



Hey Blue!

The Voice of BC Umpires



SPRING 2006

BC Baseball Umpires Association

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SuperClinic 2006

by Danny Huzar

This year's Super Clinic was outstanding. Jim Joyce, a Major League umpire, was one of our guest instructors. As expected, Jim was knowledgeable and exceedingly competent. Jim was also very down to earth. Everyone who attended had nothing but great things to say about him. The fact that he is a Major League umpire is only a statement of his qualifications not his attitude. He put everyone instantly at ease and the exchange of ideas flowed readily.

Jim Cressman from Ontario also joined our faculty. Jim has very impressive credentials, and he too was well grounded. It was a pleasure to work with Jim and that sentiment was universally shared.

We had looked forward to Ian Lamplugh's visit, however, he unexpectedly had to take his daughter to the hospital which prevented him from attending. When Ian spoke to me I sensed that he felt badly about that but I assured him that we not only understood but were happy that he had his priorities straight. There is always next year.

Our home grown instructors were Rob Allan, Mark Bodwell, Howard Chapman, Chet Masse and Fabian Poulin. All did a commendable job.

What does it take to create this seemingly simple result? It takes the commitment and hard work of numerous individuals. The board appointed a committee in September of 2005 to organize Super Clinic. The committee consisted of Ed Berkenstock, Chet Masse, Eric Rasmussen, Eric Toneff and me. We as a committee decided on content, structure, location and everything that goes with having such a clinic. Decisions are wonderful but actualizing them is the real work.

The actualization process includes many behind the scenes individuals that I would like to acknowledge. Before anything else can be done we need to find and secure a venue. This is easier said than done. Super Clinics are held early in the year and require a large facility like a gymnasium to conduct sessions. This is peak season for demand on such facilities and we end up being low in the pecking order of applicants. In September of 2005, I ran into Gary Diamond (Team Director for the PBL Nanaimo Pirates). I mentioned to Gary that

we were attempting to hold Super Clinic in Nanaimo in 2006. He immediately offered his assistance. In October I called him and asked for help in two areas. The first was to negotiate a fair rate at an appropriate hotel for out of town attendees. The second was to help find an appropriate facility. I think that Gary had the hotel deal sewn up the next day and I was put in touch with several people that ultimately resulted in obtaining our venue.

Once the venue was obtained, the next step was to secure the services of outside instructors. We have a good number of in house instructors but part of the attraction to Super Clinic is the guest instructor who brings a fresh slant to our avocation. I contacted Rick Roder (last year's guest instructor) and asked that he use his good offices to help us secure the services of a Major League umpire. Rick accepted the task and after three weeks or so was able to put me in touch with Jim Joyce.

We wanted a Baseball Canada Instructor and our Provincial Supervisor, Howard Chapman, suggested Jim Cressman. Jerry Tregaskis spoke to him and prepared him so that when I phoned Jim he was able to confirm his availability and willingness to attend. This was another significant task that was made easy for me.

Then came the rest of the stuff, Ed Berkenstock and Eric Toneff arranged to get and deliver the pitching machines for us, Chet Masse arranged for the catchers, and Eric Toneff arranged for a caterer. Jerry Tregaskis created the graphics for the portfolios that we distributed to each attendee and instructor. Jerry also picked up Jim Cressman in Vancouver and brought him to the island then got him back to the Vancouver airport the next day. When I arrived at Nanaimo Chuck Bertrand offered his help and I availed myself of it on more than one occasion.

One special thanks goes out to Jerry Tregaskis. Jerry coordinated many of these clinics before I took over 4 years ago. So I often called Jerry to use him as a sounding board. I found his experience in these matters to be exceedingly helpful. I would often call him with what I thought was a 'brain storm' and he would point

Table of Contents

BCBUA Executive	2
FEATURES	
SuperClinic	1
The View From The Plate	6
Experiences of a "Newbie Umpire"	8
Listing of Provincial Championships	5
Application- Provincial Championships	12
Listing of National Championships	11
REPORTS	
President's Report	2
Vice-President's Report	7
Area 1 - South Island Report	4
Area 2 - North Island Report	No Report
Area 3 - Lower Mainland East	No Report
Area 4 - Lower Mainland West	No Report
Area 5 - Lower Mainland South Report	4
Area 6 - Thompson Okanagan Report	5
Area 7 - South Okanagan	No Report
Area 8 - Kootenays Report	5
Area 9 - Northern BC Report	5
Level 3 Report	3
BCBUA Website	13
Little League Umpires Report	3
You Make The Call	various
PRO IMAGE Page	15
Change of Address	16
Answers to You Make the Call	16

out that it was just a 'slight drizzle'. The exceptional part is that about 2 months before the clinic, I called him everyday and not once did he hang up on me.

Finally, all of this is meaningless without the attendees. Some associations paid for all or some of the costs for some of their members, while some members traveled at significant personal expense to be there. All of the people that came and arranged to have others come are the real heroes of this story. My hat goes off to them.

All of the people that I have mentioned (and I am sure that I have forgotten one or two) deserve our thanks and appreciation.

Next year the venue for Super Clinic is back in the Lower Mainland.

Can it be even better than this one?

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

-John Berry

It's great to be back, and getting ready for a fine 2006 in officiating, and in baseball. We're looking forward to a year that offers tremendous opportunity.

For umpires at this time of year, our first priority, just like players and coaches, is to get ourselves ready for the upcoming season. BCBUA offers clinics at every level, part of an education and development approach that we keep improving. Of course, BCBUA is you, the members. It is the dedication of our senior umpires, the more experienced officials, the local umpires-in-chief, etc. who together contribute to an atmosphere of learning and improvement.

Our level system continues to offer everyone an opportunity to progress, and to mark that progress with milestones. You and the baseball community see your development as you gain a higher level. And that gives you an opportunity to face new challenges, such as games at an older or higher level, or tournaments or provincials. You also get to work with different umpires, some more experienced, and you learn more from working with them.

One of the things we are working on is providing a development program that can be recognized for school credits. You'll hear more about those requirements, but it is good to see development of officiating abilities recognized in the school system.

This year, we expect to involve the Association in providing umpires for the John Main tournament. This Peewee tournament, a BC Minor flagship, offers a chance for younger umpires and adult umpires to work together in officiating a great spring event.

Of course, one of the most sought-after opportunities in officiating is working a national tournament. It isn't for everyone, and you need to go all the way to level 4 before you can be considered. But for those who earn that privilege, it is quite an experience. And this year, we expect to send 13 umpires to national tournaments, a huge number for BC, and something that itself constitutes national recognition of the very strong capacity we have in umpiring in BC. It also means we have a real demand for more nationally rated umpires. Currently, anyone who achieves level 4 (national) status in BC has an excellent chance of being assigned to a national tournament within a year or two.

You'll see a report on SuperClinic elsewhere in this issue. But I want to express a strong vote of thanks to the organizers. Danny Huzar did his usual capable job of organizing the program and many of the logistics. Our Island members were effective hosts, lining up

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YOU MAKE THE CALL #1

Play: With runners on second and third and one out, 2-0 on B3. F1 balks while giving an intentional walk. The pitch sails to the backstop. R3 scores and R2 is thrown out going back into third after making a wide right turn. What is the ruling?

Answer on page 16

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

-Continued

great facilities and ensuring a friendly Island welcome. This year completes a three-year approach to rotating the site of the SuperClinic, and we've had solid participation in each of the lower mainland, the interior and the island.

I also want to acknowledge the excellent cooperation we enjoy with the different baseball associations in this province. We are working more effectively with all of them. This helps with learning, with on-field discipline and in providing more opportunities for our members. All the more serious programs are insisting on having carded umpires officiate their games, something that speaks volumes about their commitment to quality in their program. We need to make sure that we are always worthy of their trust and respect, on and off the field.

Let's have a great 2006 on all the ball diamonds in the province!

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LEVEL 3 REPORT

-Bill MacMillan, Coordinator

Hi everyone, I don't have much of a report this issue except for a reprint of my last article and a reminder for all prospective Level 3s to be proactive in seeking out evaluation opportunities and be sure to get those exams into me as soon as possible.

Have a great year and I hope to see you on the diamond.

REPRINT

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 too 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 op-



BASEBALL
CANADA

Baseball Canada Championships 2006

The following is a listing of all National Tournaments. for 2006, together with the Supervisors and the number of BC umpires being sent to each one. The BC umpires who will be assigned to the Championships will be announced by May 31.

Baseball Canada Cup

(17 & under All-Stars):

August 18-21, 2006

Medicine Hat, Alta.

Supervisor: Howard Chapman (BC)

ASST: Jon Oko (AB)

ASST: Trevor Drury (SK)

of BC Umpires: 2

Pee-Wee (13 & under)

August 24-28, 2006

Victoria, B.C.

