

NINE TIPS TO SURVIVE WEEKEND YOUTH TOURNAMENTS

1. **Hydrate** – This means preparing the day before, having lots of great water and hydration during the day and taking care of your body. These weekends are in the dog days of summer and can get extremely hot. Know your body and keep it hydrated.
2. **Be on time** – Show up to the tournament 30 minutes before. Be your scheduler's friend. Sometimes these tournaments have four or five times the number of umpires for a normal night. Be flexible with your schedule.
3. **Know the rules** of the tournament. Many have special tournament rules.
 - Know the run spread
 - Know the time limit
 - Know the base rulebook
 - Know the tournament specific rules (Slide rule, substitutions, lineups)
4. **Know how to deal with issues/problems.** Know the philosophy of the tournament. How do they want you to deal with issues? Call a field supervisor? Deal with yourself? Ejections?
5. **Know your partner's name.** Be a good partner. You'll work with tons of different guys at all levels in these tournaments. Communicate. Hustle. But most of all, know his/her name.
6. **Dress the part** – Your uniform takes a beating during these tournaments, but understand that your first impression likely determines a lot about how much crap you're going to get. Tuck in your shirt. Dust off your pants.
7. **Umpire the last inning of your last game the same as your first.** Be proactive with your physical fitness and energy level. Not only with hydration, but also with muscles, food intake, etc. Can you umpire the same way in your 10th hour like you do in your 10th minute?
8. **Know your limits.** If you cannot do 6 games in a day, don't sign up for 6 games in a day. Don't be a hero. An assigner would much rather only put you down for 3 games than replace you in game 4 and have to scramble for the last 2 games.
9. **Have fun.** These tournaments, while intense at times, are fun. Kids playing baseball should be fun, so have fun with it. Smile. Clap. Interact with the kids. It goes a long way to making a long weekend very, very fun.