

2022

# UMPIRE MANUAL



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**LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR OF UMPIRES**

## USA Softball Umpires

Welcome to the USA Softball 2022 season. 2021 was a very good year and we were able to hold a lot more Championships even though the COVID 19 pandemic was still holding on. Our umpires did an outstanding job navigating the COVID restrictions while still completing the task of giving our Championships the best umpiring in the country. Because of you, we made 2021 a great rebound year and expect 2022 to be even better.

We are back on schedule to hold the 2023 Urc Clinic in person in Oklahoma City Oklahoma. Our 2022 National Umpire Schools have already begun with the first one held in December of 2021 and five more still to be held in 2022. These have proven to be the backbone of our umpire program and we expect them to continue to be the mainstay of our program going forward. We also have a Fast Pitch Advanced Camp scheduled for 2022.

We want to encourage all our Local Associations to continue working on recruiting umpires, specifically Slow Pitch Umpires, who will umpire the growing number of Slow Pitch games. We would really like to have umpires excited about attending an Advanced Slow Pitch Camp, held either every year or every other year. There are umpires who work Slow Pitch across the country who want to take that next step and increasing our numbers can help make this happen.

We continue to make the umpire manual available as an electronic document posted on the website. This year we will also post the Rulebook as a digital document. We will print a limited number of rulebooks at the request of some Commissioners around the country. Check with your Commissioner to see if your association has requested any hard copies.

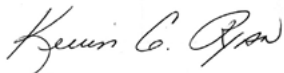
As we move into 2022 and beyond, we continue to look at mechanics that may fit our program better as the world of softball changes. We encourage any new ideas to modify mechanics and will continue to make the decisions that are best for our games. The National Umpire Staff does an outstanding job of evaluating any submissions for mechanic changes. We will always list the pros and cons of any change request and move forward with what we feel is best for all of umpiring. We will let everyone know if and / or when these changes occur.

As we move into another year it is imperative, we continue to keep the umpires we have, recruit new umpires and as all true leaders do, find our replacements. We must make this our top priority so we can leave the game and the umpire program in better shape than we found it. We will be putting an emphasis on this for 2022 and beyond.

We will also continue to reach out and ask for your participation in our committees. Committees like National Umpire Schools, UIC Clinic, and Rulebook to mention a few. If you are interested in giving back to the game, we all love, raise your hand and we will put you to work.

On behalf of the USA Softball Umpire Program, we continue to say thank you for your hard work and dedication to our program. Your hard work and dedication are what makes the USA Softball Umpire program what it is today, the best.

See you in 2022.



Kevin Ryan | Independent Contractor and Director of Umpires for USA Softball

# UMPIRE MANUAL

## TABLE OF CONTENTS 2022 Umpire Manual

Points of Emphasis .....	16
Mechanics Definitions .....	26
Umpire Social Media Guidelines .....	28
Code of Ethics for Umpires .....	31

### CHAPTER 1 Pre-requisites for Good Umpiring

Elements of a Successful Umpire .....	32
Professional Appearance .....	32
Communications .....	32
Conditioning .....	34
Game Management .....	34
Judgment .....	35
Mechanics .....	35
Positioning .....	35
Rule Knowledge .....	35
Timing .....	35
Difficult Situations .....	36
Appeal Plays .....	36
Ejections .....	36
Forfeits .....	36
Protests .....	36

### CHAPTER 2 Communications and Signals

Routine Safe or No Catch .....	38
Sell Safe .....	38
Routine Out or Strike .....	38
Sell Out .....	39
Fair Ball .....	39
Dead Ball, Time Out, No Pitch or Foul Ball .....	39
Hold Up Play & Play Ball .....	40
Count .....	40
Foul Tip .....	41
Infield Fly .....	41
Four Base Award .....	41
Home Run .....	42
Two Base Award or Ground Rule Double .....	42
Delayed Dead Ball or Illegal Pitch or Obstruction .....	42
Umpire to Umpire Signals .....	43

## UMPIRE MANUAL

Requesting Help on a Check Swing.....	43
The Infield Fly Situation is On.....	43
The Infield Fly Situation is Off.....	44
Requesting the Count.....	44
Requesting the Number of Outs.....	44

### CHAPTER 3 Pre and Post Game Responsibilities

Pre-Game with Partners.....	45
Umpire Crew Entering the Field.....	46
Pre-Game Conference with Coaches.....	46
End of the Game Procedure.....	47
Post Game with Partners.....	47

### CHAPTER 4 Plate Mechanics

Calling the Pitch in Slow Pitch and Fast Pitch.....	48
Stance.....	48
Set Position.....	49
The Pitch.....	49
Movement from the Plate in Slow Pitch and Fast Pitch.....	51
Movement.....	51
Movement to Third Base.....	52
Plays at Home Plate.....	53
Difficult Situations.....	53
Slow Pitch.....	53
Fast Pitch.....	53
General Responsibilities Both Slow Pitch and Fast Pitch.....	55

### CHAPTER 5 Base Mechanics

General Responsibilities.....	58
Base Umpire Starting Positions Terminology.....	58
Starting Positions.....	58
General Techniques on the Bases.....	59
Points Governing Decisions on the Bases.....	60
Going for Help.....	60
Watching the Ball.....	61
Base Calls.....	61
Force Plays/Plays at First Base/Tag Plays.....	61
Swipe Tag/Pulled Foot.....	62
Tag Play Philosophy.....	63
Inside/Outside Theory.....	65
Fly Ball Coverage.....	66
Difficult Situations.....	66

**CHAPTER 6**  
**Umpire Systems**

<u>The One Umpire System</u> .....	69
<u>Ground Ball to the Infield</u> .....	69
<u>Base Hit to the Outfield</u> .....	70
<u>Fly Ball to the Outfield</u> .....	72
<u>Difficult Situations</u> .....	73
<u>The Two Umpire System</u> .....	74
<u>Fast Pitch – No Runner on Base</u> .....	74
<u>Fast Pitch – Runner on First Base</u> .....	76
<u>Fast Pitch – Runner on Second Base</u> .....	77
<u>Fast Pitch – Runner on Third Base</u> .....	78
<u>Fast Pitch – Runners on First and Second Base</u> .....	80
<u>Fast Pitch – Runners on First and Third Base</u> .....	81
<u>Fast Pitch – Runners on Second and Third Base</u> .....	83
<u>Fast Pitch – Bases Loaded</u> .....	84
<u>Other Situations</u> .....	86
<u>Slow Pitch – No Runner on Base</u> .....	87
<u>Slow Pitch – Runner on First Base</u> .....	88
<u>Slow Pitch – Runner on Second Base</u> .....	90
<u>Slow Pitch – Runner on Third Base</u> .....	91
<u>Slow Pitch – Runner on First and Second Base</u> .....	93
<u>Slow Pitch – Runner on First and Third Base</u> .....	94
<u>Slow Pitch – Runner on Second and Third base</u> .....	96
<u>Slow Pitch – Bases Loaded</u> .....	97
<u>Two Umpire System Pick Off and Steal Mechanics</u> .....	99
<u>The Three Umpire System</u> .....	101
<u>No Runner on Base</u> .....	101
<u>Runner on First Base</u> .....	103
<u>Runner on Second Base</u> .....	106
<u>Runner on Third Base</u> .....	109
<u>Runner on First and Second Base</u> .....	111
<u>Runner on First and Third Base</u> .....	113
<u>Runner on Second and Third Base</u> .....	116
<u>Bases Loaded</u> .....	119
<u>Fly Ball Coverage No Runner on Base or Runner on Third Base</u> .....	122
<u>Fly Ball Coverage Runner on First Base</u> .....	123
<u>Fly Ball Coverage Runner on 2B, 1B &amp; 2B, 1B &amp; 3B, 2B &amp; 3B, &amp; Bases Loaded</u> .....	124
<u>Umpire Uniform Requirements</u> .....	126
<u>National Indicator Fraternity</u> .....	127
<u>Umpire Medals Program</u> .....	128
<u>2021 Elite Umpires</u> .....	130
<u>National Hall of Fame</u> .....	131
<u>Safety Awareness Guide</u> .....	140

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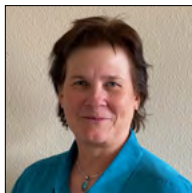
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**As 2021 was a unique year in its own right, we still had many umpires across the U.S. that did not get to umpire a full year or even half the year due to COVID restrictions within states. USA Softball Umpire Program feels it is important for all our umpires to continue to review the POE's as they have not changed since all were not able to practice them in 2021. It is our hope that we will all be able to practice these POE's across USA Softball events in 2022.**

### **Two Umpire System In Slow Pitch With No Runners On And The Base Umpire Is Back On And Walking The Line.**

Rationale and Reason: After almost two decades the mechanic of the initial positioning of the Base Umpire in Slow Pitch in the two-umpire system has changed and returned the umpire to being on and walking the line. Many things in the Slow Pitch game have changed in the 18 years since the change was made to put the Base Umpire inside the foul line in 2003. At that time there was very few ground balls fielded with plays at first base. There were more balls hit to the outfield then, and the feeling was the move inside the line made it easier for the Base Umpire to come inside and get the proper position for a play at second base, while also making the umpire hustle to a proper distance and angle for plays at first base. In the meantime, since 2003 changes have been made with the bats and balls, the distance between the bases was increased to 70 feet, and the popular defensive alignment of five infielders (six counting the pitcher) has been introduced. These changes in the Slow Pitch game have caused the number of plays at first base to increase significantly over the number of plays prior to the change. Moving the umpire back to the line has them getting in proper position for the play at first base much easier than in between the bases while working around F4, F1 and F6. If the ball gets through the infield then the umpire comes inside, buttonhooks, PUBGAR, and get in proper position for a play at 2B or a throw-back to 1B.

### **Does This New Slow Pitch Mechanic Also Apply To A Runner At Third Base Only?**

Yes. Even though in today's game of slow pitch a pitched ball remains live until in the pitcher's possession and all play has stopped, we remain on the line with a single runner at third base. Any call on the runner at 3B is the plate umpire's responsibility with the base umpire watching as they are moving from the position on the line to offer help, if asked, to the plate umpire. With the number of plays at 1B and with the alignments of the defense with three infielders often on the right side of the field, we feel the game is best served with the umpire starting on the line for the plays at first base.

## What Is The Proper Initial Positioning On The Bases In Slow Pitch In The Two-Umpire System?

There are several factors to consider when establishing the initial positioning on the bases in Slow Pitch. Primarily those would be the location of the runner(s) and the position and number of infielders used. Before applying those factors remember a couple of concepts that we also apply in positioning. The first concept is **shading**. Shading is defined as being closer to the lead runner (or to first base in Slow Pitch with no one on base), 20-30 feet from either first base or second base if the lead runner is at 2B; but never closer than 15 feet. The other concept is to always be positioned **behind** the infielders. With the number of defensive alignments and positioning possible deviations have to be made. In order to be considered behind the fielders, when you are between two fielders draw a line between the two fielders and take a position behind that line. When your position is behind that line then adjust your position to allow the defensive players adequate space to make any play necessary without hindrance from umpire's position.

With the concepts of shading and behind the infielders defined, proper positioning is now determined by the factors of location of runners and number/positioning of the infielders. With no one on base, runner at 1B or runners at 1B and 3B the umpires initial positioning will be **shading** their lead runner, the runner at 1B and **behind** a line drawn between the F3 and F4. With a runner at 2B, or runners at 2B and 3B and bases loaded the umpires initial positioning will be **shading** the runner at 2B and **behind** a line drawn between the F4 and F6 (in a traditional alignment) or between the extra infielder and F6 (in a 5-player infield).

## Managing The Illegal Pitch In Slow Pitch.

### “The Stop”

There are several ways to have an illegal pitch in Slow Pitch, and many pitchers will use those as a strategy to affect the timing and comfort level of the batters. The most common infractions by pitchers today are:

- Not adhering to the rule requiring a “stop” by the pitcher prior to delivery of the pitch
- Pitching the ball without achieving the minimum of a 6-foot arc
- Pitching the ball with an arc above the maximum of 10 feet (12 feet in Senior SP)

The “Stop”. The pitcher must be on the pitching plate with the ball and come to a complete stop, with the ball motionless, prior to starting the pitch (which is defined as the first movement made by the pitcher in the pitching motion). The most common violations of the stop are:

- Walking on the pitching plate and starting the pitch without a stop
- Catching the return from the catcher on the pitching plate and starting the next pitch without a stop

## “Minimum Height Of The Pitch”

A legal pitch must have a perceptible arc and reach a height of at least 6 feet from the ground. In today's game with the minimum pitching distance being 50 feet for adults, it is difficult to have a pitch reach the batter's strike zone and not achieve an arc of 6 feet. Although difficult it is possible, and the umpire must consistently recognize and call this pitch illegal in a timely manner. The pitch that doesn't reach 6 feet will typically be delivered with a higher speed and reach the plate quicker so the umpire must recognize and call this pitch illegal as soon as possible to allow the batter to decide whether to swing or not swing at the pitch.

## “Maximum Height Of The Pitch”

A legal pitch must have a perceptible arc while not exceeding a maximum height of 10 feet from the ground (12 feet in Senior SP). In today's game with the minimum pitching distance being 50 feet for adults, pitchers have the ability to throw the ball above the maximum limit in order to get it to plate and pass through the strike zone without the pitch appearing as high as it would with a shorter pitching distance. Once again, the umpire must consistently recognize and call the illegal pitch that is too high in a timely manner to allow the batter to decide whether to swing or not swing at the pitch.

## Why Is It Important To Stop To See The Call?

**Stop, see the play, make the call.**

USA Softball UIC's observes too many umpires running through a play and/or not fully stopping to observe the interaction of all four elements coming together. It is important that umpires **STOP** and are stationary when these four elements come together. This allows the umpire to **SEE THE PLAY**, move when necessary to get an unobstructed view of the four elements. Seeing the completed play from a stationary position allows the umpire to have better timing, to **MAKE THE CALL**. Give a strong verbal call simultaneously with a strong signal.

## What Is USA Softball's Tag Play Mechanics and Philosophies?

There is always a lot of discussion concerning movement by umpires on force and tag plays. Force plays are easier by nature as the base is fixed, not moving, there is little movement besides the stretch from the fielder as the ball is received and the runner is running in a straight line through the base in most situations. Tag plays can be extremely tricky and difficult as most of the four elements, excluding the base we are watching, are all moving at different speeds and angles. It is important that we, USA Softball, continue to discuss and breakdown the different variables that go into achieving the best angle and distance for the dynamics of a tag plays.

In USA Softball, our mechanic expectation for tag plays is that we move to a starting position first. The starting position for tag plays should be 90 degrees to the path of

the runner just short of the base they are trying to reach. As the four elements come closer, move if needed, to get an unobstructed view of the play. We believe moving to the starting position first puts you in the best position to see the four elements of the play. Then as the four elements come closer you can better judge if and when to move to get an unobstructed view of the tag while keeping all the elements of the play in front of you.

Helpful hints that we teach to assist you in understanding how a play is going to develop are:

- Read the defense fielding and throwing the ball. If we as umpires read the player's / fielder throwing the ball hips and shoulders, it will tell us where or the direction they are going to throw the ball.
- Read how and where the defense is setting up in relation to the base. The distance between the fielder and the runner's path may also be a variable of how the four elements will come together.
  - o Are they setting up in front, middle or behind the base?
  - o Are they setting up in the runner's base path, potential obstruction?
- Read the speed and path of the runner toward the base.
  - o Is the runner's path to the leading edge?
  - o Is it toward the back corner of the base?
- Read the speed of the ball on a throw compared to the runner. It is important to gauge, is the ball closer than the runner or is the ball further from the runner. When the ball arrives compared to when the runner arrives, will be a variable on how a fielder may apply the tag.
  - o If a ball is going to arrive in front of the runner, tags may be more likely to be at the leading edge or in front of the runner's body.
  - o If the ball is going to arrive behind the runner, tags are more likely to be at the side or back of the body, like a swipe tag. The ball/tag is catching up to the runner/body.
- With the above variables, read and move based on all the elements. This should help you move to the best angle and distance for a swipe tag and at the same time stay out of the way of a possible throw for a subsequent play.
- We also believe a movement of about three feet in either direction (right or left) from your starting position will allow you the best unobstructed angle and distance, to see almost every swipe tag and a tag applied straight on.

For tag plays specifically at home plate, we teach to try and not go inside the diamond because after the play at home, any subsequent plays that develop, will be to one of the other bases and the calling umpire may be in the throwing lanes on many of the throws.

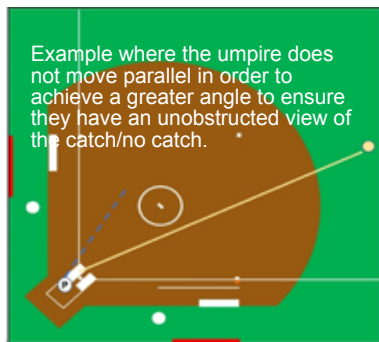
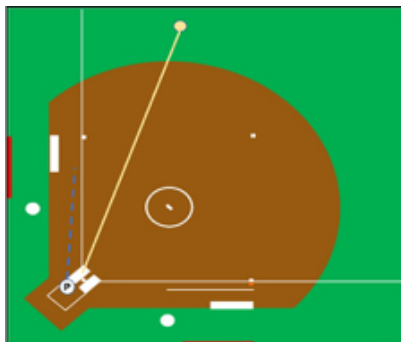
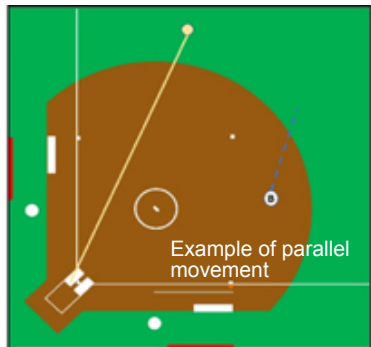
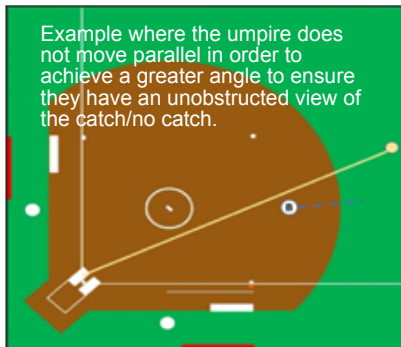
## Why Move “Parallel” To The Flight Of A Fly Ball?

The basic principle when chasing a fly ball remains the same. Stop and be set prior to the catch/no catch, see the play and make the call facing the play.

Any umpire, both plate and base umpire, that chases a fly ball should chase “parallel” to the flight of the ball. This chase path may not be a true parallel path to the flight of the ball, as you may need to achieve a greater angle as this movement is intended to obtain an unobstructed view of the catch/no catch. Chasing directly at the fielder will result in not having an unobstructed view on a possible catch/no catch especially on a ball caught near the ground.

There is a situation that requires an umpire moving directly at a fielder. This situation occurs when the primary responsibility of the calling umpire is fair/foul. In this case, the calling umpire must remain near the foul line, stop and be set, see the play, indicate ball status if touched then make the call.

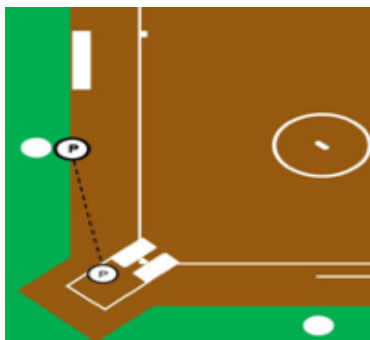
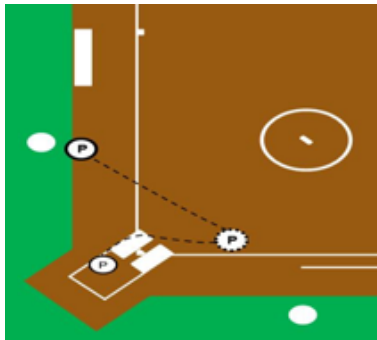
In all cases, the chasing umpire must turn with the subsequent throw to the infield to observe any additional plays.



