

An Unusual Victory

Trying something a little different in your herd could be the home run you're looking for.



Julie Mais is the editor of *Hereford World*. She can be reached at jmais@hereford.org.

My team is down by one in the bottom of the sixth inning with one out and one runner on third base, as I walk from the on-deck circle to home plate. With one foot in the batter's box, I swing the bat over my right shoulder looking for the sign from our head coach at first base.

"Bunt" he signs in effort to get my teammate home. Waiting for the right pitch, my bat connects with the ball and results in a grounder to the shortstop.

As she fields the ball, I hustle to first and my left foot makes contact with the base a second before the ball hits the first baseman's glove. My coach and I look at the umpire as he motions "safe" with his arms.

The first baseman then turns a play for home plate, successfully tagging out my teammate who unfortunately got a late jump as she was trying to score a run.

Returning to first, I turn in confusion to see the entire opposing team run off the field hollering and high-fiving, with the catcher tossing the softball at the pitcher's mound — believing they completed the double play.

My coach and I stand in silence for a few moments trying to make sense of what is happening on the ballfield. He gets confirmation from the umpire that I am indeed safe on first. Immediately, my coach assertively points to second base and yells, "go go go!"

Off I go, running to second base as the other team is celebrating and settling in their dugout. As I round second and my side of the crowd starts cheering, the other team becomes aware of the error they have made. The team scurries back out as I step on the corner of third base heading home.

I sprint to home plate on an empty ballfield and score the tying run,

setting us up to win by one run in the seventh inning.

Victories may not always look the same. Sometimes pursuing what you know is right, though you may feel silly and unsure of it at the moment, could just be the winning decision.

In this issue

It's springtime, and as you can tell, baseball is on my mind. But springtime also brings green pastures and calves to fill them. It's also time to start making breeding decisions and marketing plans for those 2018 calves.

The American Hereford Association continues to offer and to expand tools to help its members. Take some time to see what you can do just a little differently this year to improve your herd and marketing opportunities.

In this issue we recognize superior cows in the breed through the Dams of Distinction program, and we recognize bulls that sire efficient, fertile and productive females through the Sires of Distinction program. Please turn to Page 30 to see the list that recognizes 2,521 females from 640 performance herds in 40 states, and to Page 36 for the list of 93 bulls recognized this year.

Also in this issue, are tips for developing heifers and getting them bred this summer. Don't miss some key recordkeeping tips on Page 58, and get back to the basics of using expected progeny differences (EPDs) in your selection decisions on Page 54.

As we enjoy the warmer temperatures and, hopefully, "April showers," I hope you remember that trying something a little different in your herd could be the home run you're looking for. **HW**