



UMPIRES WORKING WITH THE LEAGUE OFFICERS

The relationship between umpires and the league officers will vary, depending on the type of local league organization and whether the umpire is an individual hired by the league, an umpire assigned by an association which has a contract with the league to provide umpiring services, and in many instances the relative age, experience and qualification of the individuals concerned, both umpire and league officers.

The points to be remembered are that the umpire controls the actual playing of the game on the field, and his judgement calls are not to be questioned by league officials. In a similar sense, the umpire's authority should be limited to the particular game being played and not the general operation of the league.

Too often, in conversations with others, league officers are critical of the work of some umpires and umpires are critical of the way a league officer handles his or her responsibility to the league. Comments, suggestions and complaints between the league officers and the umpires should be made only between those parties as a matter of respect and courtesy. The authority of both league officer and umpire can be destroyed when each, or either, criticizes the other through third parties. Such criticism becomes nothing more than gossip and can easily destroy a league.

Umpires, who are accustomed to working with "professional" coaches and ground crews at the high school or college level, may find themselves in more "amateur" surroundings when working games in league play. The initial point to realize is in most instances, the team managers and coaches, grounds crew, scorekeeper, and league officers are all working without compensation, and may not have the time, the funds, or perhaps even the knowledge to provide umpires some of the courtesies which are accorded umpires in more "professional" surroundings.

If pre-game conditions are not as they should be – if baseballs are not ready, there is no rosin bag on the mound, the line-ups have not been prepared – ask and offer assistance to get things ready. Don't start issuing orders and making demands on a group of volunteers who have also put in a full day working at their "regular" job. If you are going to be working the game of a league throughout the season, ask for a pre-season meeting with league officers and team managers and coaches. Discuss rules and game procedures. A thorough understanding between adults involved will eliminate many of the problems that might occur and make those that do occur far more manageable.