

HOW THE MANAGERS AND COACHES CAN HELP THE UMPIRES IN CSLL

BEFORE THE GAME

1. Show up early and have the field prepared on time. If you are the home team, you are responsible for lining the fields. Too often managers and coaches get hung up on pre-game batting practice and warm-ups and forget to do the field until the last minute. And then it turns out sloppy.
2. Do your pre-game warm-ups as stipulated in CSLL policy. Each team is allotted ten minutes to do infield/outfield warm ups before the game. And then we still need ten minutes to conduct the Little League Pledge and the plate conference. Please abide by these requirements!
3. Fill out the Line-Up card properly. A lot of time is wasted as managers make last-second corrections to their Line-Up cards during the plate conference. Please make sure you have them filled out with all the pertinent information, especially pitcher eligibility. And make sure you provide a copy to the official scorekeeper early enough so that the book is ready.
4. If you're the home team, provide an official scorekeeper early. Speaking of official scorekeepers, we have had problems in the past where the home team did not have an official scorekeeper identified and ready come game time. So we have to wait until the scorekeeper gets in the booth, preps the book, and is ready to score. This always causes us problems, especially for time-limited games.
5. Make sure your players are properly equipped and ready to play. Ensure your male catcher has his protective cup. Check your players' shoes so that they are properly tied. Check the serviceability of the protective gear (no broken straps, all helmets have chin straps, etc.) And don't forget that if you're the home team, you're also responsible to provide the game balls to the umpires; two baseballs is the minimum, but have a couple of extra just in case, especially during wet field conditions.

DURING THE GAME

1. Help the umpires keep the game moving. Don't take too much time getting your players on and off the field. If your catcher is having trouble gearing up, have someone help him/her, and send someone else out to warm up the pitcher. If you have nobody available in the dugout, have your third baseman put on the mask and get behind the plate. Get your base coaches out as soon as the catcher throws down to second base. Have your next batter ready to come up to bat (helmet on, catcher's gear off, etc.) Hustle your bullpen players into position and back to the dugout.
2. Inform the umpire-in-chief AND the opposing manager of substitutions. Informing the official scorekeeper is not enough. We all need to know of the changes to keep everyone on the same sheet of music. It is very frustrating to stop play because the opposing manager is unaware of your changes. Even if you prearrange your substitutions, you still need to announce them every inning!
3. Be a positive role model. Show good sportsmanship. Don't yell out questionable instructions, such as "Run over the catcher the next time he gets in the way!" Control your players, coaches and parents.
4. Understand that umpires make mistakes. Remember that we are all volunteers, just like you. Umpires don't criticize your strategy blunders, so don't criticize their miscues. And don't forget, you can only discuss rule interpretations, not judgment calls (safe/out, strike/ball, fair/foul, catch/no catch, etc.)
5. Think SAFETY! Look for possible safety violations during the game. There's nothing worse than having to tend to a hurt player because of something that was preventable. Don't let players carry bats into the dugout. Don't allow more than your leadoff batter stand outside the dugout in between innings, and make sure he/she stands in the proper place on the field (between home plate and the end of the dugout next to the backstop).

AFTER THE GAME

1. Win or lose, participate in the handshake. Again, another example of showing good sportsmanship. Shake hands with the opposition even if something didn't go your way. If you cop an attitude, your players will, too. Make sure your players don't rub it in when they win.
2. Get your team and equipment out of the dugouts quickly. This is especially critical if another game follows yours. The longer you take, the later the next game gets started.
3. Thank the Junior umpires. Remember how good it feels when someone comes up to you and tells you "Great game!" Express your gratitude to these youngsters; it builds up their confidence!