

## Highlights of Umpiring Clinic 1/30/16 by Dickie

### Rules

1. Local Kauai Rules supercede State Rules, so if a situation is answered by local rules, that ends the issue.
2. Bases are 55 feet apart. Mound is 46 feet from plate.
3. Generally, when there are 3 pitching rubbers in the mound area, the middle rubber is the 46 feet mark. Pitcher can pitch up to 6 feet behind rubber, with one foot touching or within (imaginary) lines at ends of rubber. Pitcher may step forward with pitch, in smooth motion (no skips or jerks). Illegal pitch is a ball.
4. Seven innings unless game is shorter due to 12 run TKO rule after 4-1/2 innings. First six innings have maximum 5 runs/inning for each team, even if TKO would necessarily result. For local (non-State Tournament games), no time limit for game. If the score is tied after regulation, next inning starts with last batter on second (can't be substituted for until this runner reaches third).
5. Local rule is that up to two under 60 females may play simultaneously, [not one under 60 male and one under 60 female as in State rules].
6. Strike mat must be secured to the ground.
7. Only jerseys and caps must match; shorts or pants should only be similar in color (requirements usually ignored for Kauai non-State Tournament play). Players need not wear cap.
8. Players cannot wear heavy chains or jewelry which may be torn off inadvertently in play. No watches (except for umpires).
9. On foul tip: i) if third strike, batter is always out; ii) if batted ball clears batter's head and is caught, batter is out.
10. If play is being made at First: i) Batter/runner must touch (any part of) orange base (base outside field of play); if runner touches only white bag, runner is out regardless of whether throw beat touch of base; iii) Batter/runner may overrun First (whether or not play is being made) without liability to be tagged out, unless *any* (umpire's discretion) attempt is made to continue to Second. Once runner is safe at First, orange base no longer has any purpose for that runner.
11. Runner cannot touch any base with hand: result is out. This applies to dives, falls, etc.
12. Overrunning at Second and Third: ii) Runner may *always* overrun any base after touching base without liability to be tagged out, unless *any* (umpire's discretion) attempt is made to continue to the next base; ii) if no play is being made but base is blocked, runner may miss base and continue to next base without returning to tag base (umpire may also signal "obstruction" (arm out with fist closed) and upon end of play, award runner proper base); iii) if play is being made and base is blocked (generally, fielder's touching any part of base, but ultimately this is umpire's discretion), runner *must* run to either side of the base, or is out upon any contact (except incidental contact when runner was avoiding base); iv) if play is being made and base is blocked, and runner runs to side and is safe, runner must return to tag base before going to next base; v) if on non-force play, a play is

being made and fielder blocks base, fielder after catching throw must make a swipe from near the base at base or runner; runner is out if runner hasn't reached imaginary line from nearest part of base, and safe if runner has reached that line by time of swipe (umpire's discretion).

13. A deliberate drop of a batted fly ball by a fielder in an effort to create a double play is illegal whether or not infield fly was called.

14. A runner cannot leave a base until the ball is hit, or the batter swings. If runner leaves base and there was no swing, runner is out even if runner left base after the pitched ball crossed the plate.

15. A base coach cannot assist a runner by touching runner; result: runner is out. Incidental contact without intent or actual assistance to runner may be overlooked.

16. A courtesy runner is in the game once that substitute touches the base at which the substitution is made; no further substitution can be made at that time, nor for that original batter unless the courtesy runner is injured. A player may be a courtesy runner only once an inning. A base runner for whom a courtesy runner is substituted cannot be a courtesy runner for someone else in the same inning. Under 60s can courtesy run only for another under 60; over 60s can courtesy run for any under-60.

17. "Commit" line for home plate is 20 feet towards Third. If base runner touches or crosses line, runner cannot return to Third and situation is *always* force play at home. Fielders cannot tag the base runner beyond the commit line; this does not create an out.

