

7th Inning Stretch

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



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Rules and Regulations Changes This Month

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

Little League International has released updates to the Rules and Regulations for the 2008 season. There is a link inside to check them out.

VERY quiet month this month...not at all much to report.

If there are any umpires out there who wish to contribute to the newsletter, please let me know and we'll get you going!

If you have ANY stories or photos you want to submit...nothing is refused!

Looking forward to hearing from all of you sometime soon!

Until next month...

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

Bob Taunton, Editor, The 7th Inning Stretch

Play Ball!

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Brain Teasers

1: The batter hits a grounder to the 2nd baseman. He/she throws the ball to the 1st baseman for the force out...the ball sails over the 1st baseman into the dugout. The batter-runner is awarded two bases on the overthrow. In advancing however, the batter-runner missed first base. **IF PROPERLY APPEALED, IS THE BATTER-RUNNER OUT FOR MISSING 1ST BASE?**

2: Bases loaded...one out...score tied 5-5 in the bottom of the seventh, the batter smashes a knee-high line drive that the pitcher reaches for but can't get. The ball hits the umpire positioned in the infield. It might have been a base hit...or...maybe a double play. **YOU MAKE THE CALL?**

3: The batter lifts a lazy pop-up near the 1st base stands; the 1st baseman goes to the fence and reaches into the stands to make the catch. The ball lands in his/her glove... but... before he/she can bring his/her arm out of the stands, an eager souvenir collector picks the ball out of the glove. **IS THIS SPECTATOR INTERFERENCE?**

Answers on page 5

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Changes To Rules And Regulations For 2008

Complete lists of significant changes to the 2008 Regulations and Playing Rules, as well as changes to the Tournament Rules and Guidelines for the 2008 season, can be found at the following link:

<http://www.littleleague.org/rules/index.asp>

Some Winning Teams From The 2007 Season

While the response to photos of the winning teams has been rather poor this season, I do have some that I wish to share with all of you...

IF you have a picture of a team from this summer, please feel free to forward it to me with an explanation of what they won, or any accomplishment, and I will be glad to get it in for you.

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



Rocky Mountain Red Sox, Alberta D8, Minor District Champions



Mississippi Mudhens, Senior "B" House League Champions, Ontario D8.
Champions of the Interlock season between ON D2, 6 and 8

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



NDG Senior Lynx, Provincial Champions from Quebec.

Photo courtesy of and copyright by Joel Silverstein (jpicstudio@yahoo.ca)

APPEASING THE PARENTS



When I travel around and talk to coaches every year, inevitably the biggest obstacle in any given year is dealing with parents. Not to say they are all bad, but you always come across a fanatical parent whose expectations exceed your tireless effort. No matter how hard you try, the scrutiny from parents and other bystanders is always creeping over your shoulder. This month we are going to discuss a way to end all of the scrutiny and win over your parents...and it all takes place before a ball is even thrown.

Most parents are great...really great. They get notified that their son or daughter is assigned to your team for the upcoming year. They start asking themselves, "Who is this guy? Is he a yeller and screamer? Will my kid get ample playing time? Is he in it for the kids, or does he have an agenda?" The best way to put an end to all of this speculation is to hold a parent meeting before the season even starts.

The first thing you should do, as a coach, is to send a letter to all of your players. In the letter, express how excited you are for the season to start, and how you are glad that they are on your team. In the envelope, include a flier for a "parent only" meeting. Express in the letter that it is very important that they attend, and the meeting will include a schedule, your expectations, and a question and answer period for you, the coach.

At the meeting, start by welcoming the parents and be sure to bring your smile. Make sure to shake each hand and show them you are human! During the meeting, go over the following items:

1. Get cell phone numbers in case of injury or illness
2. Gather names from parents to sign up to bring a treat after a practice
3. Recruit parent volunteers to help as assistants
4. Hand out a schedule of your practices and games
5. List any medical or allergy concerns for the players

There are two other things that you should convey to parents at the meeting. First, be sure to tell the parents that you will not tolerate disruptive behavior. There is nothing worse than one kid taking up all of your time because he or she has decided to be unruly. We have all had a player who disrupts the practice and refuses to listen. If this happens, tell the parents you will sit them on the side and exclude them from practice until they decide they will participate appropriately. The second time it happens, you will call the parent to come pick up their child. This may seem harsh, but the parents will appreciate your concern for all of the players having a good experience.

The second thing you should go over is inappropriate behavior by parents. While you want your parents to cheer and get involved, there is no place for the parent who yells, argues, and disrupts the game due to vulgarity or inappropriate behavior. We all know what that feels like...it is uncomfortable for the players, coaches, and other parents in the stands. Once you make this declaration, all parents will think twice before doing it at the next game. If they do, you have other parents in the stands that heard you mention it at the meeting and will have their support. Tell the parents that if it they get out of control, you will have to come over and ask them to leave. It is a scenario we all don't want, so let's have a good year and keep the comments positive for our team. Hopefully, this will encourage your parents to be positive fans for the entire season.

When you are preparing for the 2008 season, think about holding a parent meeting. You inform the parents, gather pertinent information, and lay the groundwork for a successful season. It is hard enough to coach a group of energetic kids. With the parents on your side, it makes for a great year without the scrutiny from your toughest critic.

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.



Become an Alumni Member and support Little League in your community and across the Country.

The Little League Canada Foundation's goal is "to ensure that all children in Canada have the chance to participate in Little League regardless of their abilities, either physical or financial". For an annual membership of \$10.00 or three year membership of \$25.00, as an Alumni member you will have the opportunity to have input into the growth and direction of Little League and its programs.

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

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Senior game on Saturday, August 25, 2007 at Beckwith Park, Ontario, District 8, Mississippi Little League.

Four veteran umpires worked this game, bringing some 70 years experience on field. They were: Angelo Scolli, visiting from ON D2, Pinecrest Little League, and Chris Monk, Albert Smith and Derek Weber, all from ON D8, Mississippi Little League.

Answers to Brain Teasers

1: 7.04(c) Note. The batter-runner is declared out on proper appeal. Even though the runner is awarded two bases...all bases must be legally touched.

2: 6.08(d). This game is history. The ball is dead; the batter is awarded 1st base... and ... the runner from third is forced home to score the winning run.

3: 3.16. NO. Fielders reach into the stands at their own risk. It's a foul ball.

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