

# The Indicator

The Newsletter of the MBUA

Game, Partners,



Myself.

## Things to know:

- ◆ The 2011 MBUA Umpire Training School will begin on Tuesday, January 11 at 7 PM at St. John the Baptist's School Library, 12319 New Hampshire Avenue, Silver Spring, Maryland 20904. Each class is approximately two hours long and stresses National Federation of High Schools baseball playing rules, NFHS exam preparation, field mechanics in the two and three man system and the practical aspects of becoming a successful and competent varsity level, high school baseball umpire. These classes are mandatory for new, first and second year MBUA umpires. If you new to MBUA but have umpired with another association you must still attend these classes. Veteran umpires seeking to improve their skill sets are encouraged to attend. Get off the couch this winter and get into class. See our web site, [www.mbu.org](http://www.mbu.org) for the schedule and further details.
- ◆ The required 2011 MPSSAA high school baseball rules interpretation meeting for our association will be held on Wednesday, February 9, 2011 at 7 PM in the auditorium at High Point High School on 3601 Powder Mill Road, Beltsville, MD 20705. This meeting will START at 7 PM so please be on time. Equipment vendors will be available after the meeting. You must sign in on both the MBUA and MPSSAA attendance sheets to be counted as attending the meeting. All MBUA members must attend a MPSSAA rules interpretation meeting to work public

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## Commissioner's Corner

***Happy New Year- I want to thank everyone that made 2010 a successful year for MBUA. Let's really work hard for 2011.***

### ***Reminders:***

- 1. Keep "The Arbiter Updated.***
- 2. Get into the Rule Book and Case Book.***
- 3. Recruit some new members.***
- 4. Check your equipment.***
- 5. Start running and getting ready.***



**Maryland's Elite Umpire Association**

**By: Jim Sambataro**

As independent contractors, along with Form 1040, most officials will be required to file Schedule C-EZ and Schedule SE. Schedule C-EZ is used when your total expenses do not exceed \$5,000. Schedule SE is used if you made a profit. The most important thing is to report your income, which is simply the total of all checks and cash, if applicable, received during the calendar year 2010.

You may claim deductions to offset the tax obligation of any reported income. Supporting documentation should be provided for all deductions, which are usually invoices or other forms of receipts. The most obvious deductions are for uniforms and equipment purchased during the year. The following are examples of deductions that can be included: dues to affiliated organizations, educational workshops and training clinics to improve your skills as an official, liability and any other related business insurance, subscriptions to newsletters, magazines and other publications related to the business, and even laundry and/or dry cleaning of uniforms.

Other deductions which may be overlooked and are deducted on page 1 of Form 1040 include health insurance premiums and retirement plan contributions (SEP, SIMPLE or Keogh). If you do not have a health insurance plan through either your employer or your spouse's employer you can probably deduct any health insurance premiums paid, not to exceed your net profit from the business. You can set up a retirement plan for your business and depending on the type of plan selected, you can set aside and deduct up to 100% of your net profit from the business (after deducting the required self employment taxes as calculated on Schedule SE). As 12/31/2010 has passed, only the SEP IRA plan can be set up for 2010. You can pay up to approximately 20% of your net profit for 2010 into this plan by April 15th or as late as October 15 with the automatic extension.

Any deduction for the use of a vehicle, computer or cell phone in the business is a very tricky subject. Unless you believe you can claim a home office, the use of your vehicle to go to the games is considered a commuting expense and, therefore, not deductible. If you travel from another job to the game or from one game to another this travel distance is considered business and is deductible. For 2010, if you use the mileage method for calculating the deduction, the rate is \$.50 per mile. As for the expenses of a computer and cell phone, unless you can substantiate these items as being primarily for your business, any allocation of their cost would be arbitrary and difficult to support.

All this being said, if you have an expense that you feel can be justified as related to the business then include it on your tax return. The penalty for erroneously reporting a deduction is

that under audit it is disallowed and you would have to pay the resulting tax plus a nominal amount of interest.

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## Umpire Camps

**By: Jim Sambataro**

I attended the Jim Evans' Four Day Clinic in early December along with another member of our Association. It was put on in Myrtle Beach, SC with a nice mix of classroom education each morning for four hours, followed by four hours of on the field work. Although there were some shortcomings in the logistics and the weather wasn't ideal, I personally felt it was a very worthwhile experience.

This four day program focuses on two-man mechanics and pro rules, and attempts to cover all of the material comprising their five week course for aspiring minor league umpires. The principal classroom instructor was accompanied by 8 minor league umpires working in the field, while also providing some assistance in the classroom to myself and 32 other students.

