

RHBL DELEGATES AND CLUBS

Well it's been 2 and half weeks and the League certainly keeps you busy. There are few things I need to advise you on. The Committee has asked me to relay this to you:

All games played in the RHBL competition are to be played in accordance with the RHBL rules. All coaches, managers, players, umpires and scorers are to familiarise themselves with the latest version of the rules published by RHBL (including any clarifying instructions issued to clubs from time to time) and in particular be familiar with specific rules that apply to each age group/ grade as well as the player and officials codes of conduct. Coaches and umpires should not vary the rules at plate meeting or at other times during the game however the umpire may use his or her discretion to vary rules regarding the operation of the game (such as rules relating to start/finish time) where such variations improve the ability to play a proper game.

The draft code of conduct will be on the web site next week.

- Round 7 results have been updated
- There are two protests under way the U16A and U14A's from Round 7
- These Protests are with the Competition Committee and there should be a ruling soon (hopefully before Friday's games)
- We have regraded two teams in the U14 and U16's. Some draws U16B, U16C, U14B AND 14C have been affected /modified. So please ensure your teams view the web site and ensure you advise your teams that they need to update their draw schedules. Any issues please email me.
- We are still receiving queries regarding game rulings and the Competition Committee is trying to get to the requestor. We hope to have the qualified answer as soon as possible.
- We are having a lot of games being negotiated with game changes and grounds between teams – the ruling states you must both be in agreement OTHER WISE DRAW ALLOCATION WILL BE DETERMINED BY THE LEAGUE – FROM THE PUBLISHED DRAW ETC;
- The scores are still very slow at coming in – must have them by Monday of each week!!
- There has been a query about ground allocations AND WHO GETS WHAT GROUNDS. Please it is not first in best dress. At ELS we have had some teams arrive first and take the first available diamond, not necessarily their assigned diamond. This is not acceptable, please use the draw as your guide or the Competition Committee will step in.
- **REMINDER TO ALL CLUBS: PLEASE PASS ON THE FOLLOWING TO ALL CONCERNED TEAMS , COACHES ETC**

3.8.4. PITCHING LIMITS

If unrestricted the following limits apply:

Under 19 - 80 pitches or 4 innings

Under 16 - 80 pitches or 4 innings

Under 14 - 65 pitches or 3 innings

12 Years - 55 pitches or 3 innings

11 Years 55 pitches or 3 innings

10 Years - 40 pitches of 2 innings

If restricted the following limits apply:

Under 16 - 29 pitches or 4 innings

Under 14 - 24 pitches or 3 innings

12 Years - 24 pitches age

or 3 innings

11 Years - 24 pitches or 3 innings

10 Years - 19 pitches or 2 innings

A pitcher is restricted if they are scheduled to play again in the same weekend (eg. as a Rep Player or in a gala day, irrespective of whether the player is available to play in that scheduled game. If the Rep Player is planning to be away interstate on the day of their representative game then that player is still restricted during their club game.

- I have had one club so far support the procurement idea – it was your idea, so please pass back to your Committees and start the support as it could save us money.
- The Under 11As will have a top 3 and bottom 3 play off finals series, please make sure you tell those coaches in charge.
- My registrations – please check with your clubs and ensure up to date as insurance coverage is involved here.
- Some club and managers are requesting is Blackmore Oval available and the answer is YES.
- Draws for the regrades have been done, not everyone will be happy but it is the best I could do.
- Under 12 rule change. There has been an amendment and this will be up on the web site next week. Please let your coaches and managers know of these changes. Basically a change in the diamond size and you can steal from when the ball leaves the hand of the pitcher rather than crossing the plate. Full details on the website.
- Web site update looks like will happen in the next few weeks, stay tuned.
- U12C contact for Macquarie changed – wellsy65@optusnet.com.au
- I was asked to take a look at the Under 8 draw and may be able to make a couple of changes to stop some of the same teams playing one another for two weeks in a row. Please tell your coaches to watch the site and make sure they are aware as I will try and adjust this for next week.
- William Cowan and lights were an issue – Chris Rainnie is the contact on this and is now aware of the issues.
- Still need you to return Contact details – as we have no contact for example for Stealers Bobcats.
- Over age issue- I'm still waiting on the Competition Committee to advise outcome and should have this by next week.
- In going through the draws, please be aware that in some teams age groups only one diamond has been nominated for that age group . As we move with regrades and through to the final series please double check all your ground allocations, so no double ups. If possible, if you have extra fields not in use please advise as this may sort any issue we may have latter on in the season.
- A special thanks to Sue Nicoll from Macquarie, for her help and support and for her guidance in vetting my draw changes and providing a reality check.
- For next season we will look at the scorers sheets having information on about pitching restrictions etc to keep everyone aware but is still to go to the competition committee for ratification
- Still waiting on volunteers for the recognition work group- have till next week to advise
- Have received only one clubs correct contact details please send through urgently
- Still no details from your selves or the clubs on umpires and scorers contacts we really do want to get this off the ground and build depth and encouragement
- Please Delegates encourage our school teams and pass onto the teams as this is great for the League – for those of you that did not know – we have teams such as Knox , St Pats in;
- Next week please have some match reports to me on some of the good stuff your club is doing as we need to share some of this and get the communication out there;