## Plate Umpire

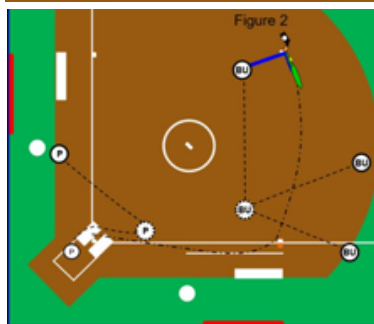
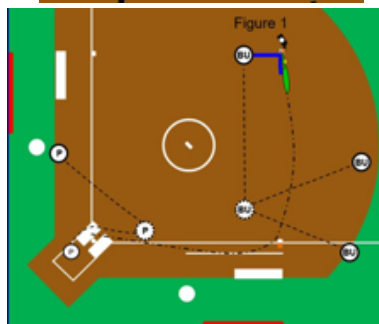
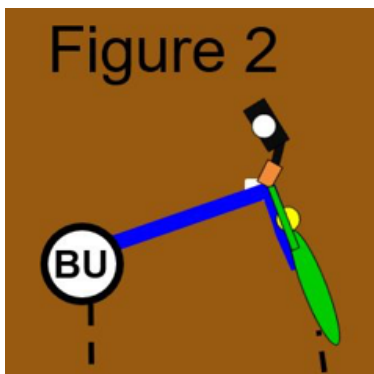
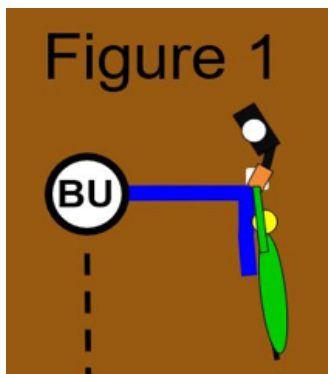
### **Proper Use Of The Holding Zone.**

It is important that plate umpires move up into the holding zone in order to see all potential plays along with communicating with their partners that they are in the proper position pertaining to their responsibilities. The holding zone is used in the Two Umpire System and Three Umpire System when an umpire chases a fly ball reverting the crew back to the Two Umpire System. Plate umpires should move out from behind the plate towards the holding zone  $\frac{1}{2}$  way to 3B in foul ground to an area where you have an unobstructed view of all four elements. It is crucial for plate umpires to remain in the holding zone until the play develops, meaning the ball takes you to the play. Be prepared to move as the play develops as you are responsible for any play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate.



## Base Umpire

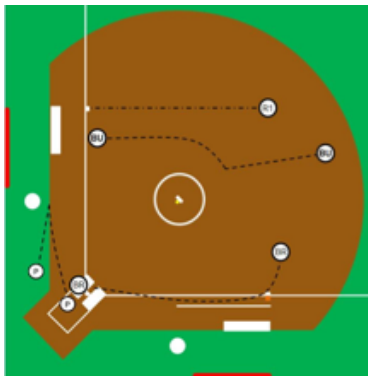
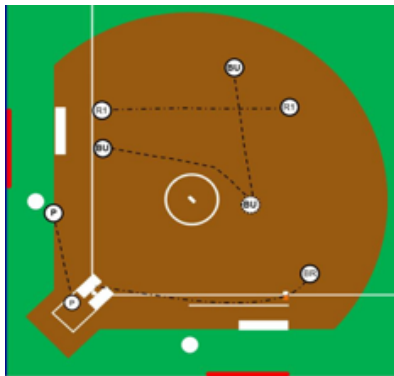
**TAG PLAYS:** For tag plays, your final calling distance should be 10 to 12 feet from the play and 90 degrees to the path of the runner. It is important that umpires identify the runner's path, the defense's positioning and how the play is developing to move to a final calling position to obtain an unobstructed view and maintain the view of all four elements, in relation to where the tag will be applied. The two diagrams below illustrate examples of the umpires positioning adjusting based on the runner's path, defense's positioning, the base, and where the tag is applied. Ultimately, umpires should adjust their positioning to obtain an unobstructed view of all four elements enabling them to see between the offense and defense and watch the tag being applied (see through the tag).



**R1 at 2B. Flyball To The Outfield That Is Caught.**

**Why does the BU take the lone runner to 3B instead of the PU in the Two Umpire System or when reverting to the Two Umpire System?**

USA Softball's philosophy is the Base Umpire takes the last runner into 3B or a lone runner into 3B. In this scenario, R1 starts at 2B. Flyball is hit to the outfield and caught, so the batter-runner is out and there is the lone runner that started at 2B. BU is responsible for the lone runner starting at 2B. If R1 stays at 2B or advances to 3B, the BU is responsible for that runner at either base. If the BU achieves the proper positioning inside the diamond slightly ahead of 2B, they can watch for and move accordingly to their responsibilities; tag-up at 2B, play at 2B and / or play at 3B if R1 advances to 3B. USA Softball feels this mechanic maximizes the efficiency of both umpires. Having the BU take R1 into 3B allows the PU to stay ahead of the runner in position for a possible play at the plate. Other codes have situational mechanics that allow the PU to take the lone runner, R1 into 3B. USA Softball doesn't have situational mechanics resulting in BU taking the lone runner, R1, into 3B.

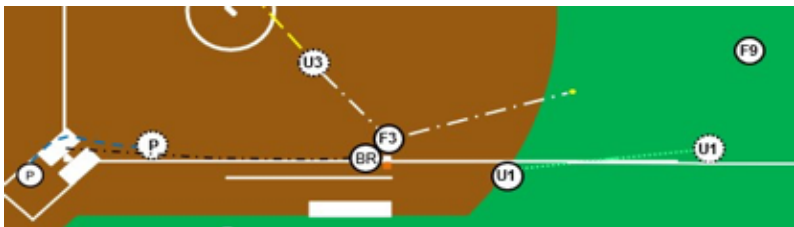
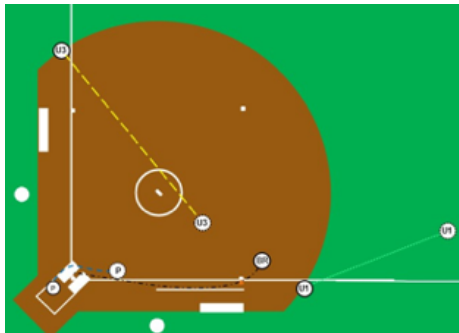




## In The Three Umpire System, Why Does U3 Cover 1B And Not PU When U1 Chases?

USA Softball believes that having U3 covering 1B instead of the PU provides more benefits when weighing the pros and cons.

- U3 covering all plays at 1B, 2B and 3B stays in line with our Two Umpire System.
- U3 hustling across the field to see / call the play at 1B allows for the umpire that has the best angle to make the call at 1B while the PU concentrates on their responsibilities of any infractions near home plate and interference / obstruction violations.
- Angle over distance has always been a priority and in this situation U3 has the best angle to have an unobstructed view of all four elements based on the throw coming from right field.
- Based on U3's position hustling across the field for their responsibilities at 1B, that still keeps them ahead of the batter-runner (runner) at 1B if the runner advances to 2B or 3B.



**Focusing in on the unobstructed angle that U3 has of all 4 elements even if they only get to the pitcher's circle, they still have angle over distance.**

**Benefits Of U3 Using The Buttonhook In Fair Territory Instead Of Foul Territory?**

There are a lot of thoughts that it is easier for U3 starting on the line to buttonhook inside the diamond using a path in foul territory. The current pathways in fair territory, in front of or behind the runner, allows the umpire to maintain consistency in executing the inside/outside movement. This gives the umpire a better opportunity to achieve 90 degrees to the path of the runner, providing the best angle and distance to observe the play, allows them to achieve an unobstructed view, to be able to stop and make the call.

**SECTION 2 DEFINITIONS**

**ANGLE OVER DISTANCE:** The decision an umpire must make when moving a great distance to the proper position for a play. Based on the type of play, the umpire should obtain the best possible angle even if it includes a longer distance view.

**BALL STATUS:** A mechanic that an umpire uses to signal the location of a batted ball in flight near a foul line when first touched by a fielder.

**BUTTONHOOK:** The movement of a Base Umpire from outside the infield to a position inside the diamond while picking up the ball and glancing at the runner. This is accomplished by planting the right foot and using a pivoting motion toward the runner.

**CHECK SWING:** An intentional attempt by the batter to stop the completion of their swing.

**COUNTER ROTATED:** When the First Base Umpire's starting position is off the foul line in the Three-Umpire System.

**DIAMOND:** The area of the infield inside the baseline.

**FLAT PITCH (SP):** A term used to describe a pitch that does not reach the required six foot minimum height.

**FORTY FIVE DEGREE ANGLE:** The maximum position at first base which an umpire should not go beyond as their final calling position.

**GOOD PELVIC ALIGNMENT (GPA):** The alignment of the Plate Umpire's pelvis with the outside front corner of home plate.

**HEEL/TOE STANCE:** The position of the Plate Umpire's feet when the heel of the foot closest to the batter is in a straight line with the toe of the foot closest to the catcher.

**HIGH PITCH (SP):** A term used to describe a pitch that exceeds the 10 foot maximum arc.

**HOLDING ZONE:** An area halfway between 3B and home plate outside the diamond, adjacent to the third base foul line, where the Plate Umpire should go to read a play in certain situations.

**INSIDE/OUTSIDE THEORY:** The theory that governs the movement of the Base Umpire, as determined by a batted or thrown ball, inside or outside the infield.

**NINETY DEGREE ANGLE:** The primary position of observation by an umpire for viewing the required four elements to make a call.

**PARALLEL MOVEMENT:** The mechanic for movement by the umpire between bases. A parallel line exists inside and outside the baselines for each base, and the proper movement is up and down the appropriate parallel line.

**PRE PITCH PREPARATION:** The thought process umpires should use to anticipate a play prior to each pitch to better understand where they may or may not need to move. This includes but is not limited to: the count, position of the runners, defensive positioning, and recognition of any situations that may occur.

**SECONDARY POSITION:** The movement away from the primary position to an area an umpire should attain an unobstructed view of any subsequent play.

**SHADING THE LEAD RUNNER:** Position in which the Base Umpire assumes off the foul line with runners on base. The Base Umpire should position themselves closer to the lead runner (20-30 feet), but not any closer than 15 feet.

**SLOT:** The position the Plate Umpire assumes behind the catcher slightly inside the inside corner of the plate with their inside ear lined up with the inside corner and outside the perimeter of the strike zone prior to the set position.

**TAG PLAY:** A situation in which a defensive player in possession of the ball touches a runner or batter-runner who is not in contact with a base.

**TRACKING THE BALL:** The act of watching the ball from the pitcher's hand into the catcher's glove/mitt using a slight movement of the head guided by the nose.

**TRAILING THE BATTER- RUNNER:** The movement of the Plate Umpire toward First Base near the line in fair territory to observe possible violations by the batter-runner and to assist the Base Umpire with unusual situations.

**WALKING THE LINE:** The mechanic in which the Base Umpire(s) starts on the foul line and moves toward home plate as the pitch is delivered. Walk the line by taking one or two steps toward home plate, pushing off with your foot furthest from the foul line to move into fair territory when the ball is batted. Umpires should stay upright throughout the entire process to allow for quicker movement, smooth transition and maximize your field of view.

**USA SOFTBALL UMPIRE SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES**

**INTRODUCTION:** Social Media has become a tool for everyone to voice an opinion, to congratulate, to complain, to find out information on a real time basis. It can be a tool for highlighting the positives of your organization and / or pointing out the negatives of your organization, a team, a coach or an umpire. Social Media has become more accessible than ever and is changing the way we communicate on a daily basis. It has taken the place of sharing information face to face. The guidelines for functioning in an electronic world are similar to the values and ethics policies individuals are expected to live by every day, whether you're posting, Tweeting, talking with coworkers or chatting over the neighbor's fence.

**PURPOSE:** To assist members of the USA Softball Umpire Program participating in respectful Social Media in all its forms as well as protecting the mission, reputation and membership of USA Softball. It is also our goal to layout a few helpful guidelines and to provide helpful and practical advice when operating on the internet as an identifiable representative of USA Softball. These guidelines apply to members who create or contribute to blogs, forums, wikis, social networks, or any other form of social media. The list includes but is not limited to: Text, Twitter, Yelp, Tumblr, Google+, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, Facebook pages/groups, or comments on online media stories. USA Softball umpires, as members of the National Governing Body of Softball, should exercise care in setting appropriate boundaries between their personal and public online behavior, understanding that what is private in the digital world often has the possibility of becoming public, even without their knowledge or consent. USA Softball expects all members acting as independent contractors to carefully review the privacy settings on any social media and networking sites they use and exercise care and good judgment when posting content and information on such sites.

**THINGS TO REMEMBER WHEN ON SOCIAL MEDIA**

- Consider social media communications as public at all times — even if created with private intentions. If you are going to use social media in any form, consider your communication may be read by anyone at any time.
- On Social Media, you may be publicly associated with the Umpiring industry, USA Softball, your Local Association, your assigners and/or your partners. Act accordingly.
- Communications among officials for learning purposes should be done privately and not through the use of social media. Be mindful that emails and other forms of direct communication can be made public.

**THE DO'S OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

- Be very sparing in the sharing of your personal information, including photos, surroundings and settings accordingly. Report fake profiles or posts to the appropriate authorities/governing bodies in a timely fashion.

- Do use social media as a means for sharing information with members of your local association. Some local groups in various states across the country have created association pages and have their group members on their friend lists. This can be a great mechanism for information dissemination and can also be a page for recognition of group members and to give potential new members a first look at becoming a USA Softball UMPIRE.
- Do use social media as a recruitment tool. Given the median age of most users of social media, it can be a great means of getting new members into the avocation.
- Do remember to keep things positive if you post information on these sites. If you come home from a game wherein everything went smoothly, it is okay to generically post about it. For example, you could say, "I had a great softball game tonight. Both teams displayed great sportsmanship. Reminds me why I umpire."
- Be aware that posts on social media are visible to the general public. Even if you limit access to your page to friends, it is likely that your post will be viewed by someone beyond the circle of people you intended to see it.
- Think twice before you post. If there is anything in your post that could be construed as a criticism of officials, of officials' decisions, or of leagues, teams, administrators, coaches or athletes...it's better left unsent.

### **THE DON'TS OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

- Avoid posting specifics about your schedule.
- Do not post any disparaging comments about players, coaches, teams, leagues, fans or fellow umpires online.
- Do not advertise where you are umpiring at any time.
- Do not be a "cheerleader" for any league, team, coach, player or umpire on these sites.
- When posting a picture of yourself wearing the shirt of your alma mater online and then call a game for that team the following week, you may be setting the stage for allegations of bias by that school's opponent.
- Do not post specifics about games, whether good or bad.
- Do not start posting online after you have had a rough game.
- Do not post details about other umpire assignments, to playoff games for instance, until that information has been officially released. Don't use social media as a news service.
- Do not use social media to criticize state or local association policies, assigning practices, etc.
- Do not post regarding calls made by umpires in other games, whatever the level. You and other umpires might debate the call you saw on TV, but debating the call on Facebook or Twitter is a no-no.
- Do not post pictures of yourself while at a Championship after or in between games.
- Do not post items that pertain to your debrief after your game is over.

- Avoid texting, instant messaging, Facebooking or any other forms of communication while umpires are in the heat of the moment.
- Do not post any inappropriate pictures, statements, or emails of yourself on any social media site.
- Do not post any inappropriate pictures, statements, or emails of anyone or anything on any social media site under the USA Softball umbrella.

### **BASIC PRINCIPLES**

- Integrity is our most important commodity: Avoid writing or posting anything that would embarrass The Times or compromise your ability to do your job.
- Assume that your professional life and your personal life will merge online regardless of your care in separating them.
- Even if you use privacy tools (determining who can view your page or profile, for instance), assume that everything you write, exchange or receive on a social media site is public.
- Just as political bumper stickers and lawn signs are to be avoided in the offline world, so too are partisan expressions online.
- Be aware of perceptions. If you “friend” a source or join a group on one side of a debate, do so with the other side as well. Also understand that readers may view your participation in a group as your acceptance of its views; be clear that you’re looking for story ideas or simply collecting information. Consider that you may be an observer of online content without actively participating.

### **Use of USA Softball's Name or Trademark(s) without USA Softball's Consent is Prohibited.**

USA Softball has ownership and legal rights to its tradename and trademarks, including the USA Softball name, the USA Softball logo, and USA Softball's other federally-registered trademarks. As such, USA Softball has the right to control all publicity and usage of its name and trademarks. Therefore, you should not use the “USA Softball” name, logo or trademarks when posting to social media, unless you have been provided advance consent by USA Softball, Inc. This includes a prohibition on any social media postings that contain photographs that clearly depict a USA Softball name, logo or trademark.

**DISCLAIMER and LIMITATIONS:** The content provided in these guidelines is intended solely for general information purposes, and is provided with the understanding that the author is not providing professional advice or services for any particular situation. Social media activities are driven by specific circumstances unique to each situation and to an extent you are concerned about a particular situation, you should consult a professional advisor. The information in these guidelines was posted with reasonable care and attention. However, it is possible that some information in these guidelines is incomplete, incorrect, or inapplicable to particular circumstances or conditions. USA Softball does not accept liability for direct or indirect losses resulting from using, relying or acting upon information in these guidelines.

**UMPIRE MANUAL**  
**CODE OF ETHICS FOR UMPIRES**

1. Honor all contracts regardless of possible inconvenience or financial basis in a punctual and professional manner.
2. Study the rules and mechanics of the game diligently, observe the work of other good umpires, and attempt to improve at all times.
3. Remember that while your work as an umpire is important, you must conduct yourself in such a way that spectator attention is directed to the players during the game and not at you.
4. Dress and maintain your appearance in a manner befitting the dignity and importance of the umpire.
5. Be fair and unbiased in your decisions, rendering them without regard to the score or the quality of the play on the field.
6. Cooperate and be professional in your associations with your fellow umpires and do nothing to cause them public embarrassment.
7. Be firm but not overbearing; positive but never rude; dignified but never 'cocky.' Remember the good umpire doesn't have to have the last word.
8. Be prepared both physically and mentally to administer the game.
9. Do not smoke on or in the vicinity of the playing field, nor drink any alcoholic beverages before the game you are to work.
10. Do not give information which might be used by a team's future opponent.
11. Keep in mind that the game is more important than the wishes of any individual player or coach or the ambitions of any individual umpire.
12. You represent USA Softball at all times. Avoid comments, conversations and social media presentations that reflect negatively on you and your representations of USA Softball.
13. Administer the game with clear, concise, and proper communication skills both verbal and nonverbal.
14. Accept responsibility for all your actions.



**CHAPTER 1  
PREREQUISITES FOR GOOD UMPIRING****Successful umpires possess certain common qualities. They include:**

1. A thorough knowledge of the rules
2. Effective communication skills: both verbal and listening
3. Effective game management, composure, self control, and a current knowledge of USA Softball mechanics.

*In short, there is no substitute for game experience. The quality of judgment is only achieved through lessons learned in game situations. The game of softball demands hustle at all times by every umpire. Athletes who play the game of softball work hard on conditioning to perform at a peak level. Successful umpires have to achieve physical fitness prior to the start of the season to be able to move at the player's speed. Rules study and experience will not compensate for an umpire being out of position because they are not physically fit enough to match the movement of the players. Umpires should be prepared to match the speed and level of the game. Successful umpiring requires complete concentration, full energies and undivided attention from the first pitch to the last out of each game.*

**A. ELEMENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL UMPIRE:**

1. **Professional Appearance** - A professional appearance should be a habit you never break.
  - a. Clean, pressed USA Softball uniform
  - b. Shoes shined
  - c. Official USA Softball cap
  - d. USA Softball Ball bag, Indicator, Plate Brush
  - e. Appropriate protective equipment for the game being played.
2. **Communication between umpires is just as important as communication between players:**

We want to expand on the importance that verbal, visual, non-verbal (body language) communication has on umpires. Communication is vital to the success of any umpire and/or umpire crew on and off the field. Effective communication skills must be practiced just like our mechanics or studying the rulebook.

As an umpire, we must always effectively communicate. Starting from the time we accept the assignment, to the pre-game with partners, pre-game with coaches, during the game and finishing with the post-game with partners and/or UIC's. To effectively communicate, we need to understand that people communicate verbally, visually and non-verbally (body language). In the USA Softball Umpire Manual, we expect our umpires to utilize all three forms of communication in an effective and positive manner. Most of the time all three forms are used simultaneously.

Communicating with partners in the Two and Three Umpire Systems is vital. There are multiple pieces that move during every play. Verbally and visually communicating with your partners can ensure the success of proper rotations and coverage of each play. Umpires should use all forms of communication anytime they are rotating from one position to another. Examples of effectively using all three forms of communication in USA Softball;

- a. **Plate Umpires (Two and Three Umpire System)**
  - i. PU verbally communicates that they are rotating to 3B in the Two and Three Umpire Systems.
  - ii. PU visually confirms that their partner(s) heard/saw them rotating by witnessing their partner(s);
    1. Also rotating to their next position if applicable.
    2. Verbally reply when completing your rotation.
  - iii. PU's movement and positioning matches what they verbally communicated rotating up to 3B per the prescribed mechanics.
- b. **Base Umpires (Three Umpire System. No one chases)**
  - i. U1 verbally communicates that they are rotating to home plate in the Three Umpire System
  - ii. U1 visually confirms that their partner(s) heard/saw them rotating to the plate by witnessing;
    1. PU is rotating up to 3B.
    2. U3 is rotating between 2B and 1B.
    3. Both partners verbally reply.
  - iii. U1's movement and positioning match what they verbally communicated rotating up to home plate per the prescribed mechanics.
- c. **Base Umpires (Three Umpire System. Umpire Chasing)**
  - i. U3 verbally communicates that they are chasing a flyball that is their responsibility, by loudly stating "going", "chase" and/or "2 ump"
  - ii. U3 visually confirms their partners heard/saw them by glancing back at their partner(s) and witnessing;
    1. PU is rotating per the Two Umpire System mechanics.
    2. U1 is rotating per the Two Umpire System mechanics.
    3. Both partners verbally reply.
  - iii. U1's movement and positioning match what they verbally communicated rotating up to home plate per the prescribed mechanics.

