

GAME REMINDERS

by Frank Sylvester

There are a few of things I always remind myself before I go on the field.

1. A strong pre-game meeting is essential to a strong crew performance
2. Umpire this game like it is for the National Championship
3. Fear is a great motivator

A strong pre-game is essential

Unlike MLB, we at the collegiate level work with different umpires every game and/or conference weekend. A strong pre-game meeting led by the crew chief, with input by the crew, ensures that the crew is on the same page and will limit or eliminate mechanics and situation handling issues/problems during the game. My advice is that the pre-game discussion is interactive.

Take this time before the game to clear your mind, temporarily, of work, home or family issues. This is the time that you should be doing whatever it is you need to do to get your mind and body in baseball mode. For me, that is stretching while listening to music or watching non-baseball programming on TV or video. For others, it could be talking baseball, watching baseball on TV or video, or just reading or doing a crossword puzzle... Whatever it is that works for you to get ready to perform at your highest level now is the time you should be doing it.

Umpire this game like it is for the National Championship

The pre-game is over and you are now on the field. Whether it is a mid-week game or a conference weekend, every at-bat, every pitch and every inning is important to each player and coach. Don't take a pitch or a play off. Work hard every inning of every game. Give each game the respect that it deserves.

Fear is a great motivator

Fear of failure should motivate every umpire to work hard and bear down on every pitch of every at-bat of every inning.