

BYBA UMPIRES



MANUAL

2009

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for choosing to participate as an umpire for Burlingame Youth Baseball Association (BYBA).

Your role as an umpire in BYBA is integral to the overall success of our program. Without dedicated individuals, such as yourself, the games could not be played. Far too often umpires are cast in a negative light, but it is our hope that through our staff, coaches, and parents that we will be able to provide an environment that is conducive to fairness and education. We also believe that by participating as an umpire, and in some cases as a player as well, that you will gain more knowledge and perspective about the game of baseball. It is never as easy as it seems, but we hope our umpiring program will minimize the challenges, and instill a sense of pride, respect, and accomplishment.

This booklet is designed to help you understand the BYBA approach to umpiring games at various levels in our program. It will cover several important items that do not involve the rules of the game, but also may not cover every question that you might have. We will be supplementing this booklet with “hands-on” umpire training for everyone to more directly provide the necessary skills and knowledge that will be needed to umpire a BYBA game. We encourage everyone to use this as a guide, but to please call the Director of Umpires, John Serrato, at (650) 703-2037 with any questions that are not answered within.

Again, thank you for your willingness to be part of the BYBA umpiring program. We believe it will be a rewarding and valuable experience for you.

REQUIREMENTS AND CERTIFICATION

To be eligible to umpire for BYBA, we have the following minimum requirements:

1. You must be a player in the 2nd year of the division above the one you will be umpiring in (e.g., to umpire Mudville, you must be in the 2nd year of Reyna; to umpire in Reyna you must in the 2nd year of Sauer).
2. If there is no playing experience, you must be 12 years old before August 1st of the current baseball season.

The Director of Umpires, John Serrato, will always be available by cell phone at (650) 703-2037 for clarification of any issues throughout the year,

The umpire selection process for playoff games will be done based on:

1. Feedback from the coaches; and
2. Umpire availability

A premium will be paid for playoff games, so we encourage each of you to do your best throughout the year to be selected for this honor.

REWARDS/CREDIT FOR SERVICE

Compensation rates for regular season games for the various divisions are as follows:

Mudville

Home Plate	=	\$17 per game
Field	=	\$15 per game

Reyna

Home Plate	=	\$19 per game
Field	=	\$17 per game

Sauer

Home Plate	=	\$40 per game
Field	=	\$40 per game

A \$1.00 per game premium will be paid for each year of experience in the BYBA umpiring program, up to a maximum of two years. Premiums will also be paid for playoff games at the end of the year. Any other changes in compensation, whether for a particular game or for home plate versus field will only be made at the discretion of the Director of Umpires, John Serrato.

For the Mudville and Reyna umpires you will be paid every two weeks by check which will be mailed to the address you designate.

BYBA is also set up to provide community service points (e.g., Block "B" points for BIS students) in lieu of compensation for a particular game or games. The hours worked will be reported directly to the school and will count towards the Community Service hours required at your school. Please alert the Director of Umpires, John Serrato, in advance if you would like to take advantage of this feature at some point during the season.

DRESS CODE

BYBA takes pride in its baseball programs. This does not just mean keeping the fields well groomed and the players properly coached, but also includes having well-presented umpires. Just as we expect the players to wear their uniforms and dress appropriately for a game, we also expect the umpires to do the same. As such, BYBA will provide each umpire with a hat and t-shirt at no charge. A protective cup must be worn by all umpires.

Shirts must be tucked in, and hats must be worn forwards.

We want everyone to succeed and be proud of the role they play as an umpire, and expect that this simple dress code can and will be followed. If not, we will work with you individually to determine how best we can help you adhere to this policy.

PRIOR TO THE GAME

All umpires are expected to arrive at the field at least 15 minutes before game time for both weekday and weekend games.

If you are umpiring the first game of the day make sure the bases are flush with the ground and do not rock as this is a safety issue.

Secure one new baseball for the game from the coach of each team. If either ball is lost or becomes unavailable during the game, ask either coach for another ball. The balls should be returned to each coach after the game.

The home plate umpire should put on the protective gear, which is stored in the bins at the fields. This should consist of a facemask, chest protector, and shin guards. All items should be adjusted to fit properly. If you need help, please ask the other umpire or one of the coaches to help you. Each umpire should use a “clicker” during the game. BYBA supplies clickers to all umpires.

