



Western Region Umpire School

Little League - Intermediate League - Junior League - Senior League - Big League - Challenger Division
Saturday AM 2-9-13



The Slot Position

The purpose of the Slot Position is to give the Plate Umpire the best possible view of the strike zone while maintaining the correct head position.

Three things control the proper head position:

1. The width of the stance;
2. The amount of squat;
3. Forward body lean/tilt.

The proper slot stance (or view) is achieved by locating yourself comfortably between the batter and the catcher. The catcher's heel controls the feet position of the umpire. The umpires' toe, forward foot, (**slot foot, closest to the batter**) is placed just behind and parallel with the catcher's heel. The toe of the umpires' trail foot should not be further back than the heel of his forward foot. **HEEL---TOE---HEEL---TOE**

For a right-handed batter the left foot is the **slot foot** and the reverse is true for a left-handed batter. The **width** of the stance should be at least shoulder **width** apart, wider if necessary to lessen the majority of squat. (**Wider is better**) The appropriate **squat** is when the thighs are parallel to the ground. Any more squat than this will hinder mobility.

The **forward body lean** should be to a minimum to reduce fatigue and instability and is used as the final adjustment for head height. You must maintain stability of the upper body. The correct location of the **head height** is to have the chin of the umpire **not below** the **top** of the catcher's head. With proper **head height** and correct location of the **slot** the umpire will have the best view of the **strike zone** and should maintain a strong, stable working position.

When first setting up for the slot position the umpire should remember that the **slot foot** goes into position first and the **trail foot** sets up second. This is often referred to the "**A**" position of the slot. While going to the squat posture (position "**B**") the umpire should move in one crisp movement. Constant eye contact with the pitcher during this "**A**" to "**B**" movement is imperative. Once in the **squat position** minor head adjustments may be made by slightly tilting the upper body forward. This **forward body tilt** should be kept to a minimum as mentioned above, too much **forward body tilt** will cause fatigue and an inconsistency with the view of the **strike zone**.

With proper feet placement and correct head height, the "**proper use of the equipment**" is insured. The body and head will be lined up with the strike zone and the body will be protected.

"**PROPER USE OF THE EYES**" will develop a good "**tracking**" of the ball. Every pitch should be followed **completely** from the pitcher's release of the ball through the strike zone and into the catcher's glove before making a call.

When working the **slot position**, the umpire will have the best stance for "**Opening the Gate**" on passed balls. The consistency of the umpire will improve by repeating this movement and holding a steady head position.

REMEMBER:

Proper Position is controlled by:

1. The width of the stance;
2. The amount of the squat;
3. Forward body lean/tilt.

Proper Feet Location: **From the catcher---Heel---Toe---Heel---Toe**

When calling balls, be sure to stay **down** in the squatted position for **ball calls**.

When making **Strike** calls, lock your legs into the "**A**" position, raise your right fist high in front of you and making a motion like pounding on a wall, call "**strike.**"

Finally, after each pitch, learn to step back and **relax** before setting up for the next pitch.



