



SOFTBALL.CA

Spring 2021

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Submissions and Ideas welcome.

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The Official Uniform and Equipment Supplier to Softball Canada's Umpires



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Between the Lines

The Official Newsletter of Softball Canada's Officiating Program

Canadian Championship Umpire Supervisors for 2021

The opportunity to attend a Canadian Championship as an umpire is the ultimate career pinnacle for many umpires. Every year we have over 150 umpires from across the country join their colleagues as they umpire our top tiers of domestic competition at eleven different events. Simply put, there is no better experience to start mostly as strangers) and come together as a team to serve a good greater than the individuals involved.

Leading those teams is both a challenge and an honour. Each year Softball Canada appoints over 25 Canadian Championship Umpires in Chief and Deputy Umpires in Chief to support the umpire crews at these prestigious events. They also support the tournament supervisor and assistant supervisor who are responsible for the administration of the whole event.

You will notice that for the past few years there has been at least one female UIC or DUIC at each FP Canadian Championship. Multiple DUICs are appointed to events where we anticipate large crew size and / or scheduled games.

The 2021 Canadian Championship umpire UIC/DUIC crews are:

Slo-Pitch

Men's SP, Surrey, BC; UIC – Don Farr (BC), DUIC – Mark Gough (NB), DUIC – Dave Jones (ON)

Women's SP, Surrey, BC; UIC – Sandra Forand (ON), DUIC – Don England (ON)

April Umpire Workout Challenge

Power up for the season ahead and qualify to win some great prizes! Simply snap a pic of yourself during or after your workout and post it to Instagram, Twitter or Facebook with the hashtags **#softballcanada** and **#umpirefit**. Every posting during the month of April gets you an entry into our prize draw of some great Softball Canada swag!

For inspiration and simple workout ideas, check out our new umpire pre-season fitness training videos on our YouTube channel.

Search for **Softball Canada Umpires** at [YouTube.com](https://www.youtube.com) and don't forget to subscribe!

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Fast Pitch

U14 Girl's, Brandon, MB; UIC – Moose Gibson (SK), DUIC – Terry Klein (SK), DUIC – Tony Kuleza (MB)

U14 Boy's, Wilmot, ON; UIC – Diego La Manna (QC), DUIC – Dave Herbst (ON)

U16 Girl's, Saskatoon, SK; UIC – Susan Strafford (BC), DUIC – Bonnie Gostola (AB), DUIC – Frank Fargey (MB)

U16 Boy's, Fredericton, NB; UIC – Mike Morrissey (ON), DUIC – Ray Blanchette (NB)

U19 Women, Montreal, QC; UIC – Ariane Longtin (QC), DUIC – Brent Chadwick (SK), DUIC – Gabrielle Mignault (QC)

U19 Men, Saskatoon, SK; UIC – Scott McLaren (BC), DUIC – Clinton Harvey (NS)

U23 Men, Saskatoon, SK; UIC – Terry Richter (AB), DUIC – Michael Neron (QC)

Women's FP, Summerside, PEI; UIC – Tonya Ribalkin Zanon (BC), DUIC – Daryl Way (ON) -

Men's FP, TBA; UIC – Gary Skjerven (SK), DUIC – Ian Brown (BC)

From the Desk of the National Director of Umpires

Jeff Whipple

2020 was a year to forget. As the pandemic held siege to our communities, most of us found our softball activities to be severely restricted or non-existent. Here's hoping that 2021 is not more of the same.

Many of you have asked about return to play protocols and what would it take to get softball

back to "normal" in your community. There is no simple answer, and the response will vary from province to province and even community to community. While Softball Canada did provide some broad guidance to our provincial and territorial partners, the conditions for both practice and competition were dependent on local pandemic conditions. This goes for umpires as well.



Provincial and territorial sport governing bodies will continue to consult and work with their local and provincial health authorities to determine how – and in some cases if – softball can be played safely.

In the meantime, please know that we value your dedication and welcome your contributions to the sport during this challenging period, whether they be on or off the diamond. Many of you have chosen to continue to register in support of the program even if being active on the field is not an option for you right now. We saw you – and we thank you.