18. A player batting out of order: i) this is an appeal play; not called by the umpire; ii) if appeal is made prior to a ball being hit fair by the improper batter, the proper batter is substituted at the same count; iii) if appeal is made after ball is hit fair, batter is out and proper batter is next to bat; iv) appeal must be made before the first pitch to the next batter or outcome of out-of-order batter stands.

19. If a fielder drops a ball due to collision (with runner, another player, umpire, fence, ground, etc.) before attempting an throw, it is not a catch. If there is no collision, then ball is caught if fielder had possession (umpire discretion), even if ball is dropped on attempt to remove ball from glove for throw.

20. On a fly ball, base runner may leave base (proper tag up) on any fielder's first contact with ball, even if juggled, and even if ball eventually caught by another fielder.

21. Infield fly rule: i) batted ball must be in the infield; ii) batted ball must be a fly ball able to be caught by some fielder (not necessarily infielder) with ordinary effort (umpire's discretion); iii) called only when less than two outs, with runners on at least First and Second; iv) can be called after the play.

22. A batted ball which bounds (touches the ground or an umpire within the lines before reaching First or Third) and thereafter crosses (or is farther in the infield) any part First or Third base, is a fair ball, even if landing foul thereafter. A fly ball first landing beyond First or Third is fair or foul depending on where it is first touched by a fielder (ball's position, not the fielder's), or if not touched, where it

lands.

23. Overthrow which goes out of play from an infielder fielding batted ball: batter gets second, base runners get two bases from their position when pitch was made. Overthrow thereafter or from outfield: base runners get base to which the base runner was running at time of errant throw, plus one base.

24. All players must use a glove in the field, except the player at First base, who may wear a mitt. No metal spikes are allowed.

### **Umpire Behavior**

1. Remember that it is part of the tradition to harass umpires, so be blind to that, while maintaining order.

2. Umpires should have a copy of State and Kauai Rules at the game. If necessary to resolve an issue, call time and look the situation up in the rules.

3. Be ready to umpire.

A. Look like an umpire: wear proper shoes.

B. Have a "clicker".

4. Before the game, discuss responsibilities with all umpires. Who will cover the tag up on fly balls? Who will make fair/foul calls in front of base, behind base, etc. What are the signs before a play for possible infield fly, timed third out at base and scoring run, etc.

5. Any player may question a call immediately and/or ask for explanation. If discussion goes beyond that, discussion is *only* with manager and/or captain. Don't allow a group to congregate. Best to remind managers and captains of this before game.

6. A guide to 12 foot limit on pitches is to stand straight, with head still, behind home plate; if the pitched ball disappears above your baseball cap's brim (head still!), it is too high. Pitch must reach 6 feet (a little above most batters' heads) on the low side. All of this is umpire's discretion.

7. You can only call what you saw. If you did not see something, confer with other umpires. Do not make a call that you didn't see. It is better to correct a mistaken call if possible.

8. Allow five warm up pitches in first inning; three thereafter. Don't allow defense to throw ball around infield.

9. Best for umpires to echo other umpire's call of time out, infield fly, etc., to make sure all players hear.

10. Chief umpire (normally, home plate) rules the game, determines whether to call a rainout or delay, whether field is safe, etc.

### **Positioning for Plays**

1. Plate umpire usually starts by standing on the opposite side of plate from batter, but off the line the batter will take as a runner.

2. Plate umpire normally makes fair/foul calls and catch/no catch calls, allowing base umpire(s) to concentrate on plays at bases. Umpires can change this

by agreement, either in general or when a play happens.

3. Base umpires at First and Third start at the foul line, about 10 feet behind the bag, in foul territory. Generally, base umpire will come onto the field to be in position to see play at base; think ahead! Base umpire may follow a batter/runner all the way to Third, checking for base being touched and safe/out plays. Base umpire may have to come towards home sufficient to see base and fly ball catch (ascertain timely tag up), but can also alert home plate umpire to make that call.

4. If there is a runner on First, First Base umpire normally positioned 10 feet behind second base, ready to come in to get good view of Second Base for play there, and of First Base for play there.