

# Sports Week

## For Little League umpires, it's more than just a game

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Post Correspondent

**DALLAS** - They are called "the men in blue." To some people, they do a thankless job that most people would not even think of volunteering for. Each time they come to work they disappoint exactly one half of the people for whom they are providing a service. Who are these people? Little League umpires.

Although Little League umpires behind the plate do get paid, they don't take up the challenge simply for the money. Answers as to why umpires volunteer range from "for the love of the game," to "I love being around kids and helping them," to "it gives me something to do now that the kids are away," to "your performance is something you can always improve upon so I take it as a challenge."

Many of the people found wearing "the Little League blue" are parents of former players who want to stay close to children. Jim McMonagle, Back Mountain Little League's current umpire-in-chief, says, "I started umpiring at the age of 13. Back then it was a good way to make some money at a young age. Where I came from, the older players umpired the games the younger kids played. I stuck with it because I like doing it for the kids, helping them to play fairly, yet have some fun. Umpiring has its rough

*"Little League baseball is the best baseball in the world. The players are there to play and have fun."*

**Jim McMonagle**  
Umpire-in-Chief  
Back Mountain Baseball

times, but it's mostly good."

Whatever the reason, umpires willingly spend their time to benefit the players involved, and their help and their patience are greatly appreciated. Not that it's easy to find umpires. McMonagle is responsible for scheduling official for at least 15 major league games alone each week and umpires at all levels. If nobody is available, he ends up doing it himself.

"Over Father's Day weekend, I ended up doing three games when I had anticipated the time off," he said.

The umpire-in-chief last year, Steve Withers, found himself umpiring all but two games of an entire tournament sponsored by Back Mountain Baseball last August. The title of umpire-in-chief is usually the hardest position to fill because of all the responsibility and organization involved.

Little League umpires get to see

pretty remarkable plays made by youngsters, but they also naturally get to see some crazy plays. From kids tee-ball age running to third base from home plate after hitting the ball, to the mad dash when an infield fly is dropped, to runners thinking there are three outs when only the second is made, to batters carrying bats to first base with them, each umpire has his own unforgettable moment.

Teaching children is often a priceless deed. Making them better people through the game of baseball is not always easy, but umpires do teach children to keep their shirts tucked in, to keep their emotions under control and to accept the success and failure of the team and not just of the individual. Umpires do not always realize how many children they have come across until they sit down and think about how many games they have done.

With each strike/ball or out/safe call, an umpire influences a game greatly. Usually each time an umpire opens his mouth, players, coaches, parents, and other fans of one team are upset and in disbelief while those of the other side are made happy. One umpire who asked that his name not be printed said, "I can't help but remember those nasty mothers who always swear that I can't see straight before anything else!"

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**Jim McMonagle, Umpire-in-Chief of Back Mountain Baseball, kept a close eye on a pitch from Brian Goeringer during a regular season game. Little League umpires often call games several times a week.**  
POST PHOTO/JIM PHILLIPS

## Red Sox power way to Major League championship

The Red Sox defeated the Giants by a score of 6-3 to capture the Back Mountain Baseball major league baseball championship. The Red Sox victory featured John Yanik's first home run and strong hitting and pitching from Elijah Miller. Miller went 3-for-3 with a double while teammates Yanik and Matt Brokenshire each were 2-for-3. Brokenshire and Matt Kelly each belted doubles for the winners. Miller struck out six in two innings in relief of winning pitcher Kelly, who struck out three in four innings of work. David Harding pitched well for the Giants, striking out eight in five innings on the mound. Eric Samanas, Ryan Harvey and Eric Domzalski each doubled for the National League champs.

### BASEBALL PLAYOFFS

#### Red Sox 20, Orioles 1

Elijah Miller hit for the cycle (single, double, triple, home run) in leading the Red Sox to an overwhelming victory over the Orioles in an American League semi-final playoff game. Matt Kelly and John Yanik each smacked 3 hits while Matt Shumbris, Matt Brokenshire and Alex Baltimore each collected 2 hits for the Sox. Brokenshire, Baltimore and Yanik all had doubles. Miller, Yanik, Kelly and Shumbris handled the pitching for the winners, combining to strike out 7 while allowing only one hit.

#### Red Sox 4, Tigers 3

Elijah Miller pitched and batted the Red Sox to a narrow victory over the Tigers in the American League championship game. Miller tossed a complete game victory, striking out 14 Tigers. At the plate, he tripled 3 times. Matt Shumbris added a double for the Sox. Dave Shultz pitched a strong game for the Tigers, striking out 9. Adam King led the Tigers' offense with a single and a double.

