



Hey Blue!



The Voice of BC Umpires

WINTER 2005-6

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MERRY CHRISTMAS &



HAPPY NEW YEAR!



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SUPERCLINIC 2006

Our Best Ever!!

Featuring:

- Major League Umpire Jim Joyce (MLB#66)
- International Umpire Jim Cressman
- Professional Umpire Ian Lamplugh

A lineup that shouldn't be missed!!

When?

February 4 & 5, 2006

Where?

**Wellington Senior Secondary
3135 Mexicana Road, Nanaimo, BC**

Accomodation?

Coast Bastion Inn

11 Bastion Street, Nanaimo, BC

Phone: 1-800-663-1144

(ask for BC Umpires Clinic Rate)

Clinic Registration?

Application on Page 10

Registration Deadline January 15

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

-John Berry

Welcome to a great 2006 in umpiring!

We've got some wonderful opportunities coming up this year, and you'll read about many of them elsewhere in this issue.

Getting this issue of "Hey Blue" off the presses and in your hands is the best way to start the new year in umpiring. Kudos to Jerry Tregaskis and Danny Huzar for taking on another issue, with the capable assistance of Steve Boutang and a number of other contributors.

Umpire development and education are priorities again this year, and you'll see lots of evidence of our plans. Clinics are a major learning and refresher tool, and we hope everyone reading this will make sure they attend one this year. If you don't know when one is slated for your area, ask your area rep or your local ball association.

SuperClinic on Vancouver Island this year extends our commitment to trying to serve members throughout the province. This builds on the successful experience in Kelowna last year, when the clinic was well-attended by both local umpires and those from other regions. Geography is a real challenge for us, and events like SuperClinic represent a major time and dollar commitment for both the Association and individual umpires. But they are so well worth it! There is just no substitute for this kind of instruction in advanced umpiring.

Another important part of developing your game towards advanced levels, is the field evaluation. More of our most senior umpires continue to qualify as evaluators. Let's use them! You need an on-field evaluation to get your level 3 (as well as passing the written test and attending an Advanced clinic within each 3 year period). And level 3 really opens doors for the serious umpire. Provincial assignments give preference to level 3 umpires who apply, and higher level regular-season assigners are increasingly looking for umpires with at least a level 3. And, of course, for umpires who want to go further, level 3 is a big step towards level 4 and prestigious national assignments.

Before anyone can aspire to the higher levels of umpiring, a sound grounding in fundamentals is essential. And our level 2 clinics lead the nation in giving that grounding. In the last couple of years, we've made these clinics more effective, especially with the flexibility in scheduling either a full day, or a number of weeknight sessions. And to make them even more effective in the future, our instructors will be getting access to more and better tools and ideas.

Our AGM in November brought included a review of our year, recognition of successes and awards, and a few changes to our board. We welcome to the board Eric Rasmussen and Dave Krochinsky. Rob Grey and Brian Cargnelli will each complete the final year of two-year terms for their areas.

Board of Directors

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

-Continued

Thanks are due to Chet Masse and Ralph Jolley, who did not stand for re-election. However, they will both remain active with the Association; they've been asked to serve as Assistant Area Representatives by their successors. Also at the AGM, a number of resolutions to amend the by-laws were considered. Some were adopted, mainly aimed at clarifying clauses that needed it. Proposals involving change to the way the board is established and elected were also considered. After a spirited discussion, these proposals were tabled, on the basis that a committee will take a broad look at the issues involved. The committee will be asked to recommend changes that can balance the needs of all aspects of our Association. I will appoint that committee early in the new year. While numbers can't get too large, I do invite any member to let me know if they would like to serve on this committee.

YOU MAKE THE CALL #1

Play: F1 throws an inside pitch directly at B1. B1 freezes and is struck on the arm by the pitch. The plate umpire calls time and awards B1 first base, but the defensive team's manager argues strongly that B1 did not make an attempt to avoid the pitch and should not be granted first base. Who is right?

Answer on back page

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REPORT - AREA 1 Vancouver Island South

-Eric Rasmussen, Area Director

My name is Eric Rasmussen and I am the new Director for Area 1. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Chet Masse for all the hard work he has done the previous 4 years on the BOD as the Area 1 Representative. He will continue to be involved in the South Island as my assistant.

The South Island has seen an encouraging increase in membership over the past year. However, we struggle to increase the number of Level 3 umpires that are in our area. Hopefully now that there are more evaluators qualified in the Province, there will be more evaluations done, thereby making the Level 3 rating a bit more accessible. If there is anyone in the South Island that would like to be evaluated (whether it be to qualify for the Level 3 system or just for the learning experience) please contact me and we will get it arranged.

2006 will be an exciting year in the South Island. In January we will be holding Super Clinic in Nanaimo February 4-5. We are attempting to get a MLB umpire to be the lead instructor in addition to our contingent of local instructors. If anyone has ever wanted to take an upper level clinic, this would be an excellent opportunity for you. Please look for the Super Clinic registration information in this edition of Hey Blue.

In August 2006, Victoria is hosting the National Pee Wee Championships at Carnarvon Park. This is the first time that the Pee Wee National tournament is being held on the Island and will be an excellent showcase of ball players and umpires. Come and check it out!

If there are any members that have questions, concerns or just need to bounce some ideas off, please feel free to contact me. I look forward to serving as your Area Director.

REPORT - AREA 2 Vancouver Island North

-Eric Toneff, Area Director

This year should be an exciting year for Northern Vancouver Island. We are co-hosts with Area 1 for the 2006 Superclinic being held February 4 and 5 in Nanaimo.

As is posted on the BCBUA website we are trying to secure the instruction of a major league umpire, no guarantees but it sure is an exciting prospect.

Area 2 has selected our Pro Image Supply Junior Umpire of the Year and we are hoping that member will be in attendance at Superclinic to receive his award and be recognized for the great job he has done through his young career.

There will also be a special award given to a senior umpire from the North Island by his home association for his dedicated, unselfish service to his community through

minor baseball for many years. I hope this gets people guessing who it is and I cannot reveal his name just yet, we want to make this a huge celebration. I can promise that in the next issue of Hey Blue! his photo will appear. For the younger umpires in Area 2, I want to say thank you for always doing your very best, all too often the young guys go unnoticed but I have traveled the island in my area and have seen some very fine young umpires. Remember it is important to attend clinics every year, there is something to be learned at each clinic and you have something to teach the older guys as well.

We have already secured March 26, 2005 as the date for the Courtenay/Comox Level 1 and 2 umpire clinic to be held at the Meeting ROOM AT Bill Moore Memorial Park and are hoping to have dates for Campbell River and Parksville very soon. We are also hoping to have umpire clinics in Port Alberni and Powell River but time will tell as BCBUA sponsored clinics have not been held in those locations in some time. Finally, Ed Berkenstock and I would like to wish all of the members of BCBUA a Merry Christmas, all the very best for 2006.

