

7th Inning Stretch

Remember...If it isn't fun...it isn't Little League!!!



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Volume 3, Number 4

Quiet Month For News

Hello again, and welcome to the new edition of The Stretch.

It's been a quiet month for news...if anyone has anything they want to send in, please feel free to do so...everything will be considered for inclusion.

Also, still looking for player profiles, umpire profiles, volunteer profiles...whatever you can give me...also your local League news...pics of the kids...

So this issue will be a short one, as we have the first month of the season under our belts.

Looking forward to hearing from all of you over the summer months!

I hope you all enjoyed the baseball puzzle last month...the answers are in this issue, as promised...There is a new quiz to test you again.

Until next month...

Thanks for taking the time to read this and every issue.

Bob Taunton, Editor, The 7th Inning Stretch

Play Ball!

Email: thestretch@littleleague.ca

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Umpire-Coach Relations

Coaches must understand that Umpires are human beings like themselves, and are there to allow the game to run smoothly and enforce the rules. However, Umpires must understand that coaches have emotions just as we do. Both must know the others code of ethics to allow the game to run smoothly.

Cursing and yelling at umpires should not be accepted in any league as far as I'm concerned. Coaches need to give umpires respect if they (which they do) expect to receive it back. Never forget on the other hand that coaches are allowed to interpretations. Always avoid trouble and give the coach time to talk to explain what he saw before you give your interpretation. Remember that the coach does represent his players and owes it to them to make sure that everything is done properly as well. On your side, you also represent all your fellow umpires and owe it to them to give your best, day in and day out, and to give coaches the opportunity to do their jobs as well.

One thing that I hate to see is a coach getting kicked out of the game. Please always try to keep every participant in the game as long as possible. Of course we all know that sometimes it has to be done, and I completely agree with a good toss of the finger when it is appropriate. However, make sure that you have taken all the procedures possible first to keep him in the game. Too many times I have seen coaches tossed uselessly, when it could have been avoided and I won't lie, it has happen to myself as well. Emotions get involved, and we get pumped up sometimes to, just like the coaches do. It is important to try to leave your personal life off the field, and always try to keep your calm; it will avoid a lot of problems.

If a coach is out of line, let him know, then attempt to walk away, never stay when you are not welcome. Allow your partners to jump in between and try to settle the coach down, because more often than not, it is you they are mad at and not your partners. Simply make sure that everything possible has been done and when you are sure, 120% positive, that you cannot avoid it any longer, give him the boot.

After all this talk about tossing coaches, it makes it seem like the article is about this but it is not. Just remember that all participants are there to have fun and you should too. Be nice to everyone on the field, give respect and it will come in return. And last but not least, avoid trouble where it can be avoided

Pitch Count Presentation Online

From Little League International:

One of the most popular presentations at the 24th Little League International Congress in Houston was that given by the American Sports Medicine Institute's Dr. James Andrews and Dr. Glen Fleisig, two of the world's most knowledgeable and respected experts in pitching injuries.

The one-hour presentation by Dr. Andrews and Dr. Fleisig is now available on-line. It is offered as a PowerPoint presentation at no charge to any person interested in viewing and hearing it.

You can access the presentation here:

<http://www.littleleague.org/pitchcount/pitchpresentation.htm>

The Little League Pledge:

I trust in God

I love my country

And will respect it's laws

I will play fair

And strive to win

But win or lose

I will always

Do my best

Umpire Teaches On His 74th Birthday

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What's the call?

Umpire consultant Albert Smith of Carleton Place put 43 umpires through their paces during the 2007 edition Upper Canada Little League Umpire Clinic at the ag hall in South Mountain on Sat., April 28. Photo - Matthew Barbour—Winchester Press

SOUTH MOUNTAIN - Albert Smith has been training umpires for 44 years. This spring was special as he celebrated his 74th birthday on the job at the 2007 Upper Canada Little League Umpire Clinic in South Mountain.

The Mountain Minor Ball Association hosted the clinic and executive member and Upper Canada Little League (UCLL) assistant umpire-in-chief Philip Labossiere said, "In true spirit and demonstrating his commitment to umpire training Albert spent his 74th birthday at our clinic and took the cake - so to speak." Labossiere reported that Smith was treated to a rousing version of "Happy Birthday," donned a party hat, and blew out the candles on his cake.

He was also presented with a birthday card signed by all of the umpires in attendance and a certificate of appreciation from the UCLL for his dedication in training umpires.

Labossiere called the clinic a success noting 43 umpires, including seven young women, from nine minor ball associations - Mountain, Winchester, Chester-ville, Williamsburg, Morrisburg, Riverside Heights, Iroquois, Kemptville and Cornwall participated. The umpires ranged in age from 10 to 61 years.

Smith, a resident of Carleton Place, provided instruction on Little League rules, as well as umpiring positioning and signalling.

Labossiere reviewed the UCLL's rules during the day-long session at the ag hall. "Our umpires are now ready to take to the diamonds when the 2007 UCLL season commences on Sun., May 13," added Labossiere.

