

observing sports

Baseball managers, like anybody else, need to be consoled at times.

Especially after they get involved with an umpire over a decision.

Because they know that the chronicler of this effort calls 'em from time to time, team pilots frequently look for a little "support" when they report their scores for write-ups in the Observer.

Maybe it'll disillusion many, but the umpires nine times out of ten render the CORRECT decision.

Take the hectic finish that involved a recent Class A battle in the Greater Livonia League.

The score was tied at 1-1. It was the last inning.

The home team had runners on third and first and one out. The batter hoisted a fly to left.

The ball easily was caught. The runner at third took off for home and the man from first started toward second and checked in there as the winning run crossed the plate.

But, wait. Somebody on the defensive team realized that the runner, who was on first, had left the base too soon. So the ball was relayed over to first and an appeal was registered.

It was a double play. Yet the game was over with the final score, 2-1.

The defensive team couldn't believe it. How could the winning run score on a double play?

An argument ensued. The ump's won and the rules backed 'em up.

Here's why: The final out didn't result from either a direct force-out or the failure of the batter to reach first base.

Since the runner had crossed the plate before the out was declared on the runner at first the run was legal. Had the out been adjudged before the runner reached home, the run would NOT have counted.

THEN THERE WAS the situation that popped up in a Farmington American Legion play.

A Clarkson batter drilled one deep to center. The Farmington outfielder snared the ball on the run, seemingly brought the ball down to a throwing position . . . then let it skid from his hands.

The ump claimed the fielder didn't have the ball long enough. Farmington supporters contested he did.

What is a legal catch frequently precipitates some squawks. The rule book says the fielder must have firm possession.

Different ump's have different ideas what "firm possession" is.

It's a judgment call . . . and you can't protest judgment verdicts.

TWO TEAMS were playing in the Free Press League up at Northville.

The batting team trailed by a run in the last inning and had two men aboard with two out.

The manager called for a pinch-hitter.

The newly assigned batter took his time getting off the bench. Then in characteristic Rocky Colavito fashion he started swinging a couple bats.

The ump told him to get into the batter's box. The batter went through some more exercise.

Now a little angry, the ump ordered the pitcher to deliver the ball playward.

"Strike One . . . Strike Two . . ." the ump shouted.

And the batter hadn't even been in the box. A rumpus broke loose. But the ump held his ground and the batter finally stepped in to face the pitcher with a two-strike count. He quickly was retired.

"How can it be?" the losing manager beefed. "My man was put in a jam. He's entitled to some time to loosen up."

Granted . . . but there is a rule that deals with stalling. Again, different ump's look at stalling tactics in different ways.

The rule works both ways. If a pitcher doesn't get on the mound, the ump can call bats.

Oh, yes, if things get bad enough, the ump even can forfeit the game.

HERE'S ONE that happened in an enclosed park:

Under the baseball clock, a batted ball clearing a fence fair more than 250 feet from the plate is a LEGAL home run.

However, there are times when it isn't.

The batter in his joy circling the sacks forgot to touch second. The defensive side called for a new ball, made a proper appeal and the ump called the batter out.

The homer was nullified.

"Can't be," the irate manager screamed.

"The book says it's legal. The ball went over the fence 335 feet from the plate."

"Ah, yes," we noted. "Sometimes one has to resort to a second rule to make a proper verdict."

Elsewhere in the book, it specifically describes that for a run to be legal, the runner must touch each base in the proper order.

That's what the bases are there for . . . to be TOUCHED.

One of the big faults on appeals after a ball has been knocked out of the park comes from putting a new one back into play.

The ball must go first to the pitcher, he steps on and then off the mound before throwing to the base in question.

Otherwise, the ump must stand like a dummy . . . since he must ignore saying or doing anything about appeal situations until the play is handled correctly.

IF YOU'RE CONFRONTED by any other beefs, let us know.

Finally, there was the situation which cropped up the other evening in a game in which we were calling the balls and strikes at Ford Field in Livonia.

"Strike Three," we hollered, and the batter turned in protest and tossed his bat into the screen.

This calls for automatic suspension from the premises.

"What'd we do now?" one of his mates inquired. "We only have eight players left."

The ump would have little choice but to forfeit the game. A baseball team must field nine players at all times.

Fortunately, the manager was listed as a player and replaced the banned performer.

Had we allowed the game to continue with eight players on one side, the opposition had grounds for a legal protest.

Lions Swap Clark For Defensive End

The Detroit Lions hope they have filled the gap created by the retirement of defensive end Darrin McCorr by obtaining Joe Robb from the St. Louis Cardinals in exchange for Michigan State's Ernie Clark.

Robb played with the Chicago Bears and Philadelphia before going to the Cardinals in 1967. He has been a starter with the team since '62. Clark played five seasons with the Lions, but was used only in a reserve role last season.