REPORT - AREA 3 Lower Mainland-East

-Eddy Lang, Area Director

-No Report recieved by press time.

REPORT - AREA 4 Lower Mainland-West

-Rob Grey, Area Director

-No Report recieved by press time.

REPORT - AREA 5 Lower Mainland-South

-Jerry Tregaskis, Area Director

Seasons Greetings to all! I hope this issue of Hey Blue! finds you all in good health and able to enjoy the spirit of the season with family & friends.

2005 was a very active year in our Area with membership increasing by 8, but there is still much work to be done as we are aware of a large number of umpires in our area, particularly in the Newton area of Surrey who are not members and did not attend a clinic in 2005.

I encourage all baseball associations in the Lower Mainland to contact the respective Area Rep to arrange for a clinic in 2006. It is, by far, the best way to train umpires and keep them up to date with new rules and mechanics.

I would also encourage all the Level 2 umpires in the area to try writing the Level 3 exam, and if you are successful, proceed with attending the SuperClinic in Nanaimo this February. The educational content and quality cannot be matched at any other clinic in the province and it is a great opportunity to meet and mingle with the senior umpires of the province.

After doing the above, I encourage you to get field evaluated this summer in an attempt to achieve your Level 3 classification. Please

read the Level 3 column in this issue for many good reasons to proceed on this course.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind you of the upcoming Provincial Championships and the BC Summer Games. The next issue of Hey Blue! will contain full details of the locations and an application form to complete and return. The experience of working a Provincial Championship is something you will never forget and a memory you will treasure for years to come.

We are actively looking for female umpires who have the potential to progress quickly to the Bantam & Midget levels. We are prepared to provide extensive training on a one-to-one basis from some of our senior umpires, to assist these female umpires to develop and progress quickly to the Level 3 qualification. BC has a very active female baseball program and they compete annually in the Canadian Championships. These championships will be held in Grande Prairie, AB in 2006 and will be held in BC in 2007. These Championships in the past have been umpired by male umpires, but starting in 2006 are to be umpired strictly by female umpires. This is a great opportunity for female umpires and BCBUA wants to encourage and promote a large number of female umpires in BC who will work both the female baseball program and the regular baseball program from Mosquito to Pee Wee to Bantam and, if they wish, the Midget program. If you know anyone in your local associations, please pass their names along to your Area Director, or any other member of the Executive, and we will enroll them in a program of direct, accelerated training to encourage and assist them to progress as quickly as possible.

Finally, in closing, I would like to take the opportunity of wishing you all the best for the coming Christmas season and a very Happy and successful New Year.

JERRY

MLB Rules Committee adds an Umpire for First Time

It's hard to believe that Major League Baseball has never had an umpire on the Rules Committee! That omission was finally corrected recently with the appointment of Larry Young, a 20 year veteran umpire to the MLB Playing Rules Committee.

Young was quoted as saying "It certainly is an honor to be the first umpire on this committee in the history of baseball." "I'm very much looking forward to the work because I think it is a great chance to do something for the game."

Sandy Alderson, chief executive officer of the San Diego Padres and MLB's former executive vice president for baseball operations, chairs the committee, and other members include John McHale Jr. executive vice president of baseball operations of MLB, Rod Carew, a Hall of Fame player and major league team executives from the Chicago Cubs, Minnesota Twins, Atlanta Braves, and Los Angeles Angels.

Larry Young has long been a respected umpire and rules expert and will have a very positive influence on the Committee.

REPORT - AREA 6 -Thompson-Okanagan

-Brian Cargnelli, Area Director

Best of the season to all of the umpires in the Thompson Okanagan. My name is Brian Cargnelli and I am the new, err..., recycled Area Rep. I was actually the original Area Rep for all of the southern part of the province (east of Hope, south of 100 Mile House and all the way to the Alberta border) back in the late 1980's and up to 1994. When I resigned that position for personal reasons in 1994, it was actually split into three separate areas. Guess no one person could really fill the shoes I left behind. LOL. I was then the Vice-President of the association from 1998-2001 and more recently (last year) I acted as the assistant to the Assistant Area Rep Matt Lowndes. So even though I am new to the executive at this point, I really have been involved in the area and the association for years.

Many of you may know me as an instructor since you have probably attended one of my clinics, but I am also a Nationally Certified Level 5 Umpire. In fact this past summer I was one of four BC umpires to work the Senior National Championships in Kamloops and I was honored to be selected to work the plate in one of the semi-final games between Quebec and Saskatchewan. In fact I have now been chosen to work nine National Championships over the past 20 years for Baseball Canada and I have also worked eight National and International tournaments for Little League. This past summer I was very fortunate to work a new College Summer League in Kelowna (West Coast College Baseball League) and I supervised the Midget AAA championships in Kamloops. In short I guess you can say that I have worked a lot of very high level ball this past year.

I know that there are many of you wondering what I will be bring to the area. One of my main reasons that I have decided to once again act as Area Rep for the Thompson Okanagan is the education factor. I strongly believe that this association must do a better job at instructing our members in this area. Although we have some of the finest umpires in the province, we can always improve. I know that everyone who has attended a clinic in the past few years has seen an improvement in the clinic format and that will continue over the next few seasons. I am currently scheduled to attend the National Caravan in Moose Jaw March 2-5 2006 to learn new and different ways of instructing umpires and I will bring this information back to this province and implement it into my clinics this year. I strongly encourage everyone to attend a clinic this next year even if you have attended the SuperClinic last year so that you can also benefit from this information. You see, I firmly believe that even umpires who are at my level of officiating need to improve both on the field and off in the classroom. With this in mind I strongly urge you to pick up a rule book and start to study and get ready for a new ball season sometime in January.

If you are interested in arranging a clinic, give me a call. If you are interested in attending a clinic and you don't know where to go, give me a call. If you just want to talk or ask a few rules questions, give me a call. If you are interested in writing your level 3 this year or being field rated this year give me a call and I will get try to get this arranged for you. You can also drop me an e-mail (bcargnel@telus.net) if you prefer this option.

Finally, a heads up to people in this area. Kamloops is hosting the BC Summer Games in 2006. If you are interested in working this tournament, go to the new and improved BCBUA web site (www.bcbua.ca) and submit an application through the on-line forms. This tournament is really early in the season and we need to get applications in by the middle of May 2006. I encourage all level 3 and level 2 umpires looking to improve to level 3 to get your applications in early in the New Year. And with that note, have a great Holiday Season and Happy New Year to all.

REPORT - AREA 8 -The Kootenays

-Bill MacMillan, Area Director

Hi everyone and welcome to winter only 4 and a bit more months till Baseball in the beautiful Kootenays.

