



TECHNICAL BULLETIN

Issue Date: August 2002

TO: STATE DIRECTORS OF UMPIRING

copy: STATE ASSOCIATIONS

As a result of the actions of several players at recent National Championships and to assist implementing a consistent approach to ejection of players and officials, it has been decided to re-issue some of the information included in a Technical Bulletin issued in September 1993.

Guidelines have also been included for action that umpires may take in the event of a misdemeanour occurring after the last out of a game.

Although recognising that all individuals have a different tolerance level, this does not absolve an umpire from the responsibility of ensuring that developing incidents do not escalate to a point that an ejection is required. The following ideas are offered to assist individual umpires to review and set their own standards for managing confrontational game situations, and to assist with implementing a consistent approach to dealing with players and officials.

DEVELOPING A CONSISTENT APPROACH TO DEALING WITH PLAYERS AND OFFICIALS

It is generally recognised that a few umpires issue the majority of ejections, others manage to diffuse the emerging incident while the remainder fail to recognise the incident needed an ejection. Umpires need to identify situations that may lead to the ejection of team personnel and take steps to prevent such action being necessary.

Success in an umpire's ability to manage more intense games can be measured by the ability of the umpire to recognise emerging situations and the taking of action to prevent an ejection. It is understood that it is not always possible to foresee every confrontation that develops due to the spontaneous reaction of some players.

Prevention of Ejections:

It is recommended to use preventive measures, where possible, when dealing with situations. Umpires are encouraged to: -

- Avoid direct confrontations;
- Use a third party to ease a developing situation;
- Never challenge players or officials in an aggressive manner;
- Take charge when an ejection is necessary;
- Maintain composure.

Practical ways to prevent ejection are often based on a variety of measures, which allow the umpire to talk unobtrusively with a player. It may be useful for the plate umpire to dust off a perfectly clean plate so that an uneasy situation can be discussed with a batter or catcher.

Similarly, the base umpire, when warning the pitcher about an illegal action, can sweep the pitcher's plate. The bases can be straightened-up or cleaned if there is a need to talk to a fielder or runner. Saying things calmly and inconspicuously demonstrates that an umpire is in control.

Using a third party keeps the umpire away from unnecessary conversations and makes it look as if players are encouraging each other. The catcher's assistance could be sought to quieten down a pitcher unhappy with the strike zone. A quiet comment to a coach can quickly end inappropriate bench comments on a close call. Other similar approaches are obvious and in each situation it is preferable for someone else to quieten disgruntled team members.

An umpire should never incite a player or official by pointing the finger, touching, raising the voice or using any actions that could lead to an ejection. Listening and allowing the player or official to make his point will generally ease the situation. The umpire should then give a response, at which time the game can continue. If the player or official continues to argue then ejection may be necessary.

Taking charge means that if an ejection becomes necessary, the umpire deals with it in a calm and controlled manner and moves on with the game. Ejecting too quickly, or not at the appropriate time, displays a lack of control. When the umpire remains calm and stays in control difficult situations become more tolerable.

Situations That Require Ejection:

- When a player or official uses foul or abusive language to an umpire, spectator or any person involved in a game;
- When a player or official acts in an unsportsmanlike manner, e.g., dropping the shoulder, kicking, fighting, tagging with intent to hurt, intentional spiking, showing dissent etc;
- Equipment abuse, e.g., throwing bats, helmets, gloves etc in any manner that displays displeasure with an umpire or a call;
- When any person intentionally kicks dirt on an umpire, or home plate;
- Any other actions, which may bring the sport into disrepute.

Misdemeanours Occurring After The Last Out of a Game:

If, after the last out of a game and up until such time as the umpires have left the vicinity of the playing area, any player or team member commits any misdemeanour that would, in the normal course of a game, lead to the ejection of such person, then the umpires can, and should, place such person on report.

The report should contain all relevant information (similar to an Ejection Report) surrounding the events that led to the reporting of the player or team member and should be delivered to the appropriate authority as soon as possible.

Should the umpires, having left the playing area, be harassed or abused by a person not involved in the game, then that person, and the incident, should be reported to the off-field management for further action to be taken.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Margo Koskelainen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Margo Koskelainen
National Umpire-in-Chief

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alan McAuliffe". The signature is cursive and stylized, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Alan McAuliffe
National Rules Interpreter