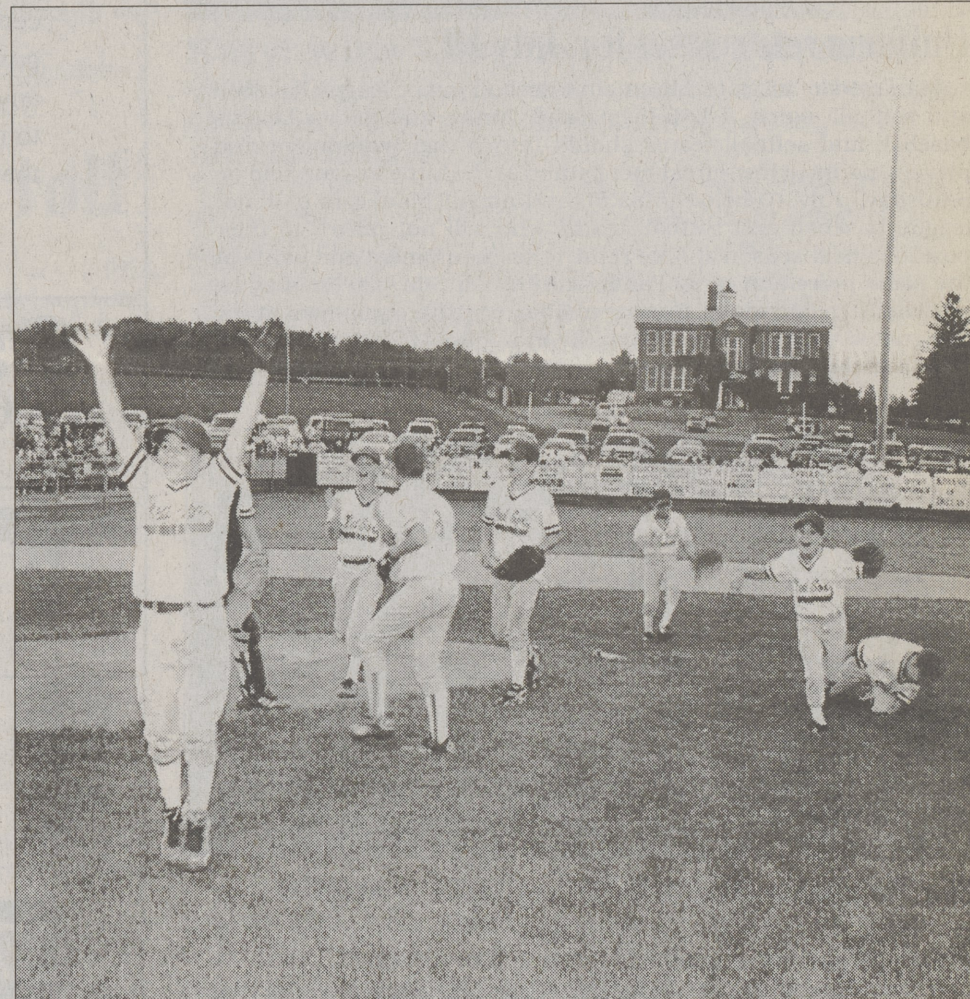
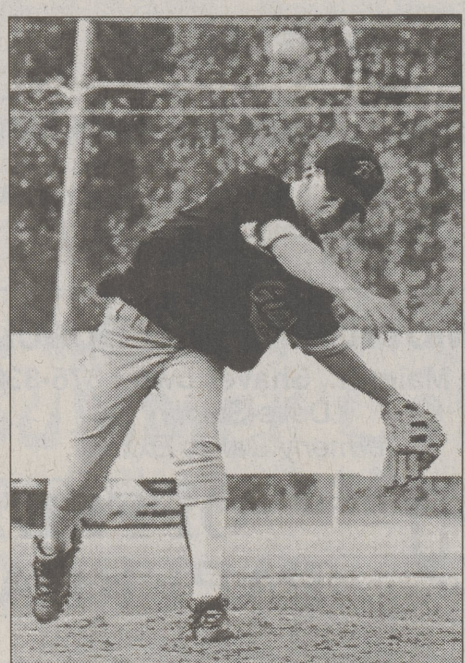
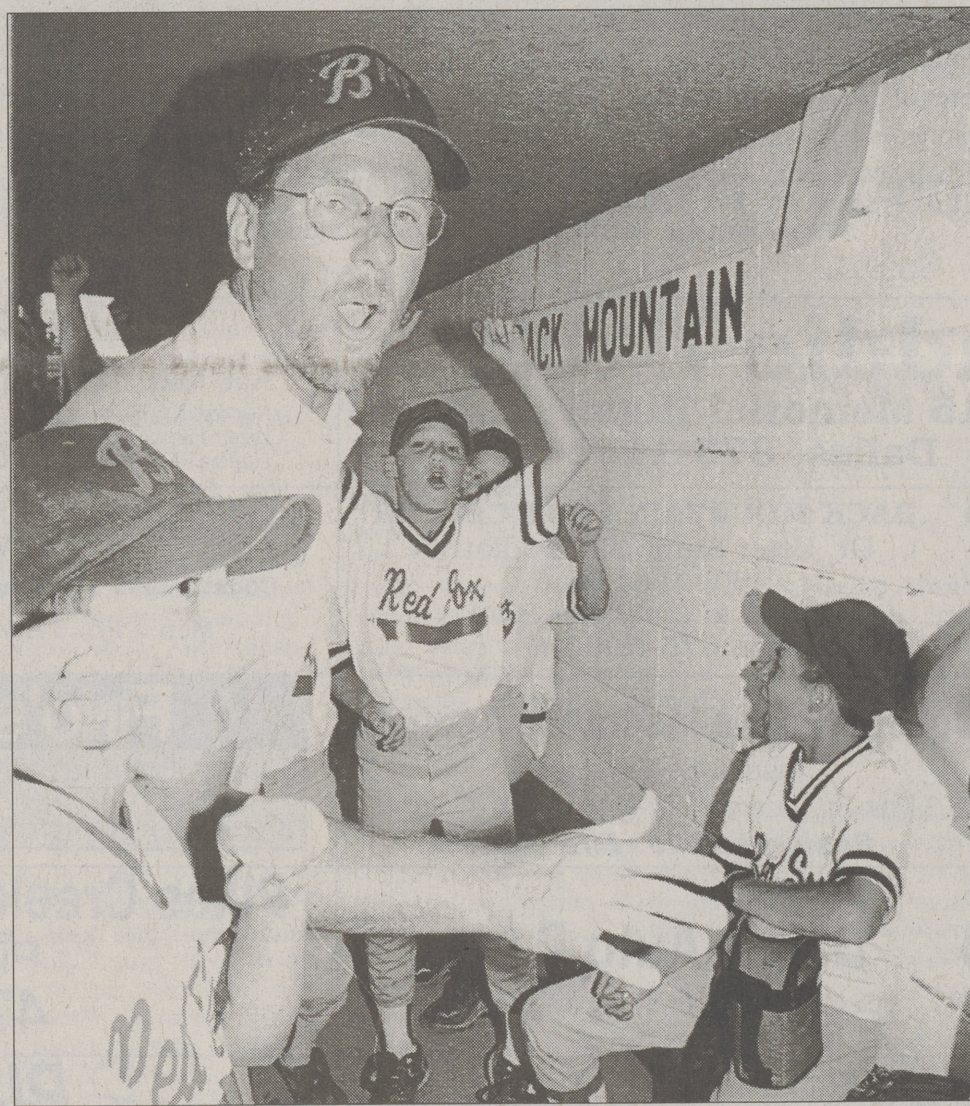
#### Giants 4, Cardinals 3