As most of you know the last few weeks have been.....interesting. There were 2 proposed bylaw changes tabled for the Annual General Meeting in November. One was the Mail in Balloting that we all know about and is critical for the outlying areas to truly be a part of the decision making process in the BCBUA. The other was a proposal to change the way the Board of Directors is chosen based on population and density of membership. This would have limited your ability to affect the decision making process in the BCBUA.

After much animated and passionate discussion at the Board of Directors meetings prior to the AGM the decision of the Board was to table these 2 proposals and give them to a committee to bring back a modified package for the next AGM. At first glance it seems that the 2 separate proposals are opposites but in fact they can work...nay, must work in conjunction to truly produce a democratic Provincial organization.

During a short campaign between the distribution of the Hey Blue! and the AGM we were able to gather enough support in opposition of the second proposal from our area that this sentiment had a tangible effect on the discussion. I would like to thank all of you who sent letters of support (they were produced at the BOD meetings) and specially I would like to thank both Don Daloise from Cranbrook and Steve Boutang from.....well we don't know what his home planet is....for their contributions. This is how a democratic organization should work and in this case it did. WELL DONE!!

The committee that will be struck will consist of both members of the Board and representatives of the membership. This committee has not yet been selected so if anyone wishes to serve or nominate a member for the committee please forward their names to President John Berry.

Back to baseball, in the last issue of Hey Blue! I mentioned that Trail Youth Baseball was thinking of applying for several Babe Ruth Provincials in 2006. This is now a done deal. Trail will be hosting the 13 year olds, the 14 year olds, the 13-15 year olds and the 16 year olds all in the same week. The history of the Babe Ruth Provincials over the past few years is such that we simply don't know how many teams we will get but it could be as few as 10 or as many as 20, we will see. Regardless, we will need some help on the umpiring front so if you are interested please fill out the application for Provincial Tournaments that will appear in the Spring issue of Hey Blue! We would love to see many new faces.

REPORT - AREA 9 Northern BC

-Adolph Jede, Area Director

My Assistant, Andre Jean, has agreed to continue for the next two years. Andre is planning on canvassing the Terrace Area for a revitalization of Umpires for the upcoming clinic in Spring of 2006.

Word is presently going out to many of the umpires re upcoming Super Clinic on the Island, on February 3-4, 2006. Lets all Support the Island organizers. Coming from the younger umpires in the North I would like to thank Jerry Tregaskis, Danny Huzar and Steve Boutang for their efforts in getting this Issue of Hey Blue out.

The 2006 Summer Games are being held in Kamloops. Any Umpires from the North who are interested in working these games, contact me, no later than May 15/06 or submit the application which will be in the next issue of Hey Blue! and have it mailed in by no later than May 31/06. This is a great opportunity to get your Evaluation up to date. All the best of the Season.

BE SURE TO ATTEND

SuperClinic 2006

Featuring:

- Major League Umpire
Jim Joyce (MLB#66)
- International Umpire
Jim Cressman
- Professional Umpire

Ian Lamplugh

February 4 & 5, 2006

**Wellington SS
Nanaimo, BC**

Application on Page 10

Registration Deadline

January 15

LEVEL 3 REPORT

-Bill MacMillan, Coordinator

There have been few changes since my last report in the Fall issue of Hey Blue! However I would like to address one issue that seems to crop up over and over. That is "why on earth would I want to pay an extra \$25.00 for Level 3, what do I get for it?"

There is the usual answer of better training and preference of selection for Provincial and other high profile tournaments. But this is not all; here is my take on why be a Level 3.

There are many fine umpires in the Province that are Level 2 and are quite happy to work local ball and not do much traveling. I was in that situation with hockey, I was a Level 2 and that was my comfort zone. I was quite content to stay there and do local games. That did not make me a worse official than the next person simply that I was happy where I was. With Baseball it was a different story for me.

When I first became involved with umpiring I quickly recognized that I had an opportunity to advance and see a higher level of ball than I could locally by becoming Level 3 and eventually Level 4. The opportunity for travel around the Province and even Nationally was my motivation for taking the senior levels. For me it has worked out as I have done 3 National tournaments and numerous Provincial tournaments where I had the chance to travel and meet all sorts of new people. I have received back a thousand fold all the extra fees that I have paid over the years.

In 2005, BC sent 9 umpires to National tournaments and in the not to distant past we have sent numerous umpires to International tournaments. Not all of us will get to go to Cuba and Taiwan for baseball but all that do started as Level 1, 2 and 3 in the BCBUA. One recurring comment we hear at the National meetings and tournaments is "why are there so few Nationals in BC?" and the recurring comment we hear at home is "why do the same bunch get to go to all the good tournaments?" Well the answer to question 2 is question 1. We would love nothing more than to have 50 National umpires in BC rather than the 24 we currently have.

All of the Nationally rated umpires in BC maintain their BC Level 3 rating and pay National dues on top of that. Every National umpire in BC has traveled to at least 2 National tournaments and will go to more simply because we don't have enough.

Currently we have only about 36 non Nationally rated umpires that have completed all of the requirements for Level 3 when we have about 90 that have one or more elements of Level 3, have paid their money but not bothered to follow through. To me this seems silly. Follow through with your opportunities and reap the benefits!

For the young umpires in BC here is an opportunity to advance your skill level and get a tangible reward in the not to distant future and for any female umpires out there the

world is your oyster. Baseball Canada has currently 2 women's tournaments that will be officiated exclusively by female umpires by 2007. In BC we have 0, none, nada and niente female National umpires!! What an opportunity for the up and coming female umps out there!

So, if personal satisfaction at knowing you have achieved something that not all can is not enough to take your Level 3 then consider the travel and adventure opportunity at your feet and take a shot.

Little League Umpires Report

-Troy Carmont,
Provincial Umpire Consultant &
National Supervisor

It has been a busy off-season preparing for next spring/summer. Plans are in full swing for our clinics starting March 4th in Surrey. We will be preparing to host the 2006 Little League Canadian Championships in Whalley from August 5th-12th, 2006.

Troy Carmont from Surrey, B.C. will be representing Canada as the Canadian Umpire at the Little League World Series in Williamsport, Pennsylvania. Troy has been officiating baseball now for 25 years and I am sure he will do us proud.

We will be sending an umpire from the North Shore to the one week umpire school in Williamsport, Pennsylvania in April 2006.

Victoria will be hosting two Softball Canadian Championships as well in August 2006.

Larry Ratchford will be supervising these tournaments on behalf of Little League Canada.

We have renewed our relationship for another two years with Pro-Image to provide all uniforms and equipment to our umpires throughout the province. We have enjoyed an excellent relationship with Pro-Image and Jerry Tregaskis, I encourage all officials to look at the new products they have to offer.

All the best during the holiday season, I will talk to you all in the new year.