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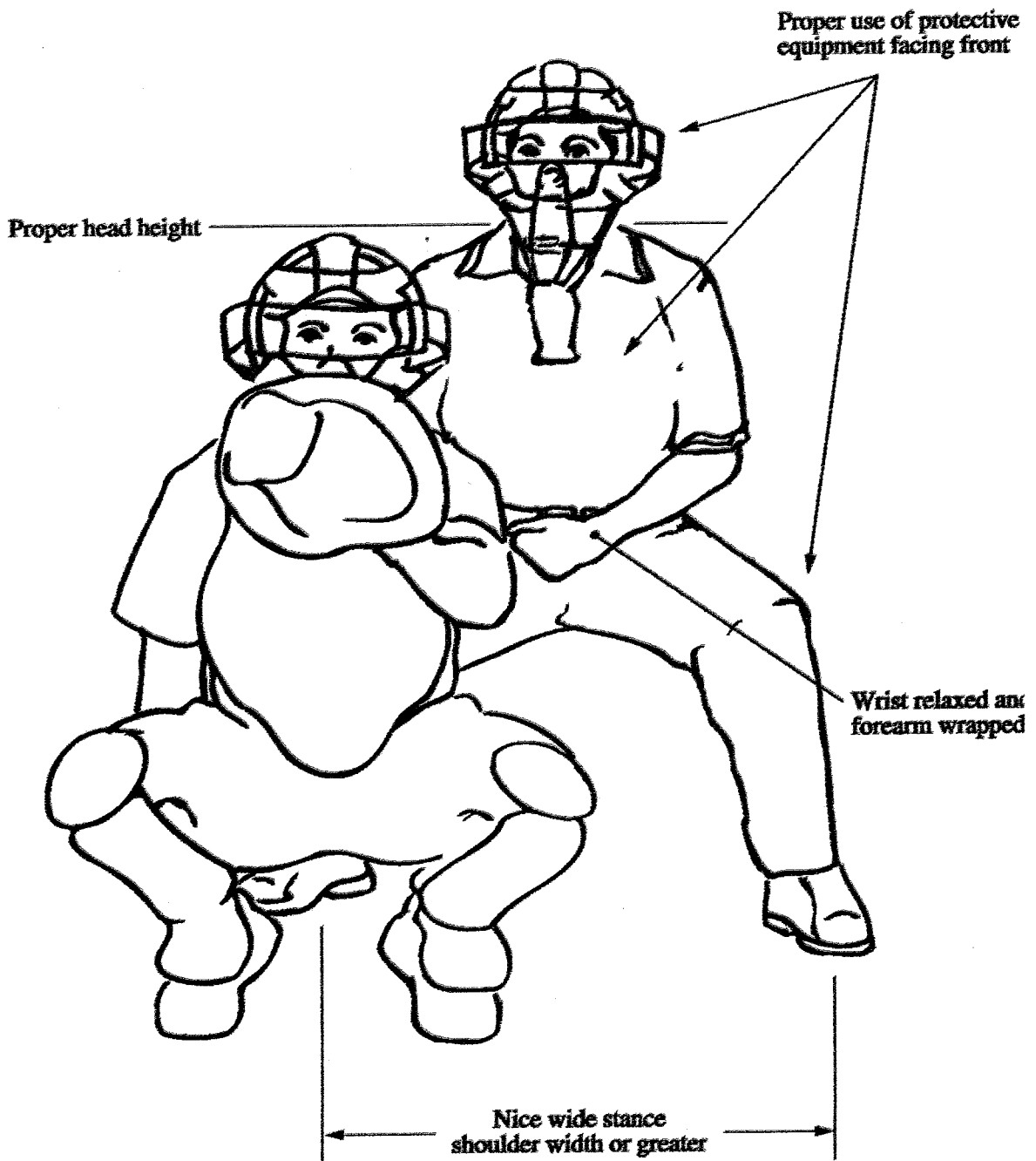
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The Slot (Front View)

Proper Head Height is controlled By;