USA Softball expects umpires to use all three forms of communication throughout the game in the Two and Three Umpire Systems. What umpires specifically verbalize to their partners are up to them if it is clear, concise, direct and loud enough. If a Base Umpire chases, they would verbalize, "going", "chase" and/or "2 umpire" and the other umpire(s) should verbally confirm. In the Three Umpire System when no umpire chases, the Plate Umpire verbally confirms that the crew remains in a three umpire system. Terms such as "3 umpire", "all in" etc should be used to do this. If a Plate Umpire checks with Base Umpire for a

check swing, they may verbally ask “did they go”, “swing”. The ultimate goal is to COMMUNICATE.

Umpires need to understand that not rotating to the proper position in a timely manner can be a form of a “breakdown” in the rotation. Umpires that do not commit and move to their position for a play per USA Softball Mechanics could be communicating to their partner(s) that they are NOT rotating, creating confusion between umpires.

### **Communications:**

- a. Always be business-like and professional when communicating with anyone about the game.
  - b. Support your crew throughout the entire game. If an information request comes from your partner, give relevant information in a concise manner.
  - c. When having a discussion with a manager or coach demonstrate good listening skills and answer the question directly using the language from the rulebook.
  - d. Communicating with your partners should be in the form of both verbal and visual confirmation. Verbalize loud enough for your partners to hear you when rotating to cover plays, by acknowledging verbally and visually.
  - e. Communication only works when it is acknowledged, therefore respond to your partners so that they know that they have been heard and seen.
3. **Conditioning:** Maintaining a good level of fitness not only helps an umpire’s movement but also improves their ability to maintain focus throughout the game. Successful umpires have to achieve physical fitness prior to the start of the season to be able to move at the player’s speed. Rules study and experience will not compensate for an umpire being out of position because they are not physically fit enough to match the movement of the players.
  4. **Game management/ Game control comes from leading by example.** Lead by example, hustle during the play and to your position after the play. If you want players to hustle on and off of the field, then you should hustle to your next position at the end of the inning. Remember to keep a tight rein on your temperament and remember that no provocation, not even a physical attack, should cause an umpire to lose sight of your primary responsibility of keeping the game under control. Use preventive umpiring techniques to handle little problems such as equipment left on the field, coaches consistently arguing calls or ball players bantering. Address it early in a respectable and calm manner and avoid problems later.

5. **Judgment is experience salted with cool-headed common sense:** It takes years to develop good judgment. Umpires earn the respect and credibility of the players by the way we render decisions. They should keep a tight rein on their temperament and remember that no provocation, not even a physical attack, should cause an umpire to lose sight of their primary responsibility of keeping the game under control. The players will relax and trust the good judgment of the umpire if the call makes sense. Calls that don't make sense put players on edge and are cause for question. To develop good judgment umpires should take time to learn the common sense application of the rules during game situations and USA Softball Mechanics.
6. **Mechanics are the backbone of umpiring:** The USA Softball National Umpire Staff spends a large amount of time developing effective mechanics designed to give every umpire the best opportunity to judge each play.
  - a. Plate mechanics begin with calling balls and strikes and end with the required movement by an umpire to complete their other duties. This includes the elements of stance, the set position, calling the pitch and movement from the plate when required.
  - b. Base mechanics begin with the fundamentals of positioning followed by timing, judgment, signals and a verbal call. Umpires should work on improving their mechanics during every game.
7. **Positioning equals credibility:** Every umpire must be a "student of the game" to prepare for every situation that may occur during a game. Pre-Pitch Preparation is essential. Concentration on the play at hand by pre-pitch planning consists of a check-list of thoughts like the count, outs, runners, ground ball, fly ball, and what do I do when the ball is hit among other things. Successful umpiring requires complete concentration, full energies and undivided attention from the first pitch to the last out of each game. A current knowledge of USA Softball mechanics will place the umpire in the proper position to umpire each play to its completion.
8. **Rule knowledge is essential for successful umpiring:** To develop a complete knowledge of the rules each umpire should study their rulebook regularly and attend Local and Regional Rules Clinics as well as a National Umpire School. Umpires who are committed to becoming the very best should attend the Advanced Camps offered in both Slow Pitch and Fast Pitch.
9. **Timing is essential for believable umpiring:** A call made before the umpire has seen the "whole play" can be a mistake. A call made after an extended delay is often viewed as a lack of confidence in the call by the umpire. Calls made too quick or too late have the same effect on ball players...NOT BELIEVABLE! Good timing is equally important on the bases and at the plate. A successful umpire will allow themselves to see the whole pitch or the whole play, then after a slight hesitation, make the call.

**B. DIFFICULT SITUATIONS**

**1. Appeal plays are a unique part of the game initiated by the offended team.**

**a. Appeals include:**

1. Batting out of order
2. A runner missing a base or touching the wrong portion of the double base if a play is being made
3. Attempting to advance to 2B after overrunning 1B
4. A base runner leaving too soon on a caught fly ball

**b. Appeals may be made:**

1. During a live ball or dead ball
2. Prior to the next pitch
3. Before the defense has left the grounds
4. Before the umpires leave the grounds at the end of the game.

**2. Ejections occur when an umpire removes a participant from the game.**

The ejected person must leave the grounds and have no contact with other participants or umpires. The Plate Umpire will not restart the game until the ejected participant has been removed. Explain the time frame to the manager and let them handle the situation. The ejected participant should be allowed to return for the next game unless they have physically attacked an umpire. When working with a partner, remember that the ejecting umpire's duties are finished when the ejection occurs. It is now time for the partner to step in and remove the ejected participant from the grounds and out of the park.

**3. Forfeits should be a last resort.** If working with a partner always consult

the crew before declaring a forfeit. All umpires can declare a forfeit, but be sure to exhaust every option before arriving at the decision. Although the rule book allows the umpire to rule a forfeit if the ejected participant is not removed in one minute use good judgment. Pulling a watch only antagonizes all concerned.

**4. Protests happen when a team member does not understand the rule interpretation or application an umpire just made, not a judgment call.**

An umpire's top priority is to get the call right. Once a protest is filed, notification must be given to the opposing coach prior to the next pitch. In Championship play a Protest Committee will convene to render a decision before the next pitch. If the protest is upheld the game will resume from the point the protest was filed.



**CHAPTER 2  
COMMUNICATIONS AND SIGNALS**

Approved USA Softball signals are designed to emphasize an umpire's ruling on a play as well as to communicate with fellow umpires, coaches, players, spectators and scorekeepers. Proper use of USA Softball approved signals reinforce the professional appearance and demeanor expected of a USA Softball umpire.

**ROUTINE SAFE OR NO CATCH**

- 1) Stand up-right with the feet shoulder-width apart, facing square to the play and eyes on the ball.
- 2) Bring both hands to the chest about shoulder high.
- 3) Extend the arms, parallel to the ground, with the palms of the hands down and say "safe".
- 4) Finish signal by dropping your arms to your sides.

**SELL SAFE**

- 1) Use the same mechanic as the routine safe signal and add emphasis by stepping toward the play and leading with your left foot as you make a loud verbal safe call and safe signal simultaneously.
- 2) Finish square to the play by bringing the right foot forward into line with the left foot and drop arms to your sides.

**ROUTINE OUT OR STRIKE**

- 1) Stand up-right with feet shoulder-width apart, facing square to the play and eyes on the ball.
- 2) Bring your left hand up belt high.
- 3) Bring your right hand and arm out to the side of the body and up to a 90 degree angle with the closed fist facing your head.
- 4) The right arm should be parallel to the ground and forward enough to see your elbow with peripheral vision as you verbalize the out call.
- 5) Finish signal by dropping your arm to your side.

NOTE: Strike calls should be verbalized in the down position before the signal is given.



## **SELL OUT**

- 1) Start up-right facing square to the play with the feet shoulder-width apart and eyes on the ball.
- 2) Take a step toward the play with your left foot.
- 3) Bring your right foot up behind the left foot and shift your weight onto the right foot.
- 4) Take a second step toward the play with your left foot as you make an overhand throwing motion and verbalize the word "out".
- 5) Bring your right foot in line with your left foot as you complete the throwing motion ending in a balanced position, facing the play.



## **FAIR BALL**

- 1) Start up-right facing square to the play with the feet shoulder-width apart and eyes on the ball.
- 2) Point toward fair ground by raising your inside hand and arm no higher than your shoulder and parallel to the ground.
- 3) If further emphasis is needed point a second time toward fair ground.
- 4) DO NOT verbalize a fair ball call.



## **DEAD BALL, TIME OUT, NO PITCH OR FOUL BALL**

- 1) Stand up-right facing square to the play with the feet shoulder-width apart and eyes on the ball.
- 2) Raise both hands high above the head with palms facing out as you verbalize "Dead Ball", "Time Out", "No Pitch" or "Foul Ball."





## HOLD UP PLAY

- 1) Stand up-right with feet shoulder-width apart and facing the pitcher.
- 2) Indicate that play should NOT begin by holding up the hand opposite the batter with the palm facing the pitcher.



## PLAY BALL

Indicate that play should begin by pointing to the pitcher with the hand opposite the batter and say "Play" or "Play Ball."



## COUNT

- 1) Raise both arms above the head indicating number of balls with consecutive fingers on the left hand and strikes with consecutive fingers on the right hand.
- 2) Give both the number of balls and strikes verbally each time the count is given.
- 3) Rotate your hands, not your body, so everyone can see the count.



## **FOUL TIP**

- 1) Rise and raise both hands and brush the fingers of the right hand over the left hand, chest high in front of the body.
- 2) Follow with the strike signal and no verbal strike call.



## **INFIELD FLY**

- 1) Stand up-right facing square to the play with feet shoulder-width apart and with eyes on the ball.
- 2) When the ball reaches its highest point extend your right arm above your head with fist closed and verbalize "Infield Fly, the batter is out" or if near a foul line, "Infield Fly, if fair, the batter is out."



## **FOUR BASE AWARD**

Slow Pitch: Raise the right arm above the head, hand open with four fingers shown and verbally call "four bases."



## **HOME RUN**

Raise the right arm above the head, fist closed and rotate the fist.



## **TWO BASE AWARD OR GROUND RULE DOUBLE**

Raise the right arm above the head, hand open with two consecutive fingers extended and verbally call "two bases."



## **DELAYED DEAD BALL OR ILLEGAL PITCH OR OBSTRUCTION**

- 1) Stand up-right with feet shoulder width apart and eyes on the ball.
- 2) Raise the left arm shoulder high and parallel to the ground with the fist closed.
- 3) Verbalize "illegal pitch", or "obstruction" as needed to describe the action observed.



## **REQUESTING HELP ON A CHECK SWING**

1) The Plate Umpire should step out from behind the catcher to be visible to your partner, in Fast Pitch, remove their mask with their left hand and:

A. In a Two Umpire System point to the Base Umpire and ask in a loud verbal voice "Did they go?"

B. In a Three Umpire System

**1. Right-Handed Batter:** The Plate Umpire should step out from behind the plate, remove their mask and point to the U1, no matter where they are positioned on the field.

**2. Left Handed Batter:** The Plate Umpire should step out from behind the plate, remove their mask and point to the U3, no matter where they are positioned on the field.

2) The Base Umpire responds by saying "yes" and gives a routine out signal, or "no" and gives a routine safe signal.

3) The Plate Umpire places their mask back on and gives the count to reflect the end result of the decision.



## **THE INFIELD FLY SITUATION IS ON**

1) The Plate Umpire should put their right hand over their chest and make eye contact with their partner.

2) The Base Umpire(s) will return the same signal to the Plate Umpire.



### **THE INFIELD FLY SITUATION IS OFF**

- 1) The Plate Umpire will tap their left forearm with their right hand and make eye contact with their partner.
- 2) The Base Umpires will return the same signal to the Plate Umpire.

### **REQUESTING THE COUNT**

- 1) Plate Umpire removes their mask, if necessary, and verbally asks their partner "what is the count?"
- 2) The Base Umpire will verbally give the count back to the Plate Umpire.

### **REQUESTING THE NUMBER OF OUTS**

(use the same procedure as above for the count).

**NOTE:** When the Base Umpire is missing the count or number of outs they should use the same process.

**CHAPTER 3  
PRE AND POST GAME RESPONSIBILITIES**

*The Pre-Game preparation should begin when you receive your assignment. Record the assignment in your date book and then make sure to contact your partner or partners well in advance of the scheduled game.*

*Arrive at the complex at least 60 minutes prior to the scheduled starting time and inform the appropriate administrators that you have arrived. (i.e. Coaches, Tournament Director, UIC, Tournament personnel. Etc.).*

*Review the ground rules with the appropriate game administrators, then establish the location of the game balls and where the scorekeepers will be located.*

**PRE-GAME WITH PARTNERS**

*The purpose of this meeting is to get the umpire crew on the “same page” for the game. The Plate Umpire should conduct this conference and encourage other crew members to participate. Do not use this conference to deviate from mechanics in this Manual.*

**The Pre-Game conference should include the following topics:**

- A. New Rules
- B. Fly Ball Coverage
- C. Tag Up Responsibilities
- D. Umpire to Umpire signals
- E. Requesting help from your partner:
  - 1. Check Swing
  - 2. Appeal to wrong umpire
  - 3. Request for information

**NOTE:** *The umpire responsible for the call asks their partner for information and announces the decision after the conference is concluded.*

- F. Special Rules:
  - 1. Time Limit
  - 2. Run - Ahead Rule
  - 3. Tiebreaker procedure (All Fast Pitch and Men's Senior Slow Pitch)
- G. Managing Umpire to Participant discussions and ejections:
  - 1. Partners should insure discussion is “one-on-one”
  - 2. Partners take control of removing ejected participant
- H. Special situations or team-specific tendencies including:
  - 1. Team Speed
  - 2. Bunting and Slapping
  - 3. Is it a rivalry game?
  - 4. Is there ‘bad blood’ between these two teams?
- I. Entering and exiting the field:
  - 1. Always enter together
  - 2. Exit together on side of ‘least resistance’

**UMPIRE CREW ENTERING THE FIELD**

*The umpire crew should perform these specific duties upon entering the field of play and prior to the pre-game coaches' conference.*

- A. Inspect the field/walk the perimeter of the field:
  - 1. Check for any hazards that may create a dead ball situation including holes in fences or other specific problems in general.
  - 2. Insure the field is properly marked and the bases and pitching plate are set at the proper distance.
- B. Inspecting Equipment:
  - 1. Inspect all equipment together as a crew, with Plate Umpire making final decision on disputed equipment.
  - 2. Communicate how illegal or removed equipment will be handled.

**PRE-GAME CONFERENCE WITH COACHES**

*Keep the Pre-Game Coaches' Conference short, but informative. Have a definite agenda prepared as this is not a rules clinic. Use the following outline:*

- A. Umpires should take proper positions as follows:
  - 1. The Plate Umpire stands behind home plate facing the pitcher's plate.
  - 2. In the Two-Umpire System, the Base Umpire faces home plate and the Plate Umpire faces the pitcher's plate.
  - 3. In the Three-Umpire System, the First Base and Third Base Umpires face the Plate Umpire on their respective sides, and the Plate Umpire faces the pitcher's plate.
- B. Plate Umpire conducts meeting.
- C. Plate Umpire and partners should be introduced.
- D. Plate Umpire receives line-up cards from each coach:
  - 1. Inspects for proper number of players in the starting line-up.
  - 2. Inspects for proper information, by rule.
  - 3. Returns line-up card to respective coach for final check.
  - 4. Accepts as "official" when cards are returned to Plate Umpire.
- E. Review Ground Rules:
  - 1. Keep ball in play as much as possible.
  - 2. Designate out of play areas.
  - 3. When out of play lines are not visible, use "permanent objects" to determine whether a ball is in or out of play.
- F. Review Special Rules:
  - 1. Time limit
  - 2. Run Ahead
  - 3. Tiebreakers (All Fast Pitch and Men's Senior Slow Pitch)
  - 4. Home Run Limit for this classification (Slow Pitch Only)
- G. Coin Toss, if needed to determine home team

**H. WHEN THE CONFERENCE IS OVER, THE UMPIRES SHOULD HUSTLE TO THEIR RESPECTIVE POSITIONS!**

**END OF THE GAME PROCEDURE**

- A. Leave the field together as a team and on the side of least resistance while giving the defensive team reasonable time for an appeal. Appeals are not permitted after the umpires leave the field.
- B. Go directly to your staging area, but don't run. Avoid conversations with players or fans. If confronted, be polite and excuse yourself to get ready for your next assignment.
- C. The Plate Umpire should return game balls to the administrator if present.
- D. Know your departure route before the game ends and where you want to end up.

**POST GAME WITH PARTNERS**

*The post game should be self reflective and used as a teaching tool, which can improve our skill set in Rules, Mechanics, and Game Management, while learning from each other. It should be a positive experience. The umpires should learn from the negatives, and grow with the positive*

- A. Find a secluded place.
- B. Plate Umpire initiates open discussion over unusual situations that occurred in that game. Crew members should start with items they would like to improve on.
- C. Every umpire is encouraged to participate, reflect and self-evaluate.
- D. Discuss pertinent Rule, Mechanic, and Game Management situations that happened in the game.
  - 1. What did the crew do well?
  - 2. Should anything have been done differently?
- E. Be honest giving and receiving constructive advice.
- F. Take notes during your conversation allowing you access to them later so you can create a plan for improvement.

**ALWAYS REMEMBER, AN UMPIRE IS EXPECTED TO BE PERFECT THEIR FIRST GAME AND IMPROVE EACH GAME THEREAFTER!!!**



**CHAPTER 4  
PLATE MECHANICS**

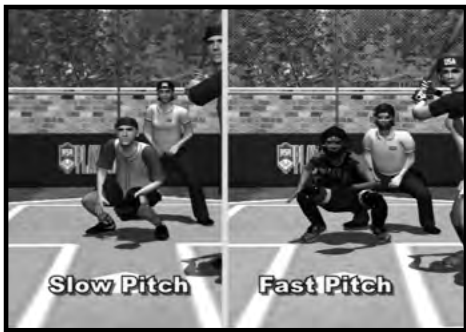
*Plate mechanics begin with calling balls and strikes and end with any required movement by the umpire to complete other duties. This includes the elements of the stance, the set position, the pitch, and movement from the plate when required.*

*A Plate Umpire who keeps these elements in perspective has a better chance of having a solid game behind the plate. These elements are similar in both Slow Pitch and Fast Pitch. Attention to detail in these areas will make you a better Plate Umpire. Let's examine these elements one by one.*

**A. CALLING THE PITCH: SLOW PITCH AND FAST PITCH**

**1. Stance:** *The stance is the foundation of good plate mechanics. The elements of a good stance are as follows:*

- a. Feet position: the umpire must set their feet with the heel of the foot closest to the batter in a straight line with the toe of the foot closest to the catcher. Do this by setting your foot behind the catcher first and squaring your shoulders to the plate. Then bring in your foot behind the batter so your feet are in a heel toe alignment making sure your ear closest to the catcher is lined up with the inside corner. Both feet should be turned slightly outward so your knees are over your toes. On a right handed batter set your right foot first, then your left foot. On a left handed batter, set your left foot first, then your right foot. This will provide the same stance on both a left handed batter and a right handed batter. Your feet should be at least shoulder width apart or wider, if comfortable, keeping in mind that you will have to move when needed.
- b. Make sure you are not too close or too far from the catcher. Remember this rule of thumb; you must see the complete plate and then the ball from the pitcher's hand to the catcher's glove or the ground as it passes through or out of the strike zone.
- c. Rotating your head and eyes toward the pitcher will assist you in seeing the ball from the pitcher's hand to the catcher's glove or the ground.
- d. Remember in Slow Pitch or Fast Pitch the stance is the same with only a slight difference in the height of the set position.