Babe Ruth Baseball announces Host Sites for 2006 Provincials

New Babe Ruth Provincial Commissioner, Keith Small has announced the host cities for their various Provincial Championships as follows:

- 10 year olds - Nanaimo
- 12 year Olds - Nanaimo
- 13 year olds - West Kootenay (Trail)
- 14 year olds - West Kootenay (Trail)
- 15 and under - West Kootenay (Trail)
- 16 year olds - West Kootenay (Trail)
- 16-19 year olds - Lower Mainland (TBA)

BCBUA assigns umpires to all of these tournaments and we will be accepting applications following the publication of the Spring 2006 issue of Hey Blue! which will contain the application form for all Provincial Championships.

BCBUA Website

-Brian Cargnelli, Webmaster

Well after a lot of work and several false starts, the new BCBUA web site is up and running. Fred O'Rourke has decided to step down as webmaster after several years and I have now taken over for him. Many thanks has to go to Fred for a great job over the years as the maintenance of a web site is a huge time commitment. With the change from Fred to me, I decided to re-write the web site from scratch and include many new areas and features that many people have been requesting for years. We are now posting many on-line forms in PDF format so that everyone can access the information. For example we now have an ejection report that you can fill out on-line and submit via the web. It is so easy that you may want to eject someone in your first game next year just to try it out. I am just kidding of course. You may want to wait until your second game. LOL.

I have also included an area called Stump the Ump where you can post rule or rotation questions that some of our most senior umpires will try to answer. Another new area is the photo gallery. If you have any pictures that you are interested in having posted on the site, send them to using email or the old fashioned way via snail mail (Canada Post). I'll scan the pictures that come in the mail and return them to you if you include a self-addressed stamped envelope. You can get my email and address information via the web site under the Executive link. Anything to get people to look at the web site I say!

If you haven't gone to the web site in awhile I encourage you to do so. Remember that this is your web site as much as it is mine. Together we can work to make the web site as good as we want it to be. If you have any feedback you can send it to info@bcbua.ca. Take care and have a great holiday season.



BC Minor Baseball Provincial Championship Sites 2006

BC Minor will announce the sites for the 2006 Provincial Championships in February. Watch for the Spring 2006 issue of Hey Blue which will contain a complete listing of all site together with instructions of how to apply to work those championships.

SUPERCLINIC 2006

We are pleased to announce the strongest lineup of guest instructors we have ever had, headlined by Major League Umpire, **Jim Joyce** (MLB#66) and his biography includes the following:

Joined the Major League staff in 1989...has worked the All-Star Game (1994, 2001), Division Series (1995, 98, 99, 2001-03), League Championship Series (1997 and 2004) and World Series (1999, 2001)...previously umpired in the Midwest League (1978-79), Florida Instructional League (1978), Texas League (1980), Pacific Coast League (1981-86, 88), International League (1987) and Dominican League (1983)...was second base umpire when Nolan Ryan recorded his 5,000th career strikeout and was at first base as Robin Yount reached the 3,000-hit milestone.

In addition to Jim Joyce, we are pleased to have **Jim Cressman** from Ontario as part of the faculty as well. Jim was named the International Baseball Federation's Umpire of the Year for 1990. His many prestigious assignments include the 1988 Olympics in Korea and the 1998 Worlds in Italy. He has umpired professionally from 1972 to 1975 and is now entering his 41st year as an umpire. He is a Master Course Conductor.

Rounding out this impressive group is our own **Ian Lamplugh**, former Major League Umpire and presently Umpire In Chief for the Chinese Professional Baseball League who will be joining us on the Sunday fresh from Taiwan via the Dominican Republic.

This faculty is certainly one of the most impressive we have ever put together for a SuperClinic and we will round out the faculty with a few of our own. Don't miss it.

The venue will be Wellington Senior Secondary in Nanaimo on Saturday February 4 & Sunday February 5, 2006. The registration fee will be \$165.00 which includes your \$75.00 membership fee and lunch on the Saturday.

If you wish to write your Level 4 exam the registration fee is \$215.00 which includes the \$50.00 Baseball Canada fee.

We have made arrangements with the Coast Bastion Hotel. The room rate is \$69.00 per night plus taxes. To reserve a room call 1 800 663-1144 and ask for the BC Umpires Association clinic rate.

The registration deadline is January 15, 2006. A registration form is on page 10 of this edition of Hey Blue! and should be forwarded along with your cheque or money order **payable to BCBUA to:**

Danny Huzar

9 Creekstone place

Port Moody BC V3H 4L7

Further details will be published on our Website (www.bcbua.ca)

THE VIEW FROM THE PLATE

-Sean Hardiman

In this column, I'd like to talk about recruitment and retention of officials in amateur sports. Like many amateur sports, baseball has its challenges when it comes to finding enough umpires in order to let the players (who are more often than not, kids) play the game. There are many reasons for the shortage, but in order to really understand why there are recruitment issues for officials, I think we need to ask ourselves why people get into officiating in the first place.

What attracts people to a difficult, stressful job that requires them to make the right decision every time, with sometimes dangerous working conditions (foul balls to the head, anyone?) and work evaluations from spectators who have little to no understanding of the job that no union worth its salt would ever tolerate? Believe it or not, there are lots of reasons. Many people become officials because they see a need from their community sports leagues. One of the best sources of officials are young people who are interested in officiating for a little bit of pocket money and a chance to play a different role on the field than the one they're used to. Others get involved because their children are in the sport, while others are people like me who officiate out of a love for the game.

There are lots of reasons why people get into officiating, but what causes people to abandon it? I recall reading a study that showed the average lifespan of an amateur sports official was two to three years. When one considers that length of time in the context of the number of years that someone could be an official, we're not doing a good job at holding on to our people. While there are numerous reasons that people might leave officiating, I would like to suggest that the biggest factor that contributing to people leaving officiating is abuse. Whether it takes the form of abuse from players, parents or spectators, the main reason I hear when I ask former officials why they left their respective games is that they were tired of putting up with the abuse from players, coaches, and spectators. In spite of greater awareness of the issue and a decreased tolerance for it, spectators and players alike don't seem to appreciate that the reason there are shortages of umpires is because the majority of people simply don't want to put up with the sort of personal attacks that many seem to think acceptable.

One of the variables at play in the recruitment and retention problem is common to many team sports, but especially baseball: We are generally only recruit officials from 49% of the population! What do I mean by this? Quite simply, we don't try very hard to recruit female umpires to work in baseball! Women are an incredibly untapped resource for potential officials (after all, there are more females in the population than males), but we haven't done much to encourage women to consider baseball as a sport they could officiate. Umpire abuse is certainly a barrier to recruiting more women to the sport, as is the fact that baseball is male-dominated. Neither of these factors is insurmountable, but they are significant, especially when one considers the numerous alternative activities someone could participate in instead. There certainly is no reason why females can't be umpires, as there have been several make it to the AAA level in the Minor Leagues. Additionally, the Canadian national women's baseball program will likely be going to an all-female umpire program next year, which will hopefully provide additional role models for women considering officiating. However, until we can keep the abuse the reality is that we need to solve the problems that keep people, male or female, out of officiating. Once we do that, we will have more success recruiting and retaining umpires of both genders.

