

A letter from your Umpire In Charge:

We are excited to welcome you to San Clemente for our annual Memorial Day Tournament. Historically this has been a highly competitive softball tournament and the umpires scheduled to work are excited to participate.

I want to bring a few things to your attention. First, there is a severe shortage of officials across all sports in the United States. Softball in Southern California is no exception. Last month, many umpires worked a high school game at 3:30 pm followed by a couple of recreational games each weeknight to make sure that our recreational leagues were able to play all of their scheduled games. Most of us are working 2X the games we want to, or should be because we have about 60% of the umpires we need.

New umpires are being trained, including Junior Umpires. You will see them working at this tournament. Please be kind and remember that they too are someone's child. Treat them with the same respect that you would expect someone to treat your child.

The news and internet are full of stories with coaches and fans misbehaving at youth sporting events. Many tournaments and leagues are taking drastic measures to alleviate these situations of misbehavior. Including disqualifying an entire team for coach or fan misbehavior after the first warning. We do not want to take such drastic measures.

Here is what is expected: You (coaches and parents) are expected to police yourselves and each other. If someone around you is acting inappropriately we expect that **you** will say something and handle the inappropriate behavior before the umpire has to get involved. *Sitting back and not saying something is the same as condoning the behavior and makes you complicit in that bad behavior.* The umpires working this tournament have the authority to eject anyone, without warning. Whether the ejected person (or persons) are allowed to return will be up to the UIC and the Tournament Director.

Please know that when you question an umpire's call on the field what you are truly questioning is their integrity. Our umpires have been hand picked because we believe in their abilities on the field. I promise you they will do the very best job they can in each game played. As a gentle reminder, they are human, just like you.

The Head Coach for each team is ultimately responsible for the conduct of their team and fans. Parents and Fans, please help out your Head Coach and don't put them on the chopping block because you were complicit in someone else's bad behavior.

Lastly, we need the Head Coach of each team to sign this letter and bring that signed copy to their first game plate meeting. It's the only way to ensure that you have read this and are aware of the expectations for this tournament.

Sincerely,

MaryAnn Menlove
UIC San Clemente Girls Softball