1. Width of Stance
2. Amount of Squat
3. Forward Body Lean



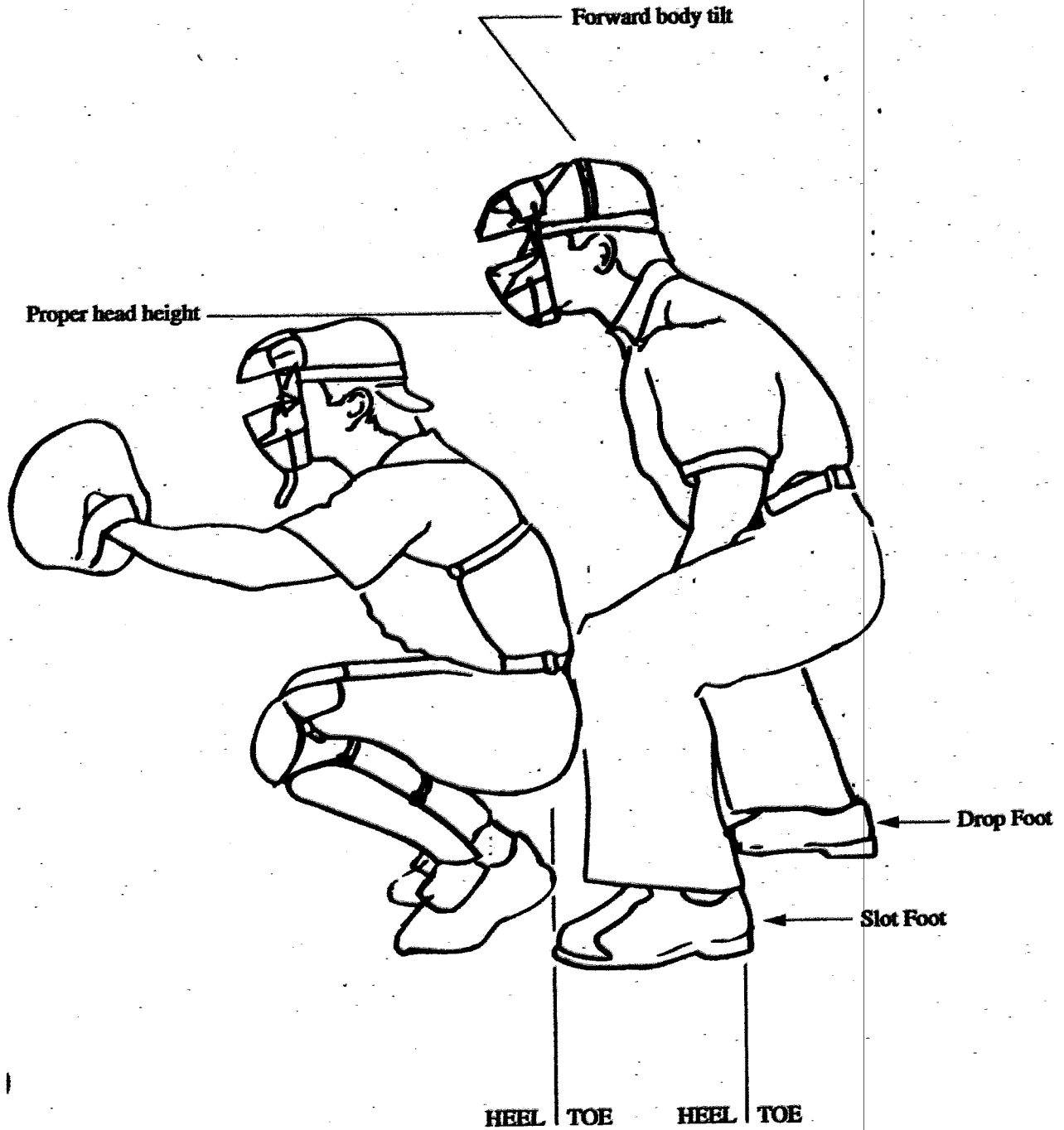


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The Slot (Side View)



"Width - Squat - Lean = Proper Head Height"

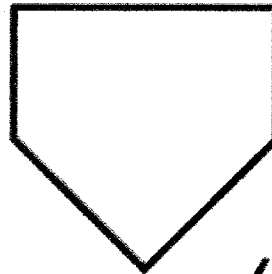
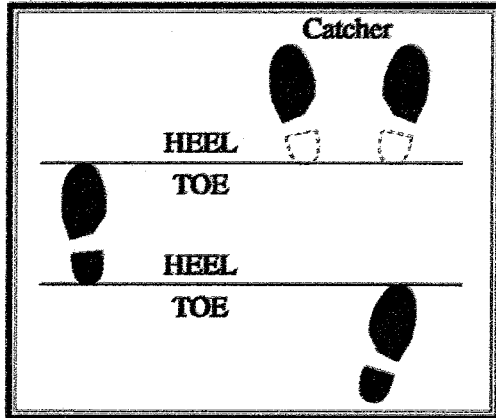