What can we do about all of this? I think the first thing that needs to be done is to change the behavior of people involved in amateur sport. One way this can be accomplished is through the implementation of code of conduct agreements. The code of conduct consists of a set of behavioral standards that all players, coaches, and officials would have to adhere to whenever they participated in a league-sanctioned activity. Anyone who sets foot on a playing field would have to sign one, and this would normally take place at the time of registration. These codes set out in specific detail what is considered appropriate and inappropriate conduct during a game, and outlines the penalties (ejection, suspension, expulsion, and/or fines) to be imposed when a conduct rule is broken. Players and coaches know well in advance that if they violate a conduct rule, there will be consequences. A number of organizations have tried this with their youth leagues with significant success. Many have required parents to sign them, as a requirement of their registration of their child in a league. One of the big advantages of a code of conduct is that it provides officials with firm guidelines for ejecting a player from the field for unacceptable conduct. I would suggest that some of the problems we encounter come from each official having a different threshold for what is considered acceptable behavior. Some officials are more inclined to eject players, while others are somewhat more tolerant of behavior that is questionable. Through the implementation of a code of conduct in our leagues, we might go a long way towards improving the standard of behavior that is accepted on the playing field. I would suggest that if we can do this, we will be well on our way to solving the recruitment and retention problem.

I should point out that the odd argument and the odd ejection are part of baseball. We should ensure that all umpires have the training to be able to deal with these sorts of scenarios, understanding that sport generates extremes in emotions from all involved. However, when one considers that many US states are enacting laws to protect officials from abuse, we have to seriously consider where we draw the line at acceptable behavior.

Your thoughts on this column and its contents are welcome – do you think that umpire abuse is an issue? Have you had situations that have caused you to consider getting out of officiating? What would you suggest as a fix to this problem? I want to hear from you - e-mail me at heybluestaff@shaw.ca and I will discuss the replies in my next column.

- Sean Hardiman lives, works, and umpires in Prince George, BC

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

-Steve Boutang

I sincerely hope that you are all enjoying the festive season and that 2006 brings you prosperity and good fortune.

For those of you who did not attend this year's BCBUA Annual General Meeting I will endeavour to sum up what I said to those in attendance. This past season was one of both ups and downs. We suffered some setbacks off the field, namely our executive's inability to produce HEY BLUE! on a timely basis. We are addressing this issue by actively looking for a new Editor. If you have any ideas on this front or are willing to help contribute to a more positive BCBUA in this regard, I invite you to submit your interests to Jerry Tregaskis, Danny Huzar, or myself. On another note, you may have been aware of some of the issues surrounding our Constitution that were discussed at the AGM. This situation could have had some serious impact on the way BCBUA conducts business in the future. Our board was very divided on the issue, which is good for debate, but bad for egos. I am pleased to report that cooler heads prevailed and subsequently both Constitutional proposals were tabled so that a special committee can be struck to study the issues and attempt to propose something for our membership at the 2006 Annual General Meeting in Victoria.

This item tops of my list of reasons to be happy about BCBUA and what we accomplished in 2005. Our board was able to have good discussion about the future of the association and how to reach those goals in a united way. Our board was able to realize our errors with respect to Hey Blue. Our association was able to send some 11 umpires and a supervisor to National Championships this year, all of who performed admirably. Our association committed to sending 3 umpires to a Nationally certified instructor's clinic which will in turn benefit our members down the road. Our association was also able to secure a grant from the Provincial gaming account which will help us put on a successful Superclinic, order a library of research and learning materials, and update our computer software, among other things. Our association has never been in better financial shape. To that end, I have been asked, along with respected members Bill MacMillan and Chet Masse, to conduct a review of the dues and fees that are paid by our membership. This does not mean that we are going to reduce fees. But it does mean that we are going to try to find more ways to give members value for their dollar so to speak. And maybe in the end, there will be a small reduction in dues.

In closing, I would like to welcome 2 new members and a recycled one to our Board of Directors. Eric Rasmussen of Victoria who will ably represent Vancouver Island South and Dave Kroschynski, a veteran umpire and well respected individual who will represent Okanagan South. These 2 individuals will bring a welcome presence to our board and

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will continue the great work done by Chet Masse and Ralph Jolley, who have stepped down. I sincerely thank both Chet and Ralph for their services. And I also welcome back Brian Cargnelli who takes over as Area Rep for Thompson Okanagan. Brian served on the board for many years before a recent hiatus and his presence and experience is a welcome addition. I am truly excited about our new Board of Directors.

Happy Holidays to everyone and prosperity in the New Year.

2005 AGM A Personal Perspective

-Danny Huzar

The 2006 AGM brought a few surprises and disappointments. The biggest disappointment that I experienced was the lack of attendance by our membership. While some will be quick to point out that the AGM is held in the Lower Mainland and as such shows the apathy of the Lower Mainlanders, I am not so sure that this apathy is restricted to any particular area. Before joining the Board I attended an AGM in Kelowna and another one held in Nanaimo and I found just as much apathy there. Why is that? Do the members really not care? I wonder? Others would be quick to point out that the cost and time commitment is prohibitive to them. I know that is true for some members, however, we had only 32 attend the AGM (that included the 15 comprised of the board members and the Provincial Supervisor). Surely there are more than 17 people from all over the province that can afford to attend both from a time and financial perspective.

I proposed some changes to the bylaws as did Bill MacMillan. There was a lot of debate as to the validity or lack thereof of each proposal. The debate centered around my proposals. Bill's had been debated extensively over the years and not much more was left to be said. These changes were first debated before my tenure started in 2001. Mail-in balloting has significant opposition. I recall our president at the time telling the board that if the board would not put forth the Mail In balloting proposal then he and Bill would do it on their own. I believe that due to that position the proposal progressed. Despite the opposition it was felt that the membership should be allowed to have a voice.

Our board met on the Friday night and all day Saturday before the AGM. My proposed changes were debated as the last order of business on the Saturday. The Board members realized that these changes would be highly divisive. Some argued that they may even cause the association to cease to exist.

I did listen to these comments, and although I was not sure that the end of the association was at stake, I was convinced that there would be significant repercussions. As such I was amenable to tabling the motion that I authored if both bylaw motions would be tabled. We as a board recommended to the membership to do so.

