

## **Intentional Walk Rule**

As with every rule change, there comes questions and concerns regarding its proper implementation. So, here is the proper procedure for the new (no pitch) Intentional Walk Rule.

The umpire must wait until the batter has assumed his position in the batter's box before "acknowledging" the manager's request to Intentionally Walk him (by simply awarding him first base, "Time" is granted the moment the umpire "acknowledges" the manager's request). If the manager is premature in his request, the umpire should politely ask him to wait until the above criteria have been met before indicating and/or informing the umpire of his final intentions(as it is for his benefit that he waits until the proper time).

This protocol will insure (1) that the batter he intended to walk is, in fact, the actual batter and has not been replaced by a pinch hitter or a player reentering the game (2) that he has adequate time to consider his options, such as a visit to the mound and/or changing pitchers and (3) in the event the immediate preceding play may involve some type of appeal, he still has time to make the appeal before choosing to walk the batter (as once the decision to walk the batter has been "acknowledged" by the umpire, the team loses its right to appeal (the walking of the batter is considered a play).

It would be of great benefit to everyone and a service to our coaches if this protocol was discussed during the ground rules, especially the first couple of weeks of the season. I wish you all a great Spring and Summer season and look forward to seeing you soon.

Tom Clews  
MBUA State Interpreter