Eric Samanas pitched a complete game and struck out 9 batters as the Giants downed the Cardinals for the National League Championship. Samanas also collected half of the Giants' 6 hits in leading the winners' offense. Adam Sulewski ripped a double for the Giants' lone extra-base hit. Sean Leary struck out 8 in a gutsy complete game performance for the Cards. Leary went 3 for 3 with 2 singles and a double to power the Cardinal offense. Matt Straub added a double and Patrick McMahon cracked 2 clutch singles as the Cardinals' late-season surge fell short.

### SOFTBALL

#### White Sox 21, Cardinals 0

Sheree Horvath allowed only 2 hits in tossing the complete game shutout. Lauren Pyskoty ripped 3 hits, including a double and a home run for the White Sox. Horvath contributed a triple and a single while Katie Birch belted a 3-run triple.



POST PHOTOS/JIM PHILLIPS

Championship game photos, clockwise from top left: manager Dan Miller and his Red Sox celebrate the title win; Red Sox players exult after the final out; the Sox' John Yanik slid into second under Ryan Harvey; Giants' manager Dave Domzalski with a little pep talk early in the game; pitchers Matt Kelly, Red Sox, left, and Dave Harding, Giants.

#### Yankees 16, Dodgers 6

Rebecca Clay smashed 2 home runs to propel the Yankees to victory. Kelly Corbett was the winning pitcher and Jodi Dickson played sparkling defense behind the plate. For the Dodgers, Lauren Collini ripped a home run.

the championship game. Horvath and Hilary Adams each had 2 hits for the Sox. Jodi Dickson led the Yankees with 2 singles.

### JUNIOR LEAGUE

#### Keystone Blacktopping 11, Back Mountain Indians 9

Frank Buzin, Mike Wills, John McGeehan and Chris Higdon each collected 2 hits and teammate Mark Kapitula went 3 for 3 for the Indians. Kapitula and Buzin combined to strike out 5.

#### Back Mountain Indians 6, Pittston/Avoca/Dupont 3

Mark Kapitula and Frank Buzin combined to strike out 13 batters in leading the Indians to victory. Jason Alfano powered the offense with 2 hits.

#### Mike Domzalski fans 17 in BMT Braves Senior League win

The Senior League Back Mountain Braves defeated North End 8-6 on June 23. Mike Domzalski struck out 17 batters.

