

UMPIRE MECHANICS MANUAL

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DBB UMPIRE

CODE OF ETHICS

Leagues have entrusted us to assist them in the educational development of their youth through athletics. The proper operation of such a process requires that umpires be independent, impartial and responsible to people they serve. In recognition of these expectations there is hereby established a Code of Ethics for all umpires. The purpose of the Code is to establish guidelines for ethical standards of conduct for all DBB umpires.

1. A DBB umpire must devote time, thought and study to the rules of the game and the mechanics necessary to carry out these rules so that one may render effective and creditable service in a fair and unbiased manner.

2. A DBB umpire must work with fellow officials and the leagues in a spirit of harmony and cooperation in spite of differences of opinion that may arise during debate of points or rules at issue.

3. A DBB umpire must resist every temptation and outside pressure to use one's position as an official to benefit oneself. Under all circumstances, umpires must avoid promoting the special interest of any person or group of persons other than the athletes we serve.

4. A DBB umpire must constantly uphold the honor and dignity of the avocation in all personal conduct and relations with the athletes, coaches, leagues, administrators, colleagues, and the public, to be a worthy example to the athletes under one's jurisdiction.

5. A DBB umpire will be prepared both physically and mentally, dress according to expectations, and maintain a proper appearance that is befitting the importance of the contest.

6. A DBB umpire must remember and recognize that it is important to honor commitments regardless of possible inconvenience of financial loss. Every member of the officiating profession carries a responsibility to act in a manner becoming a professional person. The conduct of any umpire influences the attitude of the public toward the profession in general as well as toward the DBB umpire in particular.

PREREQUISITES FOR GOOD UMPIRING

1. All baseball umpires should be physically fit at the start of each season and then make certain that they keep themselves in good condition, particularly during the period they are working games. Fortunately, most people, who officiate athletic contests, are endowed with alert, healthy and sound minds. It is equally important that they keep their bodies agile and strong. An umpire who is not physically fit is a detriment to the game of baseball. Today's athletes are well conditioned. They are very skilled and they move speedily. If the officiating is to be adequate, umpires must be able to keep pace with the athletes. Frequently, umpires must move very quickly to get into the best position to cover a play.

2. Decisions must be made positively and with good timing, but an umpire must learn to pause, read the play and react to the play with the proper call. Most novice umpires must guard against rendering decisions prematurely. It is considered the best procedure, when an umpire has to run to get into position on a play, to come to a stop where he can see all of the action clearly. Try not to make a decision while in motion. It is necessary to know where the ball is when a decision is made. The fielder may drop the ball on a tag play, or in pivoting during a double play might juggle the ball on a force play. After only a momentary hesitation for the purpose of coming to a decision, the call should be made forcefully. Timidity or over hesitation indicates a lack of confidence. All plays should be called in a confident manner, which can be developed. Positive action does much to have the umpire's judgment accepted. Good umpires cultivate their voices to increase the authority implied by the spoken word. A strong voice is a valuable asset. All calls should be made loudly & clearly so that players of both teams can hear them. Occasionally, a decision will be questioned, no matter who makes it, or how it is made.

3. Good umpiring is dependent, to a large extent, upon a complete knowledge and understanding of the rules. In fact, to be a competent umpire, it is necessary to know the rules thoroughly. Some decisions are repeatedly made so that, with experience they come by reflex. The correct way to prepare oneself for most effectively making decisions of this kind is through continued study of all possible situations. Then, basic fundamentals become second nature and correct interpretations are virtually automatic. To know the rules thoroughly requires constant and analytical study. It does not suffice to only read the rules, but they must be studied so that mental pictures of plays and situations result. Having developed clarity in the mental pictures, the umpire will be able to immediately recognize the situation and correctly rule on it automatically. Those who guess and who don't know the rules soon lose the confidence of players, coaches and spectators.

4. Proper umpiring mechanics are essential in attaining the best coverage. Many umpires who know the rules well fail to be accepted because their mechanics are poor. When a crew or a team of umpires uses proper mechanics, it is impossible for a play to occur without one of them being in the desired position to see all of the play clearly. Mechanics, or play coverage, must be mastered if the umpire is to be successful. First, a proper position for various situations must be

learned, then the coverage must be practiced so that the positioning virtually becomes a reflex action. Position and coverage should be discussed and reviewed regularly at clinics with the opportunities to practice the mechanics being made available to all umpire candidates, including both the veterans and the neophytes. It is important that all umpires take the best position possible for any given play without being in the way of any player or thrown or batted ball.

5. An umpire must totally ignore remarks from the crowd or spectators. Every crowd will include a number of people who heckle an umpire. Many persons believe that to do so is a legitimate part of a ball game. Fans not only lose respect for an umpire who in anyway reacts to criticism, but if the umpire gives evidence of being conscious of heckling, their criticism becomes more intense. Umpires must be “deaf” and “thick-skinned” and ignore any and all spectator comment.

6. An umpire must be loyal to his co-workers. The umpire must, through actions and when necessary words, endorse and support the decisions of fellow crew members. Each umpire in a crew must be willing to accept responsibility and none must attempt to shift any blame to another member of the crew. Never should there be press or radio interviews during which decisions made in a specific game are discussed, nor should there ever be any public criticism whatsoever of a fellow umpire. Then, basic fundamentals become second nature and correct interpretations are virtually automatic. To know the rules thoroughly requires constant and analytical study. It does not suffice to only read the rules, but they must be studied so that mental pictures of plays and situations result. Having developed clarity in the mental pictures, the umpire will be able to immediately recognize the situation and correctly rule on it automatically. Those who guess and who don’t know the rules soon lose the confidence of players, coaches and spectators.

7. The efficient umpire will not “showboat.” Competent umpires effectively execute their duties without flair. The umpire who discharges his responsibility with dignity and in conformance with accepted signals and procedures will encourage the players and spectators to accept his decisions. Being overly dramatic all too often does not accomplish the purpose for which it is intended and such actions frequently cause the players to lose confidence in the decisions made by an “actor.” Quiet dignity is much more effective. Umpires should not be officious but neither can they tolerate disrespect. In no case will an umpire ever attempt to coach a player.

8. Umpires must be courteous to players and coaches but avoid visiting with them immediately before, during or after the game. A business like attitude and atmosphere must prevail. They must never argue with the players, coaches or team representatives. Any discussion should be brief. A dignified attitude will often preclude and prevent an argument.

9. The successful umpire must hustle and he must be alert. These characteristics are closely associated and there is no substitute for either of them. The official’s movements must be brisk and he is expected, from time to time, to urge players to hustle. The head must be kept erect

and the umpire must have the appearance of one who can properly discharge his responsibility. At the time the ball is pitched, he should never have his arms folded.

10. The judgment necessary in making a decision is acquired through experience. Baseball game decisions must be made on the basis of fact. First, cover the play as the accepted procedure provides. More importantly, rule on the play exactly as it was seen. Every umpire must acknowledge that he will sometime err in his judgment no matter how conscientious and efficient he is and regardless of his position and rules knowledge. When the most respected umpires "boot one," they continue to work to the best of their ability. The fact that an umpire makes a rare mistake need not cause him to be unduly humble nor to be embarrassed. After an error, the umpire must never attempt to even it up. Each call is made on its own merits. Frequent errors in rule interpretation or in judgment quickly cause the players, coaches and spectators to lose confidence.

11. Umpires working together must have a mutual respect. The best rapport is obtained when there is a friendly attitude toward each other. Friendliness and respect for members of the crew (and profession) contribute to confidence in one another. Every umpire should strive to support his partner, or partners, throughout the entire contest. When one umpire requests an opinion from another concerning a given play which has been ruled upon, the opinion should be given courteously to the umpire requesting it and to him only.

12. Umpires must make a conscientious effort not to infringe on the duties and responsibilities of each other. There is no cause for greater embarrassment than to have opposing decisions made by umpires on a given play. If proper mechanics are followed, there should be no conflicting decisions.

GENERAL REMINDERS

1. A pleasing personal appearance is invaluable to an umpire. An umpire who looks professional will sell the call more often. The poorly dressed umpire suffers loss of respect and may diminish credibility. Umpires working a particular game should be dressed alike. Never should an umpire be on the field without wearing a cap. Predominately black shoes designed for umpiring should be worn. The plate umpire should wear shoes designed for safety that include hard toes. The plate umpire needs to have a ball and strike indicator, a small whisk broom, a protective supporter and cup, ball bags, line up cards and a pen or pencil for lineup changes. A chest protector, sturdy mask, preferably with a throat protector, and shin guards are standard equipment for the plate umpire.

2. The umpires' dressing quarters should be kept free from visitors. Prior to the game it is used by the umpires for the purpose of preparing themselves for a professional engagement, and the atmosphere of the dressing room should be conducive to such preparation. Umpires are expected to have a pre-game discussion, and upon occasion, discuss matters in confidence. When dressing quarters are cluttered with casual visitors, it is impossible for the umpires to

properly utilize this time. Umpires prefer, and should be accorded, the privilege of showering and dressing in privacy following the game. Many times they want an opportunity to review specific plays or situations.

3. A thorough knowledge of dead ball and delayed dead ball situations is necessary. This is invaluable to the umpire. It is decidedly to his advantage to study and know each and every situation in which the ball becomes dead immediately, or becomes dead in a delayed situation.

4. It is universally acknowledged umpires have made notable contributions to the development of baseball traditions. It is the duty of every umpire to contribute all that he can to maintain the great traditions in baseball by giving his chosen profession or avocation the best service possible. To maintain and continue high standards, it is necessary that each and every umpire carry out each assignment to the best of his ability. Throughout the country umpires have been and are admired for their integrity.

PRE-GAME PREPARATIONS

There are important pre-game responsibilities which must not be neglected. It is imperative that umpires arrive well before game starting time. Umpires should be at the field at least 30 minutes before the game, 1 hour at WS events. Umpires should not arrive so close to game time that their pre-game duties are neglected. The tournament UIC should be immediately notified of the umpires' arrival. Meet with your partner for an umpire's pre-game conference to prepare for the game. Umpires should examine the playing field closely, making certain that it is properly marked, that the pitcher's plate is legal in every respect and familiarize themselves with the boundaries, fences and screens. This is also the time to look for potential safety problems. The crew shall be together on a tour of the field, so that any points or questions concerning safety and ground rules which may arise can be considered and the conclusion made known to the appropriate individuals. All obstacles which could or may create dead ball situations should be specifically noted and examined. Fifteen minutes before the scheduled game time the umpires shall report to the field. The crew shall also be together to check each team's equipment for illegal or unsafe equipment. Only in a 3 man crew, the plate umpire and the base umpire nearest to the dugout will inspect the equipment in that dugout. The remaining umpire will take a position 45 ft. from home plate on the foul line opposite that dug out while observing all dugout activity. Then the same procedure will be applied to the other dugout utilizing the other base umpire. At least five minutes prior to the scheduled time for starting the game, the umpires & the head coach of each team shall meet at home plate for a pre-game conference to check line ups (home team first) and to discuss ground rules or any other matters pertinent to the game. Remember to ask head coaches whether all their players are legally and properly equipped, including bats and helmets. Don't forget to check about DH or courtesy runner rules. It is well to briefly discuss with the official scorer such matters as the proper batting orders and the appearance of pinch hitters and substitutes. This matter is particularly important because of the re-entry and designated hitter rules.

PRE-GAME CHECK LIST

I. ARRIVE 30 MINUTES EARLY (1 HOUR for World Series events)

II. DISCUSS MECHANICS AND FIELD COVERAGE (DRESSING ROOM)

a. TWO MAN/ THREE MAN MECHANICS

b. UMPIRE ROTATION

c. FOUL LINE COVERAGE

d. CHECK SWING PROCEDURE

e. UMPIRE/COACH CONFERENCE

f. FLY BALL COVERAGE

g. REVIEW SPEED-RULES

h. REVIEW DESIGNATED HITTER

III. REVIEW ALL BASE AWARDS

IV. REVIEW BALK RULE

V. DISCUSS PRE-GAME CONFERENCE ITEMS

a. PLAYERS LEGALLY EQUIPPED

b. LINE-UP CARDS

c. DESIGNATED HITTER

d. SPEED-UP RULES

e. GROUND RULES

f. SPORTSMANSHIP

VI. PROCEED TO PRE-GAME CONFERENCE ON FIELD WITH COACHES

GAME RESPONSIBILITIES

The plate umpire is designated as the umpire-in-chief. He is responsible for announcing “Play” and for giving the hand signal to start the game or to resume play. He will proceed to start the game only after he is positive that the pre-game ground rules discussion at home plate is clearly understood by the coach of both teams. The umpire-in-chief has the responsibility to determine

when the lights should be turned on. If at all possible this should be done prior to the beginning of an inning. When there is more than one umpire, the umpire-in-chief (plate umpire) shall be stationed behind home plate to rule on balls, strikes, fair and foul balls, and to make all decisions on the batter, other than those delegated to the base umpire, when he is stationed at the foul line. When the base umpire is covering a fly ball in the outfield, the plate umpire is responsible for observing whether or not certain runners tagged up.

