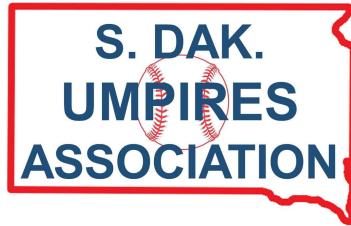


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THE BETTERMENT OF BASEBALL
IN SOUTH DAKOTA

SOUTH DAKOTA BASEBALL UMPIRE ASSOCIATION MEETING

**February 1, 2026, 11:30 AM
St. Joseph's Indian School
Chamberlain, SD**

1. The meeting was called to order by President Matt Clark at 11:31AM. There were 30 members present. President Clark asked for a moment of silence in remembrance of Reed Harter. Introductions of those present followed.
2. The 2025 Winter Meeting Minutes were reviewed:
Motion to approve: Brock Sundal Second: Doug Rousink Approved
3. The 2025 Financial Report was presented by Treasurer Mike Carda:
Discussion was had about the cost of the winter meeting and the cost of rule books. No changes were made. Motion to approve the financial report by Rich Rockafellow, Second by Jason Vaith, Approved
4. Announcements:
 - A. 399 Registered members for 2025. 87 new members in 2025. Increase of 27 members from 2024.
 - B. 2025 Hall of Fame Inductees:
 1. Brad Peters, Hartford
 2. Honorary: Dr. Tom Stotz, YanktonHall of Fame Committee: Fred Obermeier, Rock Rockafellow, Brock Sundall, John Witcraft.
 - C. 2025 SDUA Dick Ruddell Scholarship Winner:
 1. Tanner Dyke, Platte.Scholarship Committee: Bert Ready, Joe Schlimgen, Rock Rockafellow
 - D. 2025 State Champions:
 1. Amateur: Parkston Rays (B), Harrisburg Woodies (A)
 2. American Legion: Dell Rapids Post 65 (B), Harrisburg Gold Post 45 (A)
 3. Jr Legion: Parkston Post 194 (B), Legion Reserve: Rapid City Post 22 (A)
 4. VFW 16U: Platte-Geddes (C), MVP Titans (B), West Central Royal (A)
 5. High School: Dell Rapids (B), Brandon Valley (A)
 - E. 2025 Sportsmanship Awards:
 1. Amateur (Richard "Rock" Rockafellow): Castlewood (B), Yankton (A)
 2. American Legion (Porter T. Talcott): Dell Rapids (B), Renner (A)
 3. Legion Reserve: Belle Fourche (B), Aberdeen (A)
 4. VFW 16U (Lou Thury): Britton (C), Flandreau (B), Clairmont (A)
 - F. American Legion "Big Stick" Winners:
 1. Carter Simon, Groton (B Sr.)
 2. Eli Kokenge, Harrisburg Gold (A Sr.)
 3. Jaxx Kurtenbach, Parkston (B Jr.)
 4. Bennet Bloom, Renner and Murphy Eisenberg, Renner (A Reserve)

Discussion was had about the rising cost of the bats for these awards. Options for alternatives will be explored by the officers. No motion was made.

G. Mike Demming (State Sr. Legion) and Mike Moran and Don Johnson, (State Amateur) were awarded an Umpire shirt for their first State Tournament selection.

H. The State Tournament Umpire Application will be live very soon. An email will be sent out when it goes live. Deadline to apply is April 1, 2026

I. 2026 State Tournaments:

- Amateur – Mitchell: August 5-16, 2026
- “A” Sr. Legion – RC Post 22: July 28-August 1, 2026
- “B” Sr. Legion – Madison: July 31-August 4, 2026
- “A” Jr. Legion – SF East: July 30-August 2, 2026
- “B” Legion Reserve – Redfield: August 7-9, 2026
- “A” High School – Sioux Falls, Augustana: May 22-23, 2026
- “B” High School – Brookings: May 25-26, 2026
- 14 U Legion – Vermillion: July 24-26
- VFW Varsity – Britton and Belle Fourche: July 24-26, 2026
- VFW Junior Varsity – Clear Lake/Deuel and Tri-Valley: July 31-August 2, 2026

J. 2026 Legion Regional Tournaments:

- “A” Sr. Legion – Sites TBD: July 22 & 23, 2026.
- “B” Sr. Legion – Sites TBD: July 21-23, 2026
- “A” Legion Reserve – Sites TBD: July 22 & 23, 2026
- “B” Jr. Legion – Sites TBD: July 27-28, 2026

K. 2027 State Tournaments:

- Amateur – Mitchell:
- “A” Sr. Legion – Pierre
- “B” Sr. Legion – Parkston
- “A” Legion Reserve – Brandon Valley
- “B” Jr. Legion – Clark-Willow Lake
- “A” High School – TBD
- “B” High School – TBD
- 14U Legion – Sisseton
- VFW Varsity – TBD
- VFW Junior Varsity – TBD

L. PayPal: 236 members used PayPal to pay dues in 2025.

1. 2025 Usage Fee: 3.49% + \$0.49 per transaction.
2. Checks and cash still OK.

