

Officials' View

Learning From the Experiences of Others

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Taking Care of Umpires

1. Meet each umpire at the Airport
2. Arrange for his/her transportation for accreditation and lodging
3. Arrange for luggage transportation to lodging
4. Give the umpire a schedule for the meetings, places, and times
5. Give the umpire written details about accessibility to food and its schedule
6. Give written instructions about schedule of transportation to and from venue
7. Possible information about sightseeing and its cost

While some associations try to adhere to most of these practices and information, many others lack the organization to make it work. The following example will illustrate the point.

Some associations do not meet umpires at the airport. Imagine landing in a country of a different language and finding yourself alone without having or knowing their currency, or the nearest hotel or a contact.

Recently, we landed in a country and it was very nice to find some individuals waiting at the airport. But the communication was almost impossible. It was clear that they were there to help. However...

- They did not know where the officials should go.
- They wanted to help with the luggage. So they took the luggage tickets and kept them. One would assume that the luggage would be taken directly to the lodging. But they did not know where the lodging was.
- The umpires were taken to accreditation. But half of them were not found in the computer. That was despite the fact that each umpire had sent two pictures and all necessary information requested two months in advance.
- Visas are not required, but passports have to be stamped. Each individual had different ideas where they could be stamped. Some helpers took some passports and stamped them, while others were not stamped. Those umpires would later find themselves at the airport without a permit to stay in the country or even to get back into the airport.
- After that, they let us get our luggage. But where was the luggage? Nobody had his or her luggage tickets. At the baggage claim, some found some pieces of their luggage, while others found none. Where was the rest? It was on the other side of the airport, where the accreditation people assumingly kept it. After almost one hour we arrived back at the accreditation where some found some of their luggage and others found none. Now we had to go back to file a form for missing luggage with the airline.

By this time we had spent four hours at the airport. All the time we had wonderful people who wanted to help, but they had no helpful information. Their role ended up being the one who'd say, "Just a minute," and they'd go get another person, who would then leave us to find out – and not return.

Where to go from here? Nobody knows. Once again we found ourselves back where some of the luggage was found, and some buses were waiting. But still no answer to where we were going. We understood that those buses take the players to the village.

By mere luck an official from another sport heard us talking and told us that the umpires and officials were staying at a certain hotel.

The problem now was who would take us to the hotel. The buses do not go there. By then we were sitting in one of the buses and it was not going anywhere.

One of us, who is more officious than the rest, spotted a van coming and decided that all of us would get in that van and ask to be taken to that hotel. It worked. At the hotel, our names were not in the computer, but they gave us rooms.

Later we found out that a fellow umpire, a young lady, had to stay all night long sitting in the airport until the next morning because the offices were closed and nobody knew where she should go.

I guess by now you are getting the picture. Thank you for reading the whole story.