THE PLATE UMPIRE

1. Visualize the strike zone. The rule book defines the strike zone. Hopefully, umpires, the batter, other players, managers, and spectators are familiar with the rule-book definition. Since each, however, must somehow visualize this "dotted line rectangle" over home plate in his own mind and since every mind works a bit differently from every other mind, each person involved has his unique visualization of the batter's strike zone. As an umpire you have the best vantage point as well as the responsibility for determining whether the ball is in the strike zone. You are the only person in the park whose sole concern at that instant is whether it is a strike or a ball.

2. Proper strike call mechanics make the difference. Let the pitch hit the catcher's mitt, then delay slightly before you make the call. An important part of the mechanics of plate umpiring is proper timing. Don't make your call too soon nor too late. One has to always be conscious of timing. If you're off, it's better to be a little slow than to give the appearance of having made a snap judgment. Hasty calls invite mistakes and the appearance of mistakes. Say nothing on a swinging strike. When the pitch is a ball, call, "Ball!" loud enough for the infielders to hear.

3. Fingers help communicate. Some umpires, when they feel the information is needed, extend the fingers to indicate the number of balls and strikes. It is recommended that the count be given on the third and fifth pitch. This is especially good at amateur-ball fields that don't have a prompt and accurate operator of the ball-strike display or have no score-board at all. If you choose to show the strike count with your fingers, do it so all can see. The two-count is more visible if you extend your index and adjacent finger. If it is important that the count be known and the board has it wrong, announce the correct count and show it with your fingers.

4. Remove mask with left hand. Mask removal when you're wearing the inside protector should be done with the left hand. The mask need never be in the right hand. This leaves the right hand free for calling the out. Some umpires seldom take their mask off, probably because they haven't learned to do it without their cap coming off with it. You'll have less trouble if you lift the bottom out from the chin, using the top of the mask as a hinge. Bring it straight out and up, clearing the visor. Tossing the mask aside is a part of the catcher's technique. This is not permissible for umpires, nor is parking the mask on the top of the head.

5. For best protection, face the pitcher. Don't expose the unprotected side of your body. The toes of the umpire are pointed towards the pitcher. Try to keep the forward foot pointed towards the pitcher, not angled. The instep is vulnerable to a pitched or foul ball. The

protection afforded by the outside padded tongue of the plate shoe is considerably lessened if the foot is angled. Also a mask with extended throat protection may be desirable because the inside protector does not protect the neck or throat.

6. Follow the action. As a plate umpire, your duties don't stop when the ball is hit. First, watch to see if the batter is going to run. If he does, move out from behind the catcher to get a better look at the play. On the ground ball hit to the infield, head towards first base, either down the running lane or on the infield grass. Try to get at least 10 to 15 feet from home plate, the farther the better, but stop in time to watch the play at first. This initial hustle shortens the distance to where the action is. It also gives you a better vantage point from which to see runner infractions. Sometimes what starts as a routine play develops into a difficult situation for the base umpire. If the plate man has moved properly, he will be where he can see what is happening and be of assistance to his partner, if his help is requested.

7. Help the base umpire. On a fly ball hit to the outfield, go farther. Many times you go as far out as the pitcher's mound to watch the catch in the outfield. See if the ball is caught, not trapped or dropped. It's your job to observe the catch, if the base man doesn't elect to go to the outfield. It's the base man's job to see if the runner touches the bases. Remember, don't get away from home plate too far if there is a potential play there. Going to the infield is really just doing your job right. Many people will call it hustling. It becomes easier, the more you do it. It soon becomes a habit, a good one.

8. Use good judgment. As important as mechanics is in umpiring, it is not what an umpire is usually judged on, either by schools, coaches, players, or fans. Most would call you a good umpire if they thought your judgment was good on ball-strike, safe-out, and fair-foul calls. Strive to exercise your best judgment and strive to be consistent. Each supplements the other. If you want to advance in umpiring, what can you do after your ability to exercise good judgment has been established? You increase your mastery of mechanics. You improve your appearance. You increase your understanding of the rules and their application to the game situations.

One of the most difficult tasks that an umpire can have is interpreting a rule to an upset coach. Stay calm and give a complete explanation of the rule and its application to the play. This will go a long way towards gaining his respect, and towards building your reputation as a competent rules umpire. A good reputation does not come without considerable consistent effort. Repeated reading and study of the rule and case books, discussion of rules and plays with other umpires, attending rules meetings, viewing films and other presentations — all contribute.

9. Your reputation precedes you. Umpiring begins when you enter the park. From that point on, someone is watching you. On the other hand, when you leave the game, the only person you have to be satisfied with is yourself. Don't be overly critical of your performance. Things may seem bigger to you than to an outsider.

Hustle is synonymous with baseball. It's not just for players; it's for umpires, too. In fact, umpires have a lot to do with setting the tone of a game for everyone.

10. Call 'em, don't Explain 'em. Your ball-strike calls are not to be routinely explained, such as "Ball! Low," "Ball! Inside," or "Strike! Caught the corner." If the catcher asks where a certain pitch was, tell him. The catcher should not ask repeatedly, "Where was the pitch?" If he does, you should tell him that you're not going to explain every pitch to him. Tell him that he is perfectly aware of where he caught the pitch—low, outside, etc. From that point on, don't discuss pitches. Agree with the catcher if he should ask. For example, if he asks, "Was it low?" Answer, "Yes," without comment.

If you give some thought to the matter of explaining pitches, you'll realize that the catcher or pitcher seldom asks where a called strike was. When a catcher repeatedly asks about a ball call, it's really a form of protest or the catcher is inexperienced. You, as the umpire, have to distinguish between the two. If you're convinced it's a bona fide request for information, give a short, matter-of-fact replay.

A batter from time to time will inquire if what he swung at and missed was a strike. Give him the information he asks for. "No, I thought it was a little high," if that is what you thought. Make it short and don't editorialize.

11. Know how and when to call time out. The calling of time is a frequent duty of an umpire. Sometimes it's only necessary for a few players in the immediate area to be aware that time is out. On other occasions everyone — player and fan alike — needs to know that time has been called. No umpire has the voice to accomplish this. The time-out sign of throwing up both hands over the head, together with a loud, "Time!" will do the job. When the time-out doesn't need to be called, you may delay play without calling time. If the batter asks for time to get set with no runners on, simply raise your hand and give the "Do Not Pitch" sign. When the batter is set and everyone is ready, drop your arm or beckon the pitcher to pitch and play resumes. When the batter steps out of the batter's box unexpectedly and you decide to give him time, quickly throw up your hands and yell, "Time!" When added emphasis is needed, take a few quick side steps. This gets you out where you are more visible and shows that you have no intention of calling a pitch if one is made. Calling time quickly and clearly either stops the pitcher comfortably or lets the pitcher make a soft pitch, if he can't stop. Don't overdo the time-outs. Let them play unless there is a valid reason for calling time. Don't call time too quickly when it would prevent the completion of play. Don't grant a player's request for time unless he has a bona fide reason. For instance, if a relay man wants time so he can throw the ball to the pitcher, don't grant it. The offense has a right to any error made on the throw. Once time is called or the ball becomes dead, whatever the occasion, three conditions must be met before the ball is made alive. The pitcher must have the ball and be legally on the pitcher's plate, the batter must be in the batter's box, and the umpire must motion and say, "play." The ball is then alive and in play.

12. When a balk occurs, the ball is dead immediately. Whenever a balk occurs, the umpire will point to the pitcher and call “balk”, then signal time, and award bases. Whenever an illegal pitch occurs, the umpire will throw up his hands and call “illegal pitch.” When a balk occurs, each runner is awarded one base. On an illegal pitch, a ball is awarded the batter. Since the ball is dead immediately, nothing will be permitted to happen, even if the pitcher delivers a pitch or attempts to pick a runner off a base.

13. A balk or illegal pitch may need to be explained. When challenged after you penalize an illegal pitch or action, simply state, without explanation, that there was an illegality. More explanation of what constituted the illegality is permissible as learning becomes a priority over a winner-loser decision. Balk calls and illegal pitches that are questioned can possibly best be explained to coaches or pitchers after the game, if you care to do so and they are interested. This is a courtesy you might wish to extend. It will help the offending pitcher to avoid the same mistake and penalty in the future. It’s perhaps better to discuss the balk with the pitcher’s coach, possibly with the pitcher listening in, rather than to take up the matter directly with the pitcher. This lets the coach do the coaching. There are times when it is permissible to explain what constituted the balk. In a game where learning is not a priority consideration, and the winner-loser decision is, such an explanation is out of place, because it is to the advantage of the defensive team and not the umpire’s duty. If you tell how the balk was committed, it will be avoided. It’s the manager’s job, however, to instruct his pitchers in what is legal and what is not. If you do it, it’s coaching.

14. Infield-fly signals need to be communicated. The infield-fly situation frequently arises in a game. When it does, umpires should signal to one another before the pitch is made. One umpire gives the sign and the other umpires acknowledge. When the hit ball is judged to be an infield fly, the infield fly call signal is given. It is the right hand raised overhead, with your index finger pointing at the ball. At the same time yell, “Infield fly! If fair, batter’s out!” “If fair” can be included regardless of the trajectory of the ball in relation to the foul line. This habitual qualification takes care of the fly that ends up foul, and causes no problem when the fly is obviously fair. Don’t be in too much of a hurry to call the infield fly. Make your call as the ball starts downward. This seems to inform the runner(s) in adequate time, while enabling the umpire to judge whether the ball “can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort.” If an outfielder catches a ball that could have been caught by an infielder with ordinary effort, the infield fly rule is still in effect. Usually the plate man calls the infield fly first. This doesn’t excuse a base umpire from making the call first, if the plate man hasn’t yet made the call when the field umpire judges the hit ball to be an infield fly. Each umpire is responsible for making the infield fly call. When your partner calls the infield fly, regardless of how you see or how you feel about his judgment, you have to go along. This preserves the essential image of umpire unity and discourages players from challenging the call. Any misunderstanding among umpires on the call should be discussed between the umpires after the game. If there’s a misunderstanding, likely a review of the rule is in order.

15. Give the catcher room. Keeping out of the way of the catcher on a foul ball is quite tricky. If you understand the basic moves of the properly taught catcher, it's easier. When a right-hander fouls off an inside pitch, the catcher should turn to his left, because the fouled ball usually goes up over his left shoulder, if his stance is normal. You should be aware as the catcher that the ball was on the inside when fouled and therefore you should be ready to turn to the left with him. When a right-hander fouls an outside pitch, the ball, by the same token, goes up over the catcher's right shoulder. The properly trained catcher automatically whirls to his right in this case as does the properly trained umpire. Reverse the above for a lefty. Keep your eye on the catcher, not the foul ball. His job is to catch the foul; yours, to stay out of his way while following the action. As the catcher moves to find and catch the ball, move with him, but at a safe distance in case he changes direction. If the catcher runs to the fence, dugout, or elsewhere, follow him. Being close to this kind of play makes the call of the catch easier. Trot back to your position. That's hustle again. All catchers aren't orthodox in the way they cover fouls. Some are not well trained, and all make a wrong move now and then. Try to figure out, as best you can, what a catcher is likely to do. Give him adequate room to do it, and if possible, adequate room to do the unpredictable. Never put your hand on the catcher's back.

16. Keep the plate clean. There is a correct way to do it. Your small brush must be used. When you start cleaning the plate with your brush, face the spectators. This looks better to them. Brush the plate when it's dirty and always before each half inning. If the batter or catcher requests that the plate be cleaned, do so promptly and willingly. When cleaning the plate, you have a good opportunity to communicate with the catcher.

17. Avoid ambiguous fair-foul calls. It is important that you use completely different gestures when you call a batted ball fair or foul. Yell, "Foul!" as emphatically as you gesture. If the call is crucial to the game or just barely foul, yell, "Foul! Foul! Foul!" Using any other additional words might cause the call to be misunderstood. Alternately the foul can be signaled by extending the right arm, fist clenches, towards foul territory as you shout, "Foul!" When the ball is judged fair, use no verbal call, but point towards fair territory while keeping your eye on the ball. The knowledgeable runner thinks "foul" when he hears an umpire make a verbal call in a fair-foul situation. On long fly balls hit down the baseline that are the plate man's call, immediately remove your mask. Move down the baseline following the ball as far as you can before it's time to make a decision. You should be on the foul line if possible. The call shouldn't be made on the run. Stopping makes for more accuracy. On sharp line drives, you may not have time to remove your mask or move for a better look. Get the best look you can and make the call.

