



THE UMPIRE WEEKLY

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April 8, 2018

HIT-A-THON:

Save the date!

May 19, 2018 - 3:00pm

Check your email for information about our upcoming Hit-a-thon!

This will be a fun and exciting fundraiser that involves the kids, baseball and some good old-fashioned hotdogs at the ballpark!

Well, here we are again. One week of regular season behind us and Spring Break coming to an end. As we get ready to head back into the full swing of the regular season, I wanted to get this season's first issue of the Umpire Weekly out. If you were around the league last year, you might already be familiar with the Umpire Weekly Newsletter. If you're not, the Umpire Weekly is a weekly newsletter put out by email only during the regular season and only to currently registered families. Each week I will cover one or two topics that came up during the previous week of play. Whether they were scenarios that played out on the field or questions that were asked, there are often situations that seem strange. The managers and umpires may figure it out on the field, but the parents and fans do not always get an explanation or understanding of what just happened and why it was ruled that way.

For this first issue of the season, there weren't really any scenarios to cover, but there are a couple of items that I thought might be important to share.

Rule Books & Updates

First, I want to talk about the Little League Baseball and Softball Rule Books for 2018. If you are a Team Manager, you should have received one at the draft. If you attended my umpire clinic, they were available there. These rule books contain Official Regulations, Playing Rules and Operating Policies. I bring up the books to make the point that while we do allow these rule books to govern our play, it should be noted that there are and have been changes to the rules post-publication of the physical books. If you download a digital version from whatever source you download ebooks from (iBooks, Kindle or whatever) you will find the updated versions. It certainly is not required to download the digital version, as there is a cost of about \$5 each, but I make the point in order to avoid a conflict on the field when the umpire makes a call based on the updated rules, but a Manager or coach pulls out the physical book and can't find the rule the umpire referenced. There are two changes that come to mind immediately:

The Mercy Rule

Rule 4.10(e) has been dubbed the Mercy Rule because if one team is ahead by so many runs at the end of four innings (three and one-half innings if the home team is ahead), the team with the least of runs will concede the victory (Add one inning for Juniors). This rule has changed to include not only what we all know as the 10-run rule, but also a 15-run rule. It states,



“If after three (3) innings (Junior/Senior League: four innings), two and one-half innings (Junior/Senior League: three and one-half innings) if the home team is ahead, one team has a lead of fifteen (15) runs or more, the manager of the team with the least runs shall concede the victory to the opponent.”

This rule has been added to the Inter-League rules that are available on our website and they posted in each dugout.

Baseball Bats

Another rule change this year has to do with bats. Everyone knows by now that there was a major change to the bat rule, Rule 1.10. For baseball (not softball), bats must meet the USABat standard. However, what didn't make it into the rule books (printed or digital versions), was an update as of February 15, 2018 that states that Intermediates (50/70) and Juniors baseball MAY use a bat that meets EITHER the USABat standard or the BBCOR standard.

*“Beginning with the 2018 season, non-wood and laminated bats used in the Little League (Majors) and below, Intermediate (50-70) Division, Junior League divisions, and Challenger division shall bear the USA Baseball logo signifying that the bat meets the USABat – USA Baseball’s Youth Bat Performance Standard. All BPF – 1.15 bats will be prohibited beginning with the 2018 season. Additionally, starting in 2018, the bat diameter shall not exceed 2⁵/₈ inches for these divisions of play. **Bats meeting the Batted Ball Coefficient of Restitution (BBCOR) standard may also be used in the Intermediate (50-70) Division and Junior League divisions.** Additional information is available at LittleLeague.org/batinfo.”*

You can also find more about Little League Bat rules by [clicking here](#).

SAFETY

Finally, just a reminder to our Baseball Managers and Coaches... please ensure that you are adhering the proper pitch count and rest days for your pitchers. Those rules are in place for player safety. No game is more important than our boys' safety.

Also, about the bat rules as stated above, all BPF 1.15 bats are prohibited in every Little League activity including practices. Please remind your players to simply leave the old bats at home. They cannot even be in the dugouts.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Hopefully by now you've seen the emails about our upcoming Hit-a-thon. The BGLL Board of Directors is hoping this event will be a fun-filled, family event at the ballpark. So, share your players' links with family and friends. Don't forget to send it to Uncle Bobby in Montana and Grandma Jean in Arizona. There are some pretty interesting prizes to be won!

As always, thank you for your support and we'll see you on the diamond!

PLAY BALL!

Contact Us

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