

When They're in Your Face!



- Powerpoint available at bristolcountyumpires.com

1) Pregame

Start with a smile, a handshake, and a name.
Make it clear that you're happy to be there.
Always have a pregame meeting – and make it enjoyable.

2) First pitch, first inning

Take control from warm-up to first pitch.
Be alert, ready, and in position for pitch one.
Make clear, crisp, calls, beginning with pitch one.

3) Be prepared for reactions to tough calls

Get it right. Situation, position, and timing first. Then the call.
Explanatory calling. How to do it.
Be prepared for honest disagreement – it's not personal.
The triad: Fans / Players / Coaches.

4) Dealing with Fans

If possible, don't! (Learn not to react)
Can you explain that, Blue? (Answer: Sure!)
Know when to banter – and when not to.
Never return an insult.
Insults to players require a reaction – but do it via the coach!

5) The Players

Players are almost never a problem.

Work with your catcher.

Give quiet complements. But don't be a coach.

6) Coaches

Like fans, learn when not to react to them.

Spontaneous reaction to a call? Let it go.

Chronic complainers? Tune them out.

Genuine questions? Listen, sympathize, explain.

Personal Insults or Vulgarity? Respond with authority.

7) Arguments

Don't try to "win" an argument. Most of the time, you can't.

Don't try to interrupt the coach. Let them express themselves.

Limit discussion to the current call (don't bring up last inning).

Make it clear you understand their point of view.

Always, always, always keep your temper. Argue with a smile.

One vulgar word – and you've "lost" both respect and the argument itself.

Afterwards, let it go. Even if you may have made a mistake.

8) Handling the Angry Coach

Your goal is not to silence the coach, but to answer him.

The angrier the coach, the calmer you must be.

Always argue to de-escalate the situation.

"Coach, here's what I saw, so that's why I made the call I did."

Yes, ejections are necessary sometimes. But make them rare!

"That's a terrible call!" is not reason for an ejection.

9) Things not to do

Do not issue an ultimatum (*"One more word and you're gone!"*).

Don't try to be cute or sarcastic. No zingers!

Don't be a jerk. Watch your language. One word can do you in.

Don't back a coach into a corner. Always allow a way out:

"Coach, if it happened the way you said it did, then I got it wrong."