18. React immediately to a batted ball which hits the batter. When the ball goes from the bat directly to the dirt and then strikes the batter or catcher, immediately yell, "Foul!" Only the front inside corner of the batter's box is in fair territory. The tipped ball, continuing on, is almost certain to be in foul territory by the time it hits the batter. In any case, it's very difficult to judge, should the ball make contact with the batter near the fair corner of the box. Most umpires automatically call such a ball a foul. Those involved expect such a call and give you a

little trouble on the very rare occasion that the ball spins its way into fair territory after you've made the call. Kill play quickly by throwing your arms up and calling, "Foul!"

19. Indicate foul tips. When a foul tip is legally caught, the umpire should give a foul tip signal. You may have to inform the batter and catcher of your decision, if they didn't see the signal. Reasons for this gesture include: it informs fans of the foul tip, it alerts runners that the ball is alive, and it gives scorers who are thorough the information they need for the score book. Most of the time foul tips can't be detected at a distance. If the foul tip is uncaught, it becomes foul ball.

20. Stay on top of the slow roller. One play that requires the plate umpire hustle is the batted slow roller down a foul line. Don't hesitate. Get out from behind the plate and as close to the ball as possible without getting so close that you cause interference with the fielding of the ball. Some umpires take their mask off on this play, if they have time. Another play that requires the plate umpire to hustle occurs when a long, hard-hit fly ball is near the right-field foul line, and the base umpire elects to go to the outfield to follow the play on the ball. The plate umpire moves quickly to the infield, circling the pitcher's mound for a possible play at second, while watching the tag of first. If the runner attempts a double, your hustle will put you at second base before the runner, right on top of the play. After all the runner had to go the long route, while you took the short cut. Done right, it's beautiful. It will earn you respect and contribute to your reputation. You won't be required to do this often, but when the situation arises, be ready.

21. Assistance from the on-deck batter. Passed balls or wild pitches that go to the fence or backstop are a potential problem for the plate umpire. An un-retrieved ball is a safety hazard. It also could cause confusion if a live ball goes into the same area. If you can, manage to get the on-deck batter to retrieve balls. It will speed up the game. When the ball goes by the catcher, give him another ball. Be sure there are no runners on base before doing so. The on-deck batter can retrieve the passed ball. Tell him not to throw or toss them to you, since they can get away so easily, causing confusion and delay of the game. If you don't have the assistance of the on-deck batter and the catcher is retrieving the ball, throw a new ball to the pitcher while the catcher is going after the ball. Again, don't hand the catcher a new ball or throw one to the pitcher, if the wild pitch or passed ball is still alive.

22. Be alert to a play at home. On a passed ball with a runner on third, a play at home is likely. Remove your mask quickly, if you think you have time. Set yourself at a right angle to the catcher's throw. This gives you a good angle on the play at home. Most important, watch the ball and the catcher going after it, otherwise you don't know where he will be when he makes the throw. You know where the runner is headed, so that's not the problem. Make sure the catcher gets the ball and makes the throw. Then after it's judged to be accurate, follow the flight of the ball as you turn to watch the play. Too quick a turn could get you hit by a badly thrown ball. If there is no throw, there's no play. Take adequate time on this call. You

know the tagging player must retain possession of the ball. It's very embarrassing to make an out call and have the ball roll out from under the players. If this happens, you've obviously made the call too quickly. When you are certain that the play is complete, make your call emphatic with appropriate body language. After all, your call takes its importance from the importance of the play.

One way to be sure that the tagging player has retained possession of the ball is to ask to see it. Or you can tell the runner he's out if the tagger has the ball. He'll get the idea and produce it, and then make the call.

23. Don't disagree openly. If you don't agree with a call your partner makes, wait until after the game and discuss the call or play with him in private. Never discuss such a difference in the hearing or in view of the fans, coaches, or players. This is the quickest way there is to get both of you in trouble. Many potential differences between umpires can be avoided by discussing troublesome rules and ground rules privately before the game. Working with the same partner in many games makes this and many aspects of umpiring easier. Remember you are a team. You usually are judged as such. If your partner uses bad judgment, it reflects on you. If he is a good umpire and has earned a high level of respect, some of this attitude will also be transferred to you.

24. To err is human. Umpires are human. Missed pitches or errors in judgment will happen. Umpires should do their best to have as few as possible. When you boot a call or miss a pitch, DO NOT resolve to even the call next time. Once called, that is it. It's over and done. Such a resolve blows your objectivity. There is no way you can right the call. A missed pitch or a booted call is just that. It's missed and gone forever. How many pitches can an umpire miss in a game and still feel that he had a good day? You know you're going to miss some. If we were to put the figure at seven or nine, those attending the game might disagree. Stop and analyze it. That's a miscall an inning in a seven or nine inning game. That seems high, especially to a coach, but he's thinking of a miscall an inning against him. He doesn't consider the miscalls in his favor. If after the game you were to ask each coach how many pitches you missed, you might get an answer of perhaps three or four. Add them together and that's about where you come out. In few other professions where split-second judgments are required, would a higher degree of accuracy be expected.

25. Your reputation needs consistency. A good reputation is not easy to earn in umpiring. Many games are needed to establish it. One of the easiest ways to enhance your reputation is by being consistent in your ball strike calls. Each umpire seems to develop his own strike zone (adjustable to batter height and stance) and, hopefully, to stay with it. This usually gets him the reputation of a low-ball or high-ball umpire. You also can become known for having a small strike zone or a large one. This fact is recognized and accepted by coaches, players, and

knowledgeable fans. Most umpires don't purposely set out to earn any type of reputation. It just seems to develop. It isn't bad to have people think that way about your umpiring. Not being consistent may gain you an unenviable reputation sooner than you wish. Your being consistent helps the players and managers by letting them use their skills and strategy in a known frame of reference.

26. See 'em better, call 'em better. To work the plate consistently, you must consistently take the same position behind the catcher. Whether you work the scissors or the square stance, your head should be in the same position every time. The level of your head should place your chin at the top of the catcher's head, with your head slightly behind and in the slot between the catcher and the batter. If the position of the catcher and/or the batter make it impossible for you to see the pitch, adjust the best you can. Seeing the pitch well sometimes depends on the catcher. His stance just before the pitch may cause a problem in your following the flight of the ball. The better the catcher and pitcher, the easier it is to umpire and the more fun it is. If you are getting bona fide criticism from the pitcher, catcher, or coach and you know that you're having difficulties, you'll want to show some response. The important thing here is to know the difference between legitimate complaints and argumentative behavior.

27. Learn to deal with flinching. Flinching is usually an erratic problem. It can irritate the umpire far more than it affects his umpiring. The umpire also is concerned, and rightly so, with his image, if the flinching is so pronounced that it is noticeable to the fans or players.
It's puzzling in that it can come and go without apparent reason. Many have worked consecutive games without a hint of a flinch and then had it occur. Remedies include forcing yourself to wait as long as you can before getting into the just-before-the-pitch stance. This shortens the time of stressful concentration.

28. Keep the pitcher from the plate. A pitcher from time to time will be unhappy with an umpire's call. As a result, he might approach the area of home plate to voice his objections. Being inexperienced or overwrought, he might not realize at the moment that technically no player or coach can object to a ball-strike call. In addition, there is an unwritten understanding among umpires that no player, especially the pitcher, can come to the area of home plate to argue about the call of a pitch. In high school ball, the pitcher may not know this, or maybe he knows but hasn't learned to discipline himself. If you feel you must communicate with the pitcher, a recommended method is to share your concerns with the catcher and send him to the mound. Explain that it is his duty to keep his pitcher on the mound and to tone down his display of displeasure at adverse calls. Be firm but polite.

29. Be prepared to handle catcher and manager beefs. The catcher is already in the area of home plate, so how do you deal with him in the same situation? Ordinarily, the catcher is permitted to make remarks in a mild, quiet tone as long as he is facing the pitcher. Never let

the catcher turn-around to protest more than once. Warn him. A good way to do that without embarrassment to him is to brush the plate, look him in the eye, & explain your dissatisfaction. Take a more stern action the next time it happens, if he is a slow learner.

A coach who constantly protests strike calls from the bench sets a bad example in field manners. His actions should be dealt with subtly. One way is to talk to him between innings, telling him he should show some restraint. If he feels he has a legitimate gripe, he should not be ill-mannered in presenting it. His manners, good or bad, will be seized upon as a pattern by his players. He should come to you between innings in a gentlemanly manner to make his point. In the event that he doesn't choose this method and persists in "hollering" and physically displaying his objections, take appropriate action. Be sure that what you do is necessary and just. Use your best judgment. Then act. Whenever you deal with a coach or player, don't purposely embarrass him. Don't look for trouble. It's unnecessary. It will come without any help from you. Your best preparation to handle it when it comes is an attitude of calm and courtesy. Do not argue with a coach. If a coach questions a judgment call, say something like "Coach, that's a judgment call and that's the way I see it. Let's play ball!" If he questions a rule interpretation, explain your ruling. Do not prolong conversation and resume play. If you have any doubt about your ruling, do not be afraid to ask your fellow umpire, and if you are incorrect, change your ruling. This discussion with your fellow umpires should be private and away from coaches and players. Keep cool at all times.

30. Be productive between innings. Between innings the plate umpire shall walk down the foul line towards the team that is taking the field and encourage them to hustle out to their positions. Be tactful. Don't nag, but do try to minimize delay. Then move back closer to the catcher's area, close enough to be able to supply another ball to the catcher should a warm-up pitch be beyond the catcher. (pos. X) The time the pitcher takes to throw his warm-up pitches is used for such tasks as getting the balls you need and inspecting them for playability.

During this time you should be relaxed, perhaps going over in your mind your performance in the previous innings. The plate umpire shall inform the pitcher, catcher and on-deck batter when two warm-up throws are remaining for the pitcher. The umpire shall signal with his or her right hand raised with two fingers indicating two throws remaining. The plate ump should go to the 45 foot line of the offensive team during a defensive conference or pitching change.

31. Avoid further confrontation. When you have had a conflict with either team, go to the opposite foul line as they take or leave the field. Make sure you have a clean plate to start the next half inning. If you need to sweep the plate, do it with vigor and return to your position promptly. Don't pass close to the next batter nor have any conversation with him.

32. For plays at the plate, the plate umpire shall observe the runner touching or retouching third and move to foul territory on the third base side unless the throw is to the third base side of home plate. Before moving, the plate umpire should remain behind the catcher until it is determined to which side of the plate the throw will arrive.

33. Keep the baseball supply given you at the start of the game rotated. Do not try to save a newer ball for the darker innings. If it is too dark to play, stop the game. Be sure you have a minimum of four baseballs to start the game.

34. Be alert to unsportsmanlike comments from the dugouts and take immediate action to halt it. Frequent unsportsmanlike comments may cause you to lose control of the game. If you have trouble determining who is making the comments inform the coach that you will remove someone in the area on the next occurrence.

35. Be sure the batter is in the batter's box when establishing his position. Quickly glance at his bat to be sure it is legal. Take note of his stance to establish his particular strike zone.

36. It is recommended that all offensive personnel avoid the playing area until all bases have been awarded during a dead ball situation.

THE BASE UMPIRE

1. Initial position on the field is step one. When the game is about to commence, the base umpire stations himself by the foul line in foul territory about 10' behind the first baseman's playing position. Don't let the first baseman out of your sight. If he has to make a quick move, it shouldn't come as a surprise to you. Your peripheral vision should enable you to avoid player interference or crowding. Use your head and eyes to keep from having to scurry out of the way of players. NOTE: The base umpires are not permitted to use indicators while working the bases. Straddling the foul line or standing in fair territory when there is no one on the bases, could complicate the calling of a line drive that hits you. If you're in foul territory, it's simple. It's foul.

2. Stride with the pitch. One move, a simple one at that, that the base umpire will find helpful is the step towards the batter at the time of the pitch. Timing is important. You'll get a feel for it. Usually the stride is made about the time the pitcher releases the ball. If the pitch is not hit, relax and return to your original position. You do this on each pitch. This move keeps you alert, attentive, and ready for play. It also shows to players and fans that you are interested and alert. This one step towards the batter is useful at every position you take on the infield, except when in position Ready Position.

3. Exhibit proper posture on the field at all times. Your arms simply can be relaxed at your sides. Your legs shouldn't be crossed. Place your feet far enough apart to be comfortable. This helps you concentrate on the game. It goes without saying that you should keep your mind on the game at all times. Don't let it wander to other subjects. If you do, it's only a matter of time till you're in trouble and trying to catch up on the game. With the official responsibility of the final say on half swings, the base umpire must be ever alert at the time of the pitch. Remember, don't respond to the first baseman's request on a half swing just because he is closest and the easiest to hear. Wait until the plate man requests your decision.

4. Avoid ambiguity. The position of the left hand is very important in all out calls. Keep your left hand down at your side during the whole of the out sign. This keeping of the left arm close to the body insures that the out call is done with one arm, as it should be. The fans and the players don't get the impression that you started to give the safe sign & changed your mind. There will be no guessing as to which sign you made. Suit your simultaneous verbal call to the emphasis of the physical call and phrase it for, and direct it to, the offensive player. You could say, "He's out!" But if you say, "You're out!" you're getting to the principal one who must be convinced.