Both umpires should meet with the head coaches before each game, and discuss the ground rules. Such items should always include (amongst others):

- a. Identify the “head umpire” for all final decisions in the game.
- b. Review the length of the game (both innings and time).
- c. Ensure that the coaches support whatever decision is made for a call, right or wrong (you are a volunteer and doing the best you can).
- d. Instruct the coaches to keep parents under control; tell them you have the authority to warn parents, remove them from the field/stands if necessary, and potentially to call the game a forfeit and nobody plays.
- e. Tell the coaches that cheering by the players must be “positive” and only for their own team (no deriding chants about opposing players).
- f. Advise the coaches that foul language and thrown bats/helmets will not be tolerated.
- g. Point out a copy of the rules that should be posted at each field for the respective division that you are umpiring. If one is not posted, make sure to carry your own copy with you.

For youth that umpire Mudville division games, you should also explain the following, in conjunction with the items above:

- a. Called strikes will lower the “ball” count by 1.
- b. Identify to the coaches that the strike zone is a bit larger than just the width of the plate and letters to the knees.
- c. Reinforce that both of the above are in place to motivate the players to swing the bat. If it becomes clear that players are “looking to walk”, you will talk to the coach first. If it doesn’t improve, the strike zone will expand slightly.
- d. Review policy regarding leading off of a base and stealing.
- e. Review recording outs and batting rotation policy.

DURING THE GAME (Home Plate Umpire)

To convey a level of confidence in your ability to umpire a game, there are several things that can be done during the game. Some of them are as follows:

- a. Call the count out nice and loud on every pitch, and signal simultaneously with the fingers the ball strike count.
- b. Keep track of balls, strikes, and outs on the “clicker”, as well as innings and elapsed time of the game.
- c. Make sure that all bats and related equipment are in the dugout before the next batter steps in the box, and that only the on-deck batter is out of the dugout. Do NOT allow play to restart until this has been accomplished.
- d. All batters, base runners, and youth base coaches MUST wear a helmet while on the actual playing field.
- e. Encourage the batters to swing at close pitches (separate from telling the coaches).
- f. Call all plays emphatically so people can hear you; this shows people you are confident in your call, whether it is right or wrong.
- g. Consult with the other umpire only if asked to do so. If he agrees with your call, or did not see the play, strongly reiterate your original call and that it stands, and restart play.
- h. Remind coaches to curtail anything that causes you concern (verbal abuse from parents, coaches, and/or players, etc.).
- i. Inform parents (if necessary) that they must sit in the stands or down the lines. They may not stand on the field or in the dugouts as this interferes with coaching and player participation.
- j. For Mudville division, remind batters that a called strike decreases the “ball” count by 1 (when it happens), and then bark out the new count for all to hear.

DURING THE GAME (Base/Field Umpire)

The base field umpire is just as important as the home plate umpire. You may be the “head umpire” for the game, so being alert at all times is very important. Some key tasks include:

- a. Make sure to be in the proper position when runners are/are not on base.
- b. Keep track of balls, strikes, and outs on the “clicker”, as well as elapsed time of the game.
- c. Make sure that all bats and related equipment are in the dugout before the next batter steps in the box, and that only the on-deck batter is out of the dugout. Do NOT allow play to restart until this has been accomplished.
- d. All batters, base runners, and youth base coaches MUST wear a helmet while on the actual playing field.
- e. Call all plays emphatically so people can hear you; this shows people you are confident in your call, whether it is right or wrong.
- f. Consult with the other umpire only if asked to do so. If he agrees with your call, or did not see the play, strongly reiterate your original call and that it stands, and restart play.
- g. Remind coaches to curtail anything that causes you concern (verbal abuse from parents, coaches, and/or players, etc.).
- h. Inform parents (if necessary) that they must sit in the stands or down the lines. They may not stand on the field or in the dugouts as this interferes with coaching and player participation.

AFTER THE GAME

Once a game is completed there is still some work to be done, including the following:

- a. Return the game balls to the respective coach(es).
- b. The home plate umpire should remove all protective gear and replace it in the storage bin at the field.
- c. Sign your name in the log book located in the bin, and have one of the head coaches sign the log as well indicating that you umpired a game on that date and time. This is the only mechanism we have to ensure that you receive proper credit in our program.
- d. Make sure that any beverage containers or snack wrappers belonging to you are properly disposed.
- e. Call the Director of Umpires, John Serrato, at (650) 703-2037 with any questions that arose during the game. This is a great way to continue to learn. Please also call with any problems that you feel need reporting (parents or coaches yelling at you, fights, injuries, etc.).