Vaccines are coming (I am thankful to have had my first jab last week!) and hopefully some daylight on the horizon. I like to think we are closer to the end of the tunnel than the beginning and maybe, with a bit of patience and if we all follow the direction of our public health authorities, we can see each other on the ball fields around the country again soon.

In the meantime, look after each other and the sport we love. Retention will be critical this year and it will demand individual connections. Reach out to that disconnected umpire and let them know you are thinking of them and cannot wait to see them at the diamond again.

See you at the fields soon.

Uniform Standards Remain the Same for 2022

There are no changes to the on-field uniform standards for this year, but we did want to remind you of a couple of updates that may have been lost in the haze of 2020.



The biggest change has been the acceptance of on field footwear that contains white on the soles. Shoes may also have white product logos on the

uppers, but the upper part of the shoe must continue to be predominantly black.

Permitting these shoes will offer a more contemporary look to the on-field presentation of our umpires.

If you are attending a Canadian Championship please be reminded that only the new Softball Canada branding will be accepted on on-field uniforms, including the ¾ zip jacket.

Umpire Recognition Pin Program a Success

883 – that's a BIG number! That's also how many Softball Canada umpires have been eligible to receive their first pin recognizing their years of service in commitment to the sport.

After two seasons, the umpire years of service pin recognition program has proven to be a huge success. Beginning in 2020, umpires were eligible to receive service pins in their 5th, 10th, 15th, 20th and 25th years of registration.

Data for the distribution of the pins is collected when umpires write their national rules exam, where your initial year of registration is

collected. These numbers are then used to provide each province / territory with a list of their recipients. Provinces and territories are responsible for the final pin presentation in a manner they deem best.



Umpires will only receive a pin on their anniversary year. For instance, if you were in your 11th year in 2020, then you will be eligible to receive your 15th year pin in 2024. Pins will not be granted retroactively. All umpires over 25 years will be granted a 25-year pin, regardless of your length of service.

To ensure you receive your pins you simply need to write the national exam every year!

Competitive Certification Pathway Explained!

More questions are asked about the pathway to becoming a Level V umpire than any other topic. While there are many nuances to the journey, Softball Canada has produced a short, explanatory slide deck that attempts to frame the essential elements in the journey.



It is common knowledge that Softball

Canada's umpire certification program has five levels, but this document clarifies the prerequisites for advancement, the theory, practical, assessments and maintenance requirements at each level.

To review the complete slide deck, check out the Competitive Development Pathway link [here](#).



Taking a Break (due to Covid-19)? What You Need to Know.

Many umpires have chosen to take a break from on-field activity in the last year. If you are one of those umpires, here's how it may affect your certification status going forward.

While registration is a provincial / territorial responsibility (umpires must register directly with their provincial / territorial association), there are some broad national registration policies that guide the process, including when umpires return to the system after a break in registration. This would include pandemic induced leave.

Softball Canada's national policy allows umpires to leave the program (not register) for a period of one year and return at the same level with no conditions. In addition, umpires who are away from the program (not registered) for two or more years may – for one time only and subject to P/T approval – return at the same certification level under certain conditions.

If you registered last summer, then the first situation would apply for this coming summer. Many umpires took advantage of this policy last year. One year away and you hold your status simply by re-registering.

If you did not register in 2020 and choose to not register again in 2021, then your province / territory would have an option to reinstate you in 2022 (or later) under the conditions outlined in the policy. Please note that each provincial or territorial association is an independent organization and, while they operate within the broad national certification policies of Softball Canada, there is no national level appeal available for any decision they might make under this policy.

This policy only concerns certification levels. Individual provincial / territorial associations may have additional policies around registration gaps so you should check with your P/T association about any possible impacts in status and eligibility (e.g. Canadian Championship nominations, etc.) if you do not register for a season or more.

Of course, you can always protect your status and certification, even if you do not plan to umpire, by registering every year.

The policy on umpires returning to the program is outlined on the Softball Canada website at <https://softball.ca/programs/umpires/policy/leaving-the-system>

Nutrition: Step Up to the Plate and Improve Your Game

“Performing is very much like cooking: putting it all together, raising the temperature.”