The Little League Parent / Volunteer Pledge:

I will teach all children
to play fair and do
their best

I will positively support
all managers, coaches
and players

I will respect the
decisions of the
umpires

I will praise a good
effort despite the
outcome of the game

Little League Umpire School In Williamsport

Article and Photo courtesy of Margaret and Albert Smith of Mississippi Little League, District 8, Ontario

Mississippi Little League just completed a major umpire upgrade. Three Carleton Place umpires, Mark Mullen, Jeff Wingate and Chris Gordon, and David Boyle from Kingston Little League, returned Friday from a week-long intensive umpire school at Little League International Headquarters in Williamsport, Pennsylvania. And they're eager to get back behind the plate as the 2007 Little League season begins.

All agree that the hours and hours of class time and field work were well worth their time and effort. Though they groan about "From the Top", a high pressure routine that polishes calls and gestures and starts over if anyone makes a mistake, they laugh about their own miscues.

Mississippi LL Umpires Mark Mullen, Jeff Wingate and Chris Gordon



Mullen, a six-year veteran of the MLL umpire crew, was impressed that all the umpires in the group, and the instructors, were committed to their community and their young ball players, that they all simply want to make youth baseball better. He feels he gained a lot of confidence from the school, and that his attitude toward the game will be more serious.

"The school changes your attitude: umpiring isn't just something to do for a couple of hours, it's important and should have concentration and focus."

He tells how one Puerto Rican umpire stumped the instructors when he asked how to handle being chased around the ball diamond by coaches and players flourishing baseball bats!

Wingate calls the whole experience just fantastic, saying that the instructors and the group of umpires were all friendly and co-operative. He gained valuable experience, feels he'll make better field decisions and understands field mechanics much better.

"I'll be a better umpire," he says, "and have better rapport with coaches and players."

Wingate adds that he was glad that Albert Smith, MLL Umpire-in-Chief had recommended him for the school, and that MLL was fortunate to have Smith involved. (Smith provided transportation for all four umpires to and from Williamsport.)

Gordon is enthusiastic, saying he had a great time, and praises the panel of instructors who made it all seem easy, and added humour to the studying. He says he learned new techniques, improved his skill level, and his people skills as well. He was particularly impressed by Andy Konyar, Umpire-in-Chief of International Little League, Director of the Umpire School.

Boyle says he'll take more knowledge, better mechanics and field positioning back to Kingston Little League, and will be better able to help others in his umpire crews.

This year's session attracted some 40 umpires from the U.S., Canada, and Puerto Rico. Facilities for classes, fieldwork, accommodation and meals are located on Little League International's 66-acre, hilly, beautifully landscaped site – which is also the site of Lamade Stadium, home of the Major Level Little League World Series. Other levels play World Series games at other U.S. locations.

As the season approaches the Mississippi Little League volunteers – coaches, convenors, equipment managers, umpires, canteen operators and board members are working hard to get everything in order. For further news and information see www.mississippilittleleague.ca or call (613)256-3714.

PRACTICE MANAGEMENT

How can you maximize your practice to engage 100% of your kids, 100% of the time? No more standing around, no more parental complaints, and no more disruptive, bored kids. One of the hottest topics at coaching clinics is how to manage a practice. More importantly, how do you keep each and every kid on your team stimulated, entertained, and learning continually?

Every practice should start with the “first fifteen”. The first fifteen refers to the first 15 minutes of practice. Before you step onto the field, every kid must go through stretches on their own. This involves stretching the arm as well as the body (for some great arm exercises, check out my book “Baseball’s Forgotten Basics”). After stretching, the players will play catch to practice their accuracy. We don’t throw to loosen our arms; we throw to work on our accuracy. After this is completed, gather the kids together and tell them exactly what is going to happen at practice that night. This will eliminate the question, “Coach, when are we going to hit?” You may want to throw in a major league trivia question or “Did you know?” fact as an ice-breaker. Bottom line...the first fifteen minutes of practice every night should look the same. If a player shows up late, they know exactly what they missed.

Split your players into four teams (I will base this on 12 kids). Have them name their teams, or simply label them Group 1, 2, 3, and 4. I am willing to bet that I could show up to any youth baseball practice in America, and I will here this question: “Who didn’t hit yet. Did anyone out there not hit?” By splitting your team into 4 groups, you can simply call in Group 1 to hit while groups 2, 3, and 4 play the field. The remaining players take a position and play each swing live. No more congregating in left field and messing around. We always tell players to take “prep steps” before each pitch, or get into a ready position. Each player in the group hitting has a job. One player is hitting, one is on-deck getting loose, and the third player is “go-pher”. What is a go-pher? That is the person responsible to “go for” every foul ball. This will allow the defense to get back into position and eliminate wasted time on a foul ball.

The groups also allow you to have breakout sessions. For twenty minutes each practice, have players break into groups for a specific skill or game (this will also depend on the number of assistant coaches you have). Organize your groups according to pitchers, outfielders, infielders, ability level, etc. Each group will work on a skill for 20 minutes with their group or groups (more than one group can join together to make six instead of three).

