



Blue Signals

Keeping Baseball Ontario's Umpires Connected



Official Supplier

Opportunities in 2016

SUMMER 2016



Baseball Ontario is pleased to present many opportunities for Umpires to learn and grow through-out the year outside of our yearly Clinics.

Inside this issue:

ELIMINATIONS TOURNAMENTS:

This is an opportunity to work at the best baseball tournaments in the province in conjunction with Umpires in the National Program. Applications will be taken during the season on BaseballOntario.com/Umpires. Deadline to Apply is July 2nd.



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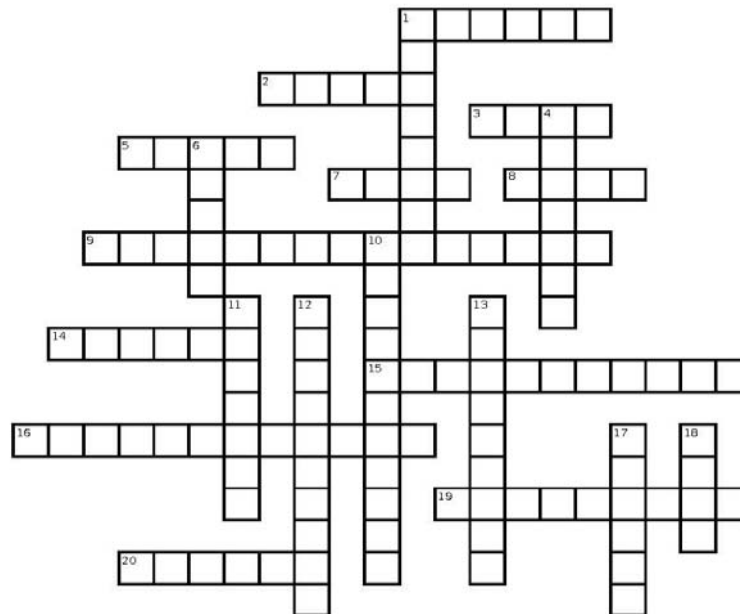
2016 Certification

Our local associations are reporting a growth in registration for 2016, and that applies not only to players but to umpires too, as the 2016 registration to date below indicates. We appreciate the continued dedication of umpires in this province!

	2015	2016	+/-
Level 1	2,122	2,585	463
Level 2	1,195	1,242	47
Level 3	808	778	-30
Level 4/5	59	60	1
Totals:	4,184	4,665	481

Please note that 2017 is a SuperClinic year for level 3 umpires. Details will be posted on the website in early 2017.

Blue Signals Crossword



Down:

1. e.g. first to third
4. before the game the umpires host a plate _____
6. the more the umpire knows the better the game goes
10. hindering the offense
11. when a coach thinks I misapplied a rule they will ...
12. R1, R2 1 out
13. a ball that leaves the playing field is..
17. a pitched ball down the middle of the plate belt high
18. deceiving a runner

Across:

1. the person moving base to base for the offense
2. how I know they touched first
3. granted upon a reasonable request
5. a _____ from one fielder to another to retire a runner
7. A batted ball bounding over first base
8. where the plate umpire exits
9. governing body that certifies umpires in Ont.
14. the person up to bat
15. a Coach who is miss behaving can be given a Bench _____
16. hindering the defense
19. Joey Bats famously violated this new rule in 2016
20. a sign from the umpire



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10 Things That Will Happen To You This Season

by Mike Winters, MLB Umpire & Crew Chief, #33

This is my 27th year as a professional umpire. Not that that makes me an expert, I still have plenty to learn, but I do have a pretty good idea of some of the things that you may see as you get started on your season. Unfortunately, most of the things that I come up with tend to be negative. I guess that is a part of the territory that we have chosen to work in. Here is my list in no particular order except of when I thought about them:

1. **You will be in the Mud.** By that I mean that you will, through no other reason than you are wearing the uniform, you will be involved in a situation where everyone seems to be angry ... at you! Sometimes you may create this on your own, and sometimes it is just a by-product of the job. The point is, no matter the reason, you will have to ...