HANDLING DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

Occasionally there are situations that arise that can be difficult to handle. BYBA is doing all that it can to help prevent such situations as they quite often involve coaches and parents, and infrequently players. We will review some of these situations in the training meeting but the underlining premise to all these is **BE FIRM AND CONFIDENT IN ALL THAT YOU DO.**

One of the most important aspects of umpiring is not necessarily whether the call is right or wrong, but making a tough call, and with authority. Coaches, parents, and players will respect your role as an umpire if you make a call quickly and decisively—this quite often shows that you were confident in what you saw which helps lessen any potential backlash. Remember, you and your fellow umpires are in charge, and should convey that when umpiring a game.

If you feel a coach is verbally abusing you or anyone else, direct them to stop--again in a firm, but polite manner. If a parent or fan is verbally abusing you or anyone else, have the coach talk to the parent or fan and have the abuse stopped. If a player is verbally abusing you or acting in an unsportsmanlike manner, direct them to stop as well. If the situation continues, you have the authority to remove them from the field and/or spectating area. If you need to hold up the game to resolve the issue, you may do so. To the extent that a situation warrants the need to contact the Director of Umpires or another BYBA Board member during the game, please do so. At the conclusion of the game, call the Director of Umpires, John Serrato, at 703-2037 providing the names of people to whom warnings were given, and the names of anyone ejected. BYBA will give you their full support in any actions you choose to implement and will act accordingly to further minimize any future problems with these people.

Injuries can be part of the game and are sometimes difficult situations to handle. Because you are a youth umpire it would be wiser to ask parents to help in an event of an injured player. Please immediately ask the coaches to come out on the field to attend to the player(s) as they have been provided some basic first aid training in the coaches class. If necessary, someone will call 911 to transport the injured party to a local medical facility. In the event of injury to an umpire, seek attention from an adult and let the director of umpires know as soon as possible.

SCHEDULES

BYBA posts the umpiring schedule on its web page, byba.us, which will include BYBA division name, umpire name and, date and time of the game.

You are responsible for finding substitutes for your particular game at least 24 hours in advance. If you have trouble doing so, please contact the Director of Umpires, John Serrato, at (650) 703-2037 for help.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What if I can't umpire a game I have been assigned?

It is a real problem when umpires cancel out on game assignments, so please avoid cancellations if at all possible. We strongly encourage you to find your own replacement, but if you have trouble, please inform the Director of Umpires, John Serrato, at 703-2037 so that additional help can be used to locate a replacement.

2. What if rain is an issue?

The BYBA phone number for field condition information is 558-7319 and is also available at byba.us. The City of Burlingame makes the determination as to whether the fields are playable or not so you must check this information if you are unsure. If it rains during a game that you are umpiring, make sure to consult with the coaches about the conditions of the field. If, in your estimation, the field ever becomes unsafe, then cancel the game. This may be hard to do with players and parents all present and wanting to play, but safety is the first concern. However, if you feel and the coaches feel it is safe, by all means play.

3. Can umpires decide to swap plate and bases assignments?

Yes, if both umpires are willing. If youth umpires swap, it must be indicated in the Umpire Log Book at the end of the game so we can properly credit the right umpires for payment.

Let us know any other questions you might have. You don't need to report game scores as the home coach has that responsibility. You do need to report any injuries (serious), ejections or behavior issues that you feel need the League's attention. Please submit any reports in that category to the Director of Umpires, John Serrato, at (650) 703-2037 or via his e-mail to bybaumps@yahoo.com.

MUDVILLE LEAGUE RULES

60 foot distance between bases. Bases are fixed. Pitching distance is 44 feet.

Continuous batting order.

10 defensive players in the field, which will include 4 outfielders in the grass portion of the field. Free defensive substitutions. Players may not sit out more than 3 defensive outs at a time or more than 6 defensive outs per game.

6 inning games. Note: No new inning will begin after 2 hours from the start of the game (new inning begins when last out is made in previous inning).

The following rule will apply to regular season games only: Each time a batting team bats through its entire batting order in an inning, an out will be assessed. This rule will not apply to the last or extra-inning of a regular season game. This rule will not apply to play-off games.