Supervisor: Ted Derpack (AB)

ASST: Jerry Tregaskis (BC)

ASST: Bill Murphy (BC)

of BC Umpires: 6

Bantam Boys (15 & under)

August 24-28, 2006

Windsor, Ont.

Supervisor: Jaques Goyette (PQ)

ASST: Chris Wilhelm (ON)

of BC Umpires: 1

Bantam Girls (16 & under)

August 18-21, 2006

Grande Prairie, Alta.

Supervisor: Corrie Davis (SK)

ASST: Bryce Paton (AB)

of BC Umpires: 1

Midget (18 & under)

August 24-28, 2006

Summerside, P.E.I.

Supervisor: Kent Walker (NS)

ASST: Jodie Frowley (NS)

of BC Umpires: 1

Junior (21 & under)

August 24-28, 2006

Guelph, Ont.

Supervisor: Ben Mercier (ON)

ASST: Stefan Durocher (PQ)

ASST: Chuch Smith (ON)

of BC Umpires: 1

Senior Men (open age group)

August 24-28, 2006

Brandon, MB

Supervisor: Larry Nicholls (MB)

ASST: Blair Hains (ON)

of BC Umpires: 1

Continued from previous column

portunity 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 umpires 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 the new season. 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 Officials Supply Inc. 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.

YOU MAKE THE CALL #2

Play: B1 bunts and F1 fails in his attempt to play the ball and collides with B1. F3 fields the ball but throws wide to F4 who is covering first. B1 reaches second safely. Is this obstruction? Is the ball ruled dead immediately or does it remain alive?

YOU MAKE THE CALL #3

Play: Runners on first & second, B1 at bat with an 0-2 count. B1 swings and misses on a low pitch and the umpire calls him out. The batter does not hear the call and starts running to first. F2 overthrows first base and the ball goes into a dead-ball area. Can the batter be called out for interference because he continued to participate after being called out?

YOU MAKE THE CALL #4

Play: One out with runners on first and second, B3 singles. R2 scores, but R1 is thrown out at the plate. B3 misses first while advancing to second. The defense properly appeals the missed base. What is your ruling?

Answers on page 16

Continued next column

REPORT - AREA 1 Vancouver Island South

-Eric Rasmussen, Area Director

We are getting ready for an exciting start to the 2006 season. We started with a bang having hosted Super Clinic in Nanaimo Feb 4-5. The line up of Jim Cressman and MLB umpire Jim Joyce was a welcome addition to our own local instructors. Big thanks to Fabian Poulin, Chet Masse, Rob Allan, and Mark Bodwell. Unfortunately, Ian Lamplugh was unable to attend due to family illness. Nonetheless, the weekend was a success and I am sure that those attended will share some of the stories told by both well received instructors. And lastly a HUGE thanks to Danny Huzar who did an exceptional amount of work from a distance to organize the weekend. Without this dedication, Super Clinic would not happen.

Currently, only 3 clinics are scheduled in the South Island (please find the schedule of clinics elsewhere in Hey Blue or on the BCBUA website). More clinics will happen but the various local associations have not confirmed dates at time of printing of Hey Blue. I expect both Level 1 & 2 clinics to run in Nanaimo, Ladysmith, Duncan and Victoria this year, so keep checking the website for updates to the schedule or feel free to give me a call. If you belong to a group that wants to sponsor a clinic, please contact me and we will get this arranged.

I would like to open an invitation to anyone wanting an evaluation (either formal or informal) to please contact me. If you have never been evaluated, you should have one done. An evaluation can be really helpful to the beginner to get your game on track or to the experienced umpire to help raise your game to that next level.

Have a great Spring season!

REPORT - AREA 2 Vancouver Island North

-Eric Toneff, Area Director

-No Report recieved by press time.

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

Welcome to another exciting year of baseball in Area 5.

All the clinics in Area 5 are now complete and I'm very pleased at the turnout. The instructors did a great job and feedback from the students was very positive.

All you new umpires, please don't hesitate to call your local allocator if you are not getting as many games as you wish as all associations are looking for umpires.

This year Area 5 is hosting the prestigious **John Main Pee Wee tournament** May 27-30 at North Delta and Newton. BCBUA is handling the allocation of umpire to the tournament this year, so if you are interested in working this tournament should apply to Jerry Tregaskis ASAP.

Those umpires in the Lower Mainland who wish to be evaluated, We will be doing so at the John Main tournament, so please contact Jerry and request an evaluation if you wish.

I encourage all qualified umpires to apply for the various Provincial Championships as soon as possible. Please see the listing of all Championships and the application form elsewhere in this issue.

>>>> CONTEST <<<<

Does the cartoon below remind you of a true story that happened to you or someone that you know? Every umpire should have at least one. It may be funny or it may be profound, regardless, we are interested in hearing it.

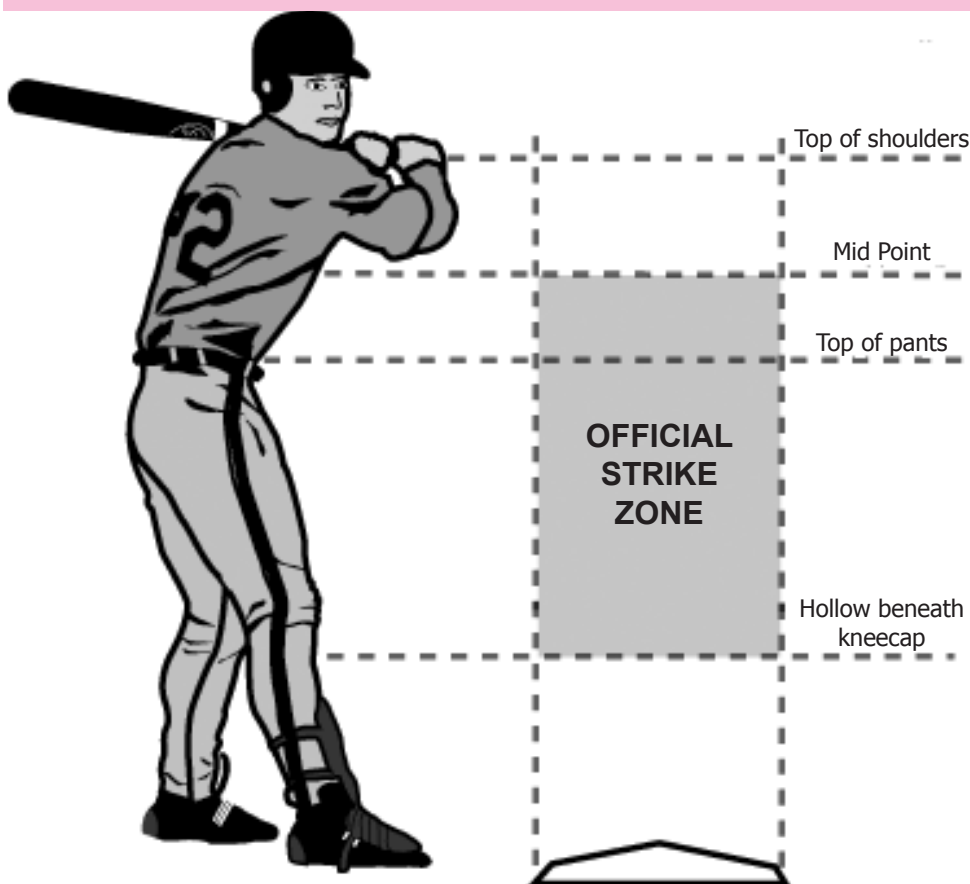
We will publish the winner in the next issue of HEY BLUE!

Every story published will be rewarded with a Super Clinic 2006 portfolio bag.



Major League Rule Change

2006 - The Strike Zone is expanded on the lower end, moving from the top of the knees to the bottom of the knees.



REPORT - AREA 6

-Thompson-Okanagan

-Brian Cargnelli, Area Director

So far we only have one clinic scheduled for this area. Kamloops is hosting a Level 1-2 clinic on April 1st, instructed by yours truly and Matt Lowndes. Contact Matt Lowndes at lowndesm1@hotmail.com for more information. If you are interested in hosting a clinic this year, make sure that you get in touch with me as soon as possible. I am totally amazed that more areas do not want to host clinics, but this is their decision. If you live in an area that is remote from Kamloops, yet still want to attend a clinic I really want you to consider getting to Kamloops on April 1st. Otherwise you will be left out in the cold for another year.

On another note, Kamloops is hosting the Canadian College Championships in May. If you are a Level 3 Umpire or National Level umpire and are interested in coming up to do some games, drop me an email. I can't guarantee anything, but we are looking for people. Also Kamloops is hosting the Summer Games. If you have not yet applied for this and want to, get your application in right away. The last thing is that Kamloops is again a possible host for the Provincial Midget AAA championships. As more information comes available, you may want to keep this in mind as you consider your applications to work a Provincial Championship.