2. **Handle a situation.** You will find yourself having to deal with a situation where there are people that are out of control, keeping order in un-orderly surroundings. That might involve ejections or it may call for diplomacy.

3. **Your timing will be too fast.** At some point during this next year, you will make a call and know immediately, the second the words come out of your mouth, that you made the wrong call. That doesn't mean that you know whether the player was out or safe. It simply means that you said it too quickly. If you had waited that split second longer, the correct words would have come out of your mouth instead. When this happens, recognize it, understand it, and strive to correct it.

4. **You will have an ejection.** I know that I said you will handle a situation earlier, but handling situations does not always involve ejections. I feel it is safe to say that an ejection is bound to happen to you at some point this season. If it does not, you might need to start thinking about taking less crap from players and coaches.

5. **You will make a call and know that you are 100% right.** You will know it because you saw everything so clearly that you will not question yourself, even if

players, fans, coaches and managers do question you. This will give you a special confidence and that confidence will show through during your discussions with all of the above.

6. **You will have to work when you don't feel like it.** Whether it is a plate or the bases, you will find yourself out there one day when you just don't want to be there. For whatever the reason; maybe you had a bad day at work or school or your family or friends are mad at you. Whatever it is, you have to put it away and get the job done. This is what separates the good from the bad. Concentrate. Do your job. Be in the game.

7. **You will learn something.** In fact, you should strive to learn something from every partner that you have and every game that you work. The less experience that you have, the more you will learn.

8. **You will get down on yourself.** For whatever reason, maybe you made the wrong call, maybe you didn't handle a situation as well as you thought you should have, who knows? Just remember: You're never as good as you think you are, and you're never as bad as you think you are. Try and shrug it off and just know that it does happen to all of us from time to time. You are not alone.

9. **You're gonna get hit with the ball.** It is impossible to avoid and the lower the level that you're working, the higher the chance that you will be hit. Do yourself a favor and get gear that will protect you from getting seriously hurt. Don't kid yourself. That 12 year old kid out there can do some real damage. That ball is hard. Keep yourself safe so that you can do your job.

10. **You're going to have fun!** This I promise. The camaraderie of this profession has always been high. Enjoy your time with your fellow umpires. Have a beer together and talk over situations and games. It will help you learn and it will help to make your umpiring experience more enjoyable! Have a great year!

My Pro School Experience

By: Cody Bradt

I have been umpiring for 7 years and am an umpire from Burlington, ON. This past January, I attended the Minor League Umpire Training Academy at Historic Dodgertown in Vero Beach, Florida. It was a 4 week course of intensive training both on and off the field. The course is taught by High level MiLB supervisors and umpires and we routinely got visits from the actual MLB umpires.

It was phenomenal; an experience of a lifetime for sure. Throughout the 4 weeks I grew a lot both on and off the field as an umpire and frankly as a better and more mature and confident person as well. I am now empowered with the tools and knowledge as to what it takes to get to the next level. Trust me when I tell you that becoming a professional umpire is not an easy task.

It was a very cool dynamic as we had umpires from around the world. We had students from Puerto Rico, Venezuela, Japan, South Korea and 3 fellow Canucks. There were students who had never umpired before, students just looking to get better and students who were already working professional baseball in other countries. The connections and friendships I made at school will last a lifetime. I can literally travel the world and umpire in most areas if I wanted to.

The school itself was broken down like this; we had class 6 days a week from 8am-6pm with the morning



portion consisting of an extensive overview of the Official Baseball Rulebook and MiLB 2-Umpire System. The afternoon portion of the day was on the diamond and in the cages putting what we learned into practice. We also had numerous guest speakers from league officials to MLB Umpires! It was surreal to hear their stories and advice. They were all extremely friendly and welcoming to the students and I got to have one on one conversations with many of them.

I would strongly recommend to anyone who is passionate about umpiring to attend pro school, whether your dream is to get to the MLB or simply wish to become a better umpire. It is an experience of a lifetime and will help you at whatever level of baseball you work.

Clinician Caravan

Baseball Ontario's Umpire Committee is looking to hold a clinician's caravan to train umpires to become umpire clinicians.