There are many more tips, drills, and techniques to managing your next practice more efficiently. Hopefully these few tips will allow you to think outside the box. Every coach should go into their next practice with a “practice plan”, or tentative schedule of the night’s activities. Your assistant coaches will be more prepared, you will be more effective, and ultimately the players will reap the rewards.



Marc Shoenfelt is the founder and President of B2B Baseball, an instructional baseball business that conducts youth coaching clinics. Marc has also written the book "Baseball's Forgotten Basics", an instructional book with a DVD companion.

The book can be seen and purchased at www.baseballsforgottenbasics.com, or for an autographed copy or to book Marc for a coaching clinic, contact him at info@B2Bbaseball.com.

“GETTING BIG THINGS from little swings”

Little League Canada Provincial And National Championships

Here is a current list of all the Provincial and Canadian Little League Championship sites and dates. I will add this info and update it every month until the tournaments are completed. [Click on the highlighted links to see the official web pages.](#)

Little League (Major) Division:

World Series: August 17 to 26, 2007 Williamsport, Pennsylvania

Canadian Championships: Regina, Saskatchewan, August 4-11, 2007

Provincial Championships:

Atlantic Division: Nova Scotia

Quebec Division: Montreal

Ontario Division: Toronto (Erindale), Ontario District 1

Prairie Division: Fort McMurray

B.C. Division: Vancouver

Junior Division:

World Series: August 12 to 18, 2007 Taylor, Michigan

Canadian Championships: Windsor, Ontario, District 5, August 3-10, 2007

Provincial Championships:

Atlantic Division: Nova Scotia

Quebec Division: Montreal

Ontario Division: Thunder Bay, District 3

Prairie Division: Calgary

B.C. Division: Vancouver

Senior Division:

World Series: August 12 to 18, 2007 Bangor, Maine

Canadian Championships: August 2 to 9, 2007 Vancouver, BC

Provincial Championships:

Atlantic Division: Nova Scotia

Quebec Division: Montreal

Ontario Division: Ottawa, District 6

Prairie Division: Edmonton

B.C. Division: Prince George

Big League Division:

World Series: July 28 to August 4, 2007 Easley, South Carolina

Canadian Championships: July 14 to 18, 2007 Calgary, Alberta, District 3

Provincial Championships:

Atlantic Division: Nova Scotia

Quebec Division: Montreal

Ontario Division: Windsor, District 5

Prairie Division: Edmonton

B.C. Division: Prince George

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Little League (Major) Softball Division:

World Series: August 9 to 16, 2007 Portland, Oregon

Canadian Championships: Victoria, BC, Date TBD

Junior Softball Division:

World Series: August 12 to 18, 2007 Kirkland, Washington

Senior Softball Division:

World Series: August 5 to 11, 2007 Lower Sussex, Delaware

Big League Softball Division:

World Series: August 13 to 18, 2007 Kalamazoo, Michigan

Canadian Championships for Junior, Senior and Big League: Not Confirmed

Brain Teasers

1: Batter hits a home run after which it is discovered he/she had used an illegal bat. Home run is disallowed. **RIGHT or WRONG?**

2: In how many situations can a run score when the third out is made on a force play?

3: Batter with a count of two balls and one strike is removed for another batter. Does the count on the new batter start over?

4: Bases full, two out, batter hits ball over fence for home run. Batter misses first base. Proper appeal is made. **How many runs score?**

Answers on the last page



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For a membership application form, please contact Little League Canada at Canada@littleleague.org.

Baseball Puzzle

Here are the answers to last months Baseball quiz...

- 1- The only player to hit a home run in his first two major league at-bats: **c, St. Louis Brown, Bob Nieman, 1951**
- 2- The pitcher that was on the mound when Joe DiMaggio's 56 game hitting streak came to an end: **b, Jim Bagby, Cleveland**

Here's one for this month (I need to find more quiz questions...anyone know of a place to get some?):

1- Who is the only pitcher to have over 3000 Strikeouts and less than 1000 walks?

- Jim Bunning
- Bob Gibson
- Don Sutton
- Fergie Jenkins
- Vida Blue

The answer will be revealed in next months issue...thanks for playing

Answers to Brain Teasers

1: Wrong – Rule 4.19(a). Illegal equipment is removed from the game and all action that resulted from the use of the illegal equipment remains. Home run stands and bat removed.

2: None – Rule 4.09(a) EXCEPTIONS: (2). The rule is pretty cut and dry in that it specifically says no runs will score when the third out of the inning is a force play out.

3: No – Rule 6.01 NOTE outlines if the third out of the inning is made while that batter is at bat the count will start over, but not when one batter takes the place of another during an at bat.

4: None – Rule 7.10(b) & 4.09(a) EXCEPTIONS(1). As mentioned above no runs will score when the third out of the inning is made on the batter runner before touching first base and the defense initiates a proper appeal.

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