

# Dulles Little League

## Umpire Training Agenda Spring 2024 (3-5-24)

**Welcome to our DLL Umpire Team. This document contains 90% of the information you need to be a successful DLL Umpire.**

**Questions** – If you have any questions about anything related to umpiring for DLL, please email/text/call me anytime. [jmartin@dulleslittleleague.org](mailto:jmartin@dulleslittleleague.org) or 202-823-5354

**DLL Umpire Account** – We are now using Stack Officials to schedule our games. Please make sure you have an account there, including your name, DOB, cell phone number and home address. There is a section in **your** account for your parent's information as well. **PLEASE DO NOT USE YOUR PARENT'S EMAIL ADDRESS TO LOG INTO STACK OFFICIALS.** The Umpire Scheduling rights are given to you, under your username and password. If you log in using your parent's email address, you won't be able to schedule games.

**Umpire Training Information and Rules** – I have posted a lot of useful information on our website ([www.dulleslittleleague.org](http://www.dulleslittleleague.org)). Once you are on our site, go to the League Operations tab, then to the Umpire tab, then to Umpire Reference Material. There you will find our Training Agenda that we use, the Local Rules, information to help with the Pre-Game Coaches Meeting and other items.

**Cancelling a game** - If you have to cancel a game within **48 hours of game start**, please notify me that you are doing so by text (202) 823-5354 or email [uic@dulleslittleleague.org](mailto:uic@dulleslittleleague.org)

### **Field information / Logistics.**

**Plate equipment** - The plate equipment will be in the shed behind/near the field. The code for the shed is **4824**.

- Face mask & helmet.
- Chest protector.
- Shin guards.

- Wear a cup.

**Attire** – Your appearance will determine 80-90% of your first impression on the coaches and players. Please dress in dark blue/black khaki pants and the DLL t-shirt, and dark, preferably black sneakers. *Pants available at Kohls & Target.*

**Items to bring to each game** - Keep these items in your pouch / bag.

- Ball/Strike Indicator.
- Rule book or access to the Little League Rules app on your phone.
- Printed copy of the local rules, you can find them on the website,
  - “Documents & rules”. → “Local rules” folder.
- Cell phone *on vibrate, for emergency use only.*

**Arrival time** - Show up **30 minutes** before game time.

- Talk to Your Fellow Umpires About Local Rules, Rotations and Walk the field.
  - Walk the entire field to check for safety hazards. (Holes, puddles, soft clay, large pieces of trash, animals, etc.)
  - Field issues. (Bases loose/missing, puddles, etc.)
- Coaches / managers meeting. *Five minutes prior to the game start.*
  - Introduction. → Be confident, this is your first impression with the coach.
  - Reminder of sportsmanship; set a good example, be a leader, etc.
  - **Note any level-specific rules & local rules.**
  - Note any field issues.
  - See sample Coach’s Meeting Agenda on the DLL website if you want more information and suggestions.

**Cancellation of games** -

- Prior to the game.
  - The decision to cancel before the game will be made by the league by 4:00 - 4:15 for a 5:30 - 6:00 o’clock game.
  - Check the DLL website “Field status” section. *This is located at the bottom right corner of the DLL home page.*
  - If the field is listed as “TBD”, **please report to the field at your usual time.** TBD means that you and the coaches will check the field and see if it is playable.

- You will receive a cancellation email / text if the game is cancelled.
- Forfeit if less than **eight** players at the start of the game. *Ten-minute courtesy period provided.*
- **Sibling's games** - We request that you not umpire your friend/siblings' games.
- After the game starts.
  - The decision to cancel the game after it starts will be made by the umpire(s).
  - If it starts raining to the point where the pitcher can't grip the ball, the kids are slipping or there are puddles forming, you may end the game.
  - If thunder / lightning is heard / seen, there is a **30 minute** wait time, if it happens again, the clock resets.
  - The field **must** be cleared of all participants, and all players must be in cars.

#### **Solo umpiring –**

- I will do my best to assign two umpires to each game, but that is not always possible.
- Do your best to officiate the plate and the field if you are working by yourself. I realize this will mean a lot more work for you and you will be paid extra to reward you for your efforts.
- If you are scheduled to work with someone and they don't show up, please contact me after the game and let me know so I can adjust your pay.

#### **Safety.**

##### **Pitcher warm-up -**

- Coach can now warm up pitchers.
- Prefer current player **on the team**. *Not a coach, adult, parent, brother, sister, etc.*
- Player warming up the pitcher must wear a mask with a dangling throat guard.  
*Not a batting helmet.*

##### **On-deck hitters -**

- On-deck hitters are **not** permitted in **Majors and below** divisions.
- No donuts.

##### **Dugouts -**

- Dugout doors are to be closed before the ball is put into play and during play.
- Players and Coaches must stay in the dugout when not on the field, batting, or coaching a base.
- No player other than the batter at the plate is to have a bat in their hands.