M. High School Rulebooks (NFHS):

1. Ordered 350 books through the SDHSAA @ \$8.00 per book.
2. Orders must be placed by March 2026 for the 2027 NFHS Rule Books.
3. SDUA sold 80 Rulebooks to the SDHSBA at cost.

N. New Member Exam: 185 completed exams. The average score was 22/30

O. Ejections: 43 reported ejections in 2026. Amateur (7), Legion (15), High School (20), A (0), VFW (3) Down 4 from last year.

Discussion was had about reminding all umpires to fill out the ejection report on the website.

Discussion was also had about who should receive the ejection reports. No motion was made.

P. SDUA T-Shirts are available for purchase. Contact Matt Clark for details or visit the SDUA website.

Discussion was had about starting an online store for SDUA apparel. President Clark will look into getting one started. No motions made.

Q. SDUA Caps can purchased at Dauby's Sports in Sioux Falls and Harve's Sport Shop in Mitchell, and can be ordered online at ump-attire.com.

R. Website – Keep visiting. Please update contact information if it is not correct.

S. The SDUA honored its 25-year umpires in 2025 with a commemorative plaque:

1. Jesse Devine, Garretson Tim May, Sioux Falls Bert Ready, Sioux Falls

2. Future 25-year umpires:

- 2026: Ryan Fuller, Chris Mercado, Yogi Millsagle
- 2027: Steve Krier, Tom Beck
- 2028: None

President Clark recognized Bryce Holter for making these plaques for the past several years and thanks him for doing so. The plaques will be acquired from a different source moving forward.

T. The SDUA honored Joe Schlimgen as a 40-year umpire with a commemorative plaque and lifetime pass to the SD State Amateur Tournament and SD State Sr. Legion Tournaments.

1. Future 40-year umpires:

- 2026: Bryce Holter ♦ 2027: None ♦ 2028: None

5. Officer Reports.

A. President Matt Clark: None

B. Vice President Greg Warren: None

C. Treasure Mike Carda: None as the report was discussed earlier

D. Secretary Scott Kortan:

- a. Reminder to all members to check the members list on the webpage for accuracy. If there is a missing email address, please get it corrected as this is the major means for communication.

6. Report from SD Amateur Baseball.

A. The SDABA will have their annual meeting on February 15.

B. League specific rules will be updated and posted on the SDUA website when available.

C. Mileage rate paid was increased to \$.70 per mile for umpires working the state tournament.

D. Game fees for the state tournament was increased to \$90/game

7. Report from SD Legion Baseball.

A. With the addition of the 14U division, we are asked to supply the big stick award for this level as well.

B. Game fees for the state Sr. Legion games was increased to \$80/game

C. For state Sr. tournaments, umpires that sit out the first championship game so they would be fresh for the if needed game, will be paid even if the if needed game is not played.

D. For regional best of 3 series, pay for the if needed game is not required.

E. PCBA (Mitchell) was granted reinstatement to Legion baseball.

F. Time clock of 120 seconds between innings and 150 seconds for pitching changes is asked to be enforced.

8. Report from High School Baseball. (See all HS points of emphasis at the end of this document)
 - A. Safety 1st base will be required in 2027. Rules regarding the safety base are addressed in the NFHS rule book on page 3.
 - B. Hockey style catchers mask is required. There are 2 medical exemptions in the state. They will have documentation from the SDHSBA board to prove the exemption. No paperwork = no exemption.
 - C. Application for post season is live
 - D. 66 Varsity level teams registered for 2026
 - E. 105 Pitch count violation is not a gotcha moment. If pitcher violates the pitch count, player and coach are restricted to the dugout for the remainder of the game.
 - F. If there is a solo coach situation, and that coach is ejected from the game, the coach may remain in the dugout for supervision purposes.
 - G. For regional best of 3 series, umpires will be paid for all three games even if only 2 are needed.

9. Report from SD VFW Baseball.

- A. Jason Whiting was appointed by the VFW as the UIC for VFW baseball.
- B. Jason was not able to attend to provide and further updates.

10. Set Mileage rates:

Motion to set mileage rates for any mileage paid by SDUA to be the current state rate. Motion by Jesse Devine, second by Jason Vaith. Motion carried.

11. Old Business:

- A. Members of the Arbitrary (Appointed by President Clark):

1. Rich Kotrba: Term Expired in 2025. Chris Mercado was appointed. Term expires 2028
2. Doug Ruesink: Term Expires in 2026.
3. Joe Schlimgen: Term Expires in 2027.