The two-man mechanics were covered in detail, stressing the importance of communication between the umpiring partners with the main goal to get each man in the best position to make the call. The initial positioning, proper movements to cover responsibilities when the ball is hit, and the proper mechanics for both verbal and hand/arm motion are first covered in class and then put into action on the field. With so many possible situations on the field, the ability to practice these mechanics with repetition was limited in this accelerated program.

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## Maryland's Elite Umpire



# Umpire Camps

*[Continued from page 2]*

It is impossible to retain all the material covered, but I am certain some basics should be readily improved. The basics including positioning, verbal and signal communications, as well as game management techniques will only become second nature the more they are repeated. Many of the key rules on all types of interference, obstruction, appeals, dead balls, and balks were also well covered, with the proper mechanics for each.

As for plate work, the emphasis was on the slot position and the mechanics for calling balls and strikes. For the plate umpire, the feet positioning, proper stance, head height, head still, eyes focused, and timing of the call are all stressed to again give you the best opportunity to

make the right call. I would have liked an assessment of my accuracy in making calls at the plate; however this was nonexistent, as was any real critique of the accuracy of calls on the bases. As we all know we are going to miss some, but being set properly and reading the pitch all the way into the glove will surely keep any misses to a minimum.

In summary, I would encourage anyone who has the opportunity and can afford the cost (\$600 including travel & lodging) to attend this clinic. I believe the greatest benefit will be for umpires who want to gain confidence and learn the best ways to perform on the field. It won't necessarily enable you to get all of the calls right, but it will help to put you in the best position to see the play – from which you are more likely to make the right call.—

## Things to Know:

*[Continued from page 1]*

high school baseball in the state of Maryland. Dual members must demonstrate proof of attendance at a session other than above. See [mpssaa.org](http://mpssaa.org) for a list of other dates and sites.

- ◆ March 2011 will be the last time the MBUA will take the National Federation Exam on paper. The Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association, the sanctioning body for public high school sports in the state of Maryland is mandating a change in procedure. In 2012, MPSSAA in association with the National Federation of High Schools and Arbitersports.com (a wholly owned subsidiary of the NCAA) will require officials in each recognized sport to sit for their sport's exam on line and through the NFHS online registration process. As an association, we MUST improve our test scores. There may be approximately a dozen umpires in our association who will not be qualified to work high school baseball if they do not achieve the minimum passing grade of 75.

### **Rule changes this year include significant changes regarding:**

- The acceptance of the lineup card with substitutes listed. (1-1-2)
- Modifies the bat rule involving composite baseball bats, defines the components of all not wood bats and the prohibition of altering bats. (1-3-2)
- Clarifies the use of hard and unyielding materials for injuring padding purposes. (1-5-8)
- Changes the definition of a foul tip batted ball. (2-16-2)
- Clarifies the importance of identifying the symptoms, signs or behavior of a player who has suffered a concussion. (3-1-5)
- Clarifies a commonly accepted base running practice. (8-2-6l)

**Join ABUA-**

**Go to [www.umpire.org](http://www.umpire.org)**

**Phone- 303-290-7411.**



# Maryland's Elite Umpire Association

**Next Meeting/Clinic-  
Sunday, January 30  
12 noon at The Heights**



### Quick Quiz

1. Batter-runner is out if tagged when he overruns 1st base and turns to his left to return to the bag.
2. Major League rules; two out; bases loaded; dropped third strike. The catcher can get a simple force play on the runner coming home instead on throwing to 1st base.
3. Runners trying to steal, must return to the base they occupied, (prior to the pitch), on a foul tip.
4. An improper batter, upon appeal, is declared out after he bats out-of-order.
5. The batter cannot be called out for interference as long as he is in the batter's box.
6. Batter is out if he bats the ball with his foot touching home plate.
7. Pitcher must break contact with the pitching rubber before throwing to pick-off a runner.
8. On a throw made by a fielder that goes out-of-play, base runners get the base they were going to, plus one.
9. A catch is adjudged by the fielder holding the ball long enough to show that possession and control has been established.
10. A base runner touched by a fair batted ball (not deflected) is automatically out.

*[Answers on page4]*

We proudly provide top quality umpires throughout the greater Washington DC metropolitan area. Our services have been utilized by area baseball leagues since 1920. We service all ages and levels of baseball from Little League to High School to Adult leagues, primarily from March to November.