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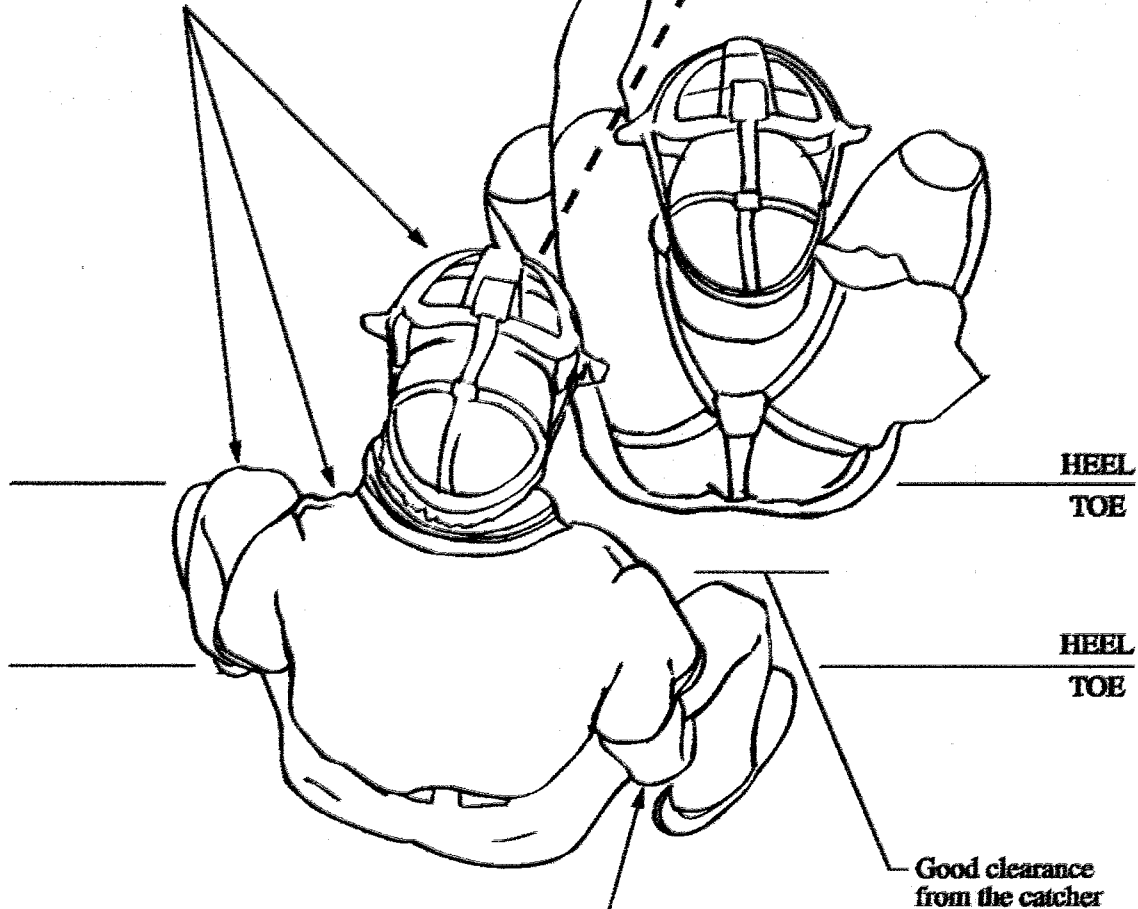


The Slot (Top View)



Good view of the outside corner

Proper use of protective equipment facing front



Right Hand on or behind the thigh

Good clearance from the catcher