#### **Coaches on the field -**

- Offense.
  - Coaches may occupy **first and third base coach's boxes**, nowhere else.
  - Batboy(s) / girl(s) are **not** permitted.
- Defense.
  - All coaches must stay in the dugout in Double A and above.
  - Single A and below are allowed to have a coach on the field positioning the defense before the pitch is thrown, but they must not instruct the kids after the ball is hit until the action stops.
  - Coaches must call timeout **and have it granted**, before entering the field.
  - Umpires DO NOT enforce pitch limits or minimum play requirements. That is up to the coaches. If there is a dispute, play it out and have them contact their Player Agent after the game to resolve it.

#### **General information.**

##### **Be confident -**

- You possess all the power within the game.
- Make calls clearly and loudly with strong, crisp mechanics.
- If you are clear and confident with your calls, it is less likely people will question them.

##### **Be consistent**

Consistency and hustle are two keys to success as an umpire.

A pitch that is a strike in the first inning should still be a strike in the 6<sup>th</sup>. It should also be a strike whether the score is 1-0 or 10-1.

**HUNT STRIKES 50/50 is a strike in all leagues, bigger for A and AA but not in dirt or above hands**

### **Be patient -**

- When you make your calls, wait that extra second, gather yourself and then call ball/strike or safe/out. That extra second will make a world of difference.

### **Keep the game flowing -**

- At the Coach's meeting before the game, strongly encourage them to use a courtesy runner for the catcher and to have them in their gear ready to come out on the field when the third is made. **This is the #1 time waster in our games.**
- Number of warm-up pitches; **eight for a new pitcher, and six for a returning pitcher.**
- Keep batters moving, and in the box between pitches.
- You control the flow of the game. Hold up your hand to the pitcher if the batter isn't ready.
- If you call time, put the ball back in play before the next pitch is thrown by pointing at the Pitcher and saying "Play".

### **Hustle -**

- Players will look up to you and how you act on the field.
- Encourage the players to hustle on and off the field.
- Stay off of your phone in between innings.

### **Concentration -**

- Coaches and fans are going to dispute / complain about your calls on the field from time to time. Unfortunately, this is part of the game and you have to learn to live with it, ignore it and not let it affect your performance on the field. As you advance to more competitive leagues, the intensity of the games are going to increase. Every call you make is potentially going to make one team, their coaches, and their fans happy, and that same call will make the other team's coaches and fans frustrated.
- If there is a persistent issue with a fan, please address it with the coach then with the Adult Game Coordinator if necessary. If there is an issue with a coach, please address it with the Adult Game Coordinator. If either occur, please call me after

the game and let me know so myself, and the Board of Directors, if necessary, can address it.

### **Time limit -**

- No new innings are to start after **two hours** of play in **Majors and below** divisions unless it is a tie. The clock starts at game time or earlier if you start before the scheduled time. For example, if you start at 5:50 instead of 6:00, two hours is 7:50. If you start at 6:05 instead of 6:00, two hours is 8:00.
- Hard stop at **two and a half hours** in **Majors and below** divisions. If you hit 2:30, please allow the at-bat to finish then end the game.
- Darkness is a judgement call made between the umpires and the coaches.

### **Umpire Positions**

- A is in foul territory, 10 to 12 feet behind first base in foul territory and occurs with no runners on base.
- B is between the Second Baseman and second base and occurs when there is a runner on first only.
- C is between the Shortstop and second base and occurs during all other situations.

### **Umpire Responsibilities (Two Person Umpire Crew)**

Home Plate Umpire is responsible for fair/foul calls up to the front of first and third base, whether the ball is in the air or on the ground. They are also responsible for all catch/no catch calls in the infield (in between home plate and all three bases in the infield).

**When the Field Umpire is in A**, they are responsible for fair/foul and catch/no catch on fly balls from the center fielder to the right field line. The Home Plate Umpire is responsible for fair/foul and catch/no catch on balls from the left field line to the center fielder.

**When the Field Umpire is in B or C**, they are responsible for catch/no catch on balls from the right fielder across to the left fielder. The Home Plate Umpire is responsible for fair/foul and catch/no catch from the right fielder to the right field line and from the left fielder to the left field line.

**When the Field Umpire is in A** and the ball passes an infielder, the Field Umpire will rotate into the working area (the area between the pitcher's mound and second base) to prepare for a play at second.

**There are times when we will have three umpires working a game, especially in Single A or Double A. When this happens, the Field Umpire in A should rotate between A and B as the situation dictates and the other Field Umpire should stay in D (behind third base, similar to A position for first base).**

### **Rule summary**

#### **Interference / Obstruction -**

- Interference.
  - Offensive - The team at bat impedes a fielder from making a play on the ball; contact or intentional interference with the fielder. *Waving arms, moving with them to block them, yelling, etc.*
  - Defensive - An act by the team in the field blocking the offensive team from making contact with the ball. *Bat strikes catcher's glove, etc.*
- Obstruction.
  - An act by a fielder that **does not** have possession of the ball, which impedes the progress of a runner. *Stepping in the baseline, blocking the base / plate, fake tags, running into them, etc.*

#### **Baseline -**

- Regarding **home to first and third to home**, the baseline is the foul line.
- Regarding **first to second and second to third**, the baseline is an imaginary line from where the runner leaves the base to the next base.
- Three-foot rule, if a runner attempts to avoid a tag by moving side to side, they have three feet to do so before they are out of the baseline.