In any event a debate was held and ultimately a motion to table each proposed By-law change was put forth and approved by the membership. It wasn't even a close vote. There was a clear majority of members wish-

Continued Next Column

ing to table both motions.

Did we miss an opportunity for change? No! There were 32 members present at the AGM. The bylaws may be changed by special resolution only. A special resolution may only pass if supported by a minimum of 75% of those present. This means that 9 votes against would have killed a special resolution. I know that there were at least 9 votes against each motion. As such it was all academic. Neither motion had a chance of being approved.

However, the board reached a gentlemen's agreement. We will form a committee to review bylaw changes and we will only propose changes to the AGM that have the unanimous support of the board. Members interested in joining the committee may contact John Berry.

What effect does this have? This will ensure that even the smallest area will be heard and satisfied before change may come about. Change will be slow but the changes that do occur will be hopefully for the betterment of the association and should not offend anyone regardless of where they reside. In the meantime the status quo remains.

At the end of the meeting a motion to move the venue of the AGM to Victoria in 2006 was passed. I voted against this motion and would like to explain myself. We have had some good years from a financial perspective. It is always a good idea to have some reserve for bad years. We may be due for some bad years. Holding the AGM will simply force a much higher expenditure. The additional cost will be approximately \$2,000.00 for next year. I know that all of our decisions cannot be motivated by dollars but in today's world we cannot ignore the financial aspects of these decisions either. As it is, we have direction from the membership to do this and we must comply. Please come to the next AGM in Victoria and make a difference.

SuperClinic 2006

Featuring:

- **Major League Umpire
Jim Joyce (MLB#66)**
- **International Umpire
Jim Cressman**
- **Professional Umpire
Ian Lamplugh**

February 4 & 5, 2006

Wellington Senior Secondary

**3135 Mexicana Road
Nanaimo, BC**

Application on Page 10

**Registration Deadline
January 15, 2006**

AWARDS

BCBUA has a number of awards which are presented to recognise members who have made a significant contribution to the Association. These awards are not necessarily presented on an annual basis, but are presented when the Board of Directors identify worthy recipients, with the assistance of members and non members. Anyone is welcome to suggest any member for an award. This should be done through your Area Director (names and contact information is on page 2 of this issue). We invite nominations at any time. The awards are usually presented at the Annual General Meeting, the SuperClinic or at any other event which is thought to be appropriate. The following is a list of the awards and qualifying descriptions.

Howard Chapman Senior Umpire of the Year Award

Awarded annually to the BCBUA member who is deemed to have had the most outstanding year of umpiring overall; culminating in his/her selection to work in a Provincial, Canadian or International tournament; and having been so selected, brings honor to the BCBUA by his/her performance.

Ian Lamplugh "Up and Comer" Award

Awarded annually to a BCBUA member who has shown a tremendous desire to improve his/her skills through consistent hard work, dedication and enthusiasm for umpiring; and who has shown enough talent to be considered for training as a professional umpire.

George Connelly Builder's Award

Awarded annually to a person who has demonstrated a long-term commitment and dedication to the development and encouragement of young umpires at his/her local league or community level by continually partnering with and supporting the BCBUA clinic program.

Doug Hudlin Distinguished Service Award

Awarded annually to a long-standing member of the BCBUA who has shown a consistent support of and dedication to the growth and development of the association through years of loyal membership and committed service.

Most Improved Umpire Award

Awarded annually to the BCBUA member showing the greatest improvement in his/her overall umpiring ability in the areas of rules knowledge and application, strike zone consistency, judgment, on-field presence, and interrelations with managers, coaches and players.

Special Projects Award

Awarded, when applicable, to recognize a person who has given of his/her time and energy sacrificially to complete a special project or assignment which is deemed to be a significant benefit to the BCBUA.

Unsung Hero Award

Awarded, when applicable, to recognize a BCBUA member who has, over a period of time, worked diligently and given sacrificially of his/her time to recruit, encourage and improve the overall abilities of younger umpires in his/her local area.

Pro Image Junior Umpire of the Year Award

Awarded annually by Pro Image Officials Supply Inc. (Official Supplier of clothing & equipment to BCBUA) to a young BCBUA member (19 and under) in each area, as recommended by the local Area Representative, who has shown a serious dedication to umpiring and to improving himself on and off the baseball field.

Game Called on account of, er, Fog

Talk about the players being in a fog, in 1979, a game between the New York Mets and the Pittsburgh Pirates was officially "fogged out".

When the game began at twilight, the skies in New York were clear, but as the contest wore on, a wierd mist rolled into Shea Stadium and settled on the playing surface. The overhead lights took on an eerie glow as the thick fog made it nearly impossible to see. The fog got so bad that a routing pop-up to centre field became a triple because the outfielders never saw the ball.

The umpires temporarily halted play, hoping the fog would clear. It didn't. Finally at 2:15 AM, the umpires decided to suspend the game and allow the teams to finish it another day when the weather was more cooperative. It was the first time a Major League game had ever been fogged out.

RECENT AWARD WINNERS

Howard Chapman Senior Umpire of the Year Award

2002 - Not Awarded
2003 - Not Awarded
2004 - Not Awarded
2005 - Rob Allan, Maple Ridge

Ian Lamplugh "Up & Comer" Award

2002 - Don Violette, Coquitlam
2003 - Don Hass, Richmond
2004 - Rob Grey, West Vancouver
2005 - Brad Gunnlaughsen, New West

George Connelly Builder's Award

2002 - Richard Spittle, Maple Ridge
2003 - Chuck Blaikie, Victoria
2004 - Andre Jean, Terrace
2005 - Terry Kratzmann, Courtenay
2005 - Fabian Poulin, Nanaimo

Doug Hudlin Distinguished Service Award

2002 - Adolph Jede, Quesnel
2003 - Lorne Raymond, Penticton
2004 - Richard Christie, White Rock
2005 - Ralph Jolley, Kelowna

Most Improved Umpire Award

2002 - Fred O'Rourke, Vancouver
2003 - Fabian Poulin, Nanaimo
2004 - Brian Carnelli, Merritt
2005 - Ken Raison, Surrey

Special Projects Award

2002 - Dave Kennedy, Vancouver
2003 - Dan Huzar, Port Moody
2004 - Not Awarded
2005 - Mark Bodwell, Surrey

Unsung Hero Award

2002 - NEW
2003 - Eric Toneff, Courtenay
2004 - Bill Murray, Maple Ridge
2005 - Chuck Bertrand, Sechelt
2005 - Eric Rasmussen, Victoria

PRO IMAGE

Junior Umpire of the Year 2004

AREA	NAME	AGE
Van Island- South	Matthew Martin	19
Van Island- North	Adam Berkenstock	14
Van Island- North	Russell Toneff	14
Lower Mnland-East	Kyle Lukacs	18
Lower Mnland-West	Derek Duncan	16
Lower Mnland-South	Aidan Sank	14
Thompson-Okanagan	Bryn Johnson	16
South Okanagan	Steffen Mazur	17
The Kootenays	Michael Pereversoff	16
Northern BC	Iain Wallis	17