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Treasurer:  
**Thomas Kneeland Jr**

Rules Interpreter:  
**Jay O'Hare**

Production Editor:  
**Megan Guerriero**



## Maryland's Elite Umpire Association

[Answers from page 3]

**1. FALSE.** A batter-runner cannot be tagged out after overrunning or over sliding first base if he returns immediately to the base. ( ref. EXCEPTION: Rule 7.08(c) ). There is no reference to turning left or right: the act of turning, by itself, is not an attempt to advance.

Rule: 7.08(j) adds that if he makes an attempt to run to second, he is out when tagged. An attempt to run can be any quick motion toward second base and is a judgment made by the umpire. That quick motion can occur regardless of the direction the batter-runner turns and at any time prior to reaching first base.

**2. TRUE.** Because the batter becomes a runner in this situation (Rule: 6.09(b) ), all runners lose the right to occupy their base and are forced to advance. A play on any of those runners is a force play so the catcher could execute a simple force at home.

**3. FALSE.** A foul-tip is a pitch that tips the bat and is fielded (usually in foul territory) but differs from a foul ball. (Refer to Rule 2:00 Definitions and Terms, FOUL TIP and FOUL BALL.) A foul-tip is a pitch that slightly grazes the bat and goes sharp and direct to the catcher's glove or hand and is caught. A foul-tip is a strike (if that strike is the third strike the batter is out) and the ball remains live.

**4. FALSE.** The scheduled batter shall be called out, upon appeal, when he fails to bat in his proper turn, and another batter completes a time at bat in his place. Rule: 6.07(a). (Also see Facts and Figures page, Batting Out of Turn, for additional information).

**5. FALSE.** In situations where the catcher has to make a throw, the batter is better off staying in the batter's box but that does not immunize him from being called for interference. The catcher expects the batter to be in the batter's box and usually plans his throws around the batter. On this type of play, any intentional or unusual motion in the batter's box or stepping out of it can cause interference.

Whenever there is a runner on third base the batter must be alert and aware of what is going on. The batter's team may be attempting to push a run home and any interference, intentional or not, will jeopardize that effort. Examples I have seen are batters interfering or swinging at a fielder's (the pitcher) throws home on an outright steal attempt and the batter's presence in the batter's box interfering with a play at the plate on a passed ball. Rules: 2.00 INTERFERENCE, 6.06(c)

**6. FALSE.** The Official Baseball Rules (Pro rules) make no specific mention of home plate in this regard. The batter is

out for illegal action when he hits the ball (either fair or foul) with one or both feet on the ground entirely outside the batter's box. A foot touching any portion of the batter's box (including the batter's box line) is not outside the batter's box. The distance between the batter's box and home plate is six inches, (Little League is four inches). A batter's foot could very well touch the batter's box and home plate at the same time. Rule: 6.06(a). NFHS (High School, which tends to change frequently) and NCAA may vary.

**7. FALSE.** From either the Wind-up or Set position the pitcher may 1) deliver the ball to the batter; 2) disengage the rubber; or 3) step and throw to a base in an attempt to pick-off a runner. (Rule 8.01(a) CASEBOOK). (Note: when a pitcher legally disengages the pitching rubber he is no longer the pitcher, he is a fielder. On wild throws (pick-offs) by a pitcher that goes out-of-bounds, runners advance one base. Wild throws by fielders have other awards that are usually two bases, as described in 7.05(g).)

**8. FALSE.** The baseball myth of base runners getting "the base they were going to, plus one" is the slow pitch softball version of the rule. (Under that rule, if the runner is retreating to 1st base on the throw, he gets 1st base plus one, that is second base.) In baseball the runners are awarded two bases from the last base legally acquired either at the time of the pitch or time of the throw. If the throw is the first play of an infield the award is from the time of the pitch otherwise it is the time of the throw. Rule: 7.04(g) and CASEBOOK.

**9. FALSE.** There are two primary elements that must be adjudged in order to validate a catch; 1) the fielder must hold the ball long enough to prove he has complete control of the ball, and 2) the release of the ball must be voluntary and intentional. Rule: 2.00 CATCH.

The definitive example is that if a center fielder grabs a fly ball in his glove, crashes into a wall and falls unconscious with the ball in his glove; it is not yet a catch. If another fielder arrives and intentionally removes the ball from the unconscious fielder's glove, the catch is now completed.

