

# Blue Notes



## “Did You Know?”

Some game trivia and its relationship to the rules today.

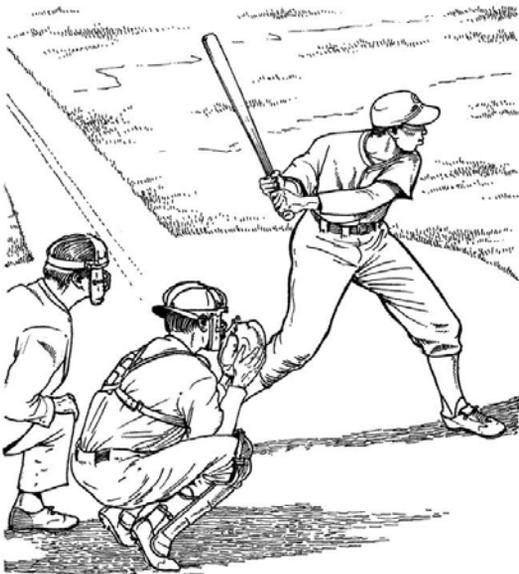
### Did You Know?

1) That the plate umpire originally ... “sat in rocking chairs 20 feet behind home plate”.

Today – The plate umpire is positioned “in the slot” which is between the batter and the catcher. Proper positioning has the head height of the umpire above the catcher’s head slightly leaning forward to allow a good view of the outside of the plate.

2) The number of pitches for a walk has changed from 8 (1880), to 6 (1884) and finally 4 (1889).

Today – When there are 4 pitches thrown and called as a “Ball”, the batter runner is entitled to first base. The proper mechanic for the plate umpire is to remain in his locked in position (don’t stand up) and call “Ball Four”.



3) The Designated Hitter (DH) rule was introduced into the American League in 1973. The DH allows each team to have a player in the line up to hit for the pitcher, thereby having 10 players on the line up card.

Today – The DH is used in both professional and amateur sports. In Baseball Ontario, minor midget to senior teams can use a DH. Baseball Ontario (under Umpires) site must be reviewed for the unique situation of re-entry players and DH which exist at the midget level.



4) A game can be called due to Darkness. In the 1800’s, John Clarkson threw a LEMON which was called for a strike by the plate umpire. The catcher then turned to the umpire and revealed the lemon. The catcher’s comment was ... “*When you can’t tell the difference between a baseball and a lemon, it’s time to stop*”. The game was called.

Today – There are various situations when an umpire must decide whether a game is to continue; darkness is one such condition. This is a suspended game.