Some more information for everyone is that I will be traveling to Prince George to instruct a Level 1 & 2 clinic on April 15-16. If anyone is interested in learning some advanced techniques and game management skills, this will be the place. On the Sunday morning we will be spending most of the time talking about the 3 man system and what I call "preventive umpiring" techniques for senior level umpires only.

If you have not had the opportunity to attend our great Super Clinic over the past few years due to location or cost, this clinic may be the answer for you. Information is now posted on the web site. If you want some more information, give me a call or drop me an email.

REPORT - AREA 7

-South Okanagan

The Area Director position is vacant at the time of printing. Anyone, from this area, that is interested in this position should contact John Berry. His contact information is on page 2.

REPORT - AREA 8

-The Kootenays

-Bill MacMillan, Area Director

Well, it's official, Punxatawny Phil did not see his shadow and spring is upon us. That means clinic season and then baseball begins....finally.

There are several clinics already booked and some that are pending. Nelson will have a clinic on March 26 with time and location to be announced and we are hoping to have a clinic in Grand Forks on April 8. Cranbrook will be having 2 clinics this year. On April 1st (Coaches Day heh heh) a Level 1 and beginner Level 2 clinic will be held at Muriel Baxter Elementary School at 0900 and the next day (April 2) a more advanced Level 2 clinic will be held at the same location from 1000 until about 1600. We don't have dates or locations for either Trail or Castlegar yet but when we do we will let you know.

The contact people for these clinics are:

Trail: Graham Wilson 368-8474

Castlegar: Matt Gallo 365-3878

Cranbrook: Don Daloise 426-4901

Grand Forks: Dave Burton 442-3460

Nelson: Rhiannon Daloise

daloise14@hotmail.com

It is essential that our current members talk to their friends, co-workers and teammates and get them out to a clinic. If we just get the same wonderful people year after year with no new blood our various organizations will simply stagnate. Be proactive and let's fill the clinics!

We have an exciting year coming up. In Trail we are trying a new concept for Babe Ruth, all the Provincial Tournaments for 13 year olds and above on the same weekend quickly followed by the North Idaho American Legion District Tournament. My spies now tell me that we may have the Babe Ruth 11 year olds in Creston and if that is true we will need help for all the Babe Ruth Tournaments. Regardless of whether the Creston tournament happens please contact either myself or Graham Wilson if you are interested in working the tournaments in Trail. Don't forget you must also complete a Provincial Tournament application so we don't get too many umps coming.

I will be available most of the season for any in the Kootenays who wish an evaluation either for promotion to or maintenance of Level 3 or just for educational purposes. Give me a call and we can set something up!

Good luck this year and I will see you either in a clinic or on the field.

REPORT - AREA 9

Northern BC

-Adolph Jede, Area Director

Two umpires from our area recently attended the Super Clinic in Nanaimo in February. One of the best clinics we've attended in recent years. Special thanks to Major League umpire, Jim Joyce for giving his time this weekend. The Super Clinic committee did an excellent job organizing everything. Thanks again guys.

To those umpires in our area who wish to upgrade to a level 3, be sure to write your exam. Deadline for submission of this exam will be December 31, 2006. This will card you for the 207 season. The field evaluation requires that you also umpire at a Provincial or major tournament at the Babe Ruth or higher level with a supervisor in attendance. So be sure to get your application in as soon as possible.

In our zone, Prince George is hosting the Senior Men's Provincial Championship this summer. There may be opportunities for some of you to work this tournament, but even if you can't this year, it will be a great opportunity to watch a 3-man crew work some excellent ball in the brand new baseball complex in Prince George.

I can't stress strongly enough the importance of attending a clinic in your area. You will learn the new rule changes and get the skills to do more than just coming out of the stands. Don't forget to mail in your take-home exam. Deadline is May 31, 2006. The Following are the 2006 Level 1-2 Clinic dates in our area:

City: Quesnel: Four – Two hour evening sessions from 7 – 9 PM

Dates: April 10, 11, 18 & 19.

Location: Riverview Elementary School

Contacts: Adolph Jede (250) 992-7505

Ajede@goldcity.net

Jim Sagert (250) 992-9303

JimSagert@sd28.bc.ca

City: Prince George – Level 1-2 Clinic

Dates: Saturday April 15, starting at 8:00 and Half Day Sunday April 16

Location: To be announced

Instructor: Brian Cargnelli

Contacts: Lance Brommeland (250) 563-2688

& Adolph Jede (250) 992-7505; Ajede@goldcity.net

City: Williams Lake – Level 1-2

Dates: Sunday April 23, starting at 8:00 am

Location: TBA

Contact: Mark Desautel (250) 392-2577

Instructors: Adolph Jede & Jim Sagert

Wish all of you in our zone all the best. Hope to see many of you on the field at some point this year.

THE VIEW FROM THE PLATE

- Sean Hardiman

For a plate umpire, the equipment you wear is of prime importance. Not only does it have an impact on how you can position yourself in order to see a pitch, but it's absolutely crucial to making sure you are able to walk off the field at the end of the game instead of being rolled off on an ambulance stretcher enroute to the hospital. In this column, I'm going to talk a bit about the various equipment options that are available to plate umpires, and hopefully provide a few things for you to think about when you are considering purchasing your next set of equipment.

Instead of starting at the top, we're going to start at the bottom and talk about your feet. What do you wear for shoes? On the bases, it's pretty straightforward. A pair of comfortable, black turf shoes will work just fine. Behind the plate, you need a little more armour. There are many brands to choose from when it comes to plate shoes, but the big things to look for are protected toe-box (definitely a steel toe), as well as proper metatarsal guards. For those of you who aren't anatomy types, the metatarsals are the bones in that make up the front part of your foot. This guard is very important to keeping your foot in one piece and not many different pieces. Beyond those two features, many of the other aspects of choosing a shoe are up to personal preference. Patent leather or a synthetic, high-top or low cut, the options are many. Pick a shoe that fits well, as you will need to run in them. Notable brands for shoes include Gerry Davis (which are quite popular with Major League Umpires), Spot-Bilt, and Nautilus.

Next up are your legs – these tend to take a beating when it comes to foul tips, so it's important that you have adequate protection. As with all equipment, there are many different models to choose from. Fit is the most important feature you should consider when purchasing leg guards as they all share the same basic design with a few variations. The differences most notable are the number of free floating pads at the top of the leg guard (one extra pad on top is known as the double knee, while two extra pads are known as the triple knee). This feature provides extra protection that extends over top of the knee and over your thigh for extra protection. Some leg guards also come with a metatarsal guard that extends over the top of your foot. This extra piece of armour will cover up the space between the top of your plate shoe and the beginning of the leg guard, protecting you from errant foul balls. Ankle protection also varies from leg guard to leg guard, with some offering thicker padding than others. Some pads allow you to remove the liner for cleaning, which can be very handy if you work at a park that tends to get dusty. If you have a chance, try getting into your stance when you try them on and practice some of your mechanics. Check to see if your pads are sliding around on you – you may need to make some adjustments or try a different set that may fit you better. Some manufacturers to consider are Wilson, All-Star, +POS, and

Diamond.

Chest protectors are a very important piece of safety equipment when it comes to umpiring. Not surprisingly, there are many different models to choose from. Fit is a very important feature (noticing a trend yet?) As it links directly to preserving your health. If a chest protector doesn't fit properly, they tend to slide all over the place and leave parts of your chest exposed. In my case, my protector tends to slide down over the course of the game, leaving the top of my sternum exposed, as well as parts of my collar bones (I'm getting it fixed this off-season so it doesn't do this anymore). Suffice it to say, all it takes is one foul tip to hit you there to either break a bone or at least knock the wind out of you. Another important feature is how much padding is located directly over the breastbone. In sports like baseball and hockey, there is a significant risk that if a player or official is hit in the chest with a ball or puck, their heart can be stunned to the point that it may actually stop beating effectively. The medical term for this condition is ventricular fibrillation, which is used to describe a condition where the heart can't put together a solid contraction to move blood around to the different parts of the body. While not an everyday occurrence, there have been a number of cases where this has happened to players, leading to serious injury and even death. As umpires, we can get hit in the chest quite easily, so if you're working high level baseball, keep this in mind when you're looking at a chest protector. Many of the other features found in chest protectors are personal preference, but next to your head, this is where you should be spending some money to protect yourself. If you have the opportunity, try out your mechanics and see if the chest protector stays put. If it's sliding around, you may want to consider adjustments or a different model so that you're not constantly pulling at it. There are a number of manufacturers, but Wilson, Gerry Davis, +POS and All-Star are the major brands.

