

United Umpires Training

Virtual Training Week 1 – Student Notes Pages

The United Umpires Approach

- Examine theory
- Reject ideas that don't prove useful
- Teach with a scientific approach, backed by video evidence
- Always explain the why
- Lift up, don't pull down

The Central Difference In Umpiring

- The demands on us as umpires have changed
- We must respond to that by making sure our approach matches the demand
- 2001 – umpire for the dugout
- 2022 – umpire for the camera

Getting Started In Umpiring

- Find a local assignor
 - Use a local league to direct you
- Find a local mentor
 - Someone who has achieved an intermediate goal of yours
- Uniforms
- Practice!

Uniforms

- Check with local organizations
- Pants
 - CHARCOAL Smitty Poly-Spandex
 - Base/Plate/Combo
- Shirts
 - Black and Light Blue
 - MLB Style
- Jackets
 - All black convertible (zip-off sleeves)
 - Elastic bottom v. non-elastic bottom
- Hats
 - 4/6/8 Stitch – 6 stitch is best for plate and bases
- Undergarments
 - Black Socks/Long tights/Dry-fit shirts
- The enemy of uniforms
 - The sun and warm water

Equipment

- Chest Protector
 - Hard Plastic for anything above 70mph
 - Flexible harness helps with fit
- Shin Guards
 - Length matters – ankle to above knee
- Mask/Helmet
 - Only added protection from HSM vs mask is to top/sides of head
 - Concussion concerns – Force3
 - Mask strap
 - Throat guard – attached to bottom of main mask bars

Equipment (cont)

- Plate Shoes
 - Hard plastic toe and metatarsal plate
- Base Shoes
 - Turf shoes – majority black w some white
- Belt
 - Should FILL the loops of your belt (1 3/4 inch)
- Ball Bag
 - Large enough for 4+ baseballs per side
 - DryLo ball bags for extra sweaty umpires
- Indicator
- Cup/Jockstrap

Stances

○ Standing Set

- Outside foot forward
- Keep your hips/shoulders pointed towards plate
- Be set when pitch is delivered
- Step back and relax between pitches

○ Hands On Knees

- Athletic position
- Feet just wider than hips
- Hands placed LIGHTLY on knees
- Ready to move

Signals

- Instructing Signals
 - Save 'sell it' for the end
 - Build a solid process
 - "Set" – "Call it" – (Mental call) – Physical Call
- Out
 - Starts with Proper Use of Eyes
 - Build the signal
 - Elbow to shoulder height
 - Knock on the door
 - Keep wrist straight
- Safe -
 - No PUE necessary – but still confirm your call mentally first
 - Build the signal
 - Elbows up w hands to chest
 - Extend straight out
- That's a catch
 - Visible from stands behind you
 - Only for borderline catches

Signals

- Close Plays
 - Out – Maintain PUE – Step and throw
 - Safe – Maintain mental process – Step forward or back – Snap signal
- Fair/Foul
 - ALWAYS stationed on the line for fair foul decisions
 - Fielder touches ball IN-FLIGHT
 - Fair/foul THEN catch/no-catch
 - 2 ways to sell a fair call – across your body or pump multiple times
- Time/Foul
 - Proper Use of Eyes Symptom!
 - Build the signal
 - Hands just wider than shoulder width
 - Hands just higher than shoulder height
 - Signal starts from shoulder, not from belt

Signals

- Giving the count
 - Remember who you are signaling for
 - When should you give the count?
- Checked Swings
 - Point – with batter side arm – “Yes!”
 - Strike – normal strike call – “They went”
 - Appeals – ensure clarity
 - Step out to side
 - Ask with open hand and use partner’s name
 - Keep your mask on

Signals

- Called Strike
 - Most individually based signal
 - Some good guidelines
 - Get tall
 - Snap off signal
 - Mirror voice and mechanic
 - Eyes stay forward until you are more experienced
- Swinging strike
 - More relaxed version of called strike
 - Our advice – avoid the hammer for called strikes
 - Don't point at hitter on obvious swings
- Strike 3
 - PUE!
 - Keep it simple
 - Keep head forward
 - 1 sound vs 2 – 1 step vs 2

Managing Your Mask

○ Removing

- Left Hand
- Indicator w lower fingers/palm
- Mask with upper fingers
- Hand to face – don't drop your head
- Grab lower left part of mask – not throat guard
- Out and Up – hat stays still

○ Putting on

- Keep in left hand
- Grab strap with right hand
- NEVER put mask on with one hand

○ Holding

- Mask remains in left hand
- Place under elbow to deal with line-up cards

Managing Your Indicator

- Left Hand
- Moving the wheels
 - Use fingers to move
 - Advance the wheels without looking
 - Get back to 0-0 without looking
- Checking indicator
 - Hand goes up to face

Managing Baseballs

- Arrange ball bags
 - On side of hip
 - Push loops of ball bags together to widen opening
- Asking for baseballs
 - When you have 2 remaining
 - Ask for what you need to fill PLUS one
- Receiving baseballs
 - During an AB – Mask on – present hands close to your CP
 - Between ABs – Mask off

Plate Meeting & Anthem

- Handshake
- Line Up Cards
 - Home side first
 - Verify DH and P and no duplicate names
 - Facilitate Exchange between coaches
- Ground Rules
 - Home coach
 - If neutral – rehearse before
- Verify Equipment
- Do NOT issue statements about arguing
- National Anthem
 - Heels together
 - Left arm straight down or holding mask
 - Standing straight

Why Do Fundamentals Matter?

- Fundamentals=foundation
 - Just like players, we build a base with good solid fundamentals
 - We must continually seek to analyze ourselves
- Does the game sharpen or dull you?
 - Much of the game umpires itself - this is a TRAP!
 - Think of every single play as an opportunity for continuing education – am I refining my PUE, my footwork, etc?