— David Tudo

In the first 3 articles, we set a nutrition goal, looked at eating in the different phases of the umpire's year, put together a meal plan using nutrition education and learned how to fuel up on game day. All of which will help you be the best you can be on the diamond. In this article you will learn a few tips to help maintain that winning meal plan while on the road. You have heard frequently throughout these articles that eating healthy is hard work and that especially comes into play when you are away from home. It is too easy to make the convenient choices and not the correct choices because the days are long and draining so planning is essential to help you stay on track.

WHERE TO EAT

The first thing you need to do is find out where you will be staying, what you have access to and if it is within walking distance. Below is a list to help you get started:



- Hotel
- Restaurant
- Venue
- Grocery Store

TO DO LIST

Once you have mapped out the areas where you can access food, create a checklist to find out what is available to help you with your healthy choices. Below is a checklist to help you get started:

- Inquire with the hotel about a continental breakfast
- Check if the hotel has a microwave, fridge, kettle or coffeemaker
- Check with the UIC if and what food will be provided at the venue for umpires and if there is a fridge or microwave available
- Review restaurant menus
- Inquire about the ballpark menu

GROCERY LIST

Knowing what is available will help you now create a grocery list. Where you are travelling to will affect what you purchase and pack. If you are travelling internationally you may not have access to the food in your regular diet. You definitely want to avoid trying new foods prior to your event so it's important that you pack items that your digestive system is used to. Below are a few suggestions of what you can take along:

- Trail mix
- Chocolate milk/Sports drink/Skim milk powder
- Canned tuna
- Crackers
- Granola bars
- Dried cereals
- Nut butter
- Instant oatmeal
- Tortillas
- Applesauce
- Dried fruit
- Beef jerky
- TSA approved condiments
- Utensils/can opener/zip lock bags/measuring spoons(cup)
- Pre-mix dry ingredient meals

- Magic Bullet
- Tin Foil
- Lined collapsible cooler/lunch kit
- Microwave safe mug
- Plastic containers with lids

FOOD HACKS

Believe it or not you can actually create meals in your hotel room. Below are a few things you can do to whip up something to eat when you don't have access to a kitchen:

- Use the microwave to scramble eggs, make instant oatmeal or a muffin in a cup
- Use a coffee maker to steam rice, veggies, boil eggs or poach salmon
- Mix up a salad in the ice bucket
- Pre-mix dry ingredient meals in ziplock bags
- Make a grilled sandwich/wrap with cheese/hummus/canned tuna by using the hotel room iron (turn off steam!)
- Fry an egg on an iron

RECIPES

There are a lot of good websites that have tips on food and travel so take some time to research things that will work for you. Here are a few recipe links that will help you prepare foods that are easy to take when travelling.

[Instant Dry Soup Mixes](#)

[Homemade Protein Bars](#)

[Vegan Protein Bars](#)

[Homemade Trail Mix](#)

TRAVEL EATING TIPS

Although it's next to impossible to stay exactly in line with your meal plan while working an event away from home there are things you should keep in mind when it comes to mealtime:

- Avoid overeating on a buffet. Follow the same serving sizes you have at home
- Limit fatty foods like crispy, fried, creamy, buttery or au gratin

- Select healthier foods that are baked, broiled, steamed, poached or in tomato sauce
- Choose healthy carbs like as rice, pasta and whole grain bread
- Choose protein such as chicken, beef, fish, beans or tofu, and add steamed or raw veggies.
- Try to stay on schedule and avoid getting hungry
- Time zones effect body rhythms so several days prior to leaving adjust meal and snack times to the local zone you are travelling to



SUMMING IT ALL UP

Good nutritional habits and a balanced diet are not developed overnight nor are they destroyed in one unbalanced meal. Healthful eating means a lifestyle of making choices, decisions, planning and knowing how to make quick and wise choices when you cannot plan.

What you have learned about eating in these 4 articles will help establish good dietary patterns for your umpiring performance. The rewards are great, and you will feel and look your best both on and off the diamond.

Works Cited

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[Write Your National Exam Here](#)

We're Looking for Help!

Do you have some experience with editing and / or publication design and interested in becoming part of the *Between the Lines* Team? We are looking for one or two keen individuals to take over a lead role on this project!

Please contact jeff.whipple@outlook.com if you are interested in taking on this leadership role in our national program!