There is much to talk about when it comes to face masks. With the increasing popularity of the hockey-style helmet masks, there is now more to choose from than ever. Today's masks are extremely light weight and allow for excellent vision. As everyone's face is different, every mask will fit slightly differently. It will be up to the individual to see which one works best, but there are a few common features you should look for. A good mask should allow you to put it on and take it off quickly and easily. You should also feel that you can see the strike zone clearly through it, though this is definitely a personal preference. It should also be made of tubular steel, as these masks offer the best balance of protection and weight. Throat protection is an essential feature of any mask, though most masks don't come with any. If you use a hockey style mask, there is still a significant amount of exposure without a throat guard. If you use a regular mask, there is a lot

of exposed space. Make sure you get a throat guard that offers you the protection you need. Not only is it a Baseball Canada standard, but your trachea doesn't stand a chance against an eighty-five mile-per-hour fastball. With helmets, make sure to look for the National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE) logo. This logo will indicate that the helmet has undergone testing to determine its effectiveness at protecting against impacts (baseballs are shot at the helmet at close range at sixty miles per hour during testing). The presence of this logo will tell you that the helmet has undergone and passed safety testing, but it's important to note it isn't a guarantee you can't get hurt using it. Popular helmet manufacturers include All-Star and Diamond, while Wilson, +POS and Diamond are the major mask manufacturers.

Of course, one can't talk about equipment without talking about the need to wear a jock and a cup while working the plate. If you can't figure out why this is important, I would suggest you get a new mask or helmet as yours must be defective.

One point that needs to be emphasized is that damaged equipment won't offer you the protection you need. If your mask is bent by a foul ball, get it replaced. The mask did its job and absorbed the energy of that ball. Do your brain a favour and get a new one.

Hopefully this column has provided you with a few ideas as to features you should consider when looking at new equipment. There are real safety features built into all the gear on the market at a number of different price points, so find the mix that is right for you. You'll feel more confident behind the plate knowing that you are protected with the best gear possible!

- Notable web links:

National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment:
<http://www.nocsa.org>

All-Star Sports (Official Helmet Mask for MLB Umpires):
<http://www.all-starsports.com>

Wilson USA (Official Masks, Chest Protectors, and Leg Guards for MLB Umpires):
<http://www.wilson.com>

+POS (Exclusive supplier to Minor League Baseball Umpires):
<http://www.pluspos.com>

Diamond Sports:
<http://www.diamond-sports.com>

Gerry Davis Sports:
<http://www.gerrydavis.com>

Disclosure: I own no stock in, have accepted no gifts from, nor have any affiliation to any of the companies cited in this article, aside from being a user of some of their equipment.

Sean Hardiman lives, works, and is occasionally hit in the head by a foul ball, in Prince George, BC.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

- Steve Boutang

With baseball just around the corner I would like to take this opportunity to invite you all to attend a BCBUA sponsored clinic and register to Umpire again this year.

Several of you took the time to attend the Superclinic in Nanaimo and there are many clinics either already underway or about to take place all across the province. Clinics are a great way to stay current with new policies and changes to mechanics, like our new 3-man system rotations for level 3 Ullpires. You can read more about this in the Education Committee report.

On the topic of Education, I am both proud and pleased to have been handed the mantle of Education Committee Chairman. I have asked Brian Cargnelli, a professional teacher with over 20 years of experience, to assist me, as well as a bright new mind in Eric Rasmussen will also assist us in improving the quality of clinic education and ongoing education through the season. If you have any comments in this area, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Currently, a committee within your Board of Directors is undertaking an investigation into the membership dues paid by Umpires throughout the province. Further, the committee is looking at the fees paid to our clinicians, evaluators, and various other honoraria that are managed through the BCBUA. It is the goal of the committee to identify ways that our membership can get better value for their annual dues. This is not to say that membership dues will be decreased, although this may also happen. But we are actively looking for ways to make sure members get the best possible education and the absolute most value for their dues as we can possibly offer. It may be possible to increase what we offer for the same dues. Perhaps we may even be able to increase what we offer at reduced rates. Any way you slice it, we are striving to become better at what we do so that you all get what you pay for. We value you as a member and want to make sure that you feel like you are investing in a worthwhile organization.

YOU MAKE THE CALL #5

Play: With the bases loaded and 2 outs, B4 hits a home run over the right field fence. As R1 is watching the ball, B4 passes him between first and second base. The other runners continue to touch all bases and score.

Is B4 out for passing R1 making the 3rd out? Do the other runs score?

Answer on page 16

INTERESTING RULES

- Danny Huzar

When I first started umpiring I bought a book which I thought would be helpful. I have to admit that I do not remember the name of the book, who wrote it or even any of the content save and except one piece of advice that I have never forgotten. The advice was that an umpire may make a wrong judgement call once in a while and that is excusable, but getting a rule wrong is not.

When I attended the Midget Nationals in 2005 I was reminded of this. In the first game of the tournament, one of the umpires ruled incorrectly. Despite the fact that he had a good tournament, he was not given any of the high profile assignments in the finals. When I talked to the supervisor about that, he told me that getting a rule wrong is a serious offence and it cost this umpire dearly in the selection of games that he could do on the final day.

I have always been a student of the rules. I study them ad nauseam and then some more. Each time I learn a new nuance that ultimately crops up in a game. I often hear umpires say how likely is that to happen? Well the rule book is a compilation of situations that happened at one time or another. When something new happens, a rule is added to deal with it. Unfortunately, the rules are by themselves incomplete and quite often need additional information to clarify them.

I offer the following as a case in point.

In the following situation is the conclusion TRUE or FALSE?

In the bottom of the final inning of a tied game with the bases loaded, on any play in which the winning run from 3rd is forced to advance to home, the game is over immediately when the batter-runner touches 1st base and the runner from 3rd has touched home plate.

This is one of those situations where a little knowledge is dangerous.

4.09(b) of the Rule book states: *"When the winning run is scored in the last half inning of a regulation game, or in the last half of an extra inning, as the result of a base on balls, hit batter or any other play with the bases full which forces the runner on third to advance, the umpire shall not declare the game ended until the runner forced to advance from third has touched home base and the batter runner has touched first base."*

Reading this rule would lead you to believe

that the answer to the question is 'TRUE', however, upon further investigation we find a Professional Interpretation in the Jim Evans manual which states:

"When the winning run is forced in, it is important for the umpire to be aware of each runner's legal obligation, including the batter-runner's."

(1) If the winning run is forced in as a result of a batted ball, all runners including the batter-runner are obliged to touch their next bases. The BR must advance and touch 1st base, and any other runner forced must advance to and touch his next base. If any such forced runner fails to do so, a force out appeal play is in order; and if sustained for the third out, no run shall count since the third out was, in effect, a force out.

If this appeal force out is not the third out, the runner shall be declared out but the winning run scores.

(2) if the winning run is forced in as a result of an award (eg. base on balls, hit batsman, catcher interference), the runner from third is required to advance and to touch home and the batter-runner is required to advance to and touch first base before the game is over. The other runners on base are not required to touch their next bases when the winning run is forced in as a result of an award."

As a result the answer could be TRUE or FALSE but not enough information is given in the situation to make a determination. Generally, since this cannot be true in all situations then the most appropriate answer is 'FALSE'.

Further our members who have access to a Level 3 manual may get this right. This is correctly covered on page 74 in the approved Ruling at the bottom of the page.

Unfortunately, most of our Level 2 members do not have access to the Jim Evans manual or the BCBUA 3 & 4 man manual, therefore upon completion of their due diligence they should come up with the answer 'TRUE', which unfortunately is wrong. Of those who have access to the other manuals, many would be satisfied with 'TRUE' as an answer once reading rule 4.09(b) in the rule book and not look any further.

This is just one instance where the rule book is wrong, or at least incomplete. There are others and I challenge you to find them.

Managing in Major League Baseball

When a sportswriter asked Mookie Wilson if he'd like to manage in the big leagues when his playing career ended, the Mookster thought about it for a moment, then decided, "only if they told me I had one year to live".

In 1989, for the first time, Major League baseball had two black managers, Frank Robinson and Cito Gaston. As luck would have it, they faced each other in the American League playoffs.

EXPERIENCES OF A "NEWBIE" UMPIRE

The following article is written by Blair Gallant, who I first met in Summerside, PEI last summer while working the National Pee Wee Championships. Blair was my roommate and we got to talking about a number of things related to baseball umpiring, including the recruitment and retention of umpires. When he mentioned that he had written an article for the Nova Scotia umpires newsletter, I asked him if he would send me a copy. He graciously agreed and once I had read it, I thought it would have wide interest for our members in BC and Blair kindly agreed that we could print it. While some of the names and places will be unfamiliar to you, the experiences and events related, will be familiar to you all, and it serves as a reminder of the problems a developing umpire experiences and reinforces the value of having a Mentor for guidance, advice, encouragement and reinforcement through the first few seasons.