HAMTRAC'S Peaches Bartow failed to survive her first match in the Wimbledon tennis championships in England. She was matched against defending champion Mrs. Billie Jean King of Los Angeles, Calif. Mrs. King had her hands full downing the Hamtramck teenager, 7-5, 6-4.

THE GRAND RAPIDS edition baseball team has been named to represent the United States next month in an international tournament in the Netherlands. Teams from Holland and the Antilles also are entered.

SANDRA POOT, who just turned 30, became the first foreign player ever to win the Ladies Professional Golf Association when she bested Kathy Whitworth in a playoff.

Miss Poot, who hails from Canada, shot a 98 to Miss Whitworth's 10 after they had tied with 94 for the regular 72 holes. The victory was worth \$3,000 to Miss Poot, playing as the tour for the first time.

ALL AMERICAN Lew Alcindor says he'll finish his college career at UCLA because of a three-year rest and

return to hockey next season with the St. Louis Blues. The former Montreal Canadiens star will split the Blues' net with Glenn Hall, another old-timer.

SUNDAY'S WINDUP DAY for the Detroit Horas Show at Bloomfield Hunt Club on East

TELEVISION HAS BEEN a big boon for bowling. In less than 10 years prize money has jumped from \$47,000 for three tournaments to nearly \$1.8 million for 58 events.

Originally there were 38 pro bowlers on the tour circuit. Now there are 750.

A NEWSPAPER STRIKE has forced the postponement of a fight between middleweight champ Nino Benvenuti and Jimmy James in Turin, Italy.

BUD STEVENS of Redford Township and his brother Don

captured the Michigan Amateur Best-ball golf championship as a prelude to the State Amateur journey in Charlevoix.

They shot a best ball of 138 over 36 holes to tie Jim Rae and Lynn Jackson of Lansing and then won a playoff for the crown.

Both Stevens were major contenders for the state amateur title. Bud has won it three previous times, Don once.

CALE YARBOROUGH will be the favorite in Thursday's Firecracker 400 auto race at Daytona Beach, Fla. He'll be seeking victory in the race for the third straight year.

A turbine-powered car, driven by Joe Leonard, has been entered in the July 7 Rocky Mountain 150-mile race in Castle Rock, Colo. This was the same car that flamed out in the Indianapolis 500-mile race with nine laps to go.

THE U.S. AUTO CLUB, meantime, has turned down a move to ban turbine cars from racing.

CHARLIE GREENE and Jim Hines both were timed in 9.9 seconds to set a world record in the 100-meter AAU track championships. They set their times in semifinal heats before Greene came back to win the final in 10 seconds flat.

FARMINGTON'S BOB JOHNSON shot 99-39-78 in the fifth annual Horton Smith Memorial Golf tournament at the Detroit Golf Club. Pete Green of Orchard Lake won the event with a stalling 53-54-69. Mike Jackson of Red Run followed with a 70.

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825-14	800-14	15.18	2.35	735-14	700-14	12.88	2.06	775-14	750-14	16.96	2.19
855-14	850-14	16.07	2.56	825-14	800-14	14.37	2.19	825-14	800-14	18.89	2.35
650-13	11.96	1.81	855-14	850-14	18.07	2.56	855-14	850-14	20.97	2.56
775-15	670-15	11.59	1.21	650-13	12.88	1.81	600-13	650-13	16.68	1.81
815-15	710-15	13.37	2.36	735-15	650-15	11.89	2.05	735-15	650-15	14.97	2.05
845-15	760-15	15.18	2.54	775-15	670-15	13.38	2.21	815-15	700-15	18.89	2.36
				855-15	710-15	15.46	2.36	855-15	760-15	23.68	2.76
				845-15	760-15	17.07	2.54	900-15	820-15	23.68	2.81
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735-14	700-14	19.29	2.06	775-14	750-14	26.77	2.19	670-14	735-14	34.88	3.25
775-14	750-14	20.38	2.19	825-14	800-14	28.76	2.35	670-14	775-14	36.43	2.50
825-14	800-14	22.98	2.35	855-14	850-14	31.88	2.56	670-14	825-14	39.42	2.63
855-14	850-14	24.94	2.56	900-14	880-14	35.17	2.85	670-14	855-14	43.26	2.71
900-14	880-14	27.78	2.85	845-15	780-15	29.87	2.76	670-15	815-15	35.42	2.71
685-15	600-15	17.86	1.85	855-15	800-15	33.44	2.81	670-15	845-15	43.76	2.89
735-15	650-15	16.89	2.03	650-13	700-13	25.52	1.81				
775-15	670-15	19.48	2.21								
815-15	710-15	21.37	2.36								
845-15	760-15	23.26	2.54								
885-15	800-15	26.18	2.76								
900-15	820-15	26.18	2.81								
650-13	19.29	1.81								
560-15	16.87	1.74								

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