- 2. Set Position:** *The Plate Umpire assumes the set position to call balls and strikes. To be in a good set position the Plate Umpire should follow these guidelines:*
- a. The umpire must start in the slot. The slot is defined as the position the umpire assumes prior to going set in which they are behind the catcher, slightly inside the inside corner of the plate with your ear closest to the catcher lined up with the inside corner and outside the perimeter of the strike zone.
  - b. You must have Good Pelvic Alignment, referred to as GPA. This position is achieved when the umpire has their pelvis aligned with the outside front corner of the plate. This allows you to look down and through the strike zone.
  - c. In both Slow Pitch and Fast Pitch, set no lower than the top of the strike zone in relationship to the batter. Your body should be locked in a stationary position to see the ball released from the pitcher's hand and travel all the way to the catcher's glove or the ground. Your hands should be placed in a comfortable position in front of your body.
  - d. Go set at the start of the pitch.
    1. In Slow Pitch this is when the pitcher makes any motion with the ball after the required stop. Each pitcher is different and the time you go set can vary accordingly.
    2. In Fast Pitch this is when one hand is taken off the ball after the hands have been placed together. Each pitcher is different and the time you go set can vary accordingly.
  - e. Be sure to bend at the knees, not at the waist. This allows your back to be straight with a slight tilt forward to bring your head into the proper position. This will reduce the pressure on your lower back and the top of your legs
  - f. Being in the correct slot and set position on both sides of the plate gives you an unobstructed view of the strike zone on every pitch from the same angle.
- 3. The Pitch:** *Calling the pitch is where a Plate Umpire puts the stance and set position to work. To call the pitch, the Plate Umpire should follow these guidelines:*
- a. To start the game or any time after the umpire has prevented a pitch from being delivered, the umpire should direct the pitcher to play ball. When holding up play, simply hold up the hand opposite the batter with your palm facing the pitcher. When you are ready for the pitch, point at the pitcher and say "play" or "play ball." At this point, it is imperative that the umpire pick up the ball with their eyes while the ball is in the pitcher's hand.
  - b. The umpire then tracks the ball from the pitcher's hand to the catcher's glove or to the ground. Tracking the ball is the act of watching the ball from the pitcher's hand into the catcher's glove using a slight movement of the head guided by the nose. Tracking is not an exaggerated head movement or just an eye movement. It is a movement of the nose which simultaneously brings the head with the pitch as the eyes are locked on the ball.

- c. Good timing is crucial when calling the pitch. After the ball is in the glove or hits the ground in slow pitch, make sure you pause, and then call the pitch.
- d. From the down position, the strike call should be elongated and made briskly and loudly. The umpire should then rise to an upright position without moving their feet and bring the right arm up to a 90 degree angle so the elbow can be seen with the umpire's peripheral vision. The fist should be closed with the palm facing the umpire's ear. A strong hammer adds certainty to your call. Any swinging strike should be a signal only.
  1. In Slow Pitch on a called third strike, a 90 degree hammer is used with a louder verbal call. For further emphasis, verbalize the words "strike three."
  2. In Fast Pitch on a called third strike, both a strong verbal call and signal should be given. For further emphasis if desired, verbalize the words "strike three."
  3. On a foul tip the umpire should rise and brush the fingers of the right hand over the left hand, chest high in front of the body followed by the strike signal.
- e. Ball calls should be short and crisp and made in the down position. Use volume to indicate closeness of the pitch.
- f. In Slow Pitch with stealing and the ball hits in front of the plate, hits the plate, or hits the batter the proper mechanic is a dead ball signal followed by a verbal ball or if swung at a strike signal.
- g. There are times when the count should be given by the Plate Umpire. Signaling the count is done by raising both arms above the head indicating balls with consecutive fingers on the left hand and strikes with consecutive fingers on the right hand. Give both the number of balls and strikes every time the count is given. Rotate your hands, not your body, so everyone can see the count.
- h. After each pitch step out, relax, reset and restart the process. This allows the umpire the time to refocus and reset for the next pitch.



## **B. MOVEMENT FROM THE PLATE IN SLOW PITCH AND FAST PITCH**

- 1. Movement:** *A good Plate Umpire realizes that they are not only required to call balls and strikes, but must be able to move to cover other responsibilities. The Plate Umpire must be ready and able to move during the game. Let's examine the reasons for movement and the proper movement from the plate:*
- a. On a ball that eludes the catcher: passed ball, fly ball behind the catcher, or a dropped third strike the Plate Umpire should be ready to move to clear the catcher.
    - 1) Umpire movement is based on reading the shoulders of the catcher.
    - 2) On either a right or left handed batter the umpire will pivot and drop step to allow the catcher to take you to the ball.
    - 3) After the umpire has cleared the catcher move to the next area of responsibility; the catch, trailing the batter-runner, play at 3B or the plate.
  - b. On a batted ball with no runners on base or a single runner at 1B, the Plate Umpire should always exit to the left of the catcher to trail the batter-runner unless the play takes you elsewhere.
    - 1) Trail the batter-runner slightly inside the foul line no more than one-third of the way to 1B to help the Base Umpire with a pulled foot, swipe tag or a bobbled ball.
    - 2) After trailing the batter-runner to 1B you should move to the holding zone unless a runner approaches 2B and your movement is to 3B.
    - 3) When moving to 3B move directly across the diamond to a location 90 degrees to the path of the runner a minimum depth of 10-12 feet from the base.
    - 4) When moving to the holding zone, move directly to an area in foul ground about halfway to 3B to an area where you have an unobstructed view of all four elements and read the play.
  - c. Plate Umpire has fair or foul responsibility on ground balls near the foul line. Position yourself on the foul line;
    - 1) If the ball is foul, give the dead ball signal followed by a verbal call of "foul or foul ball."
    - 2) If the ball is fair, point toward fair territory with the arm closest to fair ground.
  - d. On fly balls to the outfield not near the foul line, move parallel to the flight of the ball to obtain a good angle to the catch versus straight at the fielder catching the ball.
    - 1) If the ball is foul, give the dead ball signal followed by a verbal call of "foul or foul ball." If the ball is caught, give only an out signal.
    - 2) If the ball is fair and not caught, no signal is needed. No verbal call is given. If the ball is caught, give an out signal.
  - e. On a fly ball to the outfield near the foul line, when your partner does not turn their back, the Plate Umpire has, fair or foul and catch or no catch responsibilities. When the ball is near the foul line with no runner at 3B,

move up that foul line to a position where you can see the ball.

- 1) When the ball is close to the foul line and is touched, whether caught or not, the umpire must first give the ball status by pointing fair or foul.
  - 2) When the ball is close to the foul line and is touched over fair territory point fair and if the ball is not caught the point is followed by a strong "fair ball" signal. If the ball is caught, give an out signal.
  - 3) When the ball is close to the foul line and first touched over foul territory, point foul and if the ball is not caught, give a strong dead ball signal and strong verbal call of "foul" or "foul ball." If the ball is caught, give an out signal.
  - 4) If the ball is near the line and lands in fair territory untouched, give a fair ball signal.
  - 5) If the ball is near the line and lands in foul territory untouched, give a foul ball signal.
- f. When the ball is hit over the fence in fair territory, give a Home Run signal by raising the right arm above the head, fist closed and rotate the fist.
- 1) Plate Umpire should hustle to achieve the best angle and distance based on the scenario to see the ball clear the fence.
  - 2) Plate Umpire should assume a position to watch the runners touch home in foul territory so they have all action in front of them.
  - 3) In Slow Pitch when a fair batted ball is touched in flight and goes over the fence in fair territory, give the four base award signal by raising the right arm above the head, hand open with four fingers shown and verbally call "four bases."
  - 4) If the ball hits the ground before clearing the fence and then bounces over the fence, give the two base award signal by raising the right arm above the head, hand open with two consecutive fingers extended and verbally call "two bases."

**2. Movement to 3B:** *Once the umpire has exited to the catcher's left, there are several situations where the umpire should move to 3B:*

- a. First, after going to the holding zone and a play develops at 3B, move inside the diamond about two-thirds of the way to 3B, to a minimum of 10 – 12 feet from the base, obtaining a 90 degree angle to the path of the runner. Stop, read the play, then make the call.
- b. Second, when exiting the catcher with a play immediately at 3B, move up the foul line in fair territory to a minimum of 10 -12 feet from the base, obtaining a 90 degree angle to the path of the runner. Stop, read the play, then make the call.
- c. Third, in Slow Pitch, the Plate Umpire has the responsibility for a runner attempting to steal 3B. Move toward 3B in foul ground, or in fair territory, staying out of the throwing lane and let the ball take you to the play as you obtain the best angle and distance.

**3. Plays at Home Plate:** *There are specific mechanics used by the Plate Umpire when making calls at home plate:*

- a. On throws from the outfield or the infield assume a position in foul ground, 90 degrees to the path of the runner, to a minimum of 10 -12 feet from home plate in line with the outside deepest corner of the right handed batter's box. Adjust as needed to obtain an unobstructed view of the play. If the ball gets away from the catcher and goes behind you, move as the play dictates to get an unobstructed view. Avoid going inside the diamond except as a last resort.
- b. When returning to home plate from a play at 3B and the ball is in foul ground, remain inside the diamond and move parallel to the base line, to a minimum of 10 – 12 feet from home plate, obtaining a 90 degree angle to the path of the runner.
- c. On a timing play when the runner touches the plate prior to the last out of the inning and the run will count, point to the plate emphatically and say "run counts" or "run scores".
- d. On a timing play where the runner does not touch the plate before the last out of the inning is made and the run will not count, verbalize "run does not count" or "no run".

## C. DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

### 1. Slow Pitch

- a. **Illegal Pitches:** A Slow Pitch Plate Umpire will normally make more illegal pitch calls than a Fast Pitch Plate Umpire due to the differences in the pitching rule. An illegal pitch must be called when it becomes illegal by the plate or Base Umpire. To signal an illegal pitch raise your left arm horizontal with the fist closed and verbally say "illegal or illegal pitch" loud enough for the closest defensive player to hear you. In Slow Pitch, if the batter does not swing at the illegal pitch, it is ruled a ball. If the batter swings at the pitch, the illegal pitch is ignored and the result of the swing stands.
- b. **Stealing Mechanics:** Some divisions of Slow Pitch allow runners to advance when the ball reaches the front edge of home plate. Umpires must be ready to react to a player attempting to advance. On a steal attempt from 2B to 3B the Plate Umpire must recognize the steal attempt and react by finding the ball while moving toward 3B, keeping in mind that the ball may become blocked or go out of play. Let the throw turn your head toward 3B as you move into position to see the four elements of the play come together. Stop as close to 90 degrees to the tag play as possible, see the play and make the call.

### 2. Fast Pitch

- a. **Illegal Pitches/Catcher's Obstruction:** When catcher's obstruction or an illegal pitch is called, the umpire should give the delayed dead ball signal. Give the signal by extending the left arm straight out to the side of the body with the fist closed while verbalizing "obstruction" or "illegal pitch."

1. The illegal pitch can be called by either umpire. The Plate Umpire calls the timing elements, stepping outside the twenty-four inch width of the pitcher's plate (Women's and JO only). The Base Umpire is responsible for infractions involving the feet being in front or behind the pitcher's plate, crow hop, or leap. The batter may swing at or hit an illegal pitch after it's been called. (Junior Olympic) If the batter reaches 1B safely and all runners advance at least one base the illegal pitch is ignored and no option is given. If the batter does not reach 1B safely or if any runner fails to advance at least one base, the coach of the offensive team may choose the result of the play or the standard effect for an illegal pitch, a ball on the batter. (Adult Fast Pitch) If the batter reaches 1B safely and all runners advance at least one base the illegal pitch is ignored and no option is given. If not, the manager of the offended team is given the option of taking the result of the play, or having a ball awarded to the batter and all runners advanced one base. If an illegal pitch hits a batter, the batter is awarded 1B and all runners are advanced one base.
  
  2. Catcher's obstruction is the act of a catcher that hinders or prevents the batter from striking at or hitting a pitched ball. If the batter reaches 1B safely and all runners advance at least one base the obstruction is cancelled. All action as a result of the batted ball stands. No option is given. Once a runner has passed a base the runner is considered to have reached that base. If all runners, including the batter runner do not advance at least one base, the manager has the option of taking the result of the play, or enforcing obstruction by awarding the batter 1B and advancing all runners if forced. If the catcher steps on, or in front of home plate without the ball and prevents the batter from hitting the ball, the umpire will call "Dead Ball". The batter is awarded 1B and all runners are advanced one base, if forced. On a swing or attempted bunt, the catcher or any other fielder prevents the batter from hitting the ball, touches the batter or their bat with a runner on 3B trying to score on a squeeze play or a steal, the ball is dead. The runner shall be awarded home plate and the batter shall be awarded 1B on the obstruction. All other runners shall advance if forced.
- b. Hit by Pitch:** Call "Dead Ball" as soon as the batter is hit, with a strong verbal call. Now review the action that just happened. Did the batter make a motion to turn away from the pitch, or was the batter in the strike zone making no attempt to avoid being hit by the pitch? If the batter was avoiding the pitch, award them 1B .If they made no attempt to get out of the way, there is no award. If the ball was in the strike zone, it should be called a strike, with a strong verbal call.
- c. Hitting the Ball a Second Time:** When the ball hits the bat a second time or hits the batter, a dead ball is declared using the dead ball signal and a strong verbal call. While making the dead ball call, review in your mind

what you just saw. Then, ask yourself the question, did the second hit occur in fair or foul territory? If the answer is foul territory, the ball is foul and a strike is called on the batter. If the ball is fair, the next question you need to ask is whether the batter was in or out of the batter's box. If they were in the box, it is a foul ball and a strike is called on the batter. If the second hit occurred out of the batter's box, the batter is out. In each case give a strong dead ball call and point to where the second hit took place. Then announce to all the result of the action, "foul ball, strike on the batter", or "the batter is out". The Base Umpire should assist the Plate Umpire by making a dead ball signal and a strong verbal call immediately, indicating only that there was a second hit.

***Remember, as a Plate Umpire take charge of this call and SELL it.***

- d. Check Swing:** When asking for help on a check swing, the umpire should step out from behind the plate to be visible to your partner, remove the mask, point to their partner and ask in a loud verbal "did they swing" or "did they go? Step back in and give the count.
- e. Batted Ball Off of a Batters' Foot:**
1. When the batter is in the batters box:
    - a. Raise both hands above the head and call "dead ball" to stop the action.
    - b. Verbalize "foul ball".
  2. When the batter is out of the batter's box:
    - a. Raise both hands above the head and call "dead ball" to stop the action
    - b. Point to the play, give an out signal and verbalize "batter is out".
- f. Three-Foot Running Lane:** A three foot running lane violation is an example of an interference call. The Plate Umpire should:
1. Give the dead ball signal while giving a strong verbal "dead ball" call .
  2. Point in the direction of where the interference occurred.
  3. Take charge and sell the call.

## **D. GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES BOTH SLOW PITCH AND FAST PITCH**

- 1. Infield Fly:** When an umpire signals to their partner that the infield fly rule is in effect, do so prior to the pitch. The signal is made by placing the right hand and arm across the chest with the hand over the heart. It is the Plate Umpire's responsibility to call the Infield Fly. When an Infield Fly is judged by



the umpire:

- a. The umpire should judge the Infield Fly when the ball reaches its highest point.
  - b. Give the infield fly signal by raising your right arm above your head with fist closed and verbalize "Infield Fly", the batter is out", or if near a line verbalize "Infield Fly if fair, the batter is out".
  - c. When the Infield Fly is no longer in effect simply tap your left forearm with your right hand to signal to your partner the infield fly has been removed.
- 2. Time out – Suspension of Play:** To suspend play raise both arms high above your head with your palms facing the pitcher while moving out from behind the batter and catcher. If the Pitcher has started the pitch, TIME OUT should NOT be granted. The pitch should be called a "strike" or a "ball" depending on its location.
- 3. Cleaning Home Plate or the Pitcher's Plate:** If time has not been declared, call "time". Move to a position facing the backstop with your back to field of play. Use your brush to clean the plate using short, crisp strokes.
- 4. Conferences:** The two types of conferences: Offensive and Defensive It is the Plate Umpire's responsibility to document conferences:
- a. Offensive Conferences:
    1. An umpire should only allow one Offensive Conference per half inning.
    2. At the end of the conference, the umpire should notify the team participant that "the conference was the last one for that inning".
    3. A participant that attempts to have a second Offensive Conference during the same inning should be removed from the game.
  - b. Defensive Conferences:
    1. Each team is permitted three Defensive Conferences during a seven inning game.
    2. All of the Defensive Conferences can take place during the same inning without removing the pitcher from the pitching position.
    3. Umpires should not penalize an offensive team for having a conference while the defensive team is having a Defensive Conference provided the offensive team is ready to play when the Defensive charged Conference is over. The same is true if the defensive team has a conference while the offensive team is having a charged conference.
    4. Once the umpire instructs the team that is charged with the conference to play ball, both teams must immediately play ball or be in jeopardy of a conference being charged to them and enforcement of the appropriate penalty.
- 5. Ball Rotation:** According to USA Softball procedure the current game ball is in play until such time as it goes out of play. However, if both game balls do not get into play during the first half of the first inning, the pitcher in the bottom half of the first inning must throw the unused ball.

- a. If both game balls have been used, the pitcher has a choice of which ball to use during that half of the inning.
- b. The pitcher cannot have both game balls for the purpose of making a choice.
- c. The pitcher may request another ball prior to the start of warm-up pitches.
- d. The umpire should require the pitcher to relinquish possession of the ball and then put a replacement ball into the game.
- e. The umpire has sole authority to determine if a ball is playable or not.

**6. Line-up Card Management:** In order to prevent problems during the game, the Plate Umpire should keep an accurate line-up card throughout the game. Here are some suggestions to help properly manage your line-up card:

- a. Use a line-up card holder to protect each individual line-up.
- b. At the pre-game conference with the coaches, inspect each card:
  1. To see that the first name, last name, number and positions are listed.
  2. To see that all substitutes have first name, last name and numbers listed.
  3. Count the players in the starting line-up to make sure they have the proper number of players. (i.e. FP – 9 or 10 if the DP/Flex is used, SP – 10 or 11 if the EP is used).
  4. In Fast Pitch, identify the DP's position to indicate that this is the only place in the batting order to which the Flex may enter.
  5. Return the card to the respective coaches for their final review.
  6. Accept them as "official" when they are returned to you.
- c. During the game, you should record the following information on your line up card:
  1. Substitutions
  2. Re-Entries
  3. Movement of the DP and Flex in and out of the line-up.
  4. Defensive Conferences
  5. Offensive Conferences
  6. Courtesy Runners
- d. In order to properly manage the line-up card you should understand the principles of re-entry and substitutions as well as the Shorthanded rule. Also, when can a player get added to the line-up card and what to do about an incorrect number or position on the line-up card.
- e. Managing your line-up card is an integral part of overall game management.

*Base Mechanics begin with the fundamentals of positioning, followed by timing, judgment, signals, and a verbal call.*

## A. GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

### 1. Base Umpire Starting Positions Terminology:

USA Softball uses language to describe where the starting positions are on the field, for example, “first base line”, “rotated to second base”, “counter-rotated between 1B and 2B” and “third base line”. These positions are NOT “X’s” on the field, they are areas.

#### Some Specific Examples:

No R’s on base:

2 Umpire System:	BU – “first baseline”
3 Umpire System:	U1 – “first baseline” U3 – “third baseline”

R1 on first base:

2 Umpire System:	BU – “counterrotated between 1B and 2B”
3 Umpire System:	U1 – “first baseline” U3 – “rotated to second base”

R1 on second base:

2 Umpire SP System:	BU – “counterrotated between 1B and 2B”
2 Umpire FP System:	BU – “counterrotated between 2B and 3B”
3 Umpire System:	U1 – “counterrotated between 1B and 2B” U3 – “third baseline”

R1 on third base, only:

2 Umpire SP System:	BU – “first baseline”
2 Umpire FP System:	BU – “counterrotated between 2B and 3B”
3 Umpire System:	U1 – “first baseline” U3 – “third baseline”

### 2. Starting Positions:

In Slow Pitch with no runners on base and a runner on 3B only, start on the foul line 18 – 21 feet behind the base and walk the line. Walk the line by taking one or two steps toward home plate, pushing off with your foot furthest from the foul line to move into fair territory when the ball is batted. Umpires should stay upright throughout the entire process to allow for quicker movement, smooth transition and maximize their field of view.

In Fast Pitch with no runners on base, start on the foul line 18 – 21 feet behind the base and walk the line. Walk the line by taking one or two steps toward home plate, pushing off with your foot furthest from the foul line to move into fair territory when the ball is batted. Umpires should stay

upright throughout the entire process to allow for quicker movement, smooth transition and maximize their field of view.

When starting off the line or starting on the line with runners on base, the Base Umpire will take the “ready position or stance” prior to a pitch being delivered to the batter. Do this by:

- a. Standing upright in a comfortable position, placing your feet at least shoulder width apart or wider to create a firm foundation.
- b. Go to the ready position at the start of the pitch by leaning forward and placing your hands comfortably in front of your body in a position that allows you to move as the play dictates. This position transfers your body weight from your heels to the balls of your feet for better balance providing an athletic response much the same as a defensive player.
- c. Rise from the ready position at the end of the pitch and be prepared to move as the situation dictates.

