programs/umpires/blue-convention>

The following link gives you an itinerary of what will be going on there.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1D5Y7vnQTGGwtORoOX5C3_ZP1_pbFL2_u/view>

I have registered and look forward to the event. It’s a great way to prepare yourself for the upcoming season.

**District 2 Umpire in Chief – Duane Bakken**