



Windermere Little League Coach Pitch Umpire Clinic

- ❖ Be early (10 minutes)
- ❖ Be dressed (proper equipment)
- ❖ Be prepared (clinic/know local rules)

EQUIPMENT : Mask / Chest Protector / Shin Guards / Shirt / Cup*
TIMER : Set it! Use it!

IMPORTANT REMINDERS!

- **Your job is to call plays accurately/consistently and to keep the game moving** (especially between innings)
- **Judgment calls cannot be challenged!** (e.g. infield possession / balls & strikes / runner advance or not)
- **Be focused on the field/play not on other things around - don't move away from the play too fast.**

Timing, Timing, Timing

- Slow it down! There is no need to make a call the instant something happens. "Pause, Read, React". Tell yourself, "yes that was an out", or "yes, he/she is safe", THEN make the call. For balls/strikes, wait for ball to hit glove, say "yes, that was a strike" or "no, that was a ball", then call it.
- When in doubt on fair/foul, let it play out. If it was foul, you can fix it. If you call it foul but it was fair, you can't fix it.

Umpire Priorities

1. Fair/Foul; one umpire ONLY; no voice and point towards infield for fair
2. Catch/no catch; indicate/call *all* catches, but be particularly loud and vocal on any where they may be doubt; one umpire ONLY; "I've got a catch" or "That's a catch" (signal OUT), vs "No Catch!" (signal safe) – typically home plate umpire responsibility.
3. Everything else - know who is responsible for a call – one umpire, one call; do NOT "help" on a call unless asked!

PLATE UMPIRE

Strike Zone: pitcher's strike zone – not MLB – kids are learning to swing not take walks.

Plate Mechanics

- Stand to left of catcher (for right-handed batter, right side for left-handed batter) between and in back of catcher and batter. Head NO LOWER than chin just above top of catcher's head
- A person should not have enough room to walk between catcher and plate umpire
- Stance should be fairly wide, depending on your height. You need not squat down very far.
- Don't lean in, try to squat straight down (you will have a slight lean)
- Indicator is ALWAYS held in left hand. Take off mask with LEFT hand.
- DO NOT MOVE YOUR HEAD! Follow the pitch from pitcher's hands all the way to the glove WITH YOUR EYES!
- Call balls while DOWN. Stand up to call strikes. Then step back and relax between each pitch.
- Indicate count of balls with left hand, strikes with right, and indicate with hands above shoulders, facing toward the pitcher; full count is 3 balls, 2 strikes, not all fingers down!

Field positioning (one base umpire)

- A Position with nobody on
- B Position with runner on first *only*
- C Position with runners in any other combination of bases
- Watch for tag-ups on catches; determine whether runner was past ½ way when possession is made
- Infield plays – make sure fielder has secure possession of the ball and has thrown/released the ball before turning to watch the play at the base to which the fielder has thrown
- Know whether play is a force or not; on tag plays, make sure fielder has secure possession of the ball before calling runner out.
- Assist plate umpire with foul balls hit off the batter while in the box; plate umpire can't always see these; give plate umpire a chance to call this, but if not, YOU call it!
- Do NOT signal OUT/SAFE UNLESS you have the ball and a runner; no need to signal if no play was being made on the runner, or if the ball was thrown past the fielder

Safety, Safety, Safety

- Catcher MUST have a dangling throat protector
- At least ONE coach MUST be in dugout at ALL times for ALL levels
- equipment (bats, gloves, etc), cannot be left laying on the field during game

Common *misconceptions*

- *Tie goes to the runner* – 7.08(e) “A runner is out when...failing to reach the next base BEFORE a fielder tags said runner or the base after that runner has been forced to advance by reason of the batter becoming a runner.”
- *The hands are part of the bat* – if a batter is hit in the hands, umpire must judge where hands were at time of contact (in strike zone or not) and whether or not batter was making an attempt to hit the ball
- *The plate umpire can overrule a base umpire’s call* – only the umpire making a call can change his/her call if he/she so chooses
- *Runner running out of the baseline is automatically out* – see 7.08 (a) 1; runner makes their baseline and that baseline begins at the point a fielder has the ball and is attempting to make a tag on the runner.
- *Runner must slide* – 7.08 (a) 3 “...out when... runner does not slide OR ATTEMPT TO GET AROUND A FIELDER who has the ball and is waiting to make the tag”
- *Batter must turn right after passing first base* or can be tagged out; umpire must judge whether runner made an attempt to go to second before deciding to return to first base

Speed of play

- 90 seconds from last put out until start of play for the next inning
- Hustle players on and off field, tell managers to have catchers ready; another player with full helmet gear may warm up pitcher while catcher gears up!
- Don't go talk to coaches/other umpires/manager/spectators during inning change; get a quick drink, clean off the plate, and play ball!

No Infield Fly Rule

NOTES:

