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It?s just a game

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There's a video making the rounds of a minor baseball game in the U.S.

It's hard to tell which age group the players are in because the video does not focus on them, but they appear to be mid-teens.

The umpire has taken enough abuse and addressed someone in the stand directly behind home plate.

Apparently, parents had been heckling the umpire, and he's had enough. As he turns to go back to the game, more comments are thrown at him, which he ignores.

As the umpire puts on his mask and gets ready to call up the next batter, a woman yells out, ?What's that matter? Are you mad because most of the player's are taller than you??

Game over - the umpire took off his mask, walked off the diamond, through the parking lot to his car and drove away.

If there was a minimum amount of innings played, one of those teams just lost to a forfeit because the game could not continue.

The parents, who are mouthpieces apparently, started badmouthing the umpire, saying he had ruined the game.

The video's narrator points out it was not the umpire who ruined the game; it was the parents.

I don't know who the woman was that made the crack about the umpire's height, but if the situation was reversed, and she was behind the plate, and someone yelled out a slur about her physical appearance, you can bet there would be a big uproar.

There is currently a shortage of officials in minor sports - and this example is the reason why. Almost all sports are reporting a shortage of officials.

While the pandemic did affect the situation, as training programs had to be suspended, it is being reported that many people just do not want to put up with the abuse.

One league in the U.S. was reporting the longevity of officials in their sport is now just two years. After being abused for two seasons, referees are saying it simply isn't worth it.

I attend a lot of sporting events. I find that most parents in Canada, at least in our region, seem to understand that verbally abusing someone because he's on the other side of the fence just isn't the right thing to do.

Although, in hockey, some people think that yelling abuse is fine - apparently because they feel safe up in the stands ten rows away and are separated by plexiglass. Although I was at a high school game last fall where an official simply had enough. He stopped the game and ordered a grandparent out of the arena.

It was kind of funny because although Grandpa had to leave, Grandma kept her seat and watched the rest of the game.

At a football game a few years ago, one parent thought it was smart to stand on the sidelines and call the ref by name from only a few feet away and refer to him in a pretty nasty way.

It got pretty bad, and I was seriously waiting for the ref to come over and pop this guy right in the mouth - and he would have

deserved it.

Finally, it got over the top. The ref stopped the game and told the parent to leave the park. The parent started with ?you can't make me leave..?

The ref said that if he didn't leave, the game would not continue, and his team would forfeit. The idiot parent had to do the walk of shame along the sidelines to the parking lot in front of around 200 people. They were not impressed.

I don't understand why some people are hostile to referees. For the most part, they do a good job. They don't have a bias for the home team, as some people believe. Why would they? The outcome of the game doesn't affect them at all. Most refs are former players themselves.

The thing is, most kids in minor sports are not at all phased by losing a game. Usually, they just shrug it off. They understand you can't win every time. The kids are there because they enjoy playing the game and meeting with their friends. It's not a life-altering career move for them, and they know this.

I don't know if the umpire in the video returned to officiate another game, but judging from the way he simply walked away, I doubt it.

Maybe next time, the league will tell the parents there won't be a game at all because there is no one to call the balls and strikes.