

Reflections...

I was excited for the season to get started. What a great tool for the evaluation process. Top teams facing off. I was inspired by what I saw in the umpiring community. With the competitive nature of the games and being there in person, I could really appreciate the high quality of the umpiring. Appreciating the movements around the diamond, the communication and the maturity of the men in black and gray. The maturity, growth, professionalism, following protocols and enjoying what they were doing. Showing up with a more serious attitude and a business structure to their umpiring. This told me that college umpiring has come a long way and in a very good place. It's all about the details of umpiring.

There is still work to be done. Umpiring was off to a very good start in 2020. There were many positives that I observed. The overall maturity, professionalism, approachability and high focus were the aspects of the game that really stood out. Umpires appeared more ready and willing to work. Umpires appeared more connected than in year's past.

There was far less talking, laughing and joking between half innings. Plate conferences appeared to be more business-like. Coaches *look* at many aspects of your umpiring. They judge you from your first step on the diamond. They measure your attitude, focus, attentiveness, behavior, appearance and how you approach your job. It was also easy to see that umpires did their homework and were ready to start the season.

Appearance was very good for the most part. Proper uniforms and well tailored. *Looking* involved is a very important aspect of umpiring. You need to look attentive, involved and attached to all aspects of the game. Staying connected on every pitch, scanning your responsibilities for your position, and your appearance between half innings. In umpiring there is always something to do. One can never take plays or pitches off. Some umpires could stand to drop a few pounds or get in the weight room. If you can gain an advantage by appearing fit and looking mobile - it would be in your best interest to do it.

HERE ARE A FEW OF THE AREAS THAT WERE WITNESSED IN THE FIRST FOUR WEEKS OF 2020 THAT ARE CONSIDERATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT – AS WE START THE 2021 SEASON:

- **Pitch clock improvement**
- **Action clock improvement**
- **Pause, Read and React improvement**
- **Appearance between half innings/how you look and act/sense of staying connected**
- **Keep hands out of pockets and off your hips/bad image**
- **Show more energy/work ethic/appear connected**
- **HP – Put ball into play more than normal**
- **HP – Call more high strikes/bottom of the knee was very good**
- **UMPIRE WITH CONFIDENCE AND COURAGE AT ALL TIMES/MAKE THE TOUGH CALL**

Please take care of yourselves and your families. Always be safe!

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