- B. District Umpires:

District	District Umpire	Term Expires
1	John Witcraft	2026
2	Brandon Carda	2027
3	Austin Richey	2028
4	Ace Boschee	2026
5	Mike Carda	2028
6	Lloyd Jones Jr.	2026

District	District Umpire	Term Expires
7	Dan Lund	2027
7	Doug Ruesink	2028
8	Scott Hoeke	2028
9	Jesse Devine	2027
9	Johnny Kirchner	2026
10	Connor Singhisen	2026

- Austin Richey was reappointed to district 3
- Mike Carda was reappointed to district 5
- Dough Ruesink was reappointed to district 7
- Scott Hoeke was reappointed to district 8

- C. Liability Insurance:

1. Do we purchase for 2026?

2. 2026 Premium is \$776.

Motion was made to renew liability insurance in perpetuity so long as the yearly increase did not exceed 15%. If the increase was in excess of 15% from the previous years premium, it must be brought back to the membership for approval. Motion by Yogi Millsagle, seconded by Connor Singhisen, motion carried.

D. By-Law Change:

Motion was made to approve changes with the exception of Article VIII (Duties of Officers) section 5.

Motion was made by Connor Singhisen, seconded by Chris Mercado, motion carried. New By-Laws will be posted on the SDUA website.

E. New Member exam: 185 exams, avg score 22/30

1. Connor Singhisen reported that the new exam is almost complete. Once it is completed, it will replace the current exam for new members.

12. New Business:

A. Current member recertification.

1. Discussion was had regarding current members taking a test to maintain membership. District umpires were assigned with developing a plan to do so.
2. No motions were made.

B. SDUA Uniform Requirements

1. Replace SDUA patch on shirt with new cap design
 - Discussion was had about changing the current cap design to incorporate a variation of the SDUA logo.
 - Motion was made to change the cap design to be used as an alternative to the SDUA patch on the shirt. Motion was made by Connor Singhisen, seconded by Rich Rockafellow, motion was defeated
2. Set SDUA primary shirt color, cap color, jacket color, pant color.
 - Motion was made to set the primary shirt color to sky blue with the black panel, the cap color to black, jacket color to black, and pants to charcoal gray. Motion made by Chris Jackson, seconded by Johnny Kirchner, motion carried.
 - Website will be updated to reflect these changes.

C. Post-Season application process:

1. Results from the survey were discussed. Most common responses were:
 - Can't commit to the time needed
 - Don't feel qualified
 - Tournament location
 - Don't work that level of baseball
2. Point of clarification:
 - Amateur tournament application is not for the entire tournament. Individual dates can be selected

D. Ump-O-Gram

1. Greg Warren will remain as Ump-O-Gram Chairman. He will coordinate with District umpires to provide Ump-O-Grams throughout the season.

E. Open Floor

1. Lineup card holders
 - Lineup card holders were provided as recognition to all 10 and 11 year umpires last year and will continue to be provided to 10 year members.
 - Motion was made to purchase the 10 year recognition lineup card holders for current members with 12 or more years of membership. Motion was made by Connor Singhisen, seconded by John Witcraft, motion carried.
2. Meal for State Legion Umpires:
 - The SDUA has previously paid for a meal for umpires at the State Sr. Legion tournaments
 - Discussion was had to limit the dollar amount per person for that meal.
 - No motion was made.
3. Winter meeting:
 - The officers would like to thank Brock Sundal and St Joseph's Indian School for providing the location and providing for the wonderful meal from Ma's Kitchen(Roast Beef, Mashed Potatoes, Cheesy Green Beans, Roll, and Cookies).
 - A donation of \$200 was made to St. Joseph's Indian School for use of the facility.

13. Election of Officers:

A. President

- Matt Clark was nominated by Jesse Devine
- With no further nominations, motion to cease nominations and cast unanimous ballot was made by Joe English, seconded by Lloyd Jones, motion carried.

B. Treasurer

- Mike Carda was nominated by Rich Rockafellow
- Jason Vaith was nominated by Connor Singhisen
- With no further nominations, motion to cease nominations was made by Jesse Devine, seconded by Austin Richey, motion carried.
- Mike Carda was elected with 17 votes.

14. The date for the 2027 winter meeting was set for February 7, 2027

15. The date for the Spring District umpire meeting was set for April 12, 2026 in Mitchell

16. Motion to adjourn the meeting by Payton Schroder, seconded by Kevin Klopp, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 3:17PM

The SDUA Officers thank the attending members for their attention, participation, and dedication to the SDUA.

Respectfully submitted by:

Scott Kortan

Secretary – SDUA

SDHSBA Points of Emphasis 2026

SDUA Annual Meeting

NFHS Rule Changes (page 3 in NFHS Rulebook)

**Double 1B will be mandatory in 2027. SDHSBA is allowing for implementation in 2026 if so desired. The State Tournament games will have a double 1B.

