

Thursday, November 12, 2009

## Jewellery and tee-ball

I received an interesting email that I thought was worth posting.

First the email then my response

Hi,

My name is xxxxxxxx and I am an umpire of xxxxxxxx Tee Ball club. I recently completed the Level 1 umpiring clinic, this is my first year as an umpire (previous experience: 6 years as a player) and would like clarification on a rule.

I was plate umpire last Saturday and noticed a girl wearing earrings; I brought it to the attention of the coach that any jewellery was not permitted on the diamond. The coach, 2 parents and myself became involved in a discussion as the player had only recently had her ears pierced and couldn't take them out yet. The coach pointed out that the recent coaching clinic he attended at xxxxxxxx, where the instructor indicated that if the earrings could not be removed due to recent piercing they were allowed to be taped and the player was allowed to play. Long story short, one of the parents involved in the discussion proceeded to argue the rule with me and tell me that the child will be playing and cannot take her earrings out. Can you please clarify if players with new earrings that cannot be removed can participate in Tee-Ball, if so what preventative measures can be taken. Although there are a number of children within the club that have recently had their ears pierced.

### **My response (Greg mount-Bryson):**

Hello xxxxxxxx.

Thank you for your email, I hope the following clarifies your questions rule 2.3e the wearing of jewellery during tee-ball games (this should also be relevant to training).

The official line we take during umpire clinics is to explain to umpires that they should not force a child to remove ear rings or studs if they have just had their ears pierced. Our understanding is that studs or sleepers should not be removed for five to ten days after the initial piercing, however we believe the risk to the child and possibly to someone else coming in contact with the jewellery could outweigh the disappointment of a child missing a game.

Some people feel taping of the jewellery is sufficient, this is not so as a mitt making a high tag to the side of the head can easily roll tape back and allow the webbing of the mitt to become entangled in the ear ring, for this reason taping is not allowed.

For the sake of definition our interpretation of the words "exposed jewellery" means any jewellery not covered by clothing (standard tee-ball wear) or any jewellery that could become exposed with clothing rolling up.

An important point to remember is that until an umpire has been dismissed from their duty of umpiring a game they cannot be made to comply with anything contrary to the official rules of the game or a clubs by laws, in other words the umpire has the final say.

I feel it is important I also mention that clubs should be very wary of altering rules

pertaining to player safety as does rule 2.3e

I understand that some parents will become upset at this rule as all they see is their child missing out on the game, however you should remind them that as the umpire and main official you have a duty of care to comply with the rules, especially those pertaining to their child's safety.

Parents can not absolve an umpire of their duty of care by saying they will take the responsibility, they must either remove the jewellery or their child should be removed from the game.

Parents have the choice of when their children have these piercings, should they choose to do this during the tee-ball season then there is a risk their child may have to miss a game.

### Rule 2.3e

Exposed jewellery such as wrist watches, bracelets, earrings and neck chains etc., must not be worn during a game. Medi Alert bracelets and or Medi Alert necklaces are not considered jewellery and may be worn but these must be taped to the body without covering the information they contain. A DOCTORS CERTIFICATE must support any request for exemptions.

The only question I did not pose in my email was did a club official step in when the parent started arguing with a Level 1 umpire?.

Umpires have no choice but to comply with the rules of the game, Parents if you get upset take it up with me, not someone doing a job that allows you to sit back and enjoy watching your child.

Posted by Greg Mount-Bryson at 11:25 AM 