**NOTE:** Remember, the ready position is an athletic position, you should not be locked in place.

A counter rotated Slow Pitch Base Umpire between 1B and 2B in the Two Umpire System, with no runner on 2B, will take a starting position shading 1B and off of or behind the Infielder. Anytime a runner is on 2B the umpire will take a position shading the runner at 2B and off of or behind the Infielder. This positioning will allow the umpire to move to their primary position when the ball is put into play. Adjustments should and may be made based on the fielder’s positions. Fielder’s often position themselves 30 to 40 feet off the baseline. This positioning starts the BU too deep to effectively move to their primary position either inside or outside the diamond. Therefore, an option available to the BU is to draw an imaginary line between the appropriate infielders. The umpire should make every effort not to take a position that puts them in the line of sight of a defender and a pitched ball to the batter. Furthermore, the BU that uses the imaginary line as a guide needs to have pre-pitched and be prepared for the inherent risk of being in a potential throwing lane and must be ready to immediately move parallel to the baseline and out of the throwing lane on any batted ball.

### **3. General Techniques on the Bases:**

Umpires must be “Students of the Game” in preparation for handling decisions on the bases. The game situation will include the presence of runners on bases, the number of outs and the count on the batter. These factors will dictate the Base Umpire’s primary responsibility as a play develops. Your complete concentration, full energies and undivided attention is required from the first pitch to the last out.

Work for the best angle on all plays and do not let the players or coach make the call for you. On a close play, sell the call; but on an obvious play use only a routine signal.

Whenever possible, stop to allow yourself time to see the entire play before making your decision. See the play to its completion and make the call. Give a strong verbal call and visual signal simultaneously. This will help your timing and reduce the possibility of an “out/safe” call.

On a ball that is hit to the outfield that could possibly be trapped, go out on it, even with runners on base. Remember to communicate with your partners. On home runs hit out of the park, know where and when the ball left the playing field.

#### 4. Points Governing Decisions on the Bases:

Base Umpire decisions are governed by the game situation and the actions of offensive and defensive participants. The four elements of a play consist of:

- a. Ball
- b. Base
- c. Offense
- d. Defense

The Base Umpire must hustle to get into the correct position to see these elements come together before making a call.

Umpires should say “SAFE” while giving the safe signal when a runner beats the ball to a base on a force out attempt and likewise say “OUT” while giving an out signal when the ball beats the runner to the base. **The same would apply on a tag play when a runner avoids the tag by the defense, an umpire should say “SAFE” while giving the safe signal and likewise say “OUT” while giving an out signal when the runner is tagged by the defense.** A good verbal call and strong signal should be given simultaneously. The volume of the voice should reflect the closeness of the play.

If you think that you were blocked out of seeing the entire play and are asked to “go for help” then go to your partner for information to get the call correct. ALWAYS MAKE THE CALL AND THEN GO FOR HELP, IF NEEDED.

#### 5. Going For Help:

Always make the call based on the information you have and then go for help if needed due to a missing element of the play. Should you feel you were blocked out of seeing the entire play, you can go to your partners without being asked or if you are asked to “go for help” and you feel you may have not clearly seen one of the four elements of the play then go to your partners for information to get the call correct. When seeking help on a play, you should go for help as soon as possible and most definitely not

after a long conversation with the coach or team representative. When you are 100% confident in your judgement and that all four elements of the play were clearly seen, you should not seek help from your partner.

## 6. Watching The Ball:

Watching the ball aids a Base Umpire in reading where the play is likely to develop. The umpire must watch the ball as it is fielded on the infield while moving to the proper position for their primary call. Let the ball turn your head into the play as the four elements of the play come together; stop, read the play and make the call.

On batted balls to the outfield the BU should pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10-12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner as you are responsible for any play at 1B, 2B, 3B. Let the ball turn your head into the play as the four elements of the play come together; move to obtain, get, and maintain an unobstructed view, stop, read the play and make the call.

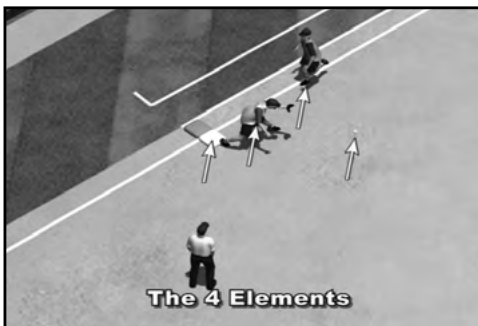
***Know where the ball is at all times, no live ball play can be made on a batter, batter-runner or runner without the ball.***

## B. BASE CALLS

**1. Force Plays /Tag Plays / Plays at 1B:**Force plays tag plays, and plays at 1B require movement to the proper position to see the entire play.

- a. With the Base Umpire on the 1st baseline and a ground ball to the infield, without taking your eyes off the ball, move inside the foul line to no further than a 45 degree angle from the foul line and no closer than 18 feet from the base. When the runner is out on a very close play use the Sell Out signal. This signal is nothing more than simulating a throw by a fielder. Move your feet as if you were fielding a ground ball and give the signal and strong "out" call simultaneously. When the runner is safe on a very close play use the "sell safe" signal. This signal is made by stepping toward the play, giving an emphatic "safe" signal and a strong "safe" call simultaneously. Finish the call by bringing your rear foot forward and squaring up to the play.
- b. With a runner at 1B in a Two Umpire system, the Base Umpire will be counter rotated between 1st and 2nd base, and a ground ball to the infield for a possible double play, make two movements from the starting position. When the play goes to 2B, take one or two parallel steps toward 2B to watch the play and push off with the right foot

- and make the call while moving parallel to the baseline toward 1B. Without taking your eyes off the play, let the ball turn your head to the play at 1B. Move to obtain and maintain an unobstructed view, stop, read the play and make the call.
- c. In Fast Pitch with a ground ball to the infield and the first play being made at 1st base, with runners on base in a Two Umpire System and the Base Umpire is counterrotated between 2nd and 3rd base, move inside the diamond towards 1st base while creating angles on the throw at 1st base. Any movement needs to first create the best angle possible while closing the distance to 1st base. Keep the four elements, the ball, the base, the offense, and the defense in front of you as the play develops. Move to obtain an angle, get, and maintain an unobstructed view, stop, read the play, then make the call.
  - d. On a routine out call, keep your feet at least shoulder width apart and bring your body to an upright position. Raise your right arm to a 90 degree angle with the fist closed, so the elbow can be seen with your peripheral vision. On a routine safe call, keep your feet at least shoulder width apart and bring your body to an upright position while bringing your hands chest high with palms down. With forearms parallel to the ground, extend your arms straight out keeping palms down.
  - e. On a tag play, take a position 90 degrees to the path of the runner just short of the base they are trying to reach at a depth of 10 – 12 feet from the play. All four elements will be in front of you. As the play develops, move to obtain and maintain an unobstructed view, read the play, hesitate slightly, and then make the call.



## **2. Swipe Tag / Pulled Foot:**

### **a. Pulled Foot:**

Once you have obtained the best angle to see the play, further actions may dictate the need to move. Sometimes movement from the primary position will help the umpire get and maintain an unobstructed view of the play. After obtaining your angle on the play at

1B and there is a possible pulled foot, move with the play to get and maintain an unobstructed view. A slight adjustment can put you in a better position to see the foot off the base. If the fielder pulls their foot, point with your left hand and say "OFF THE BASE" and give a strong "safe" signal and a clear "SAFE" call.

**b. Swipe Tag:**

Adjustment from Primary position: Once you have obtained the best angle to see the play, further actions may dictate the need to move. Sometimes movement from the primary position will help the umpire get and maintain an unobstructed view of the play.

After obtaining 90 degrees to the path of the runner on a tag play, you should adjust as necessary. After obtaining your angle on the play at 1B and the throw takes the defense off the base for a possible swipe tag, move with the play to get and maintain an unobstructed view. A slight adjustment will put you in a position to see the possible tag. Once you see the tag, point with the left hand and OK say, "TAG," followed by an "out" call and signal.

**3. Tag Play Philosophy:**

There is always a lot of discussion concerning movement by umpires on force and tag plays. Force plays are easier by nature as the base is fixed, not moving, there is little movement besides the stretch from the fielder as the ball is received and the runner is running in a straight line through the base in most situations. Tag plays can be extremely tricky and difficult as most of the four elements, excluding the base we are watching, are all moving at different speeds and angles. It is important that we, USA Softball, continue to discuss and breakdown the different variables that go into achieving the best angle and distance for the dynamics of a tag plays.

In USA Softball, our mechanic expectation for tag plays is that we move to a starting position first. The starting position for tag plays should be 90 degrees to the path of the runner just short of the base they are trying to reach. As the four elements come closer, move if needed, to get an unobstructed view of the play. We believe moving to the starting position first puts you in the best position to see the four elements of the play. Then as the four elements come closer you can better judge if and when to move to get an unobstructed view of the tag while keeping all the elements of the play in front of you.

Helpful hints that we teach to assist you in understanding how a play is going to develop are:



- Read the defense fielding and throwing the ball. If we as umpires read the player's / fielder throwing the ball hips and shoulders, it will tell us where or the direction they are going to throw the ball.
- Read how and where the defense is setting up in relation to the base. The distance between the fielder and the runner's path may also be a variable of how the four elements will come together.
  - o Are they setting up in front, middle or behind the base?
  - o Are they setting up in the runner's base path, potential obstruction?
- Read the speed and path of the runner toward the base.
  - o Is the runner's path to the leading edge?
  - o Is it toward the back corner of the base?
- Read the speed of the ball on a throw compared to the runner. It is important to gauge, is the ball closer than the runner or is the ball further from the runner. When the ball arrives compared to when the runner arrives, will be a variable on how a fielder may apply the tag.
  - o If a ball is going to arrive in front of the runner, tags may be more likely to be at the leading edge or in front of the runner's body.
  - o If the ball is going to arrive behind the runner, tags are more likely to be at the side or back of the body, like a swipe tag. The ball/tag is catching up to the runner/body.
- With the above variables, read and move based on all the elements. This should help you move to the best angle and distance for a swipe tag and at the same time stay out of the way of a possible throw for a subsequent play.
- We also believe a movement of about three feet in either direction (right or left) from your starting position will allow you the best unobstructed angle and distance, to see almost every swipe tag and a tag applied straight on.

For tag plays specifically at home plate, we teach to try and not go inside the diamond because after the play at home, any subsequent plays that develop, will be to one of the other bases and the calling umpire may be in the throwing lanes on many of the throws.

**Runner on 1B Pick Off of from the Catcher:**

Step into fair territory getting a 90-degree angle to the returning runner to 1B. Stop, move to get an unobstructed view of the play.

We have stopped short at giving advice on where to move or possibly move. We try to cover as many aspects when teaching. However, we find if we tell umpires to step in to the 90-degree angle or POSSIBLY into foul ground, we have umpires immediately move to foul ground instead of moving there based on the throw. Again, using the philosophy starting at 90 degrees to the path of the runner just short of the base of the base they are trying to reach and adjust from there. We also try to teach the positioning is

based on where F3 would normally be and where the runner is likely to return to the base, like the back outside corner of the base.

As stated in the first sentence of this play, after the umpire takes the initial step in fair territory, we would expect the umpire to move right or left, if needed, to achieve an unobstructed view of the four elements right before they come together so the umpire can stop and see the play.

#### **4. Inside / Outside Theory:**

The Inside / Outside Theory is simple:

- a. If the ball is hit inside the diamond stay outside the diamond.
- b. If the ball is hit outside the infield, pick up the ball and glance at the runner while you hustle inside infield. This allows the four elements to be in front of you; the ball, the base, the offense and the defense.
- c. For the purpose of the Inside / Outside Theory, the umpire will consider the diamond as the area of the infield inside the baselines forming a diamond shape. The infield is defined as that portion of the field that is normally covered by the infielders.
- d. The key to the Inside / Outside Theory is movement and the key to movement to inside the diamond is the buttonhook. When moving from the starting position toward the infield, concentrate on your runner responsibility. Alternate between watching the ball and glancing at the runner. Once inside the diamond at a minimum depth of 10 – 12 feet, plant your right foot and pivot into the play watching the runner touch the base. Move parallel with the runner to the next base or return to the previous base obtaining your 90 degree angle to the path of the runner for a possible tag play.



- e. When the ball stays inside the diamond, the umpire should stay outside the diamond.

**5. Fly Ball Coverage:**

There are times a Base Umpire needs to go to the outfield for fly ball coverage. When going out on a fly ball, the angle you obtain is very important.

- a. When going to the outfield, you should verbally communicate with your partner, using phrases such as “one man”, “two man” or “going”.
- b. When going to the outfield, move for an angle parallel to the flight of the ball as opposed to running directly at the fielder attempting to make the catch. This allows a better view of the catch or no catch. Read the fielder so that you are stopped and set to see the play. Stop, see the play and make the call by signaling either “out” for a catch or “safe” for no catch. Once the call is made, let the ball turn you back to the infield to observe additional plays. Remain in the outfield, do not come back to the infield until all play has ceased.
- c. When going out on fly balls near the foul line stay near the foul line. You are responsible for “Fair” or “Foul” and “Catch” or “No Catch.” Position yourself near the foul line, and if foul, signal by raising your hands over your head and give a verbal call of “Foul” or “Foul ball.” If the ball is fair, point toward fair territory with the arm closest to fair ground. When the ball is close to the foul line and is touched, whether caught or not, the umpire must first give the ball status by pointing fair or foul. When the ball is first touched over fair territory, point fair and if the ball is not caught the point is followed by a strong fair ball signal. If the ball is caught, an out signal is given. When the ball is first touched over foul territory, point foul and if the ball is not caught give a strong dead ball signal and strong verbal call of “foul” or “foul ball.” If the ball is caught give an “out” signal.

**6. Difficult Situations:**

**A. Live Ball Running Violations:**

There are violations by runners that require a signal and a verbal call when they occur, while allowing the ball to remain live.

1. Running out of the base path to avoid a tag
  - a. Point at the runner with your left hand and loudly verbalize “out of the base path...out”.
  - b. Let the play continue
2. Passing a runner
  - a. Point at the runner who passed their teammate and loudly verbalize “out”.
  - b. Let the play continue

**B. Run Downs:**

When a player is caught in a rundown it is important that the umpires responsible for the coverage move to get the best perspective of both

ends of the play. Most rundowns are covered by only one umpire.

1. Stay at a depth approximately 12 - 15 feet from the rundown and move parallel to the baseline.
2. Know where the ball is at all times.
3. Move quickly toward and around the play to achieve the best angle and distance as the tag is applied.
4. Be alert for obstruction or interference. When covering rundowns with two umpires, each umpire should take a position at their end of the rundown. This is referred to as "bracketing". When bracketing, one umpire should be outside the diamond and the other umpire should remain inside the diamond. In all cases, communication is a must. When two umpires are covering a rundown the umpire with a clear unobstructed view of the tag should make the call. To prevent both umpires from making a call, eye contact is essential prior to the call being made.

**C. Interference:**

To indicate that interference has occurred the umpire should:

1. Step forward while giving a strong "Dead Ball" signal while emphatically calling "Dead Ball".
2. Point to the interference then give a strong "Out" signal and a verbal "Out" call.

**D. Obstruction:**

The Base Umpire should immediately:

1. Give the "Delayed Dead Ball" signal and verbally say "obstruction". The signal need not be held throughout the play, but just long enough for it to be seen.
2. If the obstructed runner is put out prior to reaching the bases they would have reached had there been no obstruction, the umpire shall call "time" and award the obstructed runner and all other runners, the base they would have reached had there been no obstruction.
3. When Catcher's Obstruction occurs, the Plate Umpire shall give the "Delayed Dead Ball" signal and verbalize "Catcher's Obstruction".
4. When the play becomes dead, make the proper obstruction award. Be prepared to explain your ruling.

**E. Collision:**

Contact between defensive and offensive players does not necessarily mean that Obstruction or Interference occurred. The field is laid out in such a manner that it puts the defensive and offensive players on a collision course.

***Consider the following:***

1. Did the offensive player alter their direction in a way to draw contact with the defensive player in an attempt to draw an Obstruction call?
2. Did the defensive player alter their attempt to field the ball to draw an Interference call?
3. Could the defensive player actually make a play?
4. Did the defensive player have possession of the ball? Thorough knowledge of Interference and Obstruction rules and their application will assist in making a prompt and accurate decision.

**F. Helping on fly balls in foul territory between home and 1B or 3B:**

It is permissible for Base Umpires to assist the PU on fly balls in foul territory when the BU starts on either foul line with no runner responsibilities AND the PU has an obstructed view of the fly ball. Reminder this is the PU's call unless the BU turns their back to make the call.

**G. There are four times, after the ball has been batted that a Base Umpire will make a call at 3B:**

1. On the Batter-Runner on a triple with no runners on base.
2. On the last runner into 3B.
3. On a lone runner on a fly ball advancement.
4. On any return throw from the plate area or cut-off by a player.

## CHAPTER 6

### ONE UMPIRE

*The One Umpire System is being used in many areas of the country today, mostly in the game of Slow Pitch. It should be used only when necessity demands. The one umpire system takes a tremendous amount of hustle, alertness and keen anticipation. The theory of "angle over distance" is paramount when working this system. With this in mind, let's now look at the proper mechanics of the One Umpire System.*

*The umpire's starting position for each pitch should be in the slot behind home plate. This is the best position for calling balls and strikes, and fair and foul balls. This also enables the umpire to have a clear view of the complete playing field.*

#### GROUND BALL TO THE INFIELD:

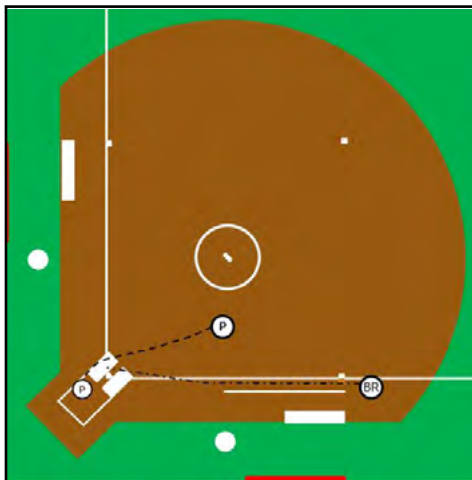
##### STARTING POSITION: ALWAYS START BEHIND HOME PLATE

##### NO RUNNER ON BASE, RUNNER AT 1B

##### ONLY, 2B ONLY, OR RUNNERS AT 1B AND 2B:

*Move out from behind the plate into the diamond and read the play. Be in a position to move where the play takes you.*

- 1. No runner on – play at 1B:**  
Move up the line toward 1B getting the best angle and distance possible. Stop, read the play, and make the call.
- 2. Runner on 1B only, 2B only, or 1B and 2B:** Move out from behind the plate toward the middle of the diamond and read the play. Be prepared for a subsequent throw to take you to your next play. Be prepared for any additional plays by returning to the middle of diamond. In every situation remember to call time when all action ceases.



**DIAGRAM: NO RUNNER'S ON.  
GROUND BALL HIT TO INFIELD**

### **RUNNER AT 3B ONLY, RUNNERS AT 1B AND 3B, 2B AND 3B, OR BASES LOADED:**

*Move out from behind the plate staying in foul ground along the 3B line.*

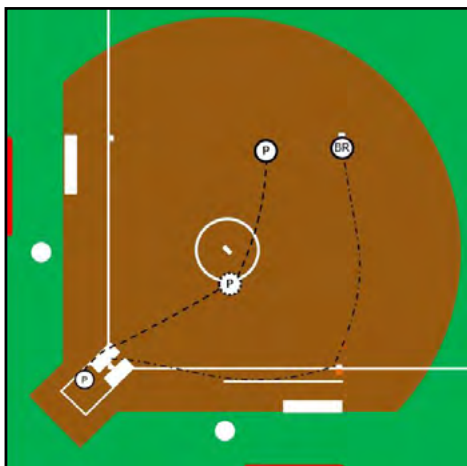
1. **If the first play goes to Home Plate for a tag play:** Move back to a position behind and in line with the deepest corner of the right hand batter's box at a minimum depth of 10 – 12 feet from the plate. Stop, read the play and make the call.
2. **If the play goes elsewhere:** Read the play and be ready to move and let the ball take you to the play. If the throw is to home for a force play; stop, read the play and make the call.
3. **If the throw goes to 1B:** Move inside the diamond, get the best angle and distance possible. Stop, read the play and make the call. If the next throw goes from 1B to 3B for a tag play, move to the best angle and distance possible. Stop, read the play and make the call.
4. **If the throw goes to Home Plate for a force play and the next throw is to 3B:** Move up toward 3B staying outside the 3B line and get the best angle and distance possible. Stop, read the play and make the call.