NFHS Points of Emphasis (pages 4-5 in NFHS Rulebook)

New for 2025

Pine Tar Rule

New for 2024

15-Run Rule (now in SDHSBA Manual)

Player/Coach Communication devices approved by NFHS (one-way from dugout to catcher)

Player Wristbands-only worn on player's wrist or forearm, not on their belt

Reminders:

Bats

BBCOR and/or wood and wood composite bats are now allowed

Baseballs

Need to have the NOSCAE stamp

Catcher's Helmet

NFHS requires catchers to wear a hockey-style mask—We have 2 doctors ordered exceptions to this.

They have documentation for this and should show it. (PGDCWL and SF player) Otherwise, NO exceptions

Catchers chest protector also needs to be NOSCAE stamped

Pitch Counts-Potential Violations

A potential violation of the 105 maximum pitch count must be brought to the attention of umpires and opposing coaches before the actual violation takes place. At this time, coaches and scorekeepers will come to an agreement on pitch counts before the game resumes.

Coaches, it is your responsibility for making certain that your pitchers are complying with the pitching limitation rule. After each half inning those responsible for tracking pitches will confirm the number of pitches for that half inning. Any discrepancies need to be worked out at that time. If a dispute cannot be resolved, the number calculated by the home team will stand as the official number. Once the next inning has begun, the numbers from the previous half inning are final. Umpires will not be involved in tracking or confirming the number of pitches.

The penalty for violating the 105-pitch limit is that the coach and player will both be removed from the game. This is not considered an ejection though. If found in the middle of the at bat, the count will continue with the new pitcher.

Reminder of the Line Up/DH options

Traditional DH-can DH for any position player and the position player and the DH are locked into that spot in the batting order and can never be in the game defensively at the same time.

Player/DH

Straight Nine-No DH

Coaching Helmets

Coaches are not required to wear a helmet; however, if a player is coaching a base, they must wear a double-flapped helmet

Jewelry

Jewelry is now allowed; however, a provision does remain that any jewelry an umpire believes poses harm or injury to the wearer or their opponent shall be immediately removed. 1-5-12, 3-3-1d

Umpire Requirement for regular season and post season

SDHSBA requires two registered umpires with the SDUA during regular season. Umpires for the post season shall be certified. So if looking for a partner, or assigning, take this into consideration.

Post Season Application Link will be on the SDUA website. Deadline to apply is April 1st, so that our Selection Committee can finalize selections and notify umpires with as much advanced notice as possible. Once you submit the application, you will receive an email confirmation.

We are planning to pay \$80/game (was \$70 in 2023) and \$1.00/mile one way and/or riding mileage of \$0.50/mile one way for umpires that ride together). Lodging will also be covered if necessary for Super Regionals and State Tournament. You will leave your Super Regional games with game fees paid by the host team. I will write mileage after the state tournament and send those checks. Class A Supers umpires will be paid \$240 in game fees regardless of whether it goes two or three games. You are expected to block off the second day, so we are compensating you for that.

Super Regionals

Class A- 2 man crew each game (8 locations) May 14-16

Three options of when to play

Class B- 2 man crew each game (8 locations) May 17-21

State Tournament-3 man crew each game

Class A-May 22-23 @ Augustana University, Sioux Falls (Same set up as Class B)

Class B-May 25-26 @ Brookings Memorial Day Monday and Tuesday

Teams- Total of 66 Varsity Teams

Class A-20 Varsity teams (same as 2025)

Added Aberdeen, Spearfish, and Watertown in 2025

Class B-46 Varsity teams (44 in 2025)

New Team

Milbank/Wilmot/Summit

Deuel

Coop Shuffling

Tri County (Irene-Wakonda/Gayville-Volin/Viborg-Hurley)

Centerville added to Beresford

(Viborg-Hurley/Centerville was c coop in 2025)

Madison/Chester/ ORR

Sioux Valley-Estelline-Arlington

(ORR/Arlington were a JV team in 2025)

Teams Lost

None

Player/Coach Ejection Form-Same as last year-Please report ALL ejections on the link on the SDUA website within 24 hours

The link is on the SDUA website. Please fill it out ASAP so that notifications can be made to the appropriate people. In 2025, we had 20 total player/coach ejections, 14 players and 6 coaches. This is up from 2024 when we had 10 player and 4 coach ejections (12 player and 3 coach ejections in 2023).

12-arguing ball and strikes and/or language

5-arguing another call

3-inappropriate contact (not malicious though)

We do not have any carry-over ejections for players to serve any game suspensions. Coaches' ejections carry over for a two-year period, but no one has any suspensions to serve starting the 2026 season.