5. Timing is critical. With the safe call, as with all calls, timing is of the essence. If premature, it could be rendered wrong by action that was continuing. What is probably equally important is that, given too soon, it robs the fan of the opportunity to make the call himself and then compare his call to yours. To him that is an important part of the satisfaction of attending the game. Allowing too long a time to elapse between the action and the call gives the appearance of uncertainty.

6. Double play situation. Watch the ball being fielded by the infielder starting the double play. Watch the ball being thrown to the pivot man. Watch the throw for its accuracy and let the throw lead you to the play. Your judgment of the play will involve:
a. Seeing pivot man's foot touch base.
b. Listening for ball hitting pivot man's glove.
c. Don't turn head too soon on the front end of the double play. If the ball is dropped by the pivot man, judge if the force play was completed and the pivot man dropped the ball while taking it out of his glove for the relay throw.
d. Picking up the relay throw to first while getting into position to make the call there.
e. Again watching for the first baseman's foot tag base and listening for ball hitting his mitt.
f. Being aware to ask for help from plate umpire on tag when pivot man's throw pulls first baseman off the base.

7. Obstruction or interference may be ruled by any umpire who sees it. Always signal a delayed dead ball or a dead ball, whatever the situation demands. Since an obstruction or interference call might create a controversy, the use of the proper signal when such infraction occurs, often precludes an argument. It also is evidence of umpire competency, as well as control of the

game. (Don't let the fact that you know you will get into an argument affect making an obstruction or interference call. As a result, these calls should be made with a loud voice and good animation.)

8. On tag plays the closer the umpire can position himself to the play the better, however he must not station himself so close that he hinders the players. Again, he should take a position at an angle where he can see the area between the base and the runner. (When taking your position be sure you are stopped, and ideally have your hands on your knees and your head perfectly still.) A base runner who is tagged while off the base is not out if the fielder fails to hold the ball. Runners sometimes beat the throw but over slide or miss the base, so the decision should not be made until the play is completed. It is a rather common error to rule on these plays prematurely. (This "timing" is a skill that is learned over the years and is paramount to good umpiring.)

9. Between innings, the base umpire shall go between first and second base 10-15 feet into the outfield grass. The third base umpire if applicable, will go between second and third base 10-15 feet into the outfield grass. During a pitching change or defensive conference the base umpire will go to the same position as he does between innings. In the two man system, the base umpire will go to the left field when in the C position and right field when in the B position.

10. All base umpire(s) will be in a down position (hands on knees) when the pitcher toes the pitcher plate except in positions A & D when the defense is not holding the runner(s).

OBSERVING THE BASES

1. On all routine plays the base umpire will watch the batter-runner touch first and second base and also watch the runner on first touch second.

2. The plate umpire will watch the runner touching and retouching third base.

3. If the base umpire goes out on a fly ball, the plate umpire shall try to observe all runners.

NOTE: The primary responsibility of the umpire is the ball. If an umpire does not see a runner miss a base he cannot make the call. However, if he doesn't know if a ball is caught on fair or foul territory, it makes no difference if a ball is missed. At the conclusion of playing action, if the umpire has observed any runner missing a base or failing to retouch a base after a catch, the umpire shall rule the runner or runners out upon proper appeal.

PROCEDURES AT THE END OF THE GAME

When the game is completed, the crew should immediately leave the field together. The plate umpire should return the baseballs to the home management. Leave the field on the side where home security is located. When there has been any flagrant irregularity associated with the game, report it within 24 hours to the proper authorities.

SIGNALS & COMMUNICATION

1. Communication signals for umpires are desirable and in fact, essential. These signals enable one umpire to let a fellow crew member know, unobtrusively, his judgment of a specific play. An umpire who wants to get the judgment of a fellow umpire can do so quickly. The approved signals are to be used. A batter's "half-swing" is a situation in which the plate umpire will sometimes desire the opinion of his fellow umpire before making his decision even though in the final analysis the plate umpire is the sole judge of balls and strikes and his decision is final. On occasion his vision may be blocked. It is now universally accepted that if the barrel end of the bat is swung so that it is in front of the batter's body or ahead of it, it is a strike. This criterion provides a positive basis upon which the judgment or decision can be made. If the plate umpire has been blocked out, or is in doubt even though he saw the action, he may request help from the base umpire or umpires by pointing to the base umpire from whom he seeks help with his left hand. The base umpire will respond with a strike signal and shall also provide a verbal "Yes, he did!" if he feels the batter did swing. If he feels that the batter did check his swing in time, he will give a safe signal quickly, and shall also provide a verbal "No, he did not!" If the plate umpire, shall not appeal a pitch he called a strike. These simple and easily understood signals are examples of those which have been devised to assist umpires.

2. Signaling is a very important aspect of umpiring. Decisions are relayed to the players, coaches and spectators by their use. The approved signals are dignified, informative and meaningful, and therefore, shall be used by all umpires. Poorly executed and unauthorized signals serve only to confuse. The manner in which a signal is given determines, at least to a degree, its acceptance by players, coaches and spectators.

BASIC UMPIRING DESCRIPTIONS AND POSITIONS

(1) POSITION A — Both feet in foul territory, approximately 15–20 beyond first base and beyond the fielder. This will be the basic position with no runners on base.

(2) POSITION B — Approximately halfway between the pitcher's mound and second base, on the first base side of the infield, more or less.

(3) POSITION C — Approximately halfway between the pitcher's mound and second base, on the third base side of the infield, more or less on a line extended from the plate through the

edge of the mound, with the feet positioned parallel to the pitcher's plate so the umpire can move to cover any attempted pickoff or steal at any base. This position will be used in any situation with runners occupying bases other than first base in the two-man system.

(4) POSITION D—Both feet in foul territory, approximately 15–20 feet beyond first base and beyond the fielder. Note: It is permissible for the 3rd base umpire to straddle the foul line when there is a runner on 3rd Base, to get a better view of the home plate area.

ABBREVIATIONS: The plate umpire will be described as U1 and the field umpire as U2. It is assumed that in all situations U1 will start out behind home plate. The three basic positions for U2 on the bases are described as follows approximately 10 feet behind the first baseman. This will be the basic position with no runners on base.

GAME SITUATIONS

Knowing the following game situations will help instill confidence in your conduct of games. All these are common situations which occur often.

(1) APPEAL PLAYS — Upon proper appeal (live ball or dead ball) the appropriate umpire will render a decision. If the inappropriate umpire is asked, that umpire will redirect the player or coach to the appropriate umpire for the proper decision.

(2) AWARDING BASES — When the ball leaves the playing area, the umpire should call, "Time," and then make the appropriate award of bases. It is not important to know the location of runners at the time the ball became dead; awards are always made based on the position of the runners at the time of the pitch or throw which made the ball become dead. Know which part of the rule is to be enforced in making awards.

(3) BALKS — Whenever a balk occurs, the umpire will point to the pitcher and call balk, then signal time, and award bases.

(4) CALLING "TIME" — The object is to keep the game moving, so only call "Time" when necessary. Remember—a coach or player cannot call "Time"; he may only request it. Only an umpire can call "Time."

(5) CHECK SWINGS — A batter's half swing or checked swing requires the umpire to seek help from his fellow umpire. On occasion his vision may be blocked. If U1 has been blocked out or is in doubt even though he saw the action, he should request help from the base umpire or umpires by pointing with his left hand to the base umpire from whom he seeks help. If U1 is sure the batter has swung, he should say, "Yes, he did," then signal a strike. If the catcher

blocks U1's view, or if U1 is simply not sure, he should step away from the plate, point to the umpire he is asking and say, "Did he go?" U2 should answer truthfully either saying, "No, he did not," accompanied by a safe signal or by saying, "Yes, he did," accompanied by an out signal. Remember there is no appeal on a strike call.

(6) COACHES ON THE FIELD—Coaches should be on the field for coaching purposes only. The head coach will, however, come onto the field to discuss situations with the umpires. Rules may need some interpretation, but keep explanations short and to the point. Explain what you saw and what you called, then politely ask the head coach to leave. Stay calm and do not argue. In most instances, a simple warning will suffice to get the coach off the field so play can be resumed. Remember balls and strikes; and check swings and balks are not to be argued.

(7) DISAGREEMENTS—Umpiring is a job where you are expected to be perfect on your first day and then get better every day thereafter. Since only the second of these expectations is likely, disagreements will arise. As an umpire, you must keep your cool. While players, coaches, and fans all become emotional, umpires must remain in control when dealing with them. Most disputes in games can be dealt with quickly, and the amount of control an umpire has in a game is directly related to his ability to make decisions and to deal with the players and coaches involved in a firm but courteous manner. You should make the call you see, and see the call you make. Do not be ashamed before you make a call to ask your partner for help. Your ultimate responsibility is to get the call right. If you do miss a call, don't dwell on it, or you'll probably miss the next one as well. The last resort is ejection of a player or coach, but if an ejection is needed, do it! Extreme verbal and/or physical abuse cannot and must not be tolerated. Such incidents must be reported through proper channels so they can be corrected.

(8) FORCE PLAY SLIDE — In a force play slide situation, the base umpire must continue to observe the initial play until the throw is released. After the throw is released, the base umpire shall pivot to observe the additional play. The plate umpire shall observe the continuing action of the initial play even with multiple runners. In a 3 man crew, U3 will have the continuing action of the initial play.

(9) FOUL TIP—A foul tip is always a strike, and the ball remains live and in play. The plate umpire must be alert for foul tips on bunts and squeeze plays and on swinging strikes, especially third strikes. Field umpires should also be on the alert for foul tips in case they should be asked for help. The plate umpire should also remember to signal foul tips.

(10) INFIELD FLY — It is a common practice for umpires to signal each other when there are less than two outs and the bases loaded or runners on first and second bases. This signal is meant as a reminder that an infield fly situation exists and should be given by each umpire prior to each batter when there is an infield fly situation. Remember, a fair fly ball can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort is an out, even if the ball is dropped. This holds even if the catch is

made by an outfielder. The ball is alive, and runners may advance at their own risk. Make a vocal call, “Infield fly, if fair, batter is out!” Do not call the play too soon; wait until the ball is on its downward arc, especially on windy days, so you can be sure the ordinary effort part of the rule is met. A good guideline for ordinary effort is whether the infielder can turn and face the infield while waiting to make the catch.

(11) PICKOFFS—Field umpires must be alert for pickoffs since they can happen quickly. Position B allows the base umpire to move quickly to get the best possible angle on a call at first base. Be sure the runner is out; a close play doesn’t mean the runner is out. With the angle you can get in a 2-man system, most plays will look close. On an attempt at first, your instinctive move will be to turn and move toward first. Don’t! The first step should be toward the foul line at a point half way between the plate and first base, i.e., the 45 foot line; then turn to the base. This will improve your angle. Pickoffs at second require a step back, then turn with the throw into the play. On pickoffs at first and third, use the same mechanics. Stop and set before making the call on any pickoff play, then take a step or two toward the play after making the call. Make a call on a pickoff attempt only if there is a tag Be sure to keep your eye on the ball; the catcher can pick off unwary runners. Don’t let him pick you off, too.

(12) RAIN — The game is in the hands of the umpires after the exchange of lineup cards. Before suspending play in a rain situation, the rain should be hard enough to make the field unplayable. Areas of primary concern should be the pitcher slipping during his delivery or the batter slipping in the batter’s box. Either of these could easily result in injury, and the safety of the players and officials should be foremost in an umpire’s mind. Use good judgment—you should play the game if possible. If a game is halted when the umpire considers the weather or ground condition unfit for play, the umpire shall resume play as soon as possible.

(13) RUNDOWNS — The best coverage for rundowns is by both umpires, one at each end of the play. When the situation allows both umpires to work a rundown, talk with your partner to let him know what you are covering. The call should be made by the umpire toward whom the runner is coming. This shows good teamwork and looks good to everyone.

(14) STEAL PLAYS—When the runner from first breaks for second, the base umpire should step backward toward the base, let the flight of the ball turn him into the play, get set, and make the call. On an attempted steal of third, the base umpire should first step toward the third base line at a point midway between the base and the plate, then turn and move toward third; just as on a pickoff at first. This will improve the angle from which the play is called. The angle is much more important than the distance.

(15) TAG PLAYS — All tag plays shall be verbalized with the proper signal. Do not try to outrun the players to the bases. Know the available shortcuts and move to get as close to a right angle as you can. Move quickly, get set, then watch the whole play and wait for the play to end

before making your call. Be patient; don't anticipate. Be sure you know the location of the ball before you make your call, especially on close plays. Also, be careful not to get too close to the play; stay far enough back to see the entire play as it develops. Watch for defensive obstruction or offensive interference. A player on defense must have the ball in order to block a base, including home plate. The plate umpire should remove and hold his mask with his left hand; make the out call with the right hand.