### BASE HIT TO THE OUTFIELD:

#### **NO RUNNER ON BASE: PLAY VIDEO**

1. Move out from behind the plate to the middle of the diamond and read the play.
2. When there is no play at 3B and the runner continues to the plate, stay inside the diamond moving parallel to the 3B base line while watching the ball and glancing at the runner.
3. On an obvious extra base hit, read the play and move accordingly. If the batted ball is a possible Home Run or a play at the plate, move into the diamond to see the runner touch all bases. Prior to the runner reaching 3B return to foul territory and move parallel to the 3B line to a position behind and in line with the deepest corner of the right hand batter's box at a minimum depth of 10 – 12 feet from the plate.
4. In all the above scenarios, when making the call, stop, read the play and make the call.

**DIAGRAM: NO RUNNER'S ON.  
BASE HIT TO OUTFIELD**

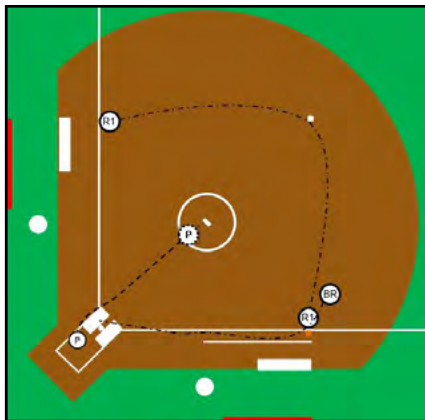


## RUNNERS ON BASE:

1. Move out from behind the plate to the middle of the diamond and read the play. With a runner on 1B only be prepared for a possible throw to 2B or 3B. Read the outfielder and if the throw goes to 3B move toward 3B getting the best angle and distance possible for a tag play. Stop, read the play and make the call.
2. With multiple runners on base, move out from behind the plate toward the middle of the diamond and read the play. With runners on 2B and 3B, glance and see the runner from 3B touch the plate while moving to the middle of the diamond. If the throw goes to the home plate, open up to the throw and move toward the plate, obtaining the best angle and distance possible. Stop, read the play and make the call.
3. In all the above scenarios, be prepared for a subsequent throw letting the ball take you to the play. Remember, multiple plays require the umpire to watch the ball, read the play, hustle into position and make the call on each play as they happen.

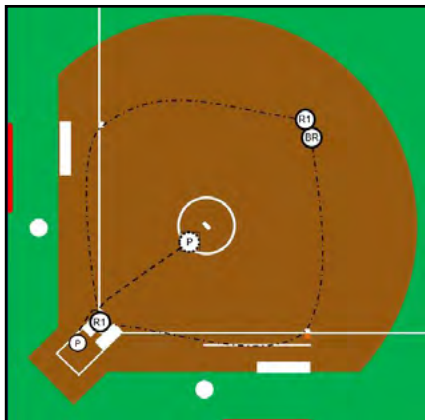
*DIAGRAM:*

*R1 @ 1B. BASE HIT TO OUTFIELD*



*DIAGRAM:*

*R1 @ 2B. BASE HIT TO OUTFIELD*





**NO RUNNER ON BASE:** **PLAY VIDEO**

1. Move out from behind the plate and focus on the ball. On a fly ball near the foul line move up the line and prioritize, fair or foul and catch or no catch. If the ball is fair and not caught, point fair, then move away from the foul line toward the middle of the diamond, pick up the ball and glance at the runner. If the batter-runner continues to the next base, move to the best angle and distance possible. Stop, read the play and make the call.
2. On a fly ball not near the foul line, move out from behind the plate, not directly at the fielder. Move to obtain an angle that is parallel to the flight of the ball to see the catch or no catch. Prior to the catch or no catch, stop, see the play and make the call.

**RUNNERS ON BASE:** **PLAY VIDEO****1. A Single Runner on Base:**

- a. Responsible first for fair or foul then catch or no catch, then watch the runner tag-up.
- b. On a fly ball to the outfield not near the foul line with a runner on 1B only, move to the best angle possible to see the catch or no catch. Once the ball is touched glance at 1B to see the runner tag-up.
- c. Be prepared to move to the best angle and distance possible should the runner advance to 2B. Stop, read the play and make the call.

**2. Multiple Runners on Base:**

- a. Responsible first for fair or foul then catch or no catch, then watch all runners tag-up.
- b. On a fly ball to the outfield not near the foul line with runners at 1B and 2B, move out from behind the plate to the best angle and distance possible to see a catch or no catch.
- c. Responsible for watching all runners tag-up. Focus on the lead runner as the runner at 1B cannot advance if the runner at 2B does not advance. Glance at both runners to insure that they properly tag-up. If the ball is caught and the runners properly tag-up and attempt to advance read the fielder making the catch and let the throw take you to the play. When the throw is released, move to the best angle and distance possible. Stop, read the play and make the call.
- d. Be prepared to move to the next play when necessary. Move to the best angle and distance possible. Stop, read the play and make the call.

**3. Multiple Runners on Base with a Runner Starting at 3B:****a. Fly Ball Near the Foul Line:**

1. Responsible first for fair or foul then catch or no catch, then watch all runners tag-up

2. With a runner on 3B only, 1B and 3B, 2B and 3B or bases loaded and a fly ball to the outfield, move out from behind the plate and focus on the ball.
3. On a fly ball near the 3B line, move to the 3B line extended and prioritize fair or foul and catch or no catch.
4. If the ball is near the 1B line, move to the first base line extended and prioritize fair or foul and catch or no catch.
5. Responsible for all base runners tagging up. Position yourself to see all runners tag-up giving special attention to the lead runner. If the ball is near the foul line and is touched, point fair or foul to give the ball status. If the ball is caught, give an out signal followed by a verbal out call and read the throw.
6. Be prepared for a subsequent play. Read the throw and let the ball take you to the next play. Move to the best angle and distance possible. Stop, read the play and make the call.

### **b. Fly Ball Not Near the Foul Line:**

1. Responsible for catch or no catch then watch the runners tag-up.
2. On a fly ball to the outfield with bases loaded move out from behind the plate into the diamond to the best angle possible to see a catch or no catch.
3. Responsible for all base runners tagging up. Once you have determined a catch or no catch, be prepared to move. Read the throw and let the ball take you to the next play. Move to the best angle and distance possible. Stop, read the play and make the call.
4. If there is a subsequent throw let the ball take you to the next play. While focusing on the ball, open up to the throw. Stop, read the play and make the call.

## DIFFICULT SITUATIONS:

*There are several difficult situations that the umpire must address in the one umpire system. Here are some examples:* **PLAY VIDEO**

1. **Runners Touching All Bases:** While you are reading the play and moving toward any play you must watch the runners touch the bases. Keep your eyes focused on the ball, while glancing at the runners. Do not guess any runner out. If you do not see them miss touching a base you cannot call them out.
2. **Base Stealing Attempt:** Move out from behind the plate, hustle and read the play. Get the best angle and distance possible. Stop, read the play and make the call.
3. **Pick-Off Plays:** Move out from behind the plate and HUSTLE to the best angle and distance possible, stop, read the play and make the call. With multiple runners on base, let the ball take you to the next play. Hustle to the best angle and distance possible. Stop, read the play and make the call.
4. **Does The Run Count:** Determine if the run counts when the last out of the inning is a tag play and not a force out or the batter-runner is put out before reaching 1B. If you have a tag play at a base and there is a runner attempting

## UMPIRE MANUAL

to score you must glance at the runner but prioritize the tag play. Make the call and immediately look at Home plate and use your best judgment to determine if the run scored. Once you determined the run scored, prior to the third out, turn to the score keeper and point to the plate empathetically and announce "run counts" or "run scores". Once you determined the runner does not score before the third out then announce, "THAT RUN DOES NOT COUNT". You must be loud and confident in order to sell the call.

## TWO-UMPIRE SYSTEM - FAST PITCH

*Key to Diagrams: P—Plate Umpire; B—Base Umpire*

### NO RUNNERS ON BASE

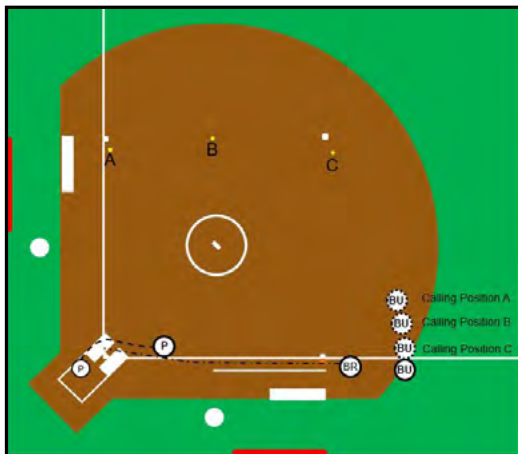
**STARTING POSITION: 18 TO 21 FEET, IN FOUL TERRITORY AND WALK THE LINE AND SQUARE TO THE PLATE. [PLAY VIDEO](#)**

#### GROUND BALL TO THE INFIELD:

**P** - Trail the batter-runner no more than 1/3 of the way to 1B in fair territory and read the play. Responsible for any play at the plate.

**B** - Step into the fair territory, at an angle 90 degrees to the path of the throw, no more than a 45 degree angle from the foul line and let the ball take you to the play. Responsible for any play at 1B, 2B or 3B.

[PLAY VIDEO](#)

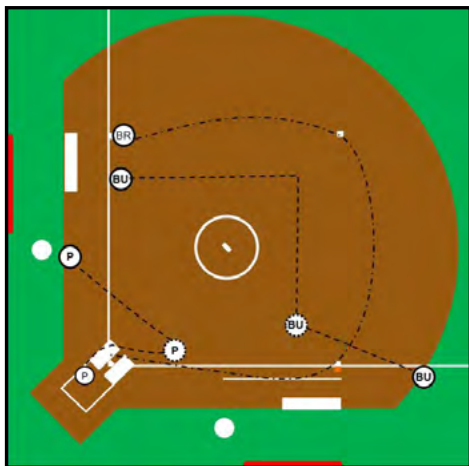


**BASE HIT TO THE OUTFIELD:**

**P** - Trail the batter-runner no more than 1/3 of the way to 1B in fair territory and read the play. As the runner approaches 2B, move to the holding zone halfway to 3B in foul ground to an area where you have an unobstructed view of all four elements and read the play.

**B** - Pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10-12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and glancing at the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner as you are responsible for any play at 1B, 2B, 3B.

**PLAY VIDEO**



**FLY BALL TO THE OUTFIELD:**

**PLAY VIDEO**

**P** - Move out from behind the plate to get the best angle and distance possible on the fly ball. As the runner approaches 2B, move to the holding zone halfway to 3B in foul ground to an area where you have an unobstructed view of all four elements and read the play. Responsible for fair / foul, catch or no catch and any play at the plate. If the BU goes out, revert to the One Umpire System.

**B** - Decide to go to the outfield to make the call or pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10-12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and glancing at the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner as you are responsible for any play at 1B, 2B, or 3B.

**STARTING POSITION: SHADE THE RUNNER AT 1B WHILE STARTING BEHIND AND OFF THE 1B SIDE OF THE SECOND BASEMAN, SQUARE TO THE PLATE AND ADJUST AS NEEDED. GO TO THE READY POSITION AT THE START OF THE PITCH. [PLAY VIDEO](#)**

**GROUND BALL TO THE INFIELD: [PLAY VIDEO](#)**

**P** - Trail the batter-runner no more than 1/3 of the way to 1B in fair territory and read the play. As the lead runner approaches 2B, move toward 3B to first obtain the proper angle, then close your distance as the play develops working to get an unobstructed view of the play and to obtain a final calling distance of 10-12 feet from the play. Remember as the four elements come together; stop, read the play and make the call. Responsible for a subsequent throw to 3B on the lead runner and any play at the plate.

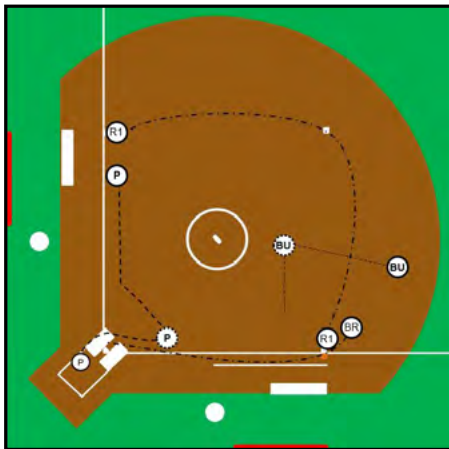
**B** - Let the ball take you to the play. Responsible for any play at 1B, 2B and the last runner to 3B.

**BASE HIT TO THE OUTFIELD:**

**P** - Trail the batter-runner no more than 1/3 of the way to 1B in fair territory and read the play. As the lead runner approaches 2B, move toward 3B to first obtain the proper angle, then close your distance as the play develops working to get an unobstructed view of the play and to obtain a final calling distance of 10-12 feet from the play. Remember as the four elements come together; stop, read the play and make the call. Responsible for a play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate.

**B** - Pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond to button-hook at a minimum depth of 10-12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and glancing at the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner as you are responsible for any play at 1B, 2B, and the last runner into 3B.

**[PLAY VIDEO](#)**



## **FLY BALL TO THE OUTFIELD:** PLAY VIDEO

**P** - Move out from behind the plate to get the best angle and distance possible on the fly ball. As the runner approaches 2B, move to the holding zone halfway to 3B in foul ground to an area where you have an unobstructed view of all four elements and read the play. Responsible for fair / foul, catch or no catch, any play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate. If the BU goes out, revert to the One Umpire System.

**B** - Decide whether to go to the outfield to make the call or pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10-12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner as you are responsible for the tag-up at 1B, any play at 1B, 2B, and the last runner into 3B.

## RUNNER ON SECOND BASE ONLY

**STARTING POSITION: SHADE THE RUNNER AT 2B, WHILE STARTING BEHIND AND OFF THE 2B SIDE OF THE SHORTSTOP SQUARE TO THE PLATE AND ADJUST AS NEEDED. GO TO THE READY POSITION AT THE START OF THE PITCH.**

## PLAY VIDEO

## **GROUND BALL TO THE INFIELD:** PLAY VIDEO

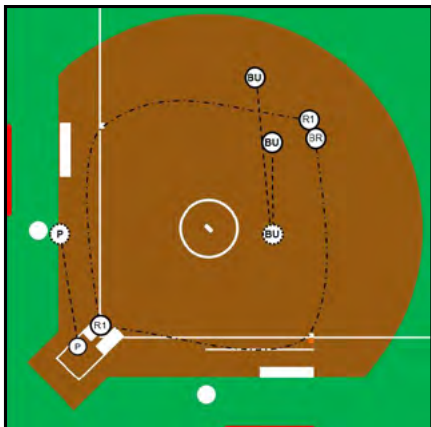
**P** - Move out from behind the plate toward the holding zone halfway to 3B in foul ground to an area where you have an unobstructed view of all four elements and read the play. Responsible for a subsequent throw to 3B on the lead runner and any play at the plate.

**B** - Let the ball take you to the play. Responsible for the first throw in the infield, any play at 1B, 2B and the last runner into 3B.

## **BASE HIT TO THE OUTFIELD:** PLAY VIDEO

**P** - Move out from behind home plate toward the holding zone halfway to 3B in foul ground to an area where you have an unobstructed view of all four elements and read the play. Be prepared to move as the play develops as you are responsible for any play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate.

**B** - Pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond toward 1B, about halfway between 2B and 1B. Continue to alternate between the ball and glancing at the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner as you are responsible for any play at 1B, 2B, and the last runner into 3B.

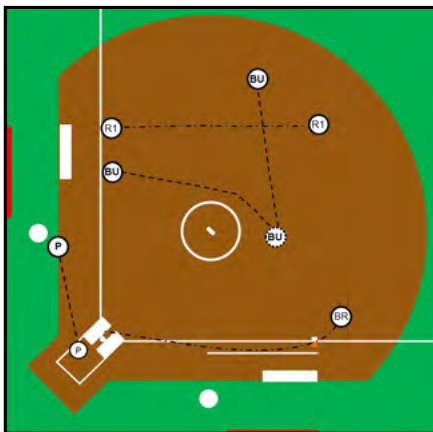


## **FLY BALL TO THE OUTFIELD:** PLAY VIDEO

**P** - Move out from behind the plate to get the best angle and distance possible on the fly ball. Responsible for fair or foul, catch or no catch, any play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate. If the BU goes out, revert to the One Umpire System.

**B** - Decide whether to go to the outfield to make the call or pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond about halfway between 2B and 1B. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner as you are responsible for the tag-up at 2B, any play at 1B, 2B, and the last runner into 3B.

*DIAGRAM: R1 @ 2B.  
FLYBALL TO OUTFIELD.  
Fly ball is caught, BR is out.*



## RUNNER ON THIRD BASE ONLY

**STARTING POSITION: SHADE THE RUNNER AT 3B WHILE STARTING BEHIND AND OFF THE 3B SIDE OF THE SHORTSTOP, SQUARE TO THE PLATE AND ADJUST AS NEEDED. GO TO THE READY POSITION AT THE START OF THE PITCH.**

**PLAY VIDEO**

## **GROUND BALL TO THE INFIELD:** PLAY VIDEO

**P** - Move out from behind the plate toward the holding zone to an area where you have an unobstructed view of all four elements and read the play. Responsible for the lead runner on a subsequent throw to 3B and any play at the plate.

**B** - Let the ball take you to the play. Responsible for the first throw in the infield, any play at 1B, 2B and the last runner into 3B.

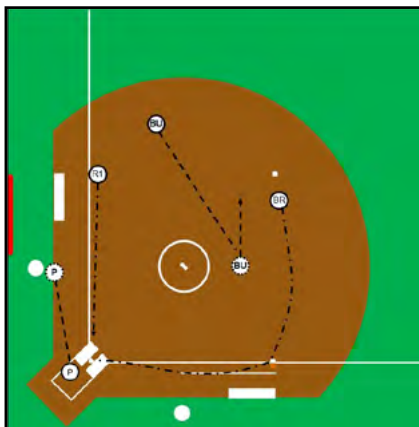
## **BASE HIT TO THE OUTFIELD:**

**P** - Move out from behind home plate towards the holding zone halfway to 3B in foul

ground to an area where you have an unobstructed view of all four elements. Be prepared to move as the play develops as you are responsible for any play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate.

**B** - Pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10-12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and glancing at the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner as you are responsible for any play at 1B, 2B, and the last runner into 3B.

**PLAY VIDEO**

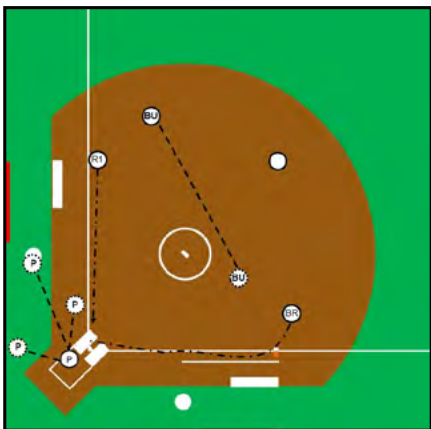


**FLY BALL TO THE OUTFIELD:**

**P** - Move out from behind the plate to get the best angle and distance possible on the fly ball. Responsible for fair / foul, catch or no catch, the tag up at 3B, any play on the lead runner at 3B, and any play at the plate. If the BU goes out, revert to the One Umpire System.

**B** - Decide whether to go to the outfield to make the call or pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10-12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner as you are responsible for any play at 1B, 2B, and the last runner into 3B.

**PLAY VIDEO**





## RUNNERS ON FIRST AND SECOND BASE

**STARTING POSITION: SHADE THE LEAD RUNNER AT 2B WHILE STARTING BEHIND AND OFF THE 2B SIDE OF THE SHORTSTOP, SQUARE TO THE PLATE AND ADJUST AS NEEDED. GO TO THE READY POSITION AT THE START OF THE PITCH. [PLAY VIDEO](#)**

**GROUND BALL TO THE INFIELD: [PLAY VIDEO](#)**

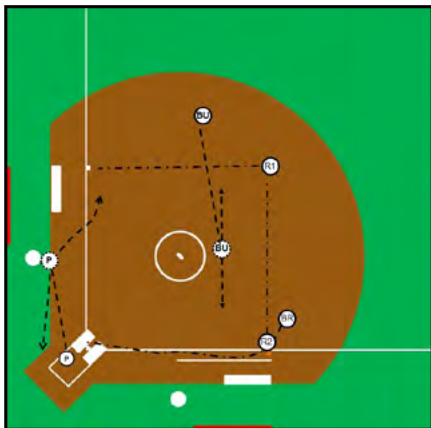
**P** - Move out from behind home plate towards the holding zone halfway to 3B in foul ground to an area where you have an unobstructed view of all four elements and read the play. Be prepared to move as the play develops as you are responsible for any subsequent throw on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate.

**B** - Let the ball take you to the play. Responsible for the first throw in the infield, any play at 1B, 2B and the last runner into 3B.

