

# SRI BULLETIN # 6 - May 2, 2012

## NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

- FUNDAMENTALS

Basic fundamentals are very important to every coach, athlete, and official. Umpires with good solid fundamentals will be ready and able to handle difficult games and the most challenging of situations. Using the Oregon Baseball Umpires Manual as your primary guide, umpires must also depend on basic fundamental movements/mechanics to guide their thinking and movement to be in the best possible position to make judgments. My biggest concern watching a lot of our umpires here in Oregon is the lack of movement. Because we use the principles of the two man crew, you need to be ready to move and adjust your position with every hit and throw. Below I am sharing a list of fundamentals I brainstormed over the past few weeks, after observing several games.

### Tad's List of Umpire Fundamentals

- Look and act like an umpire who deserves respect. Your hard work, rule knowledge, and commitment will command respect.
- Were you on time? Was your uniform clean and sharp?
- Have a quality and thorough pre-game conference. Too many times we cut this short, and it will come back to haunt you in a game. **Nothing beats good preparation.**
- Evaluate your own performance after each game. Were you out of position? What about your timing? Could your communication skills have been better? Your judgment and mechanics will not improve unless you reflect and self-assess.
- Be confident, use crisp proper mechanics, hustle and keep the game moving. Lack of hustle is unacceptable. Over time, lazy umpires get very little respect, and far fewer calls right.
- Increased awareness of rules and coverage of balks, interference, obstruction, check swings and base awards.
- Never forget you are a part of an umpiring crew. **NEVER** express negative remarks about your partners to game participants. Moral and active support for your partner will help him and the game in general.
- Learn from your partner's mistakes. Be a good partner and offer positive "food for thought" as appropriate.
- Have the desire to be a great umpire. Make the game fun, and enjoy what you're doing. People will see your passion for the game, and will respect your effort and hard work. If you're not having fun, it becomes obvious.

## TAD'S TRICKY TRIVIA

*WHAT HALL OF FAME PLAYER SAID; "BASEBALL IS 90% MENTAL . THE OTHER HALF IS PHYSICAL"*

## BETWEEN INNINGS

This is an area where I'm seeing a lot of umpires look real sloppy. Plate and base umpires should not be getting together for a chat every half inning. A brief discussion once or twice during the game should be enough. Umpires need to continue to umpire between innings, this isn't a break. The plate umpire needs to keep the game moving. Players tend to hustle more if they know the umpire is expecting it. Base umpires, watch your infielders. Watch how they throw to first, how is the first baseman fielding the throws? Positioning between innings is another area where I think we are not consistent. Base umpires should stand a couple steps into the outfield grass midway between first and second base. Plate umpires should stand on the first or third base line extended, 10 to 12 feet behind home plate. Stand on the extended baseline of the defense. Observe the on deck batters warming up, and preparing the catcher/ pitcher to throw it down. Remember guys . . . one minute.

## UNIFORM

Take pride in yourself. Out dress your partner is a good rule of thumb. Can I look better? I can say when I look sharp, I am sharp. Your shoes should never carry the last game's mud into your next game. Here in the northwest, we don't get away with "dusting them off" prior to our next game.

Your uniforms should not look like you pulled it out of a pile from the back seat. Shirts should be able to stay tucked in. If not, maybe you're not the size you were five years ago. Shirts/jackets fade over time, they should be navy blue, not pinkish blue. The bottom line here: take as much pride in your appearance as you do in getting the call right.

## CONSISTENCY IN RULE ENFORCEMENT

Nobody wins if we don't consistently enforce the rules. Players, coaches and the fans don't know what the expectations are from game to game. Coaches then will be much more likely to question an umpire when enforcement does take place. **Be consistent.**

## CLOSING

Overall I think we do a great job. Oregon has a very dedicated and professional group of umpires. Keep raising the bar. Remember, all of us can work on our signals, mechanics and rules knowledge. Don't take pitches off, hustle and keep up the good work!

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*Answer to Tad's Tricky Trivia; Yankees Catcher, Yogi Berra*