



# BASEBALL

*New Brunswick/Nouveau-Brunswick*

## Non-Confrontation Rule Briefing

### RATIONALE

On March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024, the Baseball New Brunswick Board of Directors unanimously carried a motion to implement a non-confrontation rule on all fields where 15U AA baseball and below are played. The spirit of this motion is to promote sportsmanship and reduce umpire-coach-player conflict and allow our developing umpires a safe space to learn and officiate.

The official's shortage has become a threat to the operation of minor sports in general and it is Baseball NB's intention to implement strong measures that will protect officials on the field and always set a tone of positivity and respectful conduct.

Many of these measures are in place as high as NCAA baseball and so are not considered extreme or a detraction from the game in any way. In fact, the NCAA has concluded these "non-approach" protocols have been successful in mitigating conflict on the field between managers and officials.

### The Official Rules of Baseball read: (yes, even in the MLB)

8.02 (a) Any umpire's decision which involves judgment, such as, but not limited to, whether a batted ball is fair or foul, whether a pitch is a strike or a ball, or whether a runner is safe or out, is final. No player, manager, coach or substitute shall object to any such judgment decisions.

*8.02(a) Comment: Players leaving their position in the field or on base, or managers or coaches leaving the bench or coaches box, to argue on BALLS AND STRIKES will not be permitted. **They should be warned if they start for the plate to protest the call. If they continue, they will be ejected from the game.** (\*This protocol will be followed at 15U AAA and above levels where seasoned high-performance umpires are officiating the games.)*

### In the spirit of the motion, Baseball NB will modify this rule for novice umpires and state that:

- (a) **NO WARNING** will be issued for arguing judgement at the 15U AA and below level of baseball – ejection will be upon violation of the rule.
  - a. A further application of this rule is that ANY argument (of judgement) regardless of whether the player, coach or manager leaves their position or not is an infraction of this rule.  
Example: A manager in a coach's box *or in a dugout* commenting or gesturing disagreement with a judgement call by an umpire.

- (b) A **manager/Head Coach** (HC) and not a player or assistant coach, may **ONLY** request a conference with an umpire if **an interpretation of the rules** is being requested. Under no circumstances can the manager appeal the judgement call of the umpire. In circumstances where there is a **legitimate question regarding the application or interpretation of a rule**, the manager must:
- Approach the half-way point on the foul line of their respective side of the field and wait for the umpire.
  - The manager may NOT cross the foul line.
  - The manager may NOT approach the umpire at home plate.
  - The manager must respect the wishes of the umpire in whether the umpire chooses to approach the manager to discuss the situation. If the umpire declines to approach the manager, they must return to their dugout.
- (c) **The Manager/Head Coach is responsible for managing team parent conduct.** Umpires will not deal directly with a spectator- but are not required to listen to abuse from them either. Where an umpire identifies an issue “behind the screen or fence” the following will happen:
- The umpire will approach the manager/HC of the offending spectator and identify the issue.
  - The Manager/HC will either deal with the situation or appoint another member of their coaching staff to act as the communicator.
  - The 1<sup>st</sup> communication to a spectator is that negative comments or criticism of the officials is not tolerated by Baseball NB and violates the spirit and integrity of the game. They will be asked to keep their comments positive.
  - On a 2<sup>nd</sup> complaint (of the same individual) by an umpire, the offending spectator will be asked to leave the spectator area of the field (the parking lot is acceptable). The game will not resume until the spectator has complied with this requirement.

What **CAN** a manager or coach approach an umpire for:

- Home plate meeting
- Request that the umpire call “Time”
- Line up changes and substitutions
- Injury/safety concerns or checks
- Ask the Home Plate Umpire to ask their partner for help on a check swing appeal. Once a ruling has been made the manager must accept the outcome without further comment
- Rule applications and Interpretations (subject to the above foul line protocol)
- Shake hands with the umpire(S)
- Offer words of encouragement or thanks for service

**NOTE:** The managers from both teams must now indicate on the lineup cards **WHO IS THE MANAGER** by adding an (\*) to the name on the line up. This will indicate to the umpire crew **WHO IS ALLOWED** to request a conference from the foul line. Whomever is identified as the Manager/Head Coach *must attend* the plate meeting, so the umpires know who they are.