- Some club managers have been using TEAMER.NET as a way of getting information out to their teams. This may be of use to some teams and getting the message out about upcoming games. Please see below for further details.

Dear -----:

_____ has sent you a notification from TEAMER.NET. 14A's has an upcoming Game.

Let ----- know if you are available by clicking below and responding accordingly.

<http://teamer.net/teams/178953-14as-/events/3708953/notifications/112298443?m=3700833>

THE TEAMER IPHONE APP IS NOW AVAILABLE. [DOWNLOAD IT HERE!](#)



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For some of our coaches this might be helpful. An extract from this week's Coaching Box. Please use this link as I do not want any copy right issues.

Little League Baseball and Softball <llinternational@littleleague.org>

Making Good At-Bats for Experienced Hitters: The Mental Side

By Baseball Factory Staff

Little Leaguers work extremely hard on their hitting and their swings. They put a lot of time and effort into the mechanical side of hitting, however very few young hitters work at the mental aspects of hitting or even understand what having a hitting "approach" is all about.

In this article I hope to clear up some of the questions and give young hitters some ideas of what they should be focusing on when preparing for an at-bat.

The first thing I want to discuss is proper goal setting. If I asked 10 high school-age hitters what their goals were at the plate for the upcoming season 8 of 10 would say something to the effect of: "I want to hit over .320 with at least 3 homeruns and 20-plus RBI." Now, I believe it is good to set tangible goals for yourself, but is it really rational to think that you have any control over what happens to the ball after you hit it? No! Once you have made contact it is completely out of your hands. The defense may make a great play or the ball may drop. Either way you have zero control over this.

Why then would you set a goal about something you cannot control. In the summer of 1990 I played American Legion baseball with Baseball Factory President Rob Naddelman. I had a great season that summer and won the league batting title with a .452 average. Rob also had a good year but he only hit .356. That season it got to be a joke in our dugout because Rob hit so many line drives right at people, it was ridiculous. It would be extremely fair to say that Rob hit the ball every bit as good as I did that summer, yet hit 100 points less than me. The point is that all we could control was hitting the ball hard, the fact that I got an extra 10 balls to drop that season was out of my control.

So what types of goals should you as a hitter make for yourself? Set goals that you can control. See the list below for some ideas. Keep in mind that your goals should be for each individual at-bat during the course of a season.

1. See the ball.
2. Swing at strikes.
3. Know what you are trying to do.
4. Put a good swing on the ball.

Note that each one of the goals you can control. For goal No. 2 I really wanted to write "get a good pitch to hit." After thinking about it, can you really control whether or not the pitcher throws you a good pitch to hit? No, but if you set a goal of swinging only at strikes, much more often than not you will get something decent to hit. Let's examine each goal individually.