**BASE HIT TO THE OUTFIELD: [PLAY VIDEO](#)**

**P** - Move out from behind home plate toward the holding zone halfway to 3B in foul ground to an area where you have an unobstructed view of all four elements and read the play. Be prepared to move as the play develops as you are responsible for any play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate.

**B** - Pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10-12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and glancing at the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner as you are responsible for any play at 1B, 2B, and the last runner into 3B.

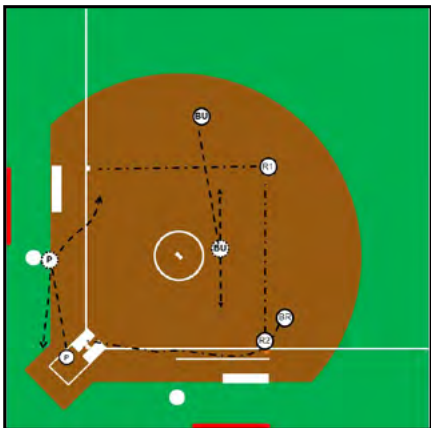


**FLY BALL TO THE OUTFIELD:**

**P** - Move out from behind the plate to get the best angle and distance possible and read the play. with Responsible for fair / foul, catch or no catch, the tag up at 2B, any play on the lead runner at 3B, and any play at the plate. If the BU goes out, revert to the One Umpire System.

**B** - Decide whether to go to the outfield to make the call or pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10-12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner as you are responsible for the tag-up at 1B, any play at 1B, 2B, and the last runner into 3B.

**PLAY VIDEO**



**RUNNERS ON FIRST AND THIRD BASE**

**STARTING POSITION: SHADE THE LEAD RUNNER AT 3B WHILE STARTING BEHIND AND OFF THE 3B SIDE OF THE SHORTSTOP, SQUARE TO THE PLATE AND ADJUST AS NEEDED. GO TO THE READY POSITION AT THE START OF THE PITCH.** **PLAY VIDEO**

**GROUND BALL TO THE INFIELD:**

**P** - Move out from behind home plate toward the holding zone halfway to 3B in foul ground to an area where you have an unobstructed view of all four elements and read the play. Be prepared to move as the play develops as you are responsible for any subsequent throw on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate.

**B** - Let the ball take you to the play. Responsible for the first throw in the infield, any play at 1B, 2B and the last runner into 3B.

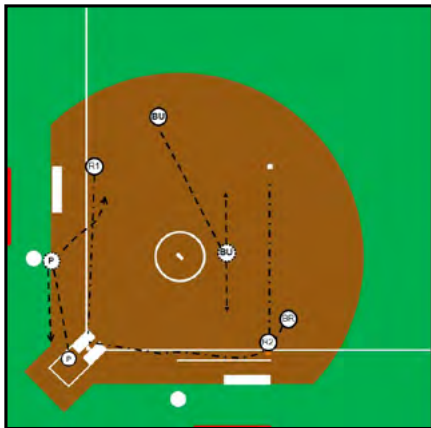
**BASE HIT TO THE OUTFIELD:**

**P** - Move out from behind home plate toward the holding zone about halfway to 3B in foul ground to an area where you have an unobstructed view of all four elements

and read the play. Be prepared to move as the play develops as you are responsible for any play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate.

**B** - Pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond about halfway between 2B and 1B. Continue to alternate between the ball and glancing at the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner as you are responsible for any play at 1B, 2B, and the last runner into 3B.

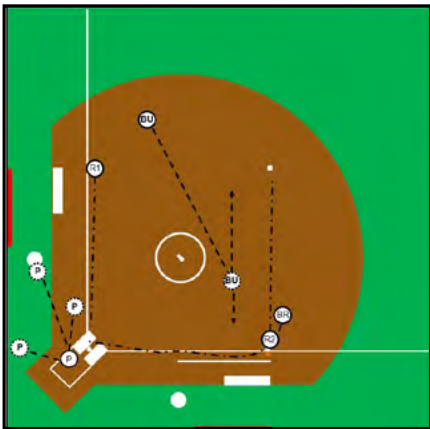
## PLAY VIDEO



### FLY BALL TO THE OUTFIELD:

**P** - Move out from behind the plate to get the best angle and distance possible on the fly ball. Responsible for fair or foul, catch or no catch, the tag-up at 3B, any play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate. If the BU goes out, revert to the One Umpire System.

**B** - Decide whether to go to the outfield to make the call or pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond about halfway between 2B and 1B. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner as you are responsible for the tag-up at 1B, any play at 1B, 2B, and the last runner into 3B.



**RUNNERS ON SECOND AND THIRD BASE**

**STARTING POSITION: SHADE THE LEAD RUNNER AT 3B, WHILE STARTING BEHIND AND OFF THE 3B SIDE OF THE SHORTSTOP, SQUARE TO THE PLATE AND ADJUST AS NEEDED. GO TO THE READY POSITION AT THE START OF THE PITCH. [PLAY VIDEO](#)**

**GROUND BALL TO THE INFIELD:**

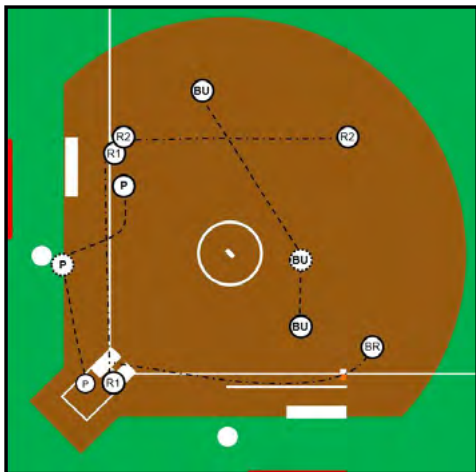
**P** - Move out from behind home plate towards the holding zone to an area where you have an unobstructed view of all four elements and read the play. Be prepared to move as the play develops as you are responsible for any subsequent throw on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate.

**B** - Let the ball take you to the play. Responsible for the first throw in the infield, any play at 1B, 2B and the last runner into 3B.

**BASE HIT TO THE OUTFIELD:**

**P** - Move out from behind home plate towards the holding zone halfway to 3B in foul ground to an area where you have an unobstructed view of all four elements and read the play. Be prepared to move as the play develops as you are responsible for any play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate.

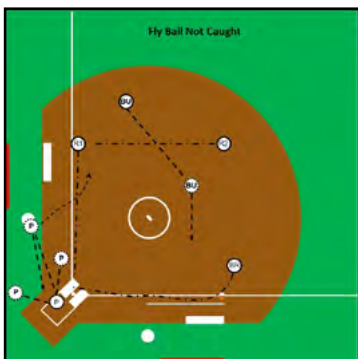
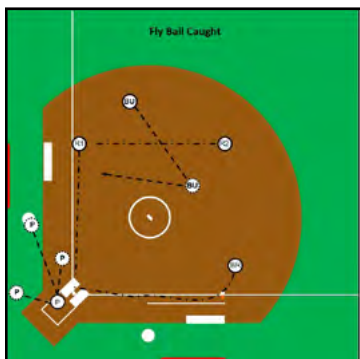
**B** - Pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you move inside the diamond about halfway between 2B and 1B. Continue to alternate between the ball and glancing at the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner as you are responsible for any play at 1B, 2B, and the last runner into 3B.



**FLY BALL TO THE OUTFIELD:** [PLAY VIDEO](#)

**P** - Move out from behind the plate to get the best angle and distance possible on the fly ball. Responsible for fair or foul, catch or no catch, the tag-up at 3B, any play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate. If the BU goes out, revert to the One Umpire System

**B** - Decide whether to go to the outfield to make the call or pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond about halfway between 2B and 1B. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner as you are responsible for the tag-up at 2B, any play at 1B, 2B, and the last runner into 3B.

**BASES LOADED**

**STARTING POSITION: SHADE THE LEAD RUNNER AT 3B, WHILE STARTING BEHIND AND OFF THE 3B SIDE OF THE SHORTSTOP SQUARE TO THE PLATE AND ADJUST AS NEEDED. GO TO THE READY POSITION AT THE START OF THE PITCH.** [PLAY VIDEO](#)

**GROUND BALL TO THE INFIELD:** [PLAY VIDEO](#)

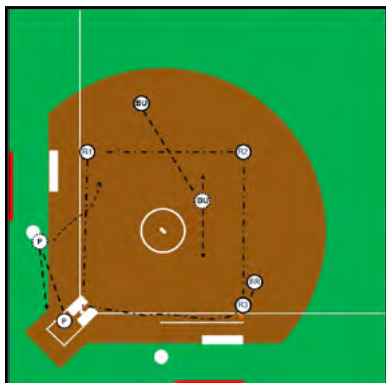
**P** - Move out from behind home plate toward the holding zone to an area where you have an unobstructed view of all four elements. Be prepared to move as the play develops as you are responsible for any subsequent throw on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate.

**B** - Let the ball take you to the play. Responsible for the first throw in the infield, any play at 1B, 2B and the last runner into 3B.

**BASE HIT TO THE OUTFIELD:**

**P** - Move out from behind home plate towards the holding zone halfway to 3B in foul ground to an area where you have an unobstructed view of all four elements and read the play. Be prepared to move as the play develops as you are responsible for any play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate.

**B** - Pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond about halfway between 2B and 1B. Continue to alternate between the ball and glancing at the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner as you are responsible for any play at 1B, 2B, and the last runner into 3B.

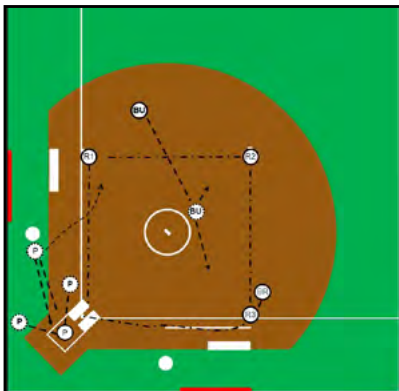


### **FLY BALL TO THE OUTFIELD:**

**P** - Move out from behind the plate to get the best angle and distance possible on the fly ball. Responsible for fair or foul, catch or no catch, the tag-up at 3B, any play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate. If the BU goes out, revert to the One Umpire System.

**B** - Decide whether to go to the outfield to make the call or pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond about halfway between 2B and 1B. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner as you are responsible for the tag-up at 2B and 1B, any play at 1B, 2B and the last runner into 3B.

**PLAY VIDEO**

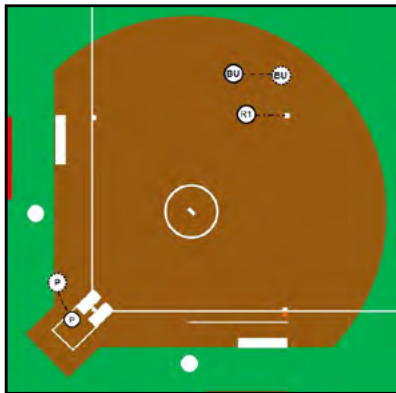
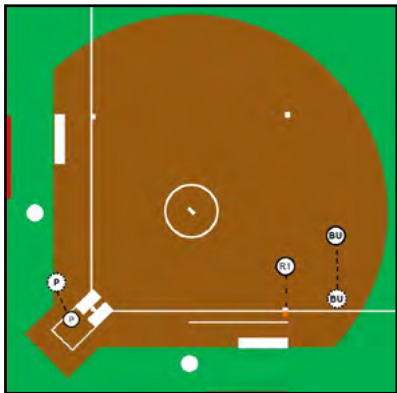


## OTHER SITUATIONS IN THE TWO UMPIRE SYSTEM

### PICK-OFF ATTEMPTS:

**B** - Move parallel with the base line to the best angle and distance possible, stop, read the play, and make the call.

**P** - Move out from behind the plate and read the play.



**PLAY VIDEO**

**PLAY VIDEO**

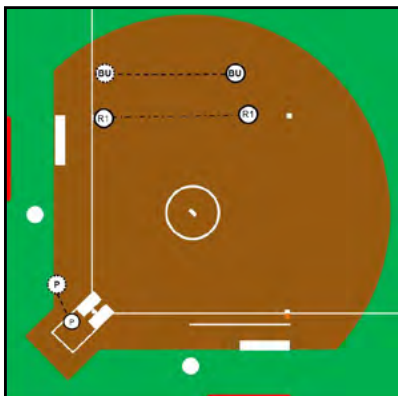
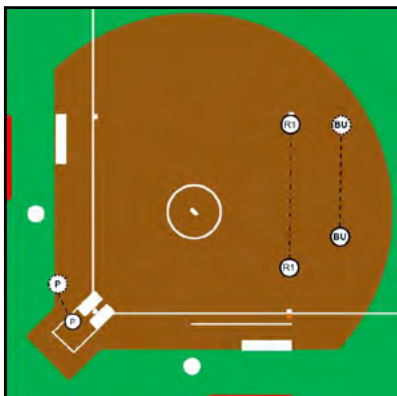
### STEAL ATTEMPTS:

**B** - Move parallel to the base line to the best angle and distance possible. Stop, get an unobstructed view of the play, and make the call.

**P** - Move out from behind the plate and read the play.

**PLAY VIDEO**

**PLAY VIDEO**



### PICK-OFF ATTEMPT AT THIRD BASE:

**PLAY VIDEO**

## TWO UMPIRE SYSTEM - SLOW PITCH

## NO RUNNERS ON BASE

**STARTING POSITION: 18 TO 21 FEET, IN FOUL TERRITORY AND WALK THE LINE AND SQUARE TO THE PLATE. [PLAY VIDEO](#)**

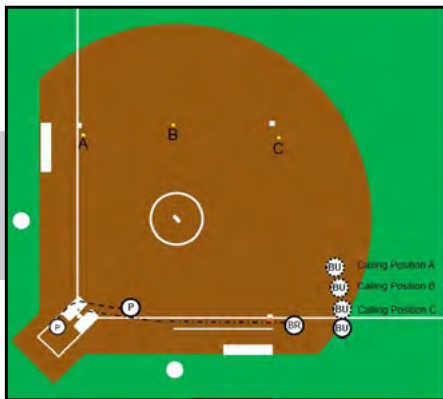
**\*\*\* The Videos in this section, No Runners on Base are prerecorded Fast Pitch Videos. With the NEW Slow Pitch Mechanic and umpires starting back on the line, the mechanic and philosophy are exactly the same between Slow and Fast Pitch\*\*\***

**GROUND BALL TO THE INFIELD:**

**P** - Trail the batter-runner no more than 1/3 of the way to 1B in fair territory and read the play. Responsible for any play at the plate.

**B** - Step into the fair territory, at an angle 90 degrees to the path of the throw, no more than a 45 degree angle from the foul line and let the ball take you to the play. Responsible for any play at 1B, 2B or 3B.

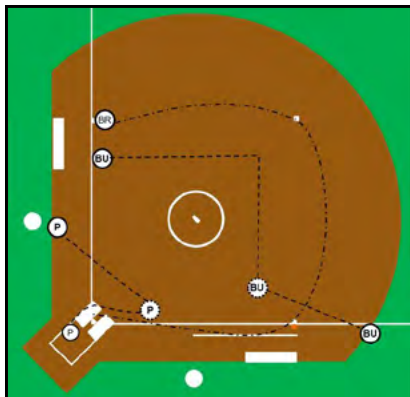
[PLAY VIDEO](#)

**BASE HIT TO THE OUTFIELD:**

[PLAY VIDEO](#)

**P** - Trail the batter-runner no more than 1/3 of the way to 1B in fair territory and read the play. Responsible for any play at the plate.

**B** - Pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10-12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner as you are responsible for any play at 1B, 2B, or 3B.





## UMPIRE MANUAL

### **FLY BALL TO THE OUTFIELD:** [PLAY VIDEO](#)

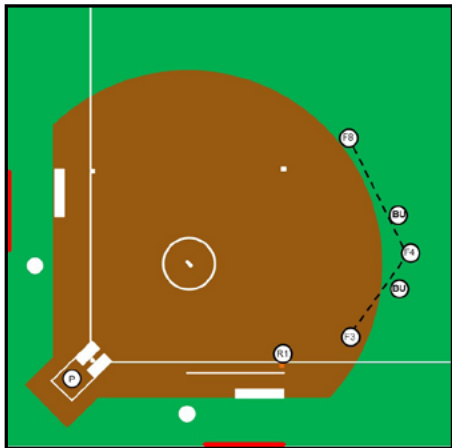
**P** - Move out from behind the plate to get the best angle and distance possible on the fly ball. Responsible for fair or foul and catch or no catch and any play at the plate. If the BU goes out, revert to the One Umpire System.

**B** - Decide whether to go to the outfield to make the call or pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10-12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner as you are responsible for any play at 1B, 2B, or 3B.

## RUNNER ON FIRST BASE

**STARTING POSITION: SHADE RUNNER AT 1B. START BEHIND OR OFF OF THE 1B SIDE OF THE SECOND BASEMAN AND SQUARE TO THE PLATE. THIS POSITION SHOULD BE ADJUSTED BASED ON THE DEPTH AND LOCATION OF THE SECOND BASEMAN OR ANY ADDITIONAL PLAYERS POSITIONED IN THE INFIELD. GO TO THE READY POSITION AT THE START OF THE PITCH.**

### [PLAY VIDEO](#)



### **GROUND BALL TO THE INFIELD:** [PLAY VIDEO](#)

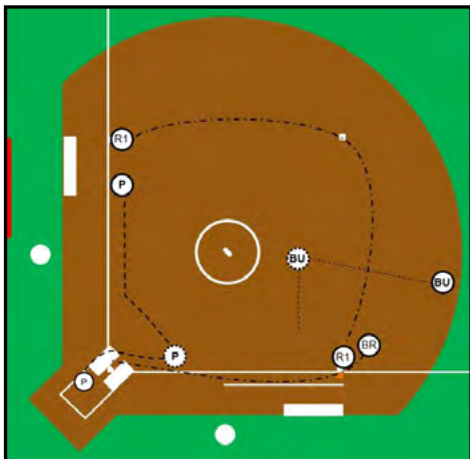
**P** - Trail the batter-runner no more than 1/3 of the way to 1B in fair territory and read the play. As the lead runner approaches 2B move toward 3B to first obtain the proper angle, then close your distance as the play develops working to get an unobstructed view of the play and to obtain a minimum distance of 10-12 feet from the play. Remember as the four elements come together; stop, read the play and make the call. Responsible for any play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate.

**B** - Let the ball take you to the play. Responsible for any play at 1B or 2B, and the last runner into 3B.

**BASE HIT TO THE OUTFIELD:** **PLAY VIDEO**

**P** - Trail the batter-runner no more than 1/3 of the way to 1B in fair territory and read the play. As the lead runner approaches 2B, move toward 3B to first obtain the proper angle, then close your distance as the play develops working to get an unobstructed view of the play and to obtain a final calling distance of 10-12 feet from the play. Remember as the four elements come together; stop, read the play and make the call. Responsible for any play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate.

**B** - Pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond about half way between 1B and 2B to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10-12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner as you are responsible for any play at 1B, 2B, and last runner into 3B.

**FLY BALL TO THE OUTFIELD:** **PLAY VIDEO**

**P** - Move out from behind the plate to get the best angle and distance possible on the fly ball. Responsible for fair or foul, catch or no catch, any play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate. If the BU goes out, revert to the One Umpire System.

**B** - Decide whether to go to the outfield or pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond about half way between 1B and 2B to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10-12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runners keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner as you are responsible for the tag-up at 1B, any play at 1B, 2B, and last runner into 3B.

## RUNNERS ON SECOND BASE ONLY

**STARTING POSITION: SHADE THE RUNNER AT 2B. START BEHIND OR OFF THE 2B SIDE OF THE SECOND BASEMAN AND SQUARE TO THE PLATE. THIS POSITION SHOULD BE ADJUSTED BASED ON THE DEPTH AND LOCATION OF THE SECOND BASEMAN OR ANY ADDITIONAL PLAYERS POSITIONED IN THE INFIELD. GO TO THE READY POSITION AT THE START OF THE PITCH.**

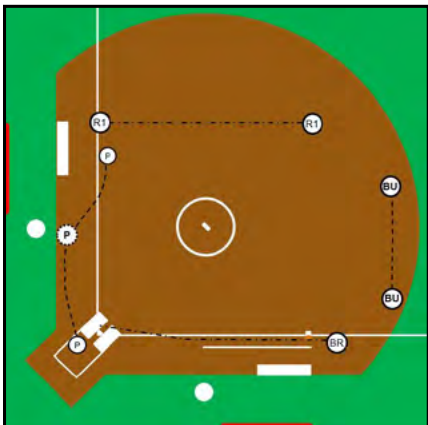
### PLAY VIDEO

#### GROUND BALL TO THE INFIELD:

**P** - Move out from behind the plate toward the holding zone halfway to 3B in foul ground to an area where you have an unobstructed view of all four elements and read the play. Responsible for any play at 3B on the lead runner and any play at the plate.