The article also serves as encouragement to young umpires to aspire toward achieving your Level 4 rating as quickly as possible so that you may participate in the National Umpires Program, which includes the ability to work National Championships. You will note from the following article, Blair only began umpiring in 2000 and worked his first National Championship as a Crew Chief in 2005.

Jerry Tregaskis, Editor

When I began, I was part of umpire class of year 2000, 157 of us, called newbies by the senior umpires. We had finished our day-and-a-half clinic and passed our exam. The clinicians told us to call our UIC and then turned us loose on minor baseball in Nova Scotia. At the start of the 2001 season, of those of us who began umpiring in 2000, only 71 (55%) remained. By 2002, we could only find only 41 (26%) of us still umpiring. So, what happened?

The reasons vary, and we could profit by lengthy discussion of the factors involved. Here, though, I will focus on the reason I wasn't one of the 74% who quit - having a seasoned Senior Ump as a mentor! You know, he's that someone you can phone with questions at all hours and the person who is willing to watch you occasionally and give you honest feedback on your work. Most newbies tend to be intimidated by Senior Umpires and avoid them. That is even more prevalent with my brother because not only is he the boss of our organization, he has a knack for being brutally honest - sometimes too honest! Despite that, I and others have taken advantage of the opportunity and are still umpiring.

The importance of a mentor became very apparent very early in my first season. Meltdown! Flashback to July 6th, 2000, where I am doing the plate (2-man) for a Midget (15-16 year old) game. My partner is Blaine. This is my first opportunity to do a game at this level, and it is only my 16th game. So far the first 15 have gone well. So well that I confess it fed my ego, and I thought, "Well, umpiring isn't that difficult."

That opinion underwent a complete transformation over the next 3 1/2 hours, which were the longest 210 minutes of my life. I arrived at the field confident and full of myself. Blaine is scheduled to be my partner, and my UIC is in the attendance. Boy, now's my time to shine. As I get ready, I can't find my indicator and Blaine doesn't have an extra one. Of course my first thought is, "Why doesn't Blaine have one?" I am starting to feel nervous for the first time. Blaine tells me to relax and not worry about the count. If I lose the count, just check with him and he will help me. He didn't have to wait long. The first batter, the count is 2-2, both swinging strikes. The next pitch is on its way. Unfortunately, I'm preoccupied with my missing counter and totally miss the easiest strike call of the night. I call it a ball and the batter ends up walking. Now I'm berating myself for missing the strike while still obsessing over my missing counter.

That starts a chain reaction of blunders that got so bad even the fans left me alone the last couple innings. I literally became unglued. The harder I tried, the more I screwed up. My positioning on plays, etc., became such an impediment on calling balls and strikes I just stayed at home plate. The coaches, players, fans, and Blaine were not impressed. My UIC left at the end of the second as it was too painful to watch.

Crowd control! I quickly began to realize that I had control of absolutely nothing; not myself, not the players, not the coaches. I am lost. That was when Blaine first showed his value. Somehow amidst all this mess, he kept the coaches and players under control, and even the fans stopped giving me the raspberry as they realized they were witnessing a spectacle that cannot be properly defined.

Later, the home coach felt bad as he slipped me an indicator at the end of three innings. But by then I was beyond redemption. The most vivid memory was of standing along the first-base line after the third inning. I was staring into right field, totally alone, numb, and realizing I had over half a game to go! It was then that I first began to understand why umpires quit. I felt so alone. I truly believe that Blaine saved this newbie from throwing in the towel after that game!

Employee assistance program; Most employers have a program that employees can call on if they need help. This could be about marriage, kids, finances, mental illness, just about anything. This is something that I think my mentor did for me that day. After enduring what I thought was the worst time ever, I dragged my feet as I made the slow walk to my car to get undressed. At that point, I couldn't imagine ever wanting to go through that again. What happened next completely changed my mind. In my real job, I work as a drug addictions counselor, which entails countless hours helping people deal with their inner demons and the perils of addiction. Well, the counselor was about to be counseled, and like my dealings with many of my clients, it was a life-altering event. Sign in tomorrow for the outcome. . . .

'Tis early in my umpiring career, and I am already ready to quit. Now, I have battled many things in life, and I know through my work that quitting would be the easy way out. Nevertheless, on that walk to the car, I was determined that it was time to return to golfing as my summertime hobby. On that day, Blaine was a master of manipulation. So much so, I

really think this guy has a future in politics. On that day he used all his experience to deal with coaches, players, my calls, etc. He then had to take on the multiple roles of being my hand holder, butt kicker, and psychiatrist. Let there be no doubt that without him, I would have ejected handfuls of coaches, players, and bat boys. I might have even walked off the field, never to be seen again on a Nova Scotia baseball diamond.

Instead I survived, though I left the field a thoroughly beaten newbie in a state of shock. Blaine sensed I was at some kind of turning point, and he took the time to listen as I unloaded my thoughts and feelings about this fiasco. An hour on the couch! The lights were off and only two cars were left in the parking lot. I stood, still wearing my gear, and rambled on and on and on. An hour passed before I decided (admitted?) I would like to continue umpiring! There wasn't any one thing Blaine said that made me change my mind. But what he did do is make me realize that umpiring isn't supposed to be easy and that being humbled is not the end of the world. He even shared some of his horror stories, after searing me to secrecy. He also suggested - no, he commanded, that I phone my assignor the next day and do as many lower level games as I could do. I took the advice (as if I had a choice) and survived my first year. After that night, the senior umpires in my area became used to me contacting them and discussing virtually every aspect of umpiring.

Time heals all wounds! Since that game, I have had the opportunity to umpire with Blaine on a few occasions. Each time, he has been able to teach me something, and sometimes I have even been able to point out things to him. The most recent pairing of the Gallant brothers came at the end of the 2002 season, more than 300 games after the first. The phone rang at work 4:00 p.m., and Blaine was on the line with a big problem. One of the umpires had become ill and was a late cancellation. Nobody was available on short notice to do a playoff game in the highest level Adult League in our province. He needed an umpire fast. I was flattered that he felt I was capable of the job. Later, I thought he might have believed only that I was capable of not screwing the pooch. Still later, I began to wonder how many other umpires he asked before he had to take me. Whatever the reason, he did phone me, and I was excited to get the opportunity. I would be calling with Blaine and another senior umpire. All my hard work for three years was about to

Continued on page 9 see "Newbie

"Newbie" Continued from page 8

payoff. I was nervous - no - very nervous. The level of ball, the field (one of the best in the province), and the large crowd were all new to me. Still, despite my nervousness, this time I felt I belonged and my partners left me with no reason to think otherwise. For this game, I was given first instead of the safer third, and that seemed to have a calming effect on me. I was confident, ready, and believed I was up to the task. The experience of working with two senior umpires was another seminar on how to approach games. First, we had a thorough pre-game. I have never done a game with senior umpires where we didn't have a pre-game. Afterwards, we also did a post game, and I appreciated the feedback I received and that they were open to my suggestions and thoughts".

The game itself, was fairly routine. There were a few close calls but no real bangers. The players were intense, the game well played, the pitching outstanding. It is great doing 9-inning game in just over two hours. And so it came to pass that But there was one play that made my realize that I had "made it." With a runner on second, the batter slapped one up the middle. The second baseman lunged to his right and from his butt threw wildly to first. The ball took a weird hop and almost hit a player in the dugout. The player moved just as it was about to hit him and the ball remained in play. The next thing I saw was Blaine killing the play and awarding bases. Immediately, the entire bench started screaming that the ball didn't hit anyone. I wasn't saying anything but Blaine knew he might have booted this one.

In my limited experience most of the umpires I've worked with wouldn't ask for help. Now there are times when you don't go for help, but in this situation Blaine approached me and asked me how I had seen the play. My version would change the call. Of course, at that point I didn't ask him why he even made the call that was clearly in my area of responsibility; I saved that for the post game! Blaine accepted he had erred in his judgment, and since it was a reversible error, that's what he did. No ifs, ands, buts or debates came from either team when Blaine did so. That was an important moment for me. Blaine was trusting my judgment to the point that he had no hesitation in approaching me.

Editor's Note: According to Baseball Canada and here in BC the call is in fact the responsibility of the Plate umpire. NS seems to have a different approach to the situation.

The post game revealed that our partner at third agreed that Blaine had erred. The drive home and discussion with Blaine that day was far different from the hour spent in the parking lot on July 6th, 2000. I have come a long way, and have found two more mentors to help me next season. With their help, I know I'll continue developing as an umpire and hopefully will begin doing more high-level games.

If there is anything I have learned in my first three years, it is whether you are a newbie or a seasoned ump, get a mentor and use him. You - and the game - will be better off for doing so!

EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT

-Steve Boutang

I am pleased to have been recently appointed as the Education Committee Chairman. The education of umpires is something that I take very seriously and hopefully you will all notice some positive changes that BCBUA is endeavouring to make a reality in the coming 12-18 months.

To begin with, I thank Ralph Jolley, the former Education Chair, for his excellent work over the past 4 years and wish him well as he takes a break from serving on the Board of Directors. I had the pleasure of working with Ralph on the committee over those years in an attempt to better umpires throughout the province and will continue to work towards that goal.

For those of you who attended Superclinic, you will have noticed some changes to the 3-man rotations that were taught. BCBUA has properly adopted the National mechanics with respect to 3-man system. This should help our senior umpires perform better at National tournaments because they will be in synch with the rest of the country.

Further, there will be more uniformity with the rest of the level 3 umpires in the province who have always worked with a different set of mechanics at Provincials. To help all our senior officials get on the same page with 3-man system, a 15 page excerpt of the National manual has been produced and will be distributed by mail to all of our level 3 members. This shorter manual outlines only the differences between the old BCBUA system and the National system that we have adopted. A complete hard copy of the National manual will be distributed to all National members in our province. A new level 3 manual is expected to be produced this summer.

Prior to the clinic season, all Area Reps will be given packages to distribute to their respective Umpire in Chiefs. These packages will consist of something that should be helpful for all young umpires. It is called an Ongoing Training Package and it is something new for BCBUA. In short, it is a package that the Umpire in Chiefs can use to help youth umpires develop their skills throughout the course of the season. I hope it is well received.

Please feel free to email me and let me know of your successes or how the product can be improved. Further, level 1 and 2 clinics are continuing to evolve over time. With the help of many dedicated senior umpires there has never been more availability in clinics. Every association can effectively dictate to BCBUA when they would like to hold a clinic and we will make every effort to ensure its success. We can even hold mid-week evening clinics. Be sure to speak to your Area Rep and Umpire in Chief if you would like to arrange for a clinic in your area.

The BCBUA Education Committee is committed in its effort to raise the awareness of our clinicians themselves. To that end, the Board of Directors approved expenditures to Nationally Certify 3 more instructors in our province this spring. These individuals will form an integral part of a team that the Education Committee will work with to better train many of our own clinicians next winter. This will benefit our members by having a better clinic in your home association. Senior BCBUA members can also expect to get more from clinics than in the past. The Education Committee is working on fresh ideas for Advanced level 3 clinics that will become more available throughout the province. And adult level 2 umpires who are tired of the same old, same old, can also expect something new in the future.

Advanced level 2 clinics are being discussed as a way to retain your interest level as well. Ideally, we would like to see a clinic where the long time level 2 umpires (mostly the adults) who have lost interest in the regular level 1-2 clinics, will be able to attend a shorter version that covers more than the basics but does not overwhelm. These could be held during the evenings, on weeknights, or whenever a clinician is available, really. The idea is that we want senior umpires to come back to a clinic and stay current.

These are the goals of the Education Committee under my direction. I hope that they meet with your satisfaction. If you have questions about the goals or objectives I have outlined, or have any comments regarding the education of umpires, please do not hesitate to contact me.



Rob Allan conducting the rules session at the Maple Ridge Clinic

BCBUA Guidelines for the Selection of Umpires to Provincial Tournaments

1. BCBUA is responsible for assigning umpires for the following Provincial Championships in 2006
 - BC Minor – PeeWee AAA, Bantam AAA, Midget AA, Midget AAA, & Western Canada Championships
 - Babe Ruth – 13 yr. Old Prep, 14 yr old, 13 – 15 year old, 16 yr old and 16 – 19 year old & any Regionals in these age groups.
 - Baseball BC - Premier League Tournaments sponsored by Baseball BC and the Jim Wray Fall Classic
 - BC Summer Games
 - Junior Baseball Association of BC Provincials
 - Senior Baseball Association of BC Provincials and Western Canada Championships

However, BCBUA members are also invited to submit applications to work the BC Minor Provincials at other levels (Specifically, Mosquito, PeeWee A and AA, Bantam A and AA) and those names will be forwarded to the UIC for the individual Tournament for his / her use.
2. All umpires selected for Provincial and / or other Tournaments for which BCBUA is responsible / involved are required to be members in good standing in the year of the Tournament as well as in the preceding year (**for 2006 Tournaments membership in 2005 & 2006 is required**).
3. The President of the BCBUA will appoint Supervisors / Umpire Allocators for the Championships in consultation with the Provincials Committee and Provincial Supervisor.
4. All eligible BCBUA members who wish to apply for assignment to a Tournament may do so by completing the application Form on page 12 and forwarding it to the Chairman of the Provincial Selection Committee **by May 15, 2006**. Requests to apply for Tournaments may also be submitted electronically using the application form format and emailing it to the Chairman as indicated below. (Please note that application for a Tournament does not guarantee selection).
4. After the application deadline, the Provincials Committee will make the selection of umpires based on the applications received, nominations from the BCBUA Board as well as the needs of the Tournament Hosts.
5. Selections for the Tournaments will be made in consultation with the relative Area Director and will be substantially based on the following criteria:
 - The Provincial or National level of the umpire
 - The location of the Tournament relative to the umpire's residence
 - The willingness of the umpire to pay his / her own expenses (travel, accommodation, meals, etc.) if necessary
 - The availability of the umpire to work the full Tournament. (It is preferred that the umpire be available for the entire time)
 - The umpire's need for evaluation relative to his / her level of certification

After Selection Process is Complete:

1. Umpires will be notified of their success (or otherwise) by e-mail and, if selected, will be required to confirm availability and acceptance of the assignment within (3) days of notification. If such confirmation is not received, an alternate will be appointed.
2. Should any vacancy subsequently occur the Provincials Committee shall name an alternate as they see fit.
3. Any qualified BCBUA member is invited and encouraged to submit an application to work BCBUA-assigned Tournaments.
4. Any member of the BCBUA Board may also submit nominations to the Provincials Committee.
5. Further information or clarification may be obtained from any member of the Provincials Committee of by contacting the Chairman: Jerry Tregaskis at 604-594-6911 or via email at trig@dccnet.com

DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS IS MAY 15, 2006

Application Form Can be Found on Page 12 or at www.bcbua.ca



3rd annual "John Main Classic" PeeWee Tournament

The Hyak Festival Pee Wee Tournament was a great event to showcase Pee Wee aged kids from all over the province. When that tournament ceased 3 years ago, BC Minor started this tournament to replace it and it was a resounding success from day one!

In 2005 it was hosted by North Delta & Newton, and many of you worked the tournament. It was a great success!! In 2006, it will again be hosted by North Delta & Newton on four fields, and will be held May 27-30, 2006.

BCBUA will be allocating umpires for this tournament, and it will be used to do Level 3 evaluations for those of you who need to renew yours, or just want a developmental evaluation. So if any of you are interested, we encourage you to contact Jerry Tregaskis soon, since last year the available positions disappeared quickly. The tournament is a lot of fun and this year we are going to run it like a Provincial Championship and it will be a lot of fun so we encourage you to apply ASAP!

Jerry's contact information is listed on page 2 of this issue, and you may use the application for Provincials found elsewhere in this issue if it is more convenient.



BC Minor Baseball Provincial Championship Sites 2006

<u>DIVISION</u>	<u>DATES</u>	<u>HOST</u>
Mosquito A	August 3 - 7	Port Alberni
Mosquito AA	August 3 - 7	Burnaby
Mosquito AAA Tier I	August 3 - 7	Newton
Mosquito AAA Tier II	August 3 - 7	North Delta
PeeWee A	August 3 - 7	Kelowna
PeeWee AA	August 3 - 7	Campbell River
PeeWee AAA	August 10 - 14	Open
Bantam A	August 3 - 7	Newton
Bantam AA	August 10 - 14	Chilliwack
Bantam AAA	August 10 - 14	Coquitlam-Moody
Midget AA	August 10 - 14	Ridge Meadows
Midget AAA	August 3 - 7	Kamloops
John Main Tournament	May 25-28	North Delta
(Pee Wee AAA) See article on page 10		& Newton
BC Summer Games	July 27-30, 2006	Kamloops



Babe Ruth Baseball Host Sites for 2006 Provincials

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

<u>DIVISION</u>	<u>DATES</u>	<u>HOST</u>
• 10 year olds -	July 19	Nanaimo
• 12 year Olds -	July 16	Nanaimo
• 13 year olds -	July 16	West Kootenay (Trail)
• 14 year olds -	July 16	West Kootenay (Trail)
• 15 and under -	July 16	West Kootenay (Trail)
• 16 year olds -	July 9	West Kootenay (Trail)
• 16-19 year olds -	TBA	Lower Mainland (TBA)

BCBUA assigns umpires to all of the tournaments listed on this page and we are accepting applications starting immediately. The application form for all Provincial Championships can be found on page of this issue and on the website.