1. **See the ball:** Probably the most important aspect of hitting, yet it is not talked about nearly enough. If you can't see the ball, you aint gonna hit it. What we are saying here is not go out and get your vision checked (although not a bad idea). What I mean is focus each and every pitch on really seeing the ball well and tracking it all the way to contact or the catcher's mitt. If you work at tracking the ball all the way in you can almost begin to slow the ball down with your eyes. When hitters are struggling you will often hear them say "I'm not seeing the ball." Does this mean that their eyes have suddenly gotten worse? No, it means they are not staying focused on seeing the ball. If you step in the box and are thinking about everything other than seeing the ball, you are taking away from your focus. I know there were times when I was hitting and thinking "man do I need a hit. If I don't get a hit I'm gonna be 0-for-3 and my average is gonna drop and" Before you know it you're swinging at a curve in the dirt because your focus is distracted away from seeing the ball.
2. **Swing at Strikes:** As a hitter you may have a very good mechanical swing. Your swing could be perfect, but if you consistently swing at bad pitches - it does not matter how good your swing is. Obviously, this goal goes along with goal No. 1. You must first see the ball, and then be selective. Barry Bonds is perhaps the best example of what I am talking about. He is a player with a perfect swing and he is extremely selective about what pitches he swings at. If you were able to watch the playoffs, it seemed as if every ball he swung at, he hit hard. He was patient and he didn't chase anything out of the strike zone. This meant that every time he swung the bat he would have a good opportunity to make solid contact. Imagine if during the course of your season you could guarantee that you only swung at strikes. Do you think that your average would go up-you bet it would. By forcing yourself to be more disciplined and only swinging at strikes you will avoid getting yourself out, and you will force the pitcher to come to you as opposed to you always helping the pitcher. This is a lot easier said than done, but you must make it a priority in your game, keep in mind this is something that you have control over.

3. **Know what you are trying to do**: If I had a dime for every time I've seen players waste an at-bat I would be a very wealthy man. You must make it clear in your mind what you are trying to do with your at-bat before you step into the box. YOU must know the situation, the outs, the score, and of course what the pitcher is doing. Know your game situations. If you are up in a one-run game with a man on second and nobody out, what should you be trying to do? Your job is to hit something to the right side on the ground and move the runner to third. Or maybe your coach has you hitting in the 4 hole and wants you swinging to drive that run in. This is what I mean; you must know what you are trying to do before you get in the box. But what about when it is two outs, nobody on in the 8th inning and you're winning by 8 runs? Usually these are throw away at-bats. You just want to get the game over with. Wrong! Work! Go to the box with a purpose. Maybe go up there with a goal to try and drive something the other way. Maybe try to get a good pitch that you can drive and try to hit a home run within your normal swing mechanics. Whatever you choose, work at it, and be sure you are clear about what you're trying to do-no indecision. Again you are in control of this.
4. **Put a good swing on the ball**: This is the goal that you work in the cages all day for. You work hard on your swing year round to be a good hitter. You train at hitting the ball to the opposite field, middle and to the pull side. You work on hitting the high pitch, the low pitch, the fastball, the curveball. Now, relax and take a good swing. Judge yourself on the swing, not whether it was a hit or not. Slumps happen when you judge yourself on hits rather than the quality of your at-bat and your swings. I have seen players who were swinging the bat well but because they weren't getting hits they started to tinker with their swing when they really didn't need too. My favorite is the guy who gets fooled and takes a bad swing but bloop a single and he's happy. Then later in the game he has a great at-bat, gets a good pitch to hit, hits a rocket line drive right at a guy, and he gets MAD. Is it me, or shouldn't you be upset about getting fooled and taking a bad swing and happy about executing everything right and taking a great swing. Yes, I understand that you work to have a good batting average, but ultimately all you can control is trying to hit the ball hard and the rest will take care of itself.

If you can take this "mental approach" to hitting I believe that you will greatly enhance your ability to hit. You will be the player that somehow manages to get hits whether you are facing a junk-baller or that kid in your area that just throws gas. You will develop mental toughness and through that will come confidence in yourself and your ability to hit. As a former college coach and now working with the Baseball Factory I get asked all the time what I looked for when I went recruiting or scouting. When coach's look at hitters they look at how good the players swing is and how good his "approach" to hitting is. That is a major determining factor in whether or not you recruit a player. You can watch players hit all day long, it is the hitter with bat speed and a good "approach" that will most impress a coach. In the next issue I will explain how to best go about achieving the goals that I have outlined in this article.

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That's it from me for another week. Enjoy your weekend.

Regards Always - Mike