Runners may not lead off 1st base until the pitched ball reaches the plate. Penalty: Ball is dead and runner is out. Runners may advance to or steal 2nd base once the pitched ball has reached the plate or any other time the ball is in play.

In the event a runner on 2nd base wishes to attempt to steal 3rd base or advance on a passed ball or wild pitch, the runner may not lead off or leave 2nd base until the pitched ball reaches the plate. In the event a runner on 2nd base leads off or leaves 2nd base prior to the pitched ball reaching the plate, the runner may not steal 3rd base or advance on a pick-off attempt, passed ball or wild pitch, and can only advance from 2nd base if forced by a walk or hit batsman or if the batter hits the ball.

Runners on 3rd base may lead off base up to 10' at a time, but may only advance if forced in by a walk or hit batsman or if the batter hits the ball. Runners on 3rd base may not steal home or advance on pick-off attempts. Note: Runners must hold up at 3rd base when advancing on the bases and the ball has not been hit in play by the batter.

Except as provided above, overthrows at all bases are live.

Adult coaches will pitch to their own teams the first 4 innings of all games through (date to be determined). Batters will be given a maximum of 5 pitches to hit the ball fair. Foul balls beginning with the 5th pitch will extend the at-bat. No leading, stealing or bunting while adult coaches are pitching. Defense will include a fielding pitcher. Players will pitch the final 2 innings of these games, and all innings of games scheduled on or after (date to be determined).

Pitchers are limited to 3 innings per game with a maximum of 5 warm-up pitches allowed between innings or a similar time period. Once a pitcher has been removed as a pitcher, s/he is not allowed to return to the game as a pitcher. A maximum of 10 warm-up pitches are allowed for a relief pitcher. Note: when a relief pitcher comes into the game to finish an inning, 1 pitch constitutes 1 inning pitched.

Any called strike will result in a ball being removed from the count.

The “infield fly rule” will not apply.

All other rules will be governed by the “Official Baseball Rules”.

CARL REYNA LEAGUE RULES

70 foot distance between bases. Bases are fixed. Pitching distance is 50 feet.

Continuous batting order.

Free defensive substitutions. Players may not sit out more than 6 defensive outs per game.

No leads off 1st base. Runners may not leave 1st base until the ball is released by the pitcher.
Penalty: Ball is dead and 1st base runner is out.

Runners may lead off 2nd and 3rd bases. A maximum 20 foot lead is allowed from 3rd base before the ball reaches the plate.

During regular season games, pitchers are limited to maximum of 3 innings per game. During play-off games, pitchers are limited to a maximum of 4 innings per game. Pitchers are limited to a maximum of 5 warm-up pitches between innings or a similar time period. Once a pitcher has been removed as a pitcher, s/he is not allowed to return to the game as a pitcher. A maximum of 10 warm-up pitches are allowed for a relief pitcher. Note: when a relief pitcher comes into the game to finish an inning, 1 pitch constitutes 1 inning pitched.

7 inning games. Time limit on weeknights: no new inning will begin after 7:30pm. Time limit on weekend games: no new inning begins after 2 ¼ hours from the start of the game (new inning begins when last out is made in previous inning). 12-run rule after 4 innings for all games.

The “infield fly rule” will not apply. “Hidden ball trick” plays are not allowed.

All other rules will be governed by the “Official Baseball Rules”.

HANK SAUER, SR. LEAGUE RULES

80 foot distance between bases. Bases are fixed. Pitching distance is 54 feet.

Continuous batting order.

Free substitutions. Players may not sit out more than 6 defensive outs at a time or more than 9 defensive outs per game.

Runners may lead off 1st, 2nd and 3rd bases without penalty.

During regular season games, pitchers are limited to maximum of 3 innings per game. During play-off games, pitchers are limited to a maximum of 4 innings per game. Pitchers are limited to a maximum of 5 warm-up pitches between innings or a similar time period. A maximum of 10 warm-up pitches are allowed for a relief pitcher. Note: it is also highly recommended that if a player pitches more than two (2) innings on Friday, s/he is limited to one (1) inning pitched on Saturday.

7 inning games.

Time limit on weeknights: no new inning will begin after 7:30pm. Saturdays: no new inning begins after 2 hours and 15 minutes. 12-run rule after 4 innings for all games.

No taking "infield" practice before games.

All other rules will be governed by the "Official Baseball Rules".

