

TOSH TIMES

TOSH Baseball Program Newsletter

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Summer 2018

Understanding an Umpire's Perspective of the Game



By Michael S. Everett

TOSH Baseball Program Coordinator

Wow—suddenly the season is about over and it's time to think about fall and what changes need to be made for next year. Hopefully, that won't take much effort because everything went well this season and you and your team made adjustments from mistakes you made earlier. RIGHT? Let me get right to the primary topic.

Officials will be Officials

Every game needs at least one, and preferably, two officials. If there are more, then you are playing in a championship or a higher level game. At all levels, officials call a beginning and end to every game. No game is designated "official" without them, but frequently we have complaints about the quality or consistency of their work. We all have stories to tell about good and bad officiating, and how it affects our game.

Let me offer some perspectives that I hope will change your mind the next time you want to lash out at the umpire in charge of your game, whether you're there as an athlete, parent, or coach.

First: Why do umpires work?

Umpiring is a job not many of us want to do! The job is similar regardless of the level of competition. For most officials at the Major League level, officiating pays all the bills and they don't need any other form of work. However, from AAA officials on down to the fellas you saw on your field last weekend, it's either a small supplement to their livelihood and maybe just a hobby.

For example, seasoned MLB umpires can earn as much as \$350,000 a year, while beginning MLB umpires earn at least \$120,000 a year. Officials at the next level down (AAA) earn about \$24,000 a year to start, while an (A) level umpire will



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start at \$10,500 per year on average. NCAA umpires get paid per game and earn anywhere between \$16,000 to \$50,000 a year. In Utah, high school officials make \$50 to \$60 per game. RMSB umpires, many of whom officiate high school games of different levels as well, earn \$40 per game for dressing professionally, acting professionally, and being punctual.

Second: What do they know?

Officials are required to know the rules of the level of baseball they are officiating. They're trained to put themselves in position to make the very best decisions possible on every play. Consider the possibility of having bases loaded, no outs, and two officials. Could you be in position to see every perceivable angle when the ball is put into play?

Officials are trained to rotate in such a way that all possible plays receive the most accurate call possible. I don't know those rotations, and unless you've been trained as an official, I assume you don't either. We should respect and appreciate the methodology they use to do their work, and know that they try to work together to achieve the most accurate result for each situation. Also, all officials rotate working the field as well as behind the plate, and each of them will bring their own

personality to each station.

Behind-the-plate umpers will have their own perspective on the quality of pitches they see cross the plate, and for the most part they'll stay consistent with their strike zones. Successful players and coaches at every level know how to take what the umpire is calling and make appropriate adjustments at the plate.

A great catcher can convince the umpire, by his framing, that a questionable ball was a strike or can help show that a pitcher's consistency in hitting his spots should be rewarded. Take the time to re-watch the 2018 College World Series and you'll see what I'm talking about.

The Oregon State pitcher threw a complete game shutout to win the deciding third game of the series. He couldn't have done that without the framing skills of his catcher, who made many balls look like strikes to the umpire. The pitcher hit unhittable spots and the catcher framed them into the strike zone.

The Arkansas coaches, players, and fans complained all day about the zone, but the players never adjusted to how the strike zone was being called. Who was at fault? The umpire for being consistent on both sides of the plate or the Arkansas players for not making adjustments?



Third: Shouldn't they be perfect?

Remember, officials are human and will make mistakes in their workplace, just like you and me. Can you imagine yourself at work making a hard decision or making a mistake and having not just your clients come down hard on you, but their family and friends chiming in as well? On top of that, imagine being heckled throughout your work day—including threats as you walk to your car on your way home. I'm sure you wouldn't want that for yourself.

Here are two real-life scenarios to illustrate: First, during a 13U game I watched recently, the plate umpire of a two-man crew called a hard-hit ground ball to the third baseman fair, which resulted in the final out of the inning with the throw to first base and stranded a runner at third base. Coaches and parents complained that the ball was touched foul and therefore no play should have been awarded.

The second example is from the College World Series

where I watched an umpire turn and watch a ball he called foul from a good vantage point. Coaches complained, and thanks to the new video replay rules in the CWS, they overturned the call because the ball barely touched the paint as it bounced out of bounds.

In real time it was too close for even a veteran NCAA official on a four-man crew to see. These two plays show different levels of officials making a very similar call under their unique circumstances. Across every level of baseball umpires are hired to make calls to the best of their judgment, and perfect or not their judgment is how the game is ruled.

So the next time you think the umpire for your 9U tournament or Super-league game wasn't the quality you expect, I hope some of this information will help you understand the officials' perspective.

As always, TOSH is here to help you with a wide array of services with our baseball-specific training program and our sports performance training services to enhance your speed, agility, and overall athletic performance.

Please call us at **801-314-2996** to make an appointment. You can learn more about our training program [here](#).

Enjoy your Fall season,

Michael

TOSH Baseball/Softball Program Coordinator



Nutritional Advice for Young Athletes: Eating Well Helps You Succeed in School and in Sports

By Ashley Hagenick

TOSH Sport Dietitian

Eating consistently throughout the day is very important for young athletes. Skipping meals and snacks can make you feel tired, grumpy, and too tired to excel in school and sports.

Fueling yourself throughout the day ensures that your body has enough energy to be active at school and to train hard at practice. This often means you'll have to pack food you can eat on the go to provide at least three full meals a day.

Make sure you always start your day with breakfast! Overnight, your body uses stored energy to rebuild the muscles you broke down in practice. If you have an early morning practice or game and don't feel like eating, make sure your dinner the night before is bigger than normal to get you through the morning workout.

As time goes on, try to train your body to tolerate small amounts of food in the morning. Make sure you choose foods you enjoy; breakfast doesn't have to be oatmeal or pancakes or eggs.

Try eating leftovers from the night before or eating a peanut butter and honey sandwich. When school starts up again, breakfast will ensure that your brain

can think and function properly for learning. Breakfast also gives your body the opportunity to store energy for practice or games later in the day.

After breakfast, it's important to fuel yourself throughout the rest of the day so you'll be ready for your practices and games. Never skip meals!

As an adolescent athlete, your calorie needs are higher to sustain your growth and your activity level. Girls and boys ages 9-18 need anywhere between 1,700-2,800 calories (for girls) and 2,000-3,800 calories (for boys) per day.

Eating frequently and packing shelf-stable snacks ensures you won't break down your muscles for energy.

Some examples of easy-to-pack snacks:

- Peanut butter and jelly or honey sandwich
- Granola bars
- Dry cereal with shelf-stable milk that doesn't need refrigeration
- Trail mix
- Pretzels with peanut butter
- Shelf-stable chocolate milk (available at Walmart, Costco, or Amazon)
- Popcorn
- Applesauce
- Whole or dried fruit

TOSH provides FREE youth sports nutrition talks for your entire team! Call 801-314-4038 or email TOSHNutrition@imail.org for more information.

Have a great Fall season!

Ashley

TOSH Sport Dietitian