The deadline for submission of application is May 15, 2006.

Les Lorentz receives long overdue recognition at Super Clinic

The following is the presentation that Ed Berkenstock made at Super Clinic to Les Lorentz of the North Island. Les received a well deserved standing ovation when he accepted the award.

The Campbell River Baseball Association and BCBUA would like to acknowledge and pay tribute to Les Lorentz, for his many years of service as a dedicated umpire in the North Island.

He was a player and coach in Prince Rupert before moving to Campbell River in 1966 at the age of 38. He went to work at Elk Falls Pulp and Paper mill as a pipe fitter.

In the spring when he tried to sign the kids up for baseball there was no room left. So undeterred he put together a fastball (softball) team and coached.

The following year he moved his team to baseball and they won the league that season.

He became an umpire out of necessity. Parenting umps and lack of umps motivated him to read the rule book, buy a mask and belly pad and get the job done right and fairly. (or was it fairly right?)

Back then both baseball and softball were combined so Les was the umpire in chief for both, for a number of years. He was the allocator or scheduler for all the games in both leagues.

In the late 1950's and 1960's there was a men's league in Campbell River, Courtenay, Cumberland, Port Alberni etc. These were well attended games with large rivalries. Les and Bruce Rennie were the only ticketed umpires in Campbell River at the time, so they did all of the home games at Lane Field.

In the early seventies, is when I met Les the first time, as I was a player in the Courtenay Babe Ruth league. Again there were large rivalries. I think there may have been some cleat sharpening before traveling to the River City. But Les was always there and always fair.

Over the years of working with Les at the mill and talking baseball, I found out he has strong feelings about coaches and fans making negative comments to junior umpires. Still today, he has occasion to chat with the offenders but only one coach and one player has he ever ejected.

It has been my pleasure to watch Les continue umping in the last few years, as my son's baseball games have taken us to Campbell River on many occasions. The rivalry continues without the cleat sharpening.

Les was born in 1928 and has been umpiring since the sixties and is now seventy seven years old and still umps. He has umpired with many over the last five decades, including provincial playdowns and championships, but he treasures most having umped with the three generations of his family. He was hoping for four, but the machinery broke.

He retired from Elk Falls Mill after 27 years of service in 1993 and since then has enjoyed retirement with his family and friends. He played and coached slow pitch until the age of 73.

On behalf of Campbell River Minor Baseball and the BCBUA we would like to present you with this gift of gratitude and appreciation for all your years of dedicated service, Les (Grandpa) Lorentz.



Some of the participants at the 2006 Maple Ridge Clinic

APPLICATION FOR SELECTION TO A PROVINCIAL TOURNAMENT



BC Baseball Umpires Association

Application for Provincial Tournament 2006

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____
ADDRESS: _____ FAX: _____
CITY or TOWN: _____ POSTAL CODE: _____ CELL: _____
e-mail: _____ DATE OF BIRTH: MM/DD/YYYY

I wish to apply for assignment to the following BCBUA Supervised Tournaments and I acknowledge that:

- If travel is required, I am ☐ or I am not ☐ prepared to pay all my expenses (travel, accommodation, meals, etc.)
(please check one)

If you are willing to pay your own expenses you will be considered for tournaments where travelling umpires are not needed due to a sufficient number of local officials. Otherwise you will be asked to travel only if the host association is willing to pay for your costs.

- I am aware of the current dress code and will comply with those requirements.
- I am available to work any games on all days of the Tournament
- I will commit to fulfilling any Provincial assignment which I accept, and
- I have been a member in good standing of BCBUA in the years 2005 and 2006.

For information on Tournaments please check the appropriate links from www.bcbua.ca

DEADLINE FOR APPLICATION IS MAY 31, 2006

CHOICE	TOURNAMENT NAME	DATES	LOCATION
1 ST			
2 ND			
3 RD			

I have read the guidelines and understand that if chosen to do a Provincial Tournament I am expected to be able to carry out the duties required of me. I have also read and understand the Provincial Dress Code and will comply with the requirements.

Dated: _____ Signature: _____

Mail, Fax or e-mail the completed application to:

Jerry Tregaskis, BCBUA Provincials Chairman
6663 Stoney Crescent, Delta, BC V4E 1L1

Phone: 604-594-6911

FAX: 604-594-6991

e-mail: trig@dccnet.com

BCBUA Website

-Brian Cargnelli, Webmaster

Have you seen the new BCBUA Web Site? We have a totally revamped web site that was launched last November. By reviewing the site traffic reports, I can see that not many of you have visited the web page. If you haven't had a look yet, go to www.bcbua.ca and have a look at this great tool for baseball officiating in this British Columbia.

One of the biggest complaints of the association over the past few years is lack of current information coming to the membership in a timely fashion. With this new web site design, that is no longer the case. Current exams, clinic information and even current and past Hey Blue editions are easily downloaded from the web site. Want to apply for a Provincial Championship assignment? You are just a couple of clicks of a mouse away from doing just that. Did you ever have a question about a rule or a certain way of covering a tough play (rotations) or just how to handle that outspoken coach? Once again you can go to the web site and post any question you want and one of our most senior umpires will get back to you with an answer. The web site is a great tool to advance your officiating skills and knowledge. But no matter what we do as an association to get the information out to you, unless you the membership uses the tools that we provide then ultimately this association will flounder.

In the last edition of Hey Blue, I asked if you to send to me pictures of fellow umpires in game situations that you would like to share with the rest of the association for the picture gallery. With the season fast approaching, please keep this request in mind and take along a digital camera to some games. Send the pictures in any format you want and I'll try to get these up to the web site quickly. I do require some basic information about the people within the pictures: name of umpire, location and level of game being played and the date of the contest. Send the pictures and any suggestions as to what you would like to see on your web site to info@bcbua.ca. Thanks and have a great season.

BC Minor Midget Division Rule Changes

There are three new BC Minor rule changes this year that you should be aware of.

1) The following is a new protest procedure to be used during provincial championships:

Rule 129 H 3 "When a manager/head coach believes an umpires decision is in violation of the playing rules (no protest may be made one judgement call) he/she may elect to inform the game Crew Chief that he/she is lodging a protest. This notification must occur before the next pitch/play. Once the protest is announced the following procedure shall apply:

A) The Crew Chief shall suspend play and inform the manager of the opposing team and the Protest Committee of the protest.

B) Both teams shall be sent to their respective dugouts or dressing rooms.

C) Before the Protest Committee hears the protest the protesting manager/head coach must put forward a protest deposit fee of \$50 cash. Should the protest be upheld the fee is returned. Should the protest be denied the fee will be retained by BCMBA.

D) The Protest Committee, both managers/head coaches and the game CREW Chief shall retire to a private area away from the teams, spectators, and other persons off the field of play. The Protest Committee shall first hear the game crew chief. Secondly, the protesting manager/head coach shall have the opportunity to explain his/her protest. Thirdly, the opposing manager/head coach shall be given an opportunity to explain his perspective. Once the protest committee has concluded their investigation and interviews the managers/head coaches and the game crew chief shall then leave while the protest committee discusses the protest in consultation with the tournament UIC. Before ruling on the protest, the Protest Committee may confer with any person whom they believe may be helpful in assisting them reach a decision.

E) Once the protest committee has reached a decision the BC Minor Director

in Charge will advise the game crew chief and both managers/head coaches of the decision.

F) The game Crew Chief shall put the decision into effect and order the resumption of play from the point of suspension. No further argument or comment on the protest shall be entertained. The decision of the protest committee shall be final. There shall be no appeal to any other body.

2) The DH Rule (only used at Midget) has been changed. The bold line is the main revision of the rule. It now reads:

Rule 129 D (4) (5) "The DH rule shall be an option in the midget division only. All aspects of Baseball Canada Rule (the MLB rule) 6.10 apply. The current game pitcher may only pinch hit for the DH in an offensive inning. A pitching change may only be made in a defensive inning. If the game pitcher is removed from the game he does not become a fresh sub and is not eligible to re-enter.

3) In the Midget Division only there is no longer an automatic one game suspension associated with ejections. Each ejection is to be submitted and reviewed on its merits.

Editor's note: These changes are welcome indeed! The most significant is the change in the DH rule which now brings the previously convoluted rule in line with the Pro rule. The second major change is the one which removes the automatic one game suspension and ensures that each ejection will be judged and penalized on an individual basis. This also highlights the importance of the umpires submitting detailed and accurate reports on each ejection. The BCBUA office wants a copy of each and every ejection report for their files. Our executive has appointed one member to peruse each report and follow up with the league on what penalties were assessed to the offender. If the Board of Directors does not feel the penalty to be sufficient, action will be taken by the Board.



BC Summer Games - Kamloops July 27-30



Kamloops will be hosting the 2006 BC Summer Games from July 27-30, 2006.