(16) TIMING PLAY—When there are two outs and a runner at second base, the plate umpire must stay at the plate in a position to be able to determine if the runner touched the plate before or after a "non-force" third out occurs. The run will then be announced to both teams as being scored or not, depending on the call. With a runner at third only, the plate umpire may observe the touch of the plate, & then move on to third for any call there on the batter-runner.

DBB APPROVED SIGNALS

STRIKE — The umpire should verbally call a strike. The umpire will either point to his right side with the right arm or he will raise his right arm to the right side, even with his shoulder, bent at the elbow and with the right hand closed in a fist. The umpire will not make any verbal strike call on a swinging strike. The umpire should use a more emphatic call for a called strike three without taking your eyes off the ball or play while keeping your head and shoulders square to the plate and pulling from the front.

BALL — The umpire should verbally call a ball. The umpire will not point to first base on ball four. It is recommended that he say ball four.

OUT — The umpire will signal out by raising the right arm to his right side even with his shoulder, bent at the elbow and with the right hand closed in a fist. The umpire will not point with his left arm and then signal with his right arm for the out. The umpire should use a more emphatic signal on a close play that results in an out being called. NOTE: The base umpires are not permitted to use indicators while working the bases.

INFIELD FLY — All umpires on the field will communicate that there is a possible infield fly situation by touching the bill of their hat with the right index finger. To call an infield fly, the umpires will wait until the ball reaches its highest point and begins its descent, the umpires will immediately raise the right arm above the head and say, "Infield fly, Batter's out." If the ball is near the foul line, the umpire will say, "Infield fly if fair, Batter's out." The umpire who is on the line that the ball is near will make the initial call, followed by the other umpires.

GROUND RULE DOUBLE — The umpire making the call will raise his right arm above his head with 2 fingers extended, signaling a ground rule double.

HOME RUN — The umpire will point to the outfield with his right arm above his head and will move the right hand in a circular motion.

CATCH — On a fly ball or line drive that is caught the umpire will use the out signal to indicate that the ball has been caught. The umpire should wait until the catch is complete to signal.

NO CATCH — On a fly ball or line drive that is not caught, the umpire will use the safe signal to indicate, “No catch.”

DO NOT PITCH — Right arm straight out front with palm outward and fingers up — signifies do not pitch, the ball is dead.

SAFE — With palms down & without crossing his hands, the umpire will bring both arms out to his side, even with his shoulders & signal safe by moving both arms together from front to back.

FOUL BALL — The umpire will signal foul ball by raising both arms above the head and then pointing into foul territory with the appropriate arm. On a foul fly ball or line drive near the foul line, the umpire will point into foul territory and then give the catch signal if the ball is caught.

FAIR BALL — The umpire will signal fair ball by pointing into fair territory with the appropriate arm. On a fair ball or line drive near the foul line, the umpire will give the fair signal and then the catch signal if the ball is caught.

FOUL TIP — The foul tip signal will be indicated by the umpire bringing his right arm across to his left side and sliding the right hand across the back of the left hand and out to his right side and then giving the strike signal.

TIME — The umpire will signal time by raising both arms straight above his head saying, “Time.”

PLAY — The umpire will indicate that play is in by pointing into fair territory with his right arm and saying, “Play.” This should be applied after every dead ball.

INTERFERENCE — The umpire will point with his right arm at the interference and will say, “That’s interference”, and then call time.

SLIDE — The coordinated movement of the 2 base umpires, designed to shift responsibility for plays at second base. A slide occurs when U3 (umpire at 3rd base) begins inside. Initially, the inside umpire is responsible for plays at 2nd and 3rd; as he slides inside U2 (umpire at 1st base) takes responsibility for plays at 2nd base (and keeps plays at first).

ROTATION — The movement of umpires. In general, umpires "rotate" in a clockwise direction. In a two-man crew, clockwise rotation generally describes U1's (umpire in chief's) movement toward 3rd base; it also refers to U2's movement toward home plate after he "goes" to cover a batted ball to the outfield.

SPECTATOR INTERFERENCE — The umpire will raise his arms above his head and cup the left hand over the right wrist with the right hand closed into a fist.

OBSTRUCTION — When obstruction occurs the umpire will extend the left fist to the side at shoulder height, point at the obstruction with the right arm and say, "That's obstruction." The umpire will then drop the dead ball signal and continue play responsibilities. When all play has ceased, the umpire will call, "Time" and make any necessary awards. (When catcher's obstruction occurs, the umpire will signal and call, "obstruction", the umpire will then wait for the play to be completed before calling time.)

BALK — Whenever a balk occurs, the umpire will point to the pitcher and call balk, then signal time, and award bases.

TIMING PLAY — If the run scores, you are to turn immediately to the official score keeper and point to home plate emphatically with your right arm, stating "The run scores! The run scores!" If the run does not score, you are to turn to the official score keeper and wave your arms in a cross-wise fashion in front of the upper body and head level stating "No run scores! No run scores!"

PLATE STANCE: All DBB umpires will employ one of the following stances when umpiring behind the plate:

BOX STANCE — The umpire will be squared off with his slot foot slightly ahead of his other foot and will position himself between the batter and the catcher. (The "slot" is the area between the batter and the catcher.)

SCISSORS STANCE — With a right-handed batter, the umpire will position his left foot forward and his right foot back and work between the batter and the catcher. On a left handed batter, the umpire will position his right foot forward and his left foot back and work between the batter and the catcher. At no time is it permissible for the umpire to work off his knee from the scissors stance.

BASE STANCE — If the first or third base umpire is on his line, he will be in the standing position (except when in the pick-off position) and will take a stride forward with the pitch, or be in the ready position with both hands on knees (legs should be spread just over shoulder width apart) as the pitcher is preparing to deliver the ball to the batter. When the umpire is in the infield he will rest both hands on his knees as soon as the pitcher begins taking his sign from the catcher.

(The thumbs should be on the inside of the knee and the fingers should be on the outside of the knee.) When the pitcher sets, the umpire comes up on the balls of his feet to be ready to move in any direction as the ensuing action dictates.

Remember: The plate umpire should always work with his head in the slot. If the catcher positions himself for an inside pitch and blocks the umpire's view, he should position his head directly over the catcher's head. The plate umpire should never position his head over the catcher's outside shoulder (the catcher's right shoulder with a right handed batter). Also, the plate umpire should not work too low. He should position his eyes just above the strike zone.

SIGNALS — Approved, proper communication signals from *Plate Umpire to the Base Umpires*.

A. With nobody on, signal number of outs on ALL situation changes.

B. 1) Runners on 1st or 1st and 3rd . . . 2-Man Only (Plate umpire) points toward 3rd base for the (clockwise) rotation while indicating the number of outs.

2) Runners on 1st or 1st and 3rd . . . 3-Man Only – give number of outs, Plate umpire signals "rotation" by pointing with right hand while simultaneously giving outs.

C. Runner on 2nd . . . give number of outs, Plate man signals "staying home" by pointing downward toward home plate.

D. Runners on 1st and 2nd . . . give the number of outs and "double tag with both fists closed", hitting twice and indicate you (Plate umpire) will move to 3rd base on Tag plays. Otherwise, base hits Plate man will stay at home.

E. Bases loaded . . . give number of outs and indicate you (Plate umpire) staying home on base hits and all tag plays.

F. Runner on third base only . . . indicate number of outs and point downward. This signals to your partner / partners that you (Plate umpire) are staying home.

G. Runner on third base only . . . a "Going Out Reminder" will be exchanged between the two field umpires. This will be accomplished by pointing toward your partner with your field side arm extended parallel to the ground.

H. With a three man crew, the signal for sliding either clockwise or counter based on situation. The signal would be with both hands moving together in a swinging manner.

I. Time play possibility . . . signal number of outs then with two fingers on wrist.

J. Infield fly signal . . . touching the bill of the cap with the right index finger.

SIGNAL SEQUENCE

EYE TO EYE CONTACT WITH PARTNERS

SIGNAL INFIELD FLY RULE (IF APPLICABLE)

SIGNAL ROTATING OR STAYING HOME, SLIDE OR ROTATION ON BASES

SIGNAL DOUBLE TAG (RUNNERS 1st & 2nd LESS THAN TWO OUTS)

SIGNAL TIMING PLAY (WITH TWO OUTS)

MECHANICS FOR THE TWO-MAN SYSTEM

NO RUNNERS ON BASE:

1. The base umpire shall position himself approximately 10-12 feet behind the first baseman with both feet in foul territory. The base umpire's right foot should be just off the foul line, and his body should be squared to home plate. The base umpire should be standing upright and take a stride toward the plate or be in the ready position with both hands on knees (legs should be spread just over shoulder width apart) as the pitcher is preparing to deliver the ball to the batter. **(Position A)**
2. Fly balls (or line drives) from the center fielder straight in (or straight back) all the way to the right field foul line belong to the base umpire (if he decides to go out on the ball). Should the base umpire decide not to go out on such a fly ball or line drive, the responsibility of the ball reverts to the plate umpire; and the plate umpire must move into proper position to observe the play. Fly balls (or line drives) from the center fielder moving any distance to his right all the way to the left field line always belong to the plate umpire.
3. Should the base umpire go out on a fly ball or line drive to the outfield, the plate umpire will immediately come out from behind home plate and pick up the responsibility of the batter-runner all the way around the base paths. This would include plays back into first base, plays at second or third base, or — unless the base umpire has come back into the infield area and assumed a position at home plate — plays at the plate. The base umpire should communicate to the plate umpire that he is going to the plate if he is able to get back in.
4. On a fly ball or line drive to the outfield where the base umpire decides not to go out, the responsibility of the ball reverts to the plate umpire. If this is the case, the base umpire will take a pivot and pick up the batter-runner, making all decisions at first, second, or third on the batter-runner. The plate umpire should come out from behind the plate in the direction the

ball is hit, to the vicinity of the mound (never on the mound) to observe the catch/no catch. If the ball is hit down the line, plate umpire should be straddling the line when observing the play.

5. On a batted ball to the outfield, the base umpire will come in & pivot and take responsibility of the batter-runner at first, second, or third base. The plate umpire will come out from behind the plate and observe the play, watching for any possible infractions. Any play on the batter-runner at the plate will be the responsibility of the plate umpire.
6. On a batted ball to the outfield, it would be possible for a rundown to develop on the batter-runner between first and second or between second and third or conceivably between third and home. If a rundown develops between third and home, the umpires will split the rundown half-and-half. If the rundown should develop between first and second or between second and third, it is handled differently. In this case, once the plate umpire sees that a rundown is developing, he will run down the foul line towards the first (or third) base cutout to help out on that end only. He must be careful not to run his partner off during the rundown, but instead should wait until the batter- runner is running the opposite way from the cutout before setting up in the cutout. As he is moving into the cutout and is ready to assume responsibility, he will communicate to his partner, “I’ve got this end!” The plate umpire will then be responsible for any play made on the runner when the runner is moving toward the plate umpire and the base umpire will be responsible for any play made on the runner when the runner is moving toward the base umpire. (Use common sense here! If the runner is just turning toward the plate umpire and moving that way, yet the base umpire is on top of the play, the base umpire should decide on the play.)
7. The responsibility for all fair fly balls hit to all infield positions belongs to the plate umpire (with the exception of when the base umpire goes out). The base umpire will come in and pivot on these plays and be responsible for all decisions on the batter-runner should the ball be dropped. All line drives to the pitcher, third baseman, shortstop, second baseman diving to his right and first baseman diving to his right belong to the plate umpire. All line drives to the first baseman and second baseman coming straight in or to their left belong to the base umpire.
8. On a ground ball to the infield, the base umpire will move from his position on the foul line and set up for the play at first base. He should generally move to a position approximately 15 to 20 feet from the base and be at the proper angle for the throw from the infielder. Umpires should try to take as many of these plays as possible in fair territory. If the second baseman is moving directly toward the first base line (“pushing” the umpire out), the base umpire should set up to take the play from foul territory. When observing the play from foul territory, the base umpire must be alert in case of an overthrow where the batter-runner tries to advance to second base. In this situation, the base umpire must stay out of the batter-runner’s way by crossing the foul line into fair territory just inside the plate side of first base after the batter-runner has crossed first base. If the base umpire will hustle, he should be able to get to the cutout at second base just before the batter-runner arrives because of the wide turn the batter-runner must take in his normal running of the bases. The plate umpire will come down the first base line, going no farther than the 45-foot line. He should be virtually stopped when the

play occurs at first base. There the plate umpire will be positioned to help the base umpire with interference calls and swipe tags on the batter-runner. From this position the plate umpire will also be able to help on situations where the fielder comes off the base early (only when asked, will the plate umpire give help on swipe tags and off the bag).
9. If the batter hits a pop-up between first and home which is obviously going to be foul and has no chance of becoming fair, the plate and base umpire will both move into position to judge the catch. If the catch is made facing the base umpire, then it is his call. If the catch is made facing the plate umpire, it becomes his call. If the fielder is facing neither umpire, the catch/no catch belongs to the umpire who is closer.