The Caravan is a very intense weekend. It will focus on teaching pedagogical skills – skills needed to be a good instructor. Being a good umpire is only part of the skills required. In addition to gaining new teaching skills, participants will be expected to make 3 or 4 presentations to their peers to demonstrate their newfound skills.

Graduates of the program will be graded and successful candidates will achieve a Clinician status and will be able to instruct at umpire clinics. The Caravan will be held a weekend in the fall in Cambridge.

In order to gauge interest, we are asking all potential participants to send an email to umpire@baseballontario.com expressing their interest. To be eligible you must be a current Level 3, 4, 5, or 6 umpire and want to teach Level 1 and 2 clinics across Ontario.



As part of our usual Blue Notes section we like to highlight some areas of concern that we're hearing from umpires. In this edition, we'll be going over some items that range from new rules, to items that will help with game management, and clarification on some misunderstood items.



Slide Rule

Rule 6.01(j) has been adopted by Baseball Ontario for the 2016 baseball season. Runners must engage in a bona fide slide when attempting to break up a double play. Runners not engaging in a bona fide slide and making contact with a fielder will be out for interference. For the purposes of this rule, the runner must:

- Begin sliding (makes contact with the ground) before reaching the base;
- Be able, and attempt, to touch the base with hand or foot;
- Be able and attempt to remain on the base (except home plate) after completion of the slide; and
- Slides within reach of the base without changing paths for the purpose of initiating contact with a fielder.



Facemask

Please remember that our rules require the use of a facemask by any team member or coach when warming up a pitcher, either on the field between innings, or in the bullpen. Do not allow anyone to warm up pitchers without the use of a facemask.



Rubbing Up Baseballs

Rubbing up of baseballs occurs at the start of or during the game when a new baseball is presented. The umpires will rub the ball with dirt or mud to remove the shine and slickness associated with a new baseball. This is allowed, it is not defacing the ball and there is no penalty associated with it if a player or coach rubs up the baseball however the umpire should check the ball before putting it in play.



Thunder Rule

When thunder roars, go indoors! As soon as thunder is heard, the potential to be struck by lightning is present. Baseball Ontario mandates that at first sound of thunder, play is to be suspended and all participants are to seek shelter until 30 minutes after the last sound of thunder. Remember this rule is not about lightning, but is related to **thunder**.

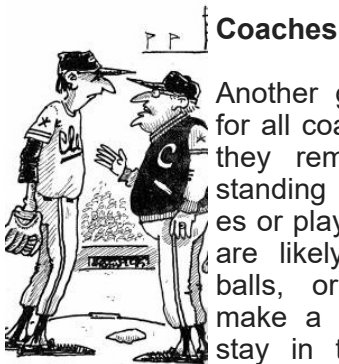
Blue Notes



Game 3 Lineup		
8	Cole	RF
20	Shaddy	3B
9	Lagan	CF
29	Yasunway	1B
1	Nomura	2B
17	Bainfield	LF
19	Calnan	DH
3	Boval	SS
27	Pennell	C
11	McKinney	P

Line-up Cards

A game management item, when reviewing lineup cards, please ensure that all coaches are included as part of the lineup card. The manager for each team should also be signing the card at the bottom to ensure that it is valid.



Coaches

Another game management item, for all coaches, please ensure that they remain in the dugout not standing or sitting outside. Coaches or players outside of the dugout are likely targets for errant foul balls, or fielders attempting to make a play. Asking coaches to stay in their dugouts at ground rules will make this process easier to manage and will avoid any potential issues that could arise later on.



Compression Sleeves

Newly adopted by Baseball Ontario, the new rule clarifies when and how compression sleeves can be used.

The new rule reads as follows:

All players, including pitchers, are permitted to wear compression sleeves on one or both arms. If only wearing one, it may be worn on either the pitching or glove arm.

A compression sleeve extending only to the elbow shall have the same restrictions as a compression sleeve extending to the wrist.

Pitchers must wear compression sleeves, which are solid in colour and may not be white or grey. Pitchers may not wear compression sleeves, which are distracting in nature including designs and reflective material.

These and all Rules of Baseball are available online. Remember to check the website often for updates, news and information at www.baseballontario.com/umpires! Don't forget to follow us on Facebook and Twitter too!

