

= Fieldin Culbreth =

Fieldin Henry Culbreth III (born March 16 , 1963) is an American umpire in Major League Baseball (MLB) . He umpired in his first MLB game in 1993 and became an American League (AL) staff member in 1999 (MLB merged its two umpire staffs into one the following year) .

Culbreth has umpired in five Division Series , six League Championship Series , two World Series and one All @-@ Star Game , as well as the National League 's single @-@ game playoff in 2007 . He was one of the umpires when a Tampa Bay Rays pitcher threw a no @-@ hitter for the first time in team history , and he was behind the plate when the New York Mets achieved the same distinction . Prior to the 2013 Major League Baseball season , Culbreth , Ted Barrett and Jim Joyce became crew chiefs after the retirements of Ed Rapuano , Tim Tschida and Derryl Cousins .

= = Umpiring career = =

Culbreth had never umpired prior to attending umpire school , and he began umpiring in 1987 . He did not take long to reach the major leagues , where he made his first umpiring appearance on August 13 , 1993 . On that day , Culbreth umpired at second base in a game played at the Kingdome between the Seattle Mariners and the California Angels .

Culbreth became a member of the official AL umpire staff in 1999 , when multiple call ? up umpires were hired to take the place of umpires who had participated in a mass resignation . He began his career on the AL staff , but in 2000 MLB merged the umpires from its two leagues . Culbreth wore # 42 as an AL umpire , but he had to stop using that number after it was retired in recognition of Jackie Robinson .

Culbreth , Ted Barrett and Jim Joyce were promoted to crew chief positions prior to the 2013 season , after former crew chiefs Ed Rapuano , Tim Tschida and Derryl Cousins retired . At the age of 49 , Culbreth became the second @-@ youngest active crew chief , with only Barrett younger at the age of 47 . Culbreth 's 2013 crew consists of Brian O 'Nora , Bill Welke and Adrian Johnson .

According to Retrosheet , Culbreth has issued a total of 38 ejections during his major league career through the 2014 season . His highest single @-@ season ejection total was six in 1997 . Through 2012 , he has officiated in a total of 2 @,@ 512 games , and he has served in more than one hundred games each season since 1997 .

= = = Notable games = = =

Culbreth was a part of the umpiring crew when Cal Ripken , Jr. of the Baltimore Orioles joined the 3 @,@ 000 hit club . He was present when Ripken finally sat out of a game after having played in 2 @,@ 632 consecutive games . Culbreth was the home plate umpire when Baltimore 's Rafael Palmeiro reached the 3 @,@ 000 @-@ hit milestone on July 15 , 2005 with a double against Joel Piñeiro of the Seattle Mariners .

Culbreth was the left field umpire for the single @-@ game playoff between the Colorado Rockies and the San Diego Padres that decided the NL 's 2007 wild card team . The game ended in the 13th inning when home plate umpire Tim McClelland called Rockies player Matt Holliday safe at home plate ; the call was controversial and replays did not show clearly whether or not Holliday touched the plate on the play . Colorado won by a score of 9 ? 8 .

Culbreth has umpired in the American League Division Series in 2002 , 2007 , 2012 , and 2014 ; and the National League Division Series in 2004 and 2008 . He officiated in the American League Championship Series in 2000 , 2009 , 2010 and 2011 ; and the National League Championship Series in 2003 and 2006 . Culbreth umpired in the World Series in 2008 and 2012 . Culbreth has officiated in 67 postseason games through the 2012 season , being the plate umpire for 11 of those contests . He was also a member of the crew for the 2006 MLB All @-@ Star Game in Pittsburgh . The American League defeated the National League , 3 ? 2 .

In the 2008 World Series , which featured the Philadelphia Phillies and Tampa Bay Rays , Culbreth worked behind home plate for Game 3 . The Phillies claimed a 5 ? 4 victory due to a walk ? off

single by Carlos Ruiz . Philadelphia won the Series in five games . In Game 3 of the 2012 World Series , Culbreth umpired behind the plate for the matchup between the Detroit Tigers and the San Francisco Giants . The Giants shut out the Tigers , 2 ? 0 . San Francisco won the World Series in the next game .

