

Summary of November 11, 2020 Umpire Advisory Team Meeting

On November 11, 2020, the Umpire Advisory Team (UAT) held a periodic meeting. UAT members in attendance were Bryan Richter, Rick Morris, John Calamari, Bill Chatterton, and Joe Holonich. Agenda discussed at the meeting are as follows.

1. Need for a coordinator for future UAT meetings.
Mike Behrens, who was responsible for scheduling UAT meetings and developing an Agenda, is no longer on the UAT. The need for a replacement was discussed and it was agreed that Bryan Richter would undertake those duties. In addition, it was agreed that as part of his responsibilities, Bryan would discuss issues that arose at UAT meetings with John Dye.
2. Creation of other positions besides a coordinator
A discussion was held about whether there was a need for other UAT positions beyond a meeting coordinator. It was agreed that a "secretary" position would be created and have the responsibility for documenting the meeting summaries. Joe Holonich volunteered to occupy the position and all attending members supported him taking the position.

It was decided no other positions were needed on the UAT.

3. Use of direct deposit for pay
Bryan reported that there was a concern from some umpires about the timeliness of receiving checks. The question was raised as to whether direct deposit could be an option for paying umpires. During the discussion, it was noted that this had been raised previously and was not implemented because of the costs associated with using direct deposit.

It was agreed that Bryan would discuss this with John Dye to see if direct deposit could be used. If direct deposit is an option but had a cost, any umpire who wanted to use it would have to pay the fee. This was an action from the meeting.

4. Lessons learned from COVID protocol and future protocol
The next agenda item covered any lessons learned from the COVID protocol in the past season. UAT members noted that, early in the season umpires were asked by Site Directors to enforce the protocol at the fields where umpires were assigned. As the season progressed, UAT members felt that the protocol was handled well and that umpires were relieved of the COVID protocol enforcement, which was beyond their areas of responsibilities.

Looking to the spring season, it was decided that nothing could be currently offered until the situation for tournaments was known. The UAT members agreed that this would be discussed in a future meeting.

5. Assigner for 2021 Season

With the permanent relocation of John Rimmell to Key West, Florida, the question was asked about who would assign games for the 2021 season. Two UAT members reported that John had told them that he would no longer be an Umpire in Chief or training coordinator for new umpires. However, John did report that he would continue to assign in the 2021 season albeit from Florida.

6. Replacement trainer for new recruits

Given that John Rimmell will no longer be coordinating training for new umpires, the UAT discussed who would be coordinating the training. Rick Morris indicated that he was asked and agreed to be the new training coordinator. Rick reported that he felt the system used over the years was a good process and that, although there were some minor changes he was considering, overall he would be continuing with the process used in the past.

7. Placement of pictures on Arbiter

A recommendation was proposed that all umpires working for Softball Umpires of Maryland (SUM) place a photo on their Arbiter page. UAT members felt that having a picture on Arbiter would allow umpires scheduled to work together see the person before arriving at the field. This would help eliminate the awkward situation where an umpire did not recognize or know his partner when arriving at the field.

It was agreed to put the steps to upload a picture on ArbiterSports in this summary. Here are the steps for uploading a picture.

1. Click the profile tab at the top of your umpire page. The tab is just to the right below "ArbiterSports."
2. When you get to the umpire profile page, there is a picture field on the right-hand side.
3. Click the plus sign "+" at the right-hand bottom of the picture field.
4. Upload a picture from your computer.
5. Allow your fellow umpires to see how good looking you are.

8. Getting the UAT meeting summary to SUM members

UAT members discussed the fact that the latest summary on the SUM website is from 2018. In addition, UAT members did not recall receiving a copy of a meeting summary from more current meetings. An action was taken by Bryan Richter to discuss with John Dye getting the UAT summary to SUM members and getting the most current summary on the SUM website.

After the discussion of agenda for the meeting, the UAT scheduled the next meeting for Monday, January 18, 2021 at 7:00.

Actions from the meeting were:

1. Bryan would investigate with John Dye if direct deposit for pay was an option; and
2. Bryan would discuss with John the need to keep the UAT summary on the SUM website current and ensuring distribution of the summary to all SUM members following a UAT meeting.

If you have a topic for the UAT to consider, please feel free to contact any of the UAT members using their contact information in Arbiter. They are:

John Calamari
Bill Chatterton
Mark Habighurst
Joe Holonich
Rick Morris
Bryan Richter
Damon Williams