**B** - Let the ball take you to the play. Responsible for any play at 1B, 2B and the last runner into 3B.

### PLAY VIDEO

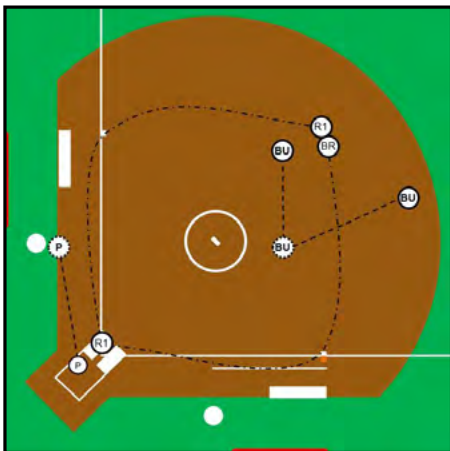


#### BASE HIT TO THE OUTFIELD:

### PLAY VIDEO

**P** - Move out from behind home plate toward the holding zone halfway to 3B in foul ground to an area where you have an unobstructed view of all four elements and read the play. Be prepared to move as the play develops as you are responsible for any play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate.

**B** - Pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond about half way between 1B and 2B to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10-12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner as you are responsible for any play at 1B, 2B, and last runner into 3B.

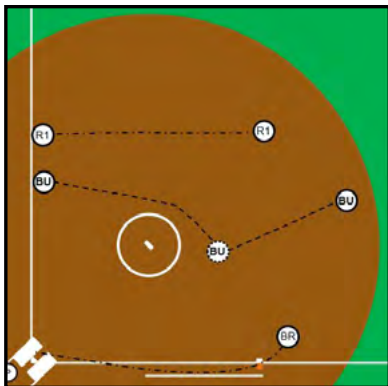


**FLY BALL TO THE OUTFIELD:**

**P** - Move out from behind the plate to get the best angle and distance possible on the fly ball. Responsible for fair or foul, catch or no catch, any play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate. If the BU goes out, revert to the One Umpire System.

**B** - Decide whether to go to the outfield to make the call or pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond about half way between 1B and 2B to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10-12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner as you are responsible for the tag-up at 2B, any play at 1B, 2B, and the last runner into 3B.

*DIAGRAM: R1 @ 2B.  
FLYBALL TO OUTFIELD.  
Fly ball is caught, BR is out.*



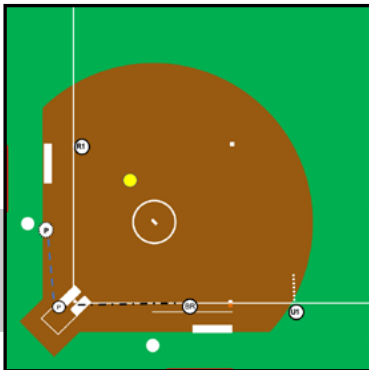
**RUNNER ON THIRD BASE ONLY**

**STARTING POSITION: 18 TO 21 FEET, IN FOUL TERRITORY AND WALK THE LINE AND SQUARE TO THE PLATE.**

**GROUND BALL TO THE INFIELD:**

**P** - Move out from behind the plate toward the holding zone halfway to 3B in foul ground to an area where you have an unobstructed view of all four elements and read the play. Be prepared to move as the play develops as you are responsible for any play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate.

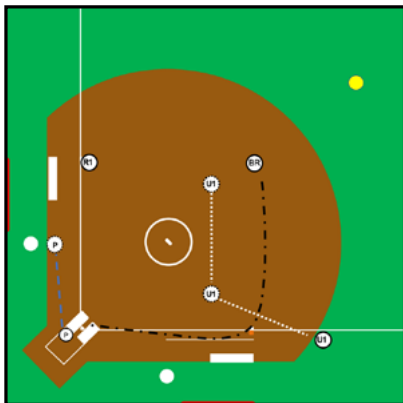
**B** - Step into the fair territory, at an angle 90 degrees to the path of the throw, no more than a 45 degree angle from the foul line and let the ball take you to the play. Responsible for any play at 1B, 2B or 3B.



## **BASE HIT TO THE OUTFIELD:**

**P** - Move out from behind the plate toward the holding zone in foul ground to an area where you have an unobstructed view of all four elements and read the play. Be prepared to move as the play develops as you are responsible for any play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate.

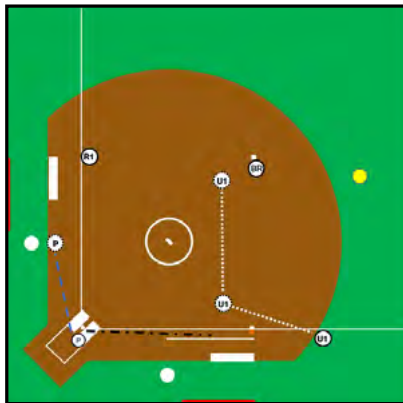
**B** - Pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond about halfway between 1B and 2B to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10-12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner as you are responsible for any play at 1B, 2B, and last runner into 3B.



## **FLY BALL TO THE OUTFIELD:**

**P** - Move out from behind the plate to get the best angle and distance possible on the fly ball. Responsible for fair or foul, catch or no catch, the tag-up at 3B, any play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate. If the BU goes out, revert to the One Umpire System.

**B** - Decide whether to go to the outfield to make the call or pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond about half way between 1B and 2B to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10-12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner as you are responsible for any play at 1B, 2B, and last runner into 3B.



**RUNNERS ON FIRST AND SECOND BASE**

**STARTING POSITION: SHADE RUNNER AT 2B. START BEHIND OR OFF OF THE 2B SIDE OF THE SECOND BASEMAN AND SQUARE TO THE PLATE. THIS POSITION SHOULD BE ADJUSTED BASED ON THE DEPTH AND LOCATION OF THE SECOND BASEMAN OR ANY ADDITIONAL PLAYERS POSITIONED IN THE INFIELD. GO TO THE READY POSITION AT THE START OF THE PITCH.**

**PLAY VIDEO**

**GROUND BALL TO THE INFIELD:**

**P** - Move out from behind the plate toward the holding zone halfway to 3B in foul ground to an area where you have an unobstructed view of all four elements and read the play. Be prepared to move as the play develops, as you are responsible for any play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate.

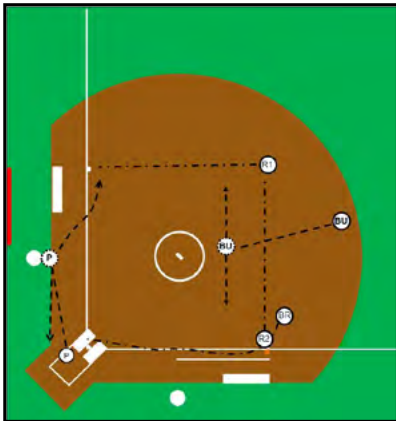
**B** - Let the ball take you to the play. Responsible for any play at 1B, 2B and the last runner into 3B.

**BASE HIT TO THE OUTFIELD:**

**PLAY VIDEO**

**P** - Move out from behind the plate toward the holding zone halfway to 3B in foul ground to an area where you have an unobstructed view of all four elements and read the play. Be prepared to move as the play develops, as you are responsible for any play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate.

**B** - Pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond about halfway between 1B and 2B to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10-12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner as you are responsible for any play at 1B, 2B, and last runner into 3B.

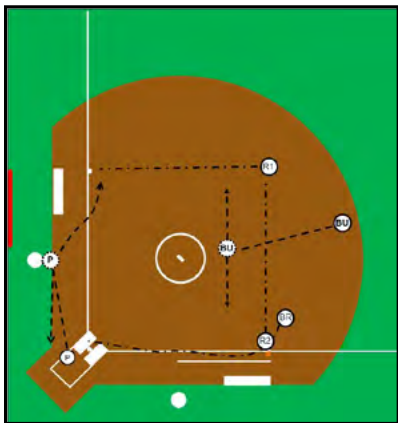


**FLY BALL TO THE OUTFIELD:**

**P** - Move out from behind the plate to get the best angle and distance possible on the fly ball. Responsible for fair or foul, catch or no catch, the tag-up at 2B, any play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate. If the BU goes out, revert to the One Umpire System.

**B** - Decide whether to go to the outfield to make the call or pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond about halfway between 1B and 2B by buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10-12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner as you are responsible for the tag-up at 1B, any play at 1B, 2B, and last runner into 3B.

### PLAY VIDEO



## RUNNERS ON FIRST AND THIRD BASE

**STARTING POSITION: SHADE RUNNER AT 1B. START BEHIND OR OFF THE 1B SIDE OF THE SECOND BASEMAN AND SQUARE TO THE PLATE. THIS POSITION SHOULD BE ADJUSTED BASED ON THE DEPTH AND LOCATION OF THE SECOND BASEMAN OR ANY ADDITIONAL PLAYERS POSITIONED IN THE INFIELD. GO TO THE READY POSITION AT THE START OF THE PITCH.**

### GROUND BALL TO THE INFIELD:

**P** - Move out from behind the plate toward the holding zone in foul ground to an area where you have an unobstructed view of all four elements and read the play. Be prepared to move as the play develops, as you are responsible for any play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate.

**B** - Let the ball take you to the play. Responsible for any play at 1B, 2B and the last runner into 3B.

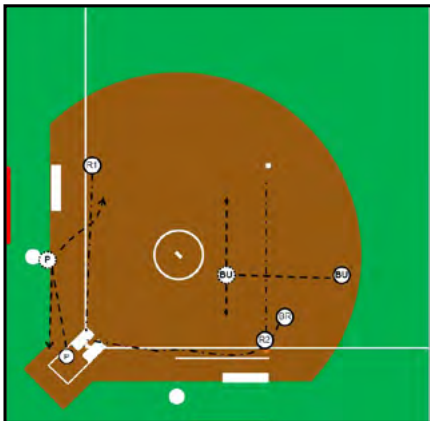
**BASE HIT TO THE OUTFIELD: PLAY VIDEO**

**P** - Move out from behind the plate toward the holding zone halfway to 3B in foul ground to an area where you have an unobstructed view of all four elements and read the play.

Be prepared to move as the play develops, as you are responsible for any play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate.

**B** - Pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond about halfway between 1B and 2B to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10-12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you.

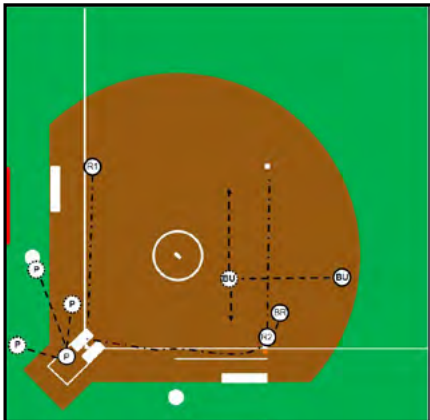
Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner as you are responsible for any play at 1B, 2B, and last runner into 3B.



**FLY BALL TO THE OUTFIELD:**

**P** - Move out from behind the plate to get the best angle and distance possible on the fly ball. Responsible for fair or foul, catch or no catch, the tag-up at 3B, any play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate. If the BU goes out, revert to the One Umpire System.

**B** - Decide whether to go to the outfield to make the call or pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond about halfway between 1B and 2B to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10-12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner as you are responsible for the tag-up at 1B, any play at 1B, 2B, and last runner into 3B.





**RUNNERS ON SECOND AND THIRD BASE**

**STARTING POSITION: SHADE RUNNER AT 2B. START BEHIND OR OFF THE 2B SIDE OF THE SECOND BASEMAN AND SQUARE TO THE PLATE. THIS POSITION SHOULD BE ADJUSTED BASED ON THE DEPTH AND LOCATION OF THE SECOND BASEMAN OR ANY ADDITIONAL PLAYERS POSITIONED IN THE INFIELD. GO TO THE READY POSITION AT THE START OF THE PITCH.**

**GROUND BALL TO THE INFIELD:**

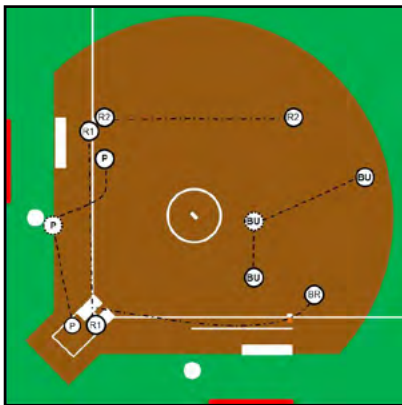
**P** - Move out from behind the plate toward the holding zone in foul ground to an area where you have an unobstructed view of all four elements and read the play. Be prepared to move as the play develops, as you are responsible for any play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate.

**B** - Let the ball take you to the play. Responsible for any play at 1B, 2B and the last runner into 3B.

**BASE HIT TO THE OUTFIELD:**

**P** - Move out from behind the plate toward the holding zone in foul ground to an area where you have an unobstructed view of all four elements and read the play. Be prepared to move as the play develops, as you are responsible for any play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate.

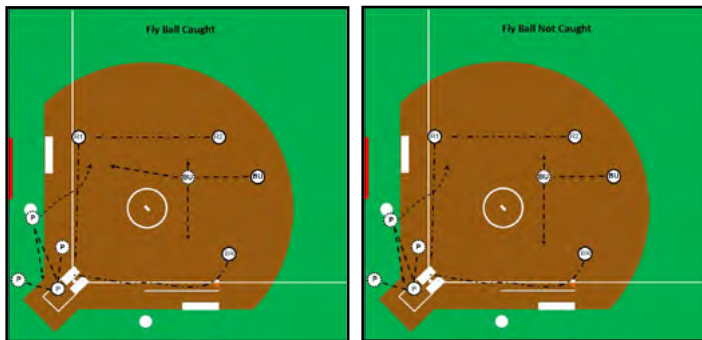
**B** - Pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond about halfway between 1B and 2B to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10-12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner as you are responsible for any play at 1B, 2B, and last runner into 3B.

**PLAY VIDEO**

## **FLY BALL TO THE OUTFIELD:**

**P** - Move out from behind the plate in foul ground to get the best angle and distance possible on the fly ball. Responsible for fair or foul, catch or no catch, tag-up at 3B, any play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate. If the BU goes out, revert to the One Umpire System.

**B** - Decide whether to go to the outfield to make the call pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond about halfway between 1B and 2B, to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10-12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner as you are responsible for the tag-up at 2B, any play at 1B, 2B and last runner into 3B.



## BASES LOADED

**STARTING POSITION: SHADE RUNNER AT 2B. START BEHIND OR OFF THE 2B SIDE OF THE SECOND BASEMAN AND SQUARE TO THE PLATE. THIS POSITION SHOULD BE ADJUSTED BASED ON THE DEPTH AND LOCATION OF THE SECOND BASEMAN OR ANY ADDITIONAL PLAYERS POSITIONED IN THE INFIELD. GO TO THE READY POSITION AT THE START OF THE PITCH.**

**PLAY VIDEO**

## **GROUND BALL TO THE INFIELD:** PLAY VIDEO

**P** - Move out from behind the plate toward the holding zone in foul ground to an area where you have an unobstructed view of all four elements and read the play. Be prepared to move as the play develops as you are responsible for any play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate.

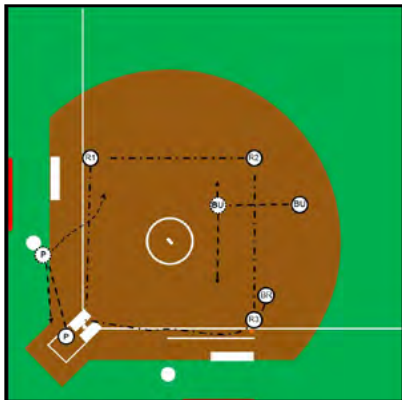
**B** - Let the ball take you to the play. Responsible for any play at 1B, 2B and the last runner into 3B.

## **BASE HIT TO THE OUTFIELD:**

**P** - Move out from behind home plate toward the holding zone halfway to 3B in foul ground to an area where you have an unobstructed view of all four elements and read the play. Be prepared to move as the play develops as you are responsible for any play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate.

**B** - Pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond about halfway between 1B and 2B to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10-12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner as you are responsible for any play at 1B, 2B, and last runner into 3B.

**PLAY VIDEO**

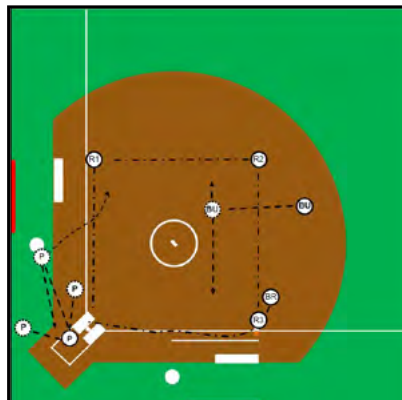


## **FLY BALL TO THE OUTFIELD:**

**P** - Move out from behind the plate in foul ground to get the best angle and distance possible and read the play. Responsible for fair or foul, catch or no catch, the tag-up at 3B, any play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate. If the BU goes out, revert to the One Umpire System.

**B** - Decide whether to go to the outfield to make the call and pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond about halfway between 1B and 2B, to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10-12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner as you are responsible for the tag-up at 1B and 2B, any play at 1B, 2B and last runner into 3B.

**PLAY VIDEO**



**PICK OFF AND STEAL MECHANICS  
TWO UMPIRE SYSTEM- SLOW PITCH**

**PICK OFF ATTEMPTS**

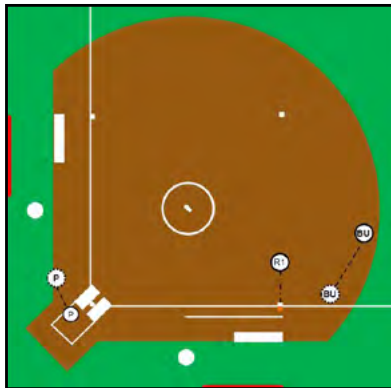
**B** - Move parallel with the base line to the best angle and distance possible, stop, see the play and make the call.

**P** - Move out from the plate to the best angle and distance (based on the origin of the throw), stop, see the play and make the call.

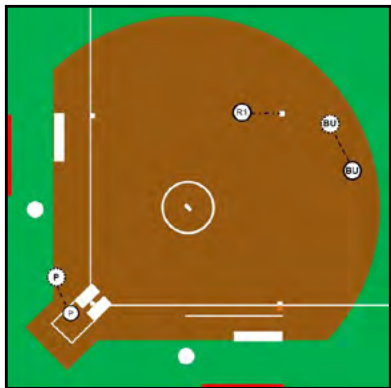
**STEAL ATTEMPTS**

**B** - Move parallel with the base line to the best angle and distance possible, stop, see the play and make the call.

**P** - Move out from the plate to the best angle and distance (based on the origin of the throw), stop, see the play and make the call.



[PLAY VIDEO](#)



[PLAY VIDEO](#)

## UMPIRE MANUAL

\*\*\* Some Videos in this pick-off section are pre-recorded Slow Pitch Videos. With the NEW Slow Pitch Mechanic having the Base Umpire starting back on the line with No Runners on & Runners starting on 3B, the mechanic and philosophy of the Plate Umpire are the same per the video. Only change to what the video demonstrates, is the Base Umpire would start on the line and not counter-rotated like prior years\*\*\*

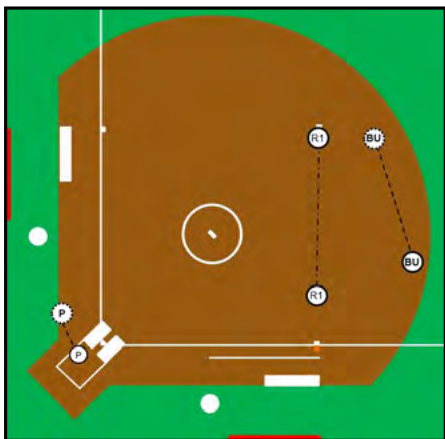
**PICK OFF ATTEMPT AT THIRD BASE:** [PLAY VIDEO](#)

### STEALS AND PICK OFF ATTEMPTS

Responsibilities in the Two Umpire System-Slow Pitch

	Steals	Pickoffs
1st Base		B
2nd Base	B	B
3rd Base	P	P

[PLAY VIDEO](#)



**RUNNER AT 2B, STEAL TO THIRD BASE:** [PLAY VIDEO](#)

**THREE-UMPIRE SYSTEM  
FAST PITCH AND SLOW PITCH**

Key to Diagrams: P—Plate Umpire; U1—1st Base Umpire, U3—3rd Base Umpire

**NO RUNNERS ON BASE**

**STARTING POSITION: BOTH UMPIRES START 18 – 21 FT BEYOND FIRST AND THIRD BASE IN FOUL TERRITORY AND WALK THE LINE. [PLAY VIDEO](#)**