For four days this summer, close to 4,000 of BC's best athletes, coaches, managers, and officials participate in 35 sport events in sports ranging from athletics and archery to cycling, sailing, and wrestling.

The BC Summer Games bring together young developing athletes from every region of the province. Competition may be the backbone of the Games, but at its heart are camaraderie and friendship, the spirit of teamwork and the setting of goals for individual excellence. Everyone goes home a winner with a personal legacy that only participation in the BC Games can provide. The spirit of excellence thrives at the BC Summer Games.

Baseball is included again this year and we are accepting applications for umpires to work in the games. Transportation, meals and accommodation will be provided, and we will need about 12 umpires. The rules for applications are that at least one umpire must come from each of the zones (as established by the Summer Games Society) with additional umpires from any area. The application can be found on page 12 of this issue. **Deadline is May 15!!**

BCBUA Library

We are pleased to announce that, through the dedicated efforts of Danny Huzar, we received a Direct Access grant to augment our Library of resource materials to be loaned out to our members. While the guidelines for actually doing this have not yet been established, we hope to have this in place shortly, and full details will be on our website. We will also have a complete listing with a brief description of the materials on the website by that time. Jerry Tregaskis has volunteered to act as Librarian, since several others who were approached, declined to do so. Jerry, through his company, Pro Image Officials Supply Inc. is already equipped to handle mail orders so it will be a perfect match.

We have started acquiring materials and a partial listing of them appears below, however we stress that we will continue to acquire materials and welcome any suggestions you may have from time to time. Please submit these to Jerry Tregaskis by e-mail only and we will use our best efforts to add them to our Library.

This is a great opportunity for our members to avail themselves of some excellent materials both for training and for recreational reading. Watch our website for further details

Baseball Bafflers		SC
Baseball Lite Funniest Moments	Luciano, Ron	PB
Best Seat in Baseball, But You Have to Stand	Gutkind, Lee	SC
Big League Baseball Puzzlers	Forker, Dom	SC
CCA Umpire's Manual		SC
Centre Field on Fire #1	Phillips, Dave	HC
Conduct of the Game	Hough, John Jr.	HC
Fall of the Roman Umpire #1	Luciano, Ron	HC
Fall of the Roman Umpire #2	Luciano, Ron	HC
Make The Right Call	Major League Baseball	SC
Make The Right Call #2	Major League Baseball	SC
NCAA Mechanics & Rules CD		CD
NCAA Umpire Video Library		CD
Planet of the Umps #1	Kaiser, Ken	HC
Planet of the Umps #2	Kaiser, Ken	HC
Remembrance of Swings Past	Luciano, Ron	HC
Standing The Gaff	Harry "Steamboat" Johnson	SC
Strike Two #1	Luciano, Ron	HC
Strike Two #2	Luciano, Ron	HC
Strike Two #3	Luciano, Ron	HC
Test Your Baseball I.Q.	Forker, Dom	SC
The Ultimate Baseball Quiz Book	Forker, Dom	PB
The Umpire Strikes Back	Luciano, Ron	HC
The Umpire Strikes Back #1	Luciano, Ron	HC
The Umpire Strikes Back #2	Luciano, Ron	HC
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Whole Video Umpire Library	Basic Umpiring 90' Diamond	DVD
Whole Video Umpire Library	Behind The Plate-McSherry	DVD
Whole Video Umpire Library	Handle It!	DVD
Whole Video Umpire Library	How to Keep Score in Baseball	DVD
Whole Video Umpire Library	Rules Made Easy	DVD
Whole Video Umpire Library	See aBalk Call a Balk	DVD
World's Strangest Baseball Stories		PB
Working the Plate	Gregg, Eric	HC
You be the Umpire	Goldstein, Richard	SC
You're Out & You're Ugly Too!! #2	Merrill, Durwood	HC
You're Out & You're Ugly Too!! #1	Merrill, Durwood	HC

MLB UMPIRE NUMBERS RETIRED

1 BILL KLEM

Nicknamed "The Old Arbitrator." Umpired from 1905 to 1940 and then served as chief of National League umpires. Holds the record for World Series appearances with 18 and consecutive appearances with five. Originated arm signals to coincide with verbal calls. In a rare tribute to an umpire, he was honored with gifts on "Bill Klem Night," September 2, 1949 at the Polo Grounds. Member of the National Baseball Hall of Fame.

2 NICK BREMIGAN

Umpired in the American League from 1974 to 1989. He tragically died of a heart attack on March 28, 1989 at the age of 43. He was a member of the AL umpire staff when he passed away. Worked the Florida State, Eastern, International, Florida Wmter Instructional and Puerto Rican Winter Leagues before joining the AL. Called the 1980 World Series, four AL Playoffs and two Mid-Summer Classics.

2 JOCKO CONLAN

Umpired in the National League for 24 years (1941-64). Umpired four World Series and six All-Star Games. Played in 128 major league games as a member of the Chicago White Sox (1934-35). Became the fifth umpire elected into the National Baseball Hall of Fame. Conlan on umpiring: "You've got to have thick skin and a strong heart. You've got to have and command respect. Without them, you're nothing."

3 AL BARLICK

Umpired at the major league level for 33 years (1940-72). Worked a record seven All-Star Games. At age 25, he became one of the youngest umpires to reach the major leagues. Known for his booming calls and distinctive hand signals. Started umpiring sandlot games after a coal mining strike forced him to earn extra money. Was a World War II Coast Guard veteran. Became the sixth umpire inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame in 1989.

9 BILL KUNKEL

Became an American League umpire in 1968 and served for a time as referee for the National Basketball Association. Also a pitcher for the New York Yankees and Kansas City Athletics, where he compiled a lifetime record of 6-6. Died in 1988 at the age 48, after a long battle with cancer. His son Jeff was an infielder with the Texas Rangers (1984-92).

16 LOU DiMURO

Umpired in the American League from 1963-82. Worked two World Series, three League Championship Series and four All-Star Games. His son Mike is currently a major league baseball umpire with 2 1/2 years of service. Died tragically on June 8, 1982, at the age of 51, when he was struck by a car as he was crossing a street in Arlington, Texas.



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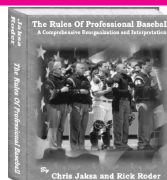
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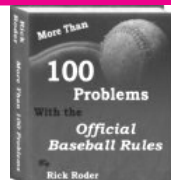
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ANSWERS TO 'YOU MAKE THE CALL'

1. The balk is enforced since the batter did not advance one base. However any play on the runners beyond the base they are awarded on the balk stands. Since R2 advanced to third and was subsequently put out, his out stands.

Rule Book 8.05 Penalty

2. Obstruction and the ball is immediately dead. Because B1 was obstructed before reaching first base, B1 is awarded first base.

Rule Book 7.06(a)

3. A runner who continues to advance after being put out does not violate any rule by that act alone. B1 is out and each runner is awarded two bases for the errant throw.

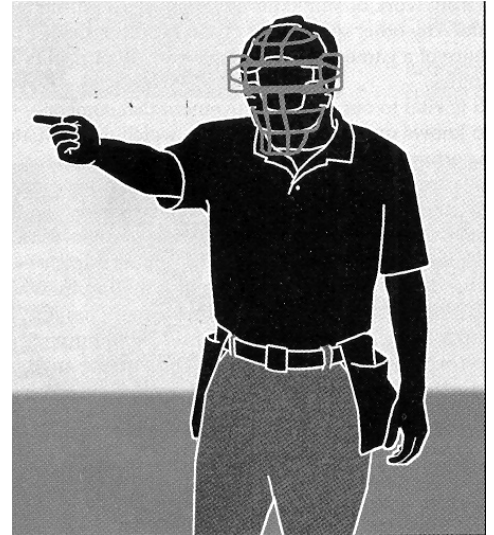
Rule Book 7.09(f)

4. No runs score. A run cannot score when the third out is the result of a force-play

Rule Book 4.09(a) exception (1)

5. B4 is out for passing R1, however the baserunning infraction does not negate the award (home run), even though it is the 3rd out. The other runners score.


Rule Book 7.08(h)



ARE YOU MOVING?

Every mailing of Hey Blue! Results in a number of copies being returned by the Post Office marked "MOVED". We are sure that most people who move notify the Post Office of their change of address and that the next issue of Hey Blue! gets forwarded to them but they will continue to go to the old address unless you let us know your new address. If we have a returned copy of Hey Blue! we will remove your address from our mailing list until we get an updated address. We do retain your name on the Membership list but once you are deleted from our mailing list you will not receive any further issues of Hey Blue! until we are advised of your new address. If you have recently moved or are planning to do so in the next few months, please complete the form to the right and mail it to us as soon as possible. If you know the date that you will be moving we will update our files for that date.

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