#### **Fair / foul ball determination -**

- The determination depends on where the ball is contacted, not where the player is located. Home plate is in **fair territory**. There is a line from **home plate to first and third base**, that is what determines fair or foul.

- Where the ball **stops** is the determination, not where it is when it's moving.  
*Unless it flies out of the park.*
- Foul tip that is caught directly by the catcher is a live ball.

#### **Force out vs. tag -**

- Force out.
  - The runner is **forced to run to the next base** due to a runner behind them advancing, if a fielder with the ball steps on the base they are going to, they are out.
- Tag play.
  - The runner **chooses to run**, meaning the fielders have to **tag the runner, not step on the base they are running to**. The fielder must maintain possession of the ball.

#### **Runner leaves early -**

- A runner may not advance / steal until the ball crosses home plate. If caught going early, the runner must return to their previous base.

#### **Infield fly - AA+.**

- Infield fly rule only occurs under these conditions,
  - Less than two outs.
  - Runner on **first and second or bases loaded**.
  - The batted ball is a fair fly ball which can be reasonably caught by any infielder with average effort.

#### **Uncaught third strike - Majors+.**

- After an uncaught third strike, the ball is still live unless first is occupied. If first base is unoccupied, the defensive team must throw out the base runner at first base. The baserunner is eligible to run to first base until they enter the dugout or a dead ball zone.
- An uncaught third strike can be either a ball that is dropped by the catcher or a ball that does not go directly into the catcher's mitt from the pitcher (hits the ground before the catcher catches it).

#### **Bats.**

- Wooden bats are allowed in **all** divisions.

- Majors and below,
  - No more than thirty-three inches in length.
  - USA Certified. *Look for a silver stamp near the grip of the bat.*

### **Coaches Conduct.**

- Expected to display good sportsmanship at all points during the game.
- Expected to maintain discipline and leadership of their team and fans.
- Should lead by example.
- Respect the players on their team, the opposing team, the umpire(s), and the spectators.
- Ejection.
  - Last resort.
  - Not only forced to leave the current game, but suspended from the next scheduled game.
  - Fosters a hostile environment for all involved kids, parents, and umpires.
  - Contact me if you eject someone so I can have a talk with them.

[uic@dulleslittleleague.org](mailto:uic@dulleslittleleague.org)

### **Resources.**

- Little League Rule app
- DLL Website.
- Little League Baseball Official regulations, playing rules, and policies.
- Little League Umpire Website [www.littleleagueumpire.org](http://www.littleleagueumpire.org)
- Email [uic@dulleslittleleague.org](mailto:uic@dulleslittleleague.org)

Call / Text My Cell - 202-823-5354

### Additional Items

Coach Challenging Calls – Ball/Strike, Out/Safe, Fair/Foul are judgement calls and coaches can't challenge them. They can respectfully request information about a rule like interference.

Proper Slot – Find it, stay there to get the best angle to call balls and strikes. Don't flinch or bail. Pads are in front. You have a better view of the ball and less chance of being hit if you are in the proper slot.

Keep your head still on balls/strikes and head/body still on safe/out. You hold your phone as still as possible when you take a picture. If you move your camera, your picture is blurry.

Strike Zone - Arm pit to top of knee, one ball width up/down or in/out is ok, two ball widths at your discretion. More for younger levels. Be consistent.

Timing is CRITICAL on all calls. Slow down, take your time and be sure what you see and hear before you make the call. Say to yourself "That ball was a Strike/Ball" to slow yourself down

Loud and Crisp Mechanics and Voice

The closer the play, the louder and more emphatic you should be

Get in position (90-degree angle), see the release, then immediately snap your head to the front of the bag and listen for the catch. **DO NOT WATCH THE FLIGHT OF THE BALL.**

Wedge on plays at the plate. This means align yourself with the left back pocket of the catcher, about 3 feet away, and move as they move. Turn and wedge as they turn to take the throw and make the tag. This will give you the best angle to make the best call possible.

On a passed ball, pivot to allow the catcher space to get the ball then get move quickly to the top of the left-hand batter's box. Remember, the pitcher is coming in from the mound to cover the plate. **DO NOT WATCH THE FLIGHT OF THE BALL.** Focus on the third base side edge of home plate and watch the glove (with ball in it) and runner come together there.

Give count to pitcher every other pitch, as you see it and full count is numbers not fist. You should say "3 - 2", "not full count".

Sportsmanship starts with us and goes to the players and fans.