RUNNER ON FIRST BASE ONLY:
1. The base umpire will position himself midway between the back edge of the grass of the pitcher's mound and the second base cutout, on the first base side of the infield. The umpire should position himself so that if an imaginary line were drawn from home plate through the right edge of the pitcher's mound towards second base, the umpire would be straddling that line. The umpire's body should be squared to the front edge of home plate. He should be ready to move a step either way in case he is blocking the view of the second baseman. Be assured the fielder will inform the umpire of this situation if it exists. **(Position B)**
2. Fly balls (or line drives) from the left fielder straight in all the way to the right fielder straight in belong to the base umpire. Fly balls (or line drives) where the left fielder moves any distance towards his right or the right fielder moves any distance towards his left belong to the plate umpire. Umpires should communicate so both will be certain who has responsibility for any given fly ball or line drive to the outfield.
3. On any batted ball to the outfield the base umpire will step up, turn with the ball, and back up only two or three steps towards the mound to open up the playing field. (Note: We call this area behind the mound the "working area" for the base umpire.) The base umpire has the responsibility of the touch at second base by the runner from first as well as the touch of first base by the batter-runner. The plate umpire will come out from behind home plate in the direction of third base, keeping approximately three to six feet into foul territory as he moves down the third base line. It is suggested that as the plate umpire leaves the cutout area at home plate, if he observes that a possibility exists of a play at third on the runner originally on first, that the plate umpire make an initial communication to his partner, "I've got third if he comes," alerting his partner to the possibility of a first-to-third play. When the plate umpire sees that there is a good possibility for a play at third, as previously mentioned he will communicate to the base umpire as he moves into the cutout at third. At that point he should immediately get into position for the play at third, obtaining proper distance and angle for play. If the runner is declared out at third base, the plate umpire will pivot out of the cutout and head back to home plate in foul territory, keeping the ball in front of him and his eye on the ball. If the runner is safe at third, the plate umpire will again keep his eye on the ball, and after the ball is thrown to the pitcher he will pivot out of the cutout, come across the third base foul line into foul territory, and head back to home plate. If the ball is overthrown at third base (so

that the runner may get up and start home), the plate umpire will stay in fair territory and take responsibility of the runner going home. In this situation, he should pivot out of the cutout at third with his left leg opening up towards home and move in fair territory in the direction of the home plate cutout, staying off the foul line so as not to interfere with the runner's progress. Again, he must turn with the ball and keep his eye on the ball. Should a play develop at the plate, the plate umpire will be set in fair territory (usually in front of the plate) with proper distance and angle for the play. In the meantime, the base umpire will be with the batter-runner, his only runner at this time.

4. Responsibility for all fly balls and line drives to the pitcher belong to the plate umpire. The plate umpire will also take all fly balls fielded by the catcher. All other fly balls and line drives to the infield are the responsibility of the base umpire with the exception of when the first or third baseman is moving towards the foul line, in which case the plate umpire has the responsibility. When the fly ball is hit, the plate umpire should swing out from home plate a few feet into foul territory in the direction of third base to observe the play (unless the ball is hit near the foul lines). This is because the plate umpire continues to have responsibility for the runner coming from first to third if the ball should be dropped. If the fly ball is hit near the third base line, the plate umpire will straddle the line to make the call. If the fly ball is hit up the first base line, the plate umpire will again straddle the line, and it would be a good idea for him to communicate to his partner, "I'm on the line!" because, on the rare occasion when the ball would be dropped & the runner from first continues on to third, the plate umpire would not have responsibility for that play (for example with two out and runner on the move). The plate umpire's positioning on line drives to the infield would be the same as just mentioned for fly balls with the exception that it is permissible to move out in front of the plate for line drives back to the pitcher. On fly balls to the infielders, the base umpire will step up and turn with the ball and face the infielder, glancing back over his shoulder at first base to watch the batter-runner touch first base. It is permissible for the base umpire to take a couple steps backward towards the mound to open up the field of play in this situation. In fact, if the infielder is moving in to make the play, the base umpire may have to move several steps — including to either side of the mound — in order to give the fielder room to catch the ball. In this situation, the base umpire must guard against taking himself completely out of position in case the ball should be dropped.

5. On a ground ball to the infield the plate umpire will stay home, and the base umpire will cover all plays at first, second, and third. If the ground ball is rolling up the third base line, the plate umpire must come out from behind the plate and be prepared to make a fair/foul decision on the ball rolling up the line. If the ground ball is rolling up the first base line, the plate umpire will come up the first base line for the fair/foul decision as well as for taking responsibility of tag/no tag on the batter-runner up to the 45-foot line. On a ground ball to the infield where a double play is possible, the base umpire will step up and turn with the ball, facing the fielder as he is fielding the ball but moving toward first base. As the ball is being thrown to second, he will stop to observe the play at second. After he has observed the play at second, he will again move toward first and give his verbal and visual signal while he is moving

toward first. The base umpire should be set when the play at first is made and render his decision at first. If he made a safe call at second, he should move toward second and repeat his call to ensure that the runner is aware he has been declared safe at second.

6. On a steal play at second, the base umpire should be aware that the runner is going to second by picking him up in his peripheral vision, even though his eyes are still focused on the plate. The base umpire should begin his reactions to the steal as the ball is about to be caught by the catcher. The base umpire must be aware of the fact that the ball may be hit or that a check swing is possible, and therefore he must be careful not to take his focus away from the plate area too soon. The base umpire will begin the steal mechanic by making a "drop-step" towards second base from his original position, keeping his eye on the ball and not turning his back on the ball. In essence, the ball will turn the umpire into the play as the throw reaches and passes the base umpire (the umpire should more or less be "pivoting" on his right foot as the throw passes him). At this point, the umpire will turn and focus on the play, keeping in mind that by this he should be in proper position and angle for the play at second (ideally a step or two to the home plate side of the second base cutout). Should the ball get away at second base and roll towards the outfield, the base umpire must be prepared to move into position for a possible play at third base if the runner decides to go. The umpire must also keep his eye on the original play at second base, watching for possible obstruction. As the runner is getting up and deciding to try for third, the base umpire should cut towards the third base foul line, making sure that he stays in front of the runner and that he keeps his eye on the play for any possible obstruction. He must glance at the location of the ball and then glance back at the runner so as to "key" off the reactions of the runner. Should the umpire see the runner commit to third, again moving in the direction of an imaginary 45-foot line along the third base line. It is imperative on this play that the base umpire NOT run parallel to the baseline with the runner. This almost certainly results in the runner beating the umpire to third and the umpire looking up the back end of the play at third — a terrible position for the play.

7. On pick-offs at first base, the base umpire should take a couple of quick steps forward, moving in the direction of the 45-foot line. The umpire should turn with the ball, face the play, and be set for the call. It is not important for the umpire to get close to the play, but it is critical to get the proper angle.

RUNNER ON SECOND BASE ONLY:

1. The base umpire will position himself midway between the back edge of the grass of the pitcher's mound and the second base cutout, on the third base side of the infield. The umpire should position himself so that if an imaginary line were drawn from home plate through the left edge of the pitcher's mound towards second base, the umpire would be straddling that line. The umpire's body should be squared to the front edge of home plate. (The positioning just described refers to fields where the grass lines are as recommended in the National Federation Rules. The umpire will have to adjust accordingly on fields which vary from this standard.) This is the same positioning that will be used with a runner on third base only, runners on first and second, second and third, or bases loaded. **(Position C)**

2. Fly ball and line drive responsibilities for balls hit to the outfield are exactly the same as with a runner on first base only.

3. On any fly ball or line drive to the outfield, the base umpire is responsible for the runner tagging up at second base as well as for the batter-runner touching first base. The base umpire is also responsible for the play at third base should the runner at second tag; or any play on that runner going back into second; or any play at first, second, or third should the ball not be caught. The base umpire should drift back **two or three steps** towards the mound in order to open up the playing field to observe the catch, watch the runner at second tag-up, and watch the batter-runner touch first.
IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO NOTE HERE, THAT IN FLY BALL COVERAGE THE FIRST PRIORITY IS THE BALL. There could be an occasion when the base umpire may miss the batter-runner touching first base because he had to keep his eye on the ball. This is simply a drawback of the two-umpire system.
4. On an obvious base hit to the outfield, the plate umpire will stay home, and the base umpire will have responsibility for all plays at first, second, and third. As the ball is hit to the outfield, the base umpire will step up, turn with the ball, and back up only two or three steps towards the mound to open up the playing field. He has the responsibility of the touch of first by the batter-runner. The plate umpire will swing out from behind home plate a few feet into foul territory in the direction of third base to watch the runner from second touch third and to observe the play.
5. Responsibility for all fly balls and line drives to the pitcher belong to the plate umpire. The plate umpire will also take all fly balls fielded by the catcher. All other fly balls and line drives to the infield are the responsibility of the base umpire with the exception of when the first or third basemen is moving towards the foul line, in which case the plate umpire has the responsibility.
6. On a ground ball to the infield the plate umpire will stay home, and the base umpire will cover all plays at first, second, and third.
7. With two out, the time play is in order. The two umpires would alert each other to this situation with a prearranged inconspicuous signal before each batter comes to bat when there is a runner on second base and two out. The signal should be to place two fingers across the wrist and the point to the plate. Both umpires should signal this. As it becomes apparent that a time play is developing, the plate umpire will take a position behind home plate, approximately 6 to 8 feet behind the plate, in such a manner that he will be in a straight line between the runner touching home and the third out occurring on the bases. From this position the plate umpire will watch to judge whether the runner crosses the plate before or after the third out is made on the bases. After the plate umpire has judged whether or not the run scored before the third out, he will communicate this information to the official scorer by turning towards the scorer and using the following mechanics: If the run scores: you are to turn immediately to the official score keeper and point to home plate emphatically with your right arm, stating, “The run scores! The run scores!” If the run does not score: you are to turn to the official score

keeper and wave your arms in a cross-wise fashion in front of the upper body at head level stating “No run scores! No run scores!”

RUNNER ON THIRD BASE ONLY:

1. The base umpire will position himself in exactly the same manner as with a runner on second base only. **(Position C)**
2. Fly ball and line drive responsibilities for balls hit to the outfield are exactly the same as with a runner on first base only.
3. On any fly ball or line drive to the outfield the plate umpire is responsible for the runner tagging up at third base. The base umpire is responsible for the batter-runner touching first base. The base umpire is also responsible for any play on the runner on third going back into third base as well as any play at first, second, or third should the ball not be caught. On a fly ball or line drive to the outfield where the runner at third is tagging, the plate umpire will swing out from the plate several steps into foul territory to his left (usually in the general direction of the third base dugout) in order to line up the tag at third base. After the tag-up, he will immediately break quickly (“bust”) back home, setting up for any possible play at the plate on the runner from third. The actual distance and direction the plate umpire swings out to his left will vary depending on the direction the fly ball is hit, and in most cases, it will not be possible for the plate umpire to have an exact line on the tag-up; however, this swinging out to the left will help decrease the angle on lining up the tag at third base.
4. On an obvious base hit to the outfield, the plate umpire will stay home, and the base umpire will have responsibility for all plays at first, second, and third. The plate umpire will have responsibility for all touches of home plate, and the base umpire is responsible for all touches at first, second, and third.
5. Responsibility for all fly balls and line drives to the pitcher belong to the plate umpire. The plate umpire will also take all fly balls fielded by the catcher. All other fly balls and line drives to the infield are the responsibility of the base umpire with the exception of when the first or third baseman is moving towards the foul line, in which case the plate umpire has that responsibility.
6. On a ground ball to the infield the plate umpire will stay home, and the base umpire will cover all plays at first, second, and third.
7. On a pick-off attempt, the base umpire will use a technique very similar to the pick-off mechanic at first base. The base umpire should take a couple of quick steps forward, moving in the direction of an imaginary 45-foot line along the third base line. The base umpire should be completely stopped and set for the pickoff. His body should be squared to the play, with his hands on his knees. Remember, it is angle — not the distance — that is critical for pick-off plays.

RUNNERS ON FIRST AND SECOND:

1. The base umpire will position himself in exactly the same manner as with a runner on second base only. **(Position C)**

2. Fly ball and line drive responsibilities for balls hit to the outfield are exactly the same as with a runner on first base only.