Culbreth was the first @-@ base umpire for Tampa Bay Rays pitcher Matt Garza 's no @-@ hitter against the Detroit Tigers on July 26 , 2010 . In the third inning , Tigers manager Jim Leyland was ejected from the game by second @-@ base umpire Marty Foster . Garza 's no @-@ hitter was the first by a Rays pitcher . Culbreth was at second base on June 1 , 2012 , when New York Mets pitcher Johan Santana threw a no @-@ hitter against the St. Louis Cardinals . This no @-@ hitter was the first to be thrown by a Mets pitcher . Santana benefited from a close call on the third base line by umpire Adrian Johnson ; the Carlos Beltrán line drive appeared to be fair , but Johnson ruled it foul .

During Spring training in 2014 , Culbreth was part of the first use of expanded replay in a MLB game . After Toronto Blue Jays manager John Gibbons elected to challenge a safe call made by Culbreth , who was umpiring at first base , replay umpire Brian O 'Nora upheld the ruling following a video review that lasted 2 minutes and 34 seconds .

= = = Incidents = = =

During the 2001 season , Culbreth received an email from then ? MLB official Sandy Alderson advising the umpire that he was not calling enough strikes and that if he did not make adjustments , he would face criticism from ESPN analysts when he umpired a game that was broadcast by the network .

On September 16 , 2005 , Culbreth was involved in a dispute with pitcher Randy Johnson of the New York Yankees . At the time , the Yankees were contending for a playoff spot . After Johnson expressed his displeasure with some of the umpire 's calls on balls and strikes , Culbreth ejected Johnson in the second inning . New York catcher John Flaherty stated that he " was disappointed that Fieldin reacted as quickly as he did " , but Flaherty also admitted that Culbreth " had a legitimate gripe . " Johnson said that he was " deeply regretful " and acknowledged , " I was wrong for letting my emotions get away from me . " Prior to Johnson 's apology , Culbreth was criticized by Yankees announcers John Sterling and Suzyn Waldman , neither of whom was aware of what had been said on the field .

Earlier in the 2005 season , Culbreth had twice ejected Philadelphia Phillies manager Charlie Manuel from games , once in April and again in August . During the 2001 season , Culbreth had previously ejected Manuel from a contest ; it was held during Manuel 's time as manager of the Cleveland Indians . Culbreth has also thrown former manager Mike Hargrove out of three different games , with two of the ejections taking place while Hargrove was with Cleveland and the third during the manager 's time in Baltimore .

During a game in 2013 between the Houston Astros and Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim , Culbreth , acting as the crew chief for the game , made an incorrect call in the 7th inning . He later received a two @-@ game suspension and a fine . Los Angeles had runners on first and second base with two outs when Houston manager Bo Porter made a pitching change , bringing in left @-@ hander Wesley Wright . Los Angeles manager Mike Scioscia called for a pinch @-@ hitter , inserting right @-@ handed batter Luis Jimenez . Porter attempted to make a second pitching change , before Wright threw a single pitch , by calling for Héctor Ambriz , a right @-@ handed pitcher . Scioscia immediately argued the second pitching change , pursuant to MLB rule 3 @. @ 05 (b) , which states " If the pitcher is replaced , the substitute pitcher shall pitch to the batter then at bat , or any substitute batter , until such batter is put out or reaches first base , or until the offensive team is put out , unless the substitute pitcher sustains injury or illness which , in the umpire @-@ in @-@ chief 's judgment , incapacitates him for further play as a pitcher " . After discussing the call with his umpiring crew , Culbreth allowed the pitching change , violating the rule . The three other umpires working the game (Brian O 'Nora , Bill Welke , and Adrian Johnson) received unspecified fines for the incident , while Culbreth was suspended and fined by MLB . He did not serve his suspension

immediately , and he continued working regular games in the weeks following the incident .

= = Personal = =

Fieldin Culbreth was born and raised in Inman , South Carolina . He attended Mabry Middle School . A former pitcher and outfielder , Culbreth graduated from Chapman High School and attended Spartanburg Methodist College . He studied at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte , where he played baseball . He began umpiring in college following an arm injury . He and his wife Claire have three children : Fieldin IV , Celina and Shannon . As a member of an organization called BLUE for Kids , Culbreth has visited and brought presents to hospitalized children on multiple occasions .

Culbreth is five feet and eleven inches tall and weighs 225 pounds . Culbreth and his family adopted a shelter dog in 2010 .