**10. FALSE.** A base runner is not out if the batted ball touches him after the ball passes an infielder, provided no other infielder has a chance to make a play. (If the ball was touched or deflected by the first infielder, the runner is not out regardless of an opportunity by a second infielder.) Rule: 7.08(f). (Note: outstanding reference and examples, N.A.P.B.L. Umpire Manual, Section 4.5).

[Source: Central Maryland Umpires]



## Maryland's Elite Umpire Association

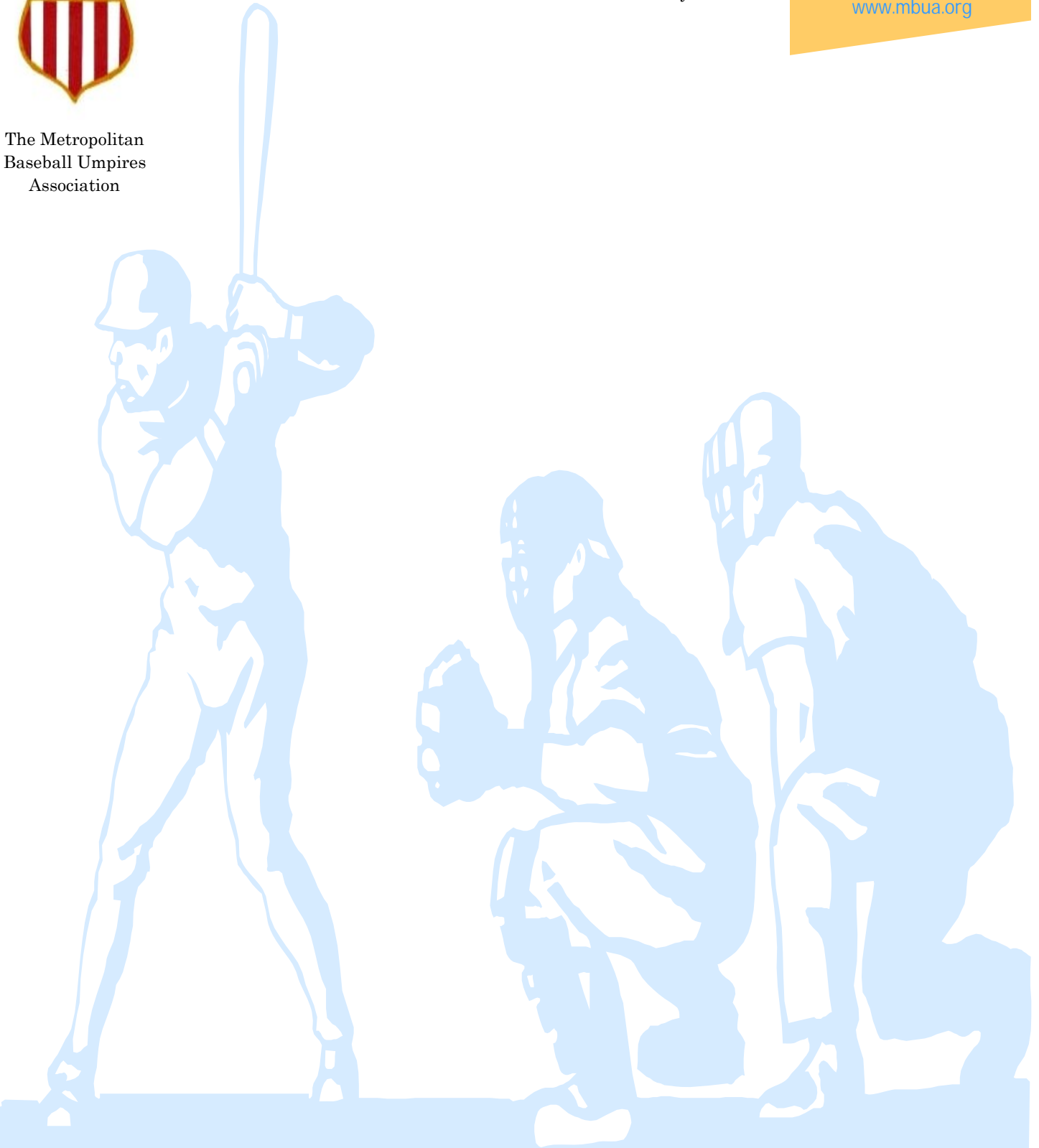


The Newsletter of the MBUA

January 2011

We're on the web!  
[www.mbu.org](http://www.mbu.org)

The Metropolitan  
Baseball Umpires  
Association



**Maryland's Elite Umpire Association**