3. On any fly ball or line drive to the outfield the base umpire is responsible for the tag-ups at both second and first. Should the ball be caught, the base umpire is responsible for plays back into second or first. Should the ball not be caught, the base umpire is responsible for all plays at first, second, and third as well as all touches at first and second. The plate umpire is responsible for the play at third base if the runner at second tags up and advances. Should the ball not be caught, the plate umpire is responsible for all plays at the plate as well as for all touches of third and all touches of home.
4. On an obvious base hit to the outfield, the plate umpire will stay home, and the base umpire will have responsibility for all plays at first, second, and third.
5. Responsibility for fly balls and line drives to the infield are exactly the same as with a runner on second base only.
6. With less than 2 out, the infield fly rule is in effect. The umpires will alert each other to this situation with a prearranged signal before each batter whenever the infield fly is in effect. There is no restriction on which umpire should initiate the infield fly call other than the plate umpire should be the one to initiate the call if the fly ball is hit near either foul line. When one umpire makes the infield fly declaration, the other umpire should follow up with the verbal and visual call also. Proper terminology for calling an infield fly is: "Infield Fly! Batter is out!" exclaimed loudly and clearly while fully extending the right arm into the air with a fist and index finger pointing straight up. If the fly ball is near the foul line, the plate umpire will initiate the call by exclaiming loudly and clearly, "Infield fly if fair!" (use the same visual signal). The base umpire would then follow with the same call. The proper moment for the umpire to declare an infield fly is when the umpire sees that the infielder is positioned under the ball. In most cases this will occur when the infielder is facing the infield and after the flight of the ball has reached its apex. These conditions will indicate that "ordinary effort" has occurred.
7. On ground balls to the infield, the plate umpire will stay at the plate and the base umpire will be responsible for all plays at first, second, and third. Remember, the plate umpire is responsible for runners touching third base as well as the plate.

RUNNERS ON FIRST AND THIRD:
1. The base umpire will position himself in exactly the same manner as with a runner on first base only. **(Position B)**
2. Fly ball and line drive responsibilities for balls hit to the outfield are exactly the same as with a runner on first base only.
3. On any fly ball or line drive to the outfield the plate umpire is responsible for the tag-up at third base as well as any play at the plate on the runner advancing from third base. Should the ball not be caught, the plate umpire would also be responsible for the play at third base on the runner originally on first unless the plate umpire must remain on the first base line for coverage of a ball hit down the first base line. The base umpire is responsible for the tag-up at first base if

that runner tags, and he is also responsible for the touch of first base by the batter-runner. The base umpire is also responsible for any play on the runner on third going back into third base as well as any play at first, second, or third should the ball not be caught (except when the plate umpire has first-to-third coverage).

4. On any batted ball to the outfield, the plate umpire has responsibility for the play going into third base on the runner originally on first base. The plate umpire is also responsible for all plays at the plate as well as all touches of third and all touches of home plate. The base umpire also has responsibility for all touches of first and second. The plate umpire will come out from behind the plate in the direction of third base, keeping approximately three to six feet into foul territory as he moves down the third base line. He will watch the runner from third touch home plate by glancing back over his right shoulder as he moves down the line. It is suggested that as the plate umpire leaves the cutout area at home plate, if he observes that a possibility exists of a play at third on the runner originally on first, he should make initial communication to his partner, "I've got third if he comes," alerting his partner to the possibility of a first-to-third play. As a play at third begins to appear likely or imminent, the plate umpire will move into the cutout at third and communicate loudly to his partner, "I've got third, Bill! I've got third!" This would release the base umpire to pick up the batter-runner.

5. Fly ball and line drive responsibilities for balls hit to the infield are exactly the same as with a runner on third base only except that with two out, the plate umpire will assume the normal first-to-third coverage. Therefore, he will need to be moving towards third base (glancing back at the runner from third touching home plate) in case the ball should be dropped.

6. On a ground ball to the infield the base umpire will be responsible for all plays at first, second, and third. The plate umpire will, of course, be responsible for all plays at the plate.

7. If the runner on first attempts to steal second base and the catcher throws the ball directly to second, this play would be handled in the same manner with a runner on first only. However, in steal situations with runners at first and third, the base umpire must react carefully to the development of the play. For example, if the runner on first is stealing, it is possible for the catcher to throw the ball to the shortstop (or second baseman), who comes in to cut off the throw, attempting to catch the runner at third off guard. It is also possible that the catcher may fake a throw towards second base, followed by a snap throw directly to third. These plays require excellent reactions on the part of the base umpire. If the play is actually made at second base, then the base umpire must immediately bounce back towards the runner on third. Also, should the ball get loose at second base and roll into center field, the base umpire would be prepared to react to the development of this play as well.

RUNNERS ON SECOND AND THIRD:

1. The base umpire will position himself in exactly the same manner as with a runner on second base only. **(Position C)**

2. Fly ball and line drive responsibilities for balls hit to the outfield are exactly the same as with a runner on first base only.

3. On any fly ball or line drive to the outfield the plate umpire is responsible for the tag-up at third base as well as any play at the plate on the runner advancing from third base. The base umpire is responsible for the tag-up at second base, for the play at third base if the runner at second advances, and for the touch of first base by the batter-runner. The base umpire is also responsible for plays on either runner going back into second or third if the ball is caught; as well as all plays at first, second, or third should the ball not be caught.
4. On an obvious base hit to the outfield, the plate umpire will stay home, and the base umpire will have responsibility for all plays at first, second, and third. The plate umpire is responsible for all touches of home plate and for all touches of third. The base umpire is responsible for all touches of first and second.
5. Fly balls and line drives to the infield will be handled in exactly the same manner as with a runner on third base only.
6. Ground balls to the infield will be handled in exactly the same manner as with a runner on third base only.

BASES LOADED:
1. The base umpire will position himself in exactly the same manner as with a runner on second base only. **(Position C)**
2. Fly ball and line drive responsibilities for balls hit to the outfield are exactly the same as with a runner on first base only.
3. On any fly ball or line drive to the outfield the plate umpire is responsible for the tag-up at third base as well as any play at the plate on the runner advancing from third base. The base umpire is responsible for tag-ups at first and second as well as all plays at first, second, and third. The base umpire is also responsible for plays on any runner going back into first, second, or third base after the catch; as well as all plays at first, second, or third should the ball not be caught. The base umpire also has responsibility of the touch at first base by the batter-runner.
4. On an obvious base hit to the outfield, the plate umpire will stay home, and the base umpire will have responsibility for all plays at first, second, and third. The plate umpire is responsible for all touches of home plate and for all touches of third. The base umpire is responsible for all touches of first and second.
5. Fly balls and line drives to the infield will be handled in exactly the same manner as with a runner on third base only.
6. With less than two out, the infield fly rule is in effect. The mechanics and terminologies will be the same as with runners on first and second only.
7. On a ground ball to the infield the plate umpire will stay home, and the base umpire will cover all plays at first, second, and third.

ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES:
1. POSITIONING FOR PLAYS AT THE PLATE:
A lot of umpires are moving and not getting set for plays at the plate. Being closer to tag plays at the plate, working off the catcher's hip, finding the window, and making late adjustments are

all very important factors that need to be considered when getting in the best position to get tag plays correct.

2. SIGNALING “NO TRIP”:
After an injury trip to the mound is concluded, the plate umpire shall inform the opposing coach that the conference was not considered a trip. He will do this by verbally announcing to the coach, “No trip” while signaling with an appropriate hand motion. Regarding injury conferences on the mound, it is important that the plate umpire accompany, the coach to the mound and that he remain in the vicinity of the conference until the coach leaves the mound in order to ensure that this privilege is not abused.

3. POSITION BETWEEN INNINGS:
The plate umpire will stand with his back to the dugout of the team in the field, halfway up the respective line and just in foul territory. The base umpire will stand in shallow right field, halfway between first and second base. (The third base umpire will stand in shallow left, halfway between second and third when using a three man crew.) There are no specific restrictions regarding the umpires’ stance between innings other than they are to remain alert and professional. Body language should not reflect an appearance of being aggressive, challenging, “cocky,” overly relaxed, lackadaisical, bored etc. There is no specific restriction regarding folding of arms in front of the chest, hands on hips, or arms and hands behind the back, other than the umpire’s appearance should not suggest any of the terms referred to earlier. Hands in pockets do not appear professional and should be avoided on the field.

4. PROCEDURE FOR PRACTICE SWING HITTING CATCHER’S GLOVE:
On occasions when the batter’s practice swing tips the catcher’s glove before the delivery or the pitch, the procedure is for the plate umpire to call “Time” immediately. It is suggested that the umpire then indicate the infraction by announcing, “Backswing hit the catcher!” while indicating a motion similar to a foul tip signal and then pointing to the catcher.

5. PROCEDURES FOR CHECK SWINGS:
All decisions on check swings shall be called loudly and clearly by the plate umpire. If the pitch is a ball and the batter does not swing at the pitch, the mechanic to be used by the plate umpire is: “Ball, no he didn’t go.” If the pitch is a ball but the batter commits on the check swing, a two-part mechanic is to be used; “Yes you went,” while pointing directly at the batter with the left arm; then — after finishing the pointing — the umpire shall give the strike signal. If the coach or catcher of the defensive team asks for an appeal on a check swing, the plate umpire should step out from behind the plate, point at his partner with his left arm, and ask loudly “Bill, did he go?” while pointing directly at his partner. His partner will then indicate his decision on the check swing by calling loudly “Yes he went!” while giving a strike signal, or loudly “No he didn’t go!” while giving the safe signal. The plate umpire will then give the proper count (visually and verbally). If the appeal results in a strike three call, the base umpire should

give the mechanic very emphatically. The plate umpire may — on his own — ask for help on a check swing if in doubt on the check swing. The umpire's decision on a check swing shall be based entirely on his judgment as to whether or not the batter struck at the pitch. Baserunners and umpires must always be alert to the possibility that the base umpire — on appeal from the plate umpire — may reverse the call of a ball to the call of a strike, in which event the runner may be in jeopardy of being put out by the catcher's throw. This can be a factor when the baserunner is stealing.

For example, consider the following play:

PLAY**:** Runner on first base, 3-1 count on the batter. Runner is stealing, and is a check swing on the pitch. Plate umpire calls "Ball; no he didn't go." Catcher throws the ball to second base anyway, resulting in a play at second where the runner is tagged before reaching the base.

If the play above occurs, it should be handled in the following manner: The base umpire would watch the play very closely at second base, but he would not make any call on the play. Instead, after the play is completed he would simply announce to the players surrounding the play, "That's ball four." If the defensive coach or catcher then requests an appeal on the check swing, the plate umpire will ask his partner for help. If the call is "No he didn't go," then the original call of ball four prevails. However, if the call is "Yes he went," the base umpire will emphatically call the appeal ("Yes he went") and then turn and very emphatically call the runner out or safe at second base, depending on what he observed when the play occurred at second. In situations when there are two strikes on the batter and the next pitch is a passed ball or wild pitch on which there is a check swing, the plate umpire shall ask the umpire for help IMMEDIATELY (while the catcher is chasing after the ball), WITHOUT AN APPEAL REQUEST FROM THE DEFENSE**.** This way, both the defense and offense are quickly advised as to what the final call will be. Both umpires must be very alert to this type of situation (i.e., a check swing with two strikes and a passed ball or wild pitch). Coaches or players may not argue the call (or the appealed decision) on any check swing. If a coach or player leaves his position to argue with an umpire concerning the decision on a check swing, he shall be warned that this is not permitted. If he persists in arguing after the warning, the offender will be removed from the game, as he is now arguing over a called ball or strike.

6. FOUL BALLS IN THE BATTER'S BOX:

Whenever either umpire sees a batted ball strike the batter while he is still in the batter's box, that umpire should immediately call and signal "Foul!" loudly and clearly. If the base umpire observes the batted ball striking the batter after the batter has clearly left the batter's box and the base umpire is absolutely certain that without a doubt the ball struck the batter-runner completely out of the batter's box in fair territory, the base umpire will emphatically call "Time" and declare the batter-runner out. If the base umpire is not sure whether the batter-runner was out of the batter's box when struck by the ball, the base umpire shall hesitate momentarily to give the plate umpire opportunity to make a call, and if the plate makes no call, the base umpire should then immediately call "Foul!" The plate umpire would do the same

thing if he is not sure whether the batter-runner was in fair or foul territory when leaving the batter's box and is struck by the ball.

REMEMBER THE FOLLOWING:

1. The most important part of umpiring is TIMING. When working the plate, give yourself time to think about the pitch. The teams might react negatively, at first, when you don't call a strike immediately on a pitch "right down the pipe", but they will become accustomed to your timing and will understand that there will be a small delay before the decision is rendered. Proper timing applies to out/safe calls as well as ball/strike calls. When working the bases, let the whole play develop before you make your call.

2. Communicate to each other on who has the ball & where each of you will be in situations.

3. Any legitimate question deserves a legitimate answer. Don't be unapproachable.

4. Trust your partner and work as a team.

5. Maintain your composure at all times. It takes two people to have an argument. Don't let your ego ruin the game. If the coach has had "his say" and is walking away, let him go. Don't insist on having the last word. That type of attitude will only cause problems.

6. When a base umpire is in the B, C position and a ball is hit directly toward the leftfielder on the borderline of the coverage area boundary when the base umpire is in the C position or towards the right fielder on the borderline of the coverage area boundary when the base umpire is in the B position, and the ball's path is such that it is uncertain which umpire has the responsibility for the catch/no catch, the following communications are recommended. If time permits, the base umpire may use either a verbal or visual signal to communicate to the plate umpire that the base umpire will have the responsibility for the catch. If the plate umpire is certain that the ball is in his coverage area, and time permits. The plate umpire should use a verbal signal to communicate to the base umpire that he will take the responsibility for the catch/no catch.

MECHANICS FOR THE THREE-MAN UMPIRE SYSTEM

NO RUNNERS ON BASE:

1. The umpire will position himself approximately 15–20 feet beyond the base and beyond the fielder with both feet in foul territory. **(U2 – Position A) (U3 – Position D)** The base umpire should be standing upright and take a stride toward the plate or be in the ready position with both hands on knees (legs should be spread just over should width apart) as the pitcher is

preparing to deliver the ball to the batter. **(Position A)** The third base umpire should be in the same approximate position behind the third baseman. **(U2 – Position A) (U3 – Position D)**
2. The first base umpire shall go out and take responsibility for all fly balls and line drives in front of, behind or to the left of the center fielder. The third base umpire shall go out and take responsibility for all fly balls and line drives to the right of the center fielder.
3. When the third base umpire is required to go out to the outfield to render a decision, you will revert back to the two-umpire system. Anytime you go out, don't try to get back into the play; wait until all action has ceased before returning to your position. When the first base umpire goes out, the third base umpire will come straight into the center of the infield and take any play at second or third base on the batter-runner. The plate umpire will come down to first base and be responsible for the batter-runner touching first base and will take any play on the batter-runner returning to first base. Should the batter-runner continue past first, second, and third, the play at the plate, if any, will be the responsibility of the plate umpire.
4. With no runners on base, the third base umpire will come straight across to second base on all ground balls and fly balls to the infield and take all plays at second base and third base. The first base umpire will come in and set up in a position needed to render a decision at first base.
5. With no runners on base, the third base umpire will come straight across the infield to second base on all fly balls, line drives and base hits to the outfield and render all decisions needed at second base unless, he has found it necessary to go out to the outfield. The first base umpire will come in and set up in a position needed to render a decision at first base.
6. With no runners on base, if the batter hits a base hit to the outfield which goes beyond or through the outfielder, the third base umpire will start towards second base, and the first base umpire will watch the batter-runner touch first while moving down the foul line in foul territory preparing for a possible rotation. The third base umpire, seeing the ball has gone through the outfielder will take the batter-runner into second base. The plate umpire will rotate to third base. The first base umpire will rotate to home plate.

RUNNER ON FIRST BASE ONLY:

1. The first base umpire will position himself 10-12 feet beyond the first base bag with both feet in foul territory for the pick-off play at first base. You should be close enough to make the decision on a pick-off without moving into the play. **(U2 – Position A) (U3 – Position Deep B)**
2. DBB uses the following mechanic for a runner on first base only: The third base umpire will move into the infield & assume a position on the third base side of second to take a steal play.
3. If the runner on first is picked off, the infield umpire will have that part of the rundown going into second base and any subsequent play into third base. The first base umpire should move towards second base as the runner continues on to third base and assume responsibility for the back end of a possible rundown between second and third base. The first base umpire should not commit toward second until after the runner has gained possession of second base since the runner over rounding second and returning is the responsibility of the third base umpire.
4. With a runner on first base only, if the first base umpire goes out for any reason, the infield umpire will slide over toward first base and assume full responsibility for the runner on first

base and also have responsibility should the batter become a runner. The plate umpire will go down to third base and take the play on the runner coming from first base, and if that runner continues on to home plate, the plate umpire will also have that responsibility.
5. With a runner on first base only, if the first base umpire does not go out to the outfield, then on any batted ball to the outfield, the umpires will rotate so that any play at third is handled by the plate umpire and the first base umpire will have all plays at the plate. The third base umpire shall slide to the first base side of second and handle all plays at second and first bases.
6. With a runner on first base only, the responsibility of catch or no catch of fly balls and line drives to the center fielder straight in and straight back and to his foul line belong to the first base umpire. The third base umpire has catch/no catch of the left fielder straight in and straight back to the left of the center fielder. If the ball is hit where the left fielder moves any distance towards the foul line, then the catch/no catch responsibility belongs to the plate umpire.

RUNNERS ON FIRST AND SECOND

1. The first base umpire will position himself 15–20 feet beyond the base and beyond the fielder with both feet in foul territory. **(U2 – Position A) (U3 – Position C)**
2. The third base umpire will position himself halfway between the pitcher's mound and second base on the third base side of the mound in a position ready for plays at second or third.
3. The plate umpire will take the play at third on the runner tagging up at second, the third base umpire will slide over and take responsibility of the runner on first base, and the first base umpire will move home to cover a possible play at the plate.
4. On any base hit the plate umpire will remain at home, and the first and third base umpires will assume responsibility for all plays on the bases. On a base hit, the first base umpire will pivot and take the batter-runner into second; he is responsible for any play made on the batter-runner at second base or back into first base.
5. If the first base umpire goes out, you will revert back to the two-umpire system.
6. Catch/no catch responsibilities remain the same as when a runner is on first.

BASES LOADED

1. The first base umpire will position himself approximately 15–20 feet beyond the base and beyond the fielder with both feet in foul territory. **(U2 – Position A) (U3 – Position C)**
2. The third base umpire will position himself in Position C, on the shortstop side of the infield.
3. On balls hit to the infield, the infield umpire will render all decisions at second and third base. The first base umpire will render all decisions at first base. The plate umpire will remain at the plate.
4. On fly balls and line drives to the outfield the catch/no catch responsibility remains the same as when a runner is on first.
5. The tagging up by the runner on third base belongs to the home plate umpire. The tagging up by the runner on second base going to third belongs to the infield umpire. The tagging up by the runner on first base going to second belongs to the first base umpire. Remember to let the ball take you to your play.

6. With bases loaded on any base hit the plate umpire will remain at home, and the first and third base umpires will assume responsibility for all plays on the bases. On a base hit, the first base umpire will pivot and take the batter-runner into second; he is responsible for any play made on the batter-runner at second base or back into first base.

RUNNERS ON FIRST AND THIRD:

1. The first base umpire will position himself 10-12 feet beyond the first base bag with both feet in foul territory. **(U2 – Position A)**
2. The third base umpire will position himself in Position C, on the shortstop side of the infield. **(U3 – Position C)**
3. Fly ball responsibility remains the same as with runners on first and second or with a runner on first base only. The plate umpire is responsible for the runner on third tagging up and advancing to home plate.
4. With a runner on first and third base, if the first base umpire goes out for any reason, the infield umpire will slide over toward first base and assume full responsibility for the runner on first base and also have responsibility should the batter become the runner. The plate umpire will go down to third base and take the play on the runner coming from first base, and if that runner continues on to home plate, the plate umpire will also have that responsibility.
5. With runners on first and third base, if the first base umpire does not go out to the outfield, then on any batted ball to the outfield, the plate umpire will remain at home, and the first and third base umpires will assume responsibility for all plays on the bases. On a base hit, the plate umpire will come up to third base, while watching the runner touch home plate, and assume the responsibility for the runner from first base going to third. The infield umpire, after watching the runner from first base touch second and seeing that he is in fact advancing to third, shall slide to the first base side of second and assume the responsibility for the batter-runner advancing to second or returning to first. The first base umpire watches the batter-runner touch first while moving down the foul line toward home for the rotation.

RUNNER ON SECOND BASE ONLY:

1. The first base umpire will position himself in infield setting up on the first base side on the edge of the infield grass, approximately 10-12 feet from second base. **(U2 – Position deep B)**
2. The third base umpire will position himself 10-12 feet behind the third baseman with both feet in foul territory. **(U3 – Position D)**
3. On any ball hit to an infielder, the third base umpire will be responsible for all plays at third base. The infield umpire will be responsible for all plays at second and first.
4. On fly balls and line drives to the center fielder straight in and straight back and to the left field line belong to the third base umpire. The responsibility of catch/no catch from the right fielder straight in and straight back and to the right of the center fielder belongs to the first base umpire. With an umpire on the third base line and one in the center of the infield, on any ball hit where the right fielder moves any distance toward the foul line, the responsibility for fair/foul and catch/no catch belongs to the home plate umpire.

5. If the third base umpire goes out for any reason, you will again revert back to the two-umpire system.
6. With two outs, U3 will move to position C and U2 will move to position A

RUNNERS ON SECOND AND THIRD:
1. The first base umpire will position himself in infield setting up on the first base side on the edge of the infield grass, approximately 10-12 feet from second base. **(U2 – Position deep B)**
2. The third base umpire will position himself 10-12 feet behind the third baseman with both feet in foul territory. **(U3 – Position D)**
3. On any ball hit to an infielder, the third base umpire will be responsible for all plays at third base. The infield umpire will be responsible for all plays at first and second.
4. On fly balls and line drives to the outfield, the responsibility for the catch or no catch is the same as if a runner on second base only. In those cases, the responsibility will belong to the third base umpire, who is on the foul line. With an umpire on the third base line and one in the center of the infield, on any ball hit where the right fielder moves any distance towards the foul line, the responsibility for fair/foul and catch/no catch belongs to the home plate umpire.
5. If the third base umpire goes out for any reason, you will again revert back to the two-umpire system.
6. With two outs, U3 will move to position C and U2 will move to position A

RUNNER ON THIRD BASE ONLY:
1. The first base umpire will position himself approximately 15–20 feet beyond the base and beyond the fielder with both feet in foul territory. **(U2 – Position A) (U3 – Position D)**
2. The third base umpire will position himself 6-8 feet behind the third baseman with both feet in foul territory. **(U3 – Position D)**
3. On a clean base hit, the third base umpire will come into the infield and take responsibility for the batter-runner going into second base.
4. If the first base umpire goes out, the third base umpire will come into the center of the infield and take responsibility for the batter-runner going into second base or returning to first base. The home plate umpire will drop back into foul territory and take responsibility for the runner on third tagging up. In this situation, the third base umpire is responsible for the batter-runner touching first base.
5. If the third base umpire goes out to the outfield, the first base umpire has responsibility for all action at first, second and third bases.

CHECKED SWINGS:
When the plate umpire is asked by the catcher or manager to check with the base umpire for help on a check swing (only when the pitch is called a ball) the plate umpire should ask the first base umpire on a right handed batter and the third base umpire (who is positioned on the third

base side of the infield) for a left handed batter. It is important that the base umpire, if he rules the check swing a “strike”, give an emphatic and clear signal.

REMEMBER

1. With no runners on, fly balls in foul territory between home plate and first base or home plate and third base, both the plate umpire and the appropriate base umpire will move toward the dugout area to be in position to rule on a catch/no catch and whether the fielder was in live or dead ball territory at the time of the catch. Whomever the fielder is facing at the time of play will be responsible for the catch/no catch decision. If the fielder is not facing either umpire at the time of the play, the responsibility of the call will be with the nearer umpire.
2. With no runners on, the first base umpire is responsible for catches on the first base side of second base and the third base umpire is responsible for catches on the third base side of second base. The third base umpire should be ready to help the first base umpire on situations where the second baseman is diving away from the first base umpire and in doing so, obstructs the view of the first base umpire. In turn, the first base umpire should be ready to help the third base umpire on situations where the shortstop is diving away from the third base umpire and subsequently obstructs the third base umpire’s view. The plate umpire will be responsible for line drives to the pitcher and fly balls between the plate and the mound.
3. Fair and foul balls up to the base will be called by the plate umpire. Any fair or foul ball from the front of the base on will be called by the base umpire positioned on the line. If the base umpire is not positioned on the line for a fair/foul call, the decision will be the responsibility of the plate umpire. Only the umpire making the call will signal.

TOURNAMENT PROTEST PROCEEDURE FOR DBB UMPIRES

Always make every attempt to keep the game ON THE FIELD. When a rule interpretation is questioned by the head coach, explain your ruling then get together with your partners and get the situation correct. If the explanation (decision) from the crew still does not satisfy the coach and he wants to protest the ruling, make a note of the game situations (balls and strikes, outs, runners and their locations), Suspend the game and ask for the **TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR. Judgement calls are NOT protestable.**

SPECTATOR MANAGEMENT POLICY

Officials are only responsible for team personnel (Players, Coaches, Non-Players, Team Attendants) relating to the game. Game management is responsible for everyone else. If someone not under the official’s jurisdiction is to be justifiably removed, you must stop the contest, locate **TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR** and ask him/her to handle the situation. Resume play once it is handled.

Ask yourself a few questions before taking this to the **TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR;**

1. Did the spectator do or say anything to disrupt the game in any other way besides intimidating the umpire?
2. Did the spectator use profanity or offer personal threats of bodily harm against the official?
3. Did the spectator ever leave the stands and come onto the playing field?

FINALLY

Do your job to the best of your ability. You are the only individuals involved in the DBB contest being paid.

It is ALWAYS about the players…….