PRO IMAGE

Junior Umpire of the Year 2005

AREA	NAME	AGE
Van Island- South	Andrew Wrean	16
Van Island- North	Scott Garneau	13
Lower Mnland-East	Geoffrey Payne	17
Lower Mnland-West	Malcolm Keetley	18
Lower Mnland-South	Stephen Bailey	15
Thompson-Okanagan	Clint Sully	18
South Okanagan	Lyle Anderson	17
The Kootenays	Curtis Dietrich	16
Northern BC	Jeremy Kral	16

The Infield Fly Rule - Getting the Bugs Out

By Richard Christie, BCBUA Technical Director

One of the most maligned and misunderstood rules in baseball has to be the Infield Fly rule. It causes more confusion

than a stray at a dog show. It has always been a mystery to me why this rule causes otherwise normal individuals to "lose it". If being a good umpire is the ability to keep one's head while everyone else around you is losing theirs, then understanding the Infield Fly rule will go a long way towards accomplishing this goal.

To best explain this rule, let's look at why the rule is there in the first place. Let's imagine that YOU are a runner on 2nd base, and your best friend is a runner on 1st base. There's no one out and your team's best hitter is up. He takes a mighty swing and pops the ball up to the 3rd baseman.

As the ball is in flight what do you think you would be doing? Well, assuming that you and your friend are smart baserunners, you should be remaining fairly close to your base; because you know that if the 3rd baseman catches the ball and throws to your base before you get back, you will be called out. So you're not likely to stray too far off your base.

Now let's pretend for a moment that the Infield Fly rule did not exist. Here is what could easily happen. The 3rd baseman calls for the ball and, just before he's about to catch it, he lets the ball drop. He picks it up on the first bounce and tags 3rd, and then, just as your friend on 1st is frantically heading for 2nd, he relays to the 2nd baseman who tags 2nd base. DOUBLE PLAY!! You're both out!! "Wait a minute," you say. "That's not fair!!"

Well, I happen to agree with you. And, fortunately, so does the rules committee. So in order to prevent this injustice from occurring they put in the Infield Fly rule. This rule has but one purpose, and that is to protect the baserunners from a possible double play. Here's how it works:

In order to invoke the Infield Fly rule there are four things that you must have.

- 1) Runners on 1st and 2nd (or bases loaded)
- 2) Less than 2 outs
- 3) A pop up (not a line drive nor a bunt)
- 4) Easily playable by an infielder with ordinary effort

Let's examine each of these in detail.

1. Runner on 1st and 2nd (or bases loaded). There must be a baserunner at 1st and 2nd base. Why? If you had any other situation - re 1st base only, 1st and 3rd, 2nd and 3rd, etc. there is never more than one person, aside from the batter, who, would be "forced" to run if the ball was allowed to drop. Since the batter, if he's doing his job properly, should be running on the hit, there is no way that he could become the second out on the tail end of a double play. Therefore, the defense would only be able to get one out no matter what they do.

2. Less than 2 outs. This should be self explanatory. If you already had 2 outs there would be no need for a double play.

3. A Pop Up (not a line drive nor a bunt). It is important to note that the rule is not to be invoked in cases of a line drive or a bunt. These situations are covered under a different rule (605.1).

4. Easily Playable by an infielder with ordinary effort. This seems to be the part of the rule that gives everyone the most problem. Take note of 2 things:

- a) The rule does not say that the ball has to be hit within the infield, only that it must be playable by an infielder.
- b) The rule makes no restriction as to who may catch the ball, only that an infielder must be "able" to make the catch with "ordinary effort".

And just what is "ordinary effort"? It is ordinary effort when an infielder can easily get under the ball with lots of time to make what should be a routine catch. It is not ordinary effort if an infielder has to turn and run to catch the ball.

It is not ordinary effort if an infielder has to dive to make a catch. It doesn't matter where an infielder happens to position himself. It doesn't matter where the ball is hit.. If he can get under the pop-up easily, it is an Infield Fly. If he can't, then it is not an Infield Fly.

Before the play begins, you would already know if you have less than 2 outs, and if you have runners at 1st and 2nd. So before the play begins you should be aware of a potential Infield fly situation. Now as soon as the batter hits a pop-up, you should be looking for just one thing In your judgement is the ball easily playable by an infielder with ordinary effort? If so, point at the ball with your right index finger and say "Infield Fly, the batter is out". The best time to make this call is when the ball has reached the top of its arc and is starting back down. This gives you lots of time to size up the situation and to decide if the ball is easily playable or not. By calling an Infield Fly, what you are doing is calling the batter out, thereby elimination any force of the runners. However, the ball remains alive and in play and the runners may tag up after a catch, or advance if the ball is dropped, entirely at their own risk. The key thing is they are not "forced" to advance, they can stay right where they are.

One more point about the Infield Fly. It is only applicable on a fair ball. If the ball is touched in foul territory and caught or dropped, it is a foul ball (Not an Infield Fly). If the ball drops untouched and rolls foul (before 1st or 3rd), it is a foul ball (Not an Infield Fly). If the ball is touched in fair territory and caught or dropped, it is a fair ball and an Infield Fly. If the ball drops untouched and rolls fair (before 1st or 3rd), it is a fair ball and an Infield Fly. So in any Infield Fly situation, when the ball is near the line, you should point and say "Infield Fly If Fair". Then, once it is established that it is indeed a fair ball, simply say "Batter's Out". If it turns out to be a foul ball instead, then call "Foul Ball". I hope that this has helped clear up some of the confusion regarding this simple, but troublesome rule. Good luck in the coming year.

Editor's Note: This is a reprint of an earlier article. In the past season there were many questions from members requesting various rule interpretations so that they can improve how their umpiring skills. BCBUA encourages your questions and we encourage you to submit them to the new "Stump the Ump" section on the website www.bcbua.ca From time to time, Hey Blue will print a selection of those questions.

MLB EJECTIONS BY THE NUMBERS

The following is a sampling of ejections of Current Major League managers as of the 2005 season.



115 Bobby Cox
(14 Seasons)



71 Tony LaRussa
(27 Seasons)



56 Lou Piniella
(14 Seasons)



0 Willie Randolph
(First Season)

YOU MAKE THE CALL #2

Play: With bases loaded and one out, B5 is at bat with a count of 2-2. B5 swings at but misses the next pitch. Thinking that this is the third out, F2 flips the ball (a) to the plate umpire, or (b) to the ground in front of home plate. All baserunners advance one base. How should the umpire rule on this?

Answer on back page

LIFE IN PROFESSIONAL BASEBALL

-Ian Lamplugh

The last out of the game has been made, I have left the field and I am going up the tunnel to the umpire's room. What happens next in the locker room?

In the Chinese Professional Baseball League (CPBL), I remove my light blue game shirt, change my undershirt, and grab a bottle of water. (If I was working home plate, I would naturally remove my equipment as well. The umpire crew then has a meeting about the game. We discuss close plays, unusual plays (for example, batter interference, and umpire positioning. These meetings are a good thing, because let me tell you I have seen more crazy plays in half a season here, than in my last eight years in the Major Leagues and minor leagues!! In fact, my talking during these post game meetings is the second part of my job (the first being to umpire!), to bring my experience, theories, and positioning taught to me in the United States and share this information with the Taiwan umpires. Sometimes we will even go out to the television truck to watch certain plays, and talk about them. When the meeting is over, it is time to go back to the hotel (by taxi) or on to the next city (usually by train, but sometimes by bus or airplane), stopping to eat (and amusing the local umpires with my chopstick follies!) at some point.


In the Major Leagues, I would take off my shoes and put them in the middle of the room for the clubhouse attendant to clean. Next my clothes go into the laundry basket-they will be washed and ready to wear tomorrow. I then shower and have dinner (salad, meat, potatoes, vegetable, and dessert). During dinner the crew would talk about the game and probably watch video of any plays they were curious about. Every MLB umpire room must have a television and VCR, not just so the umpires can review the game, but also in case there is a controversial play. The media is allowed into the umpires room ten minutes after the game. This means that if the umpires think the media may want to question something, they will change the routine, watching the play first and make sure they have clothes on when the reporters arrive!

Only one time did the media want to talk to me after a game - in Montreal, the New York Mets were in town. I called the Mets Jay Payton (now with the San Diego Padres) safe on a close play, in the top of the eighth inning. Montreal pitcher Steve Kline (now with the St. Louis Cardinals) directed profanity at me, so I immediately ejected him from the game. He then threw his glove at my head, and charged at me, having to be restrained by three teammates, the whole time threatening to fight Jay Payton after the game! So, the media wanted my reaction to Klines' violent outburst after being ejected.

And finally, when it was time to leave the stadium, if we were staying in town, we would usually take a limousine back to the hotel. If we were going to another city, often we received a police escort (police cars or motorcycles) away from the stadium to the airport for our first class flight.

Ian

The following application for SuperClinic should be completed and mailed with your cheque to Danny Huzar, 9 Creekstone Place, Port Moody V3H 4L7



**SUPER CLINIC REGISTRATION
2006**
Please print using UPPER CASE only.

LAST NAME: _____ FIRST NAME: _____
 DOB (mm/dd/yy): ___/___/___ GENDER: M F PHONE: (____) _____
 FAX: (____) _____
 ADDRESS: _____ CELL: (____) _____
 Line 1 _____
 Line 2 _____
 City _____ Postal Code _____ WORK: (____) _____

EMAIL: _____ Please underline numerals
 The undersigned authorizes BCBUA to release this information to baseball leagues and/or allocators.

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE (mm/dd/yy): _____

FOR BCBUA USE ONLY

DATABASE ID: _____ AREA: _____

AMOUNT PAID:
 PROVINCIAL ONLY: \$165.00
 BASEBALL CANADA: \$215.00

Discipline Committee Report

-Steve Boutang, Chairman *Comments and conclusions in this report are the personal opinions of the author and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the BCBUA Executive.

I would like to take the opportunity to congratulate all of our members who this year avoided the kind of items which normally end up on my desk. In other words, you are all to be thanked for a job well done. There was very little controversy surrounding umpires this year - much less than most seasons.

Sadly, we did have one incident which required an investigation and subsequent suspension to the umpire, a member from Lower Mainland West.

One incident that did require an investigation, but resulted without suspension, was one that particularly disturbed me. The complaint was made by a coach from Vancouver, who is also a BCBUA umpire, against an umpire after a heated argument during a game.

Following some debate with senior BCBUA board members, it was found that the coach had fabricated some of the complaint in an effort to have the umpire suspended and thus unavailable to umpire some important season ending games. Consequently, the complaint filed by the coach was withdrawn. Then during a season ending game, the same coach was involved in an incident with an umpire. The coach protested a game in a vehement fashion and after much argument on the field. The umpire supervisor then discussed the situation with the umpire and coach in private quarters where it was admitted by the coach that he was just trying to motivate his team. It was agreed that the protest was not upheld. Then when the umpires went back onto the field, the coach again berated the umpires in front of all fans and coaches in a further attempt to motivate the team.

What a shame it is that such members exist within our association. Individuals who use their knowledge of umpiring and umpires to benefit themselves as coaches for the sole purpose of winning a minor baseball game. It is too bad that I cannot name this individual so that we could all see how one of our members treats his fellow umpires and to warn other young umpires that an individual like this exists within our midst. Sadly this is not the mandate of the committee. Sadly, however, we lose umpires annually because of actions such as these.

In closing, I thank those senior members of our association who have served on the Discipline Committee this year and in years past. It is a thankless job, and you all have my respect for having completed your assignments.

YOU MAKE THE CALL #3

Play: Runners on second & third with none out. F1 is trying to issue an intentional walk to B3, but balks and throws over the catcher's head to the backstop. R3 scores and R2 reaches third, but makes a wide turn and is tagged out trying to return to third. Is R2 allowed to remain at third in view of the balk, or is he out?

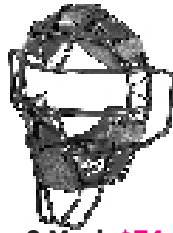
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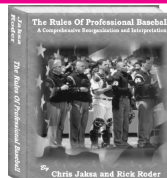
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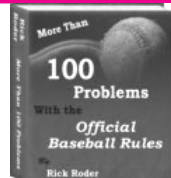
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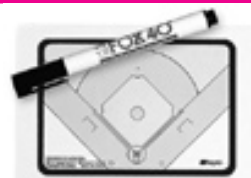
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ANSWERS TO YOU MAKE THE CALL

1. Ruling: If B1 seemingly makes no attempt to avoid the pitch because he freezes, the ball is dead and he is awarded first base. However, the batter may never intentionally move into the pitch to allow the ball to strike him. If he does, the ball is dead when it strikes him and the pitch is ruled either a ball or a strike.

Pro 6.08b

2. Ruling: Under Pro rules, the ball remains alive in both scenarios. If the plate umpire realizes F2's blunder in (a) he should drop the ball immediately. **Pro 5.10c**

3. Ruling: Because the batter did not advance at least one base, the wild pitch is cancelled and the balk is enforced. R3 scores and R2 remains at third. Batter continues at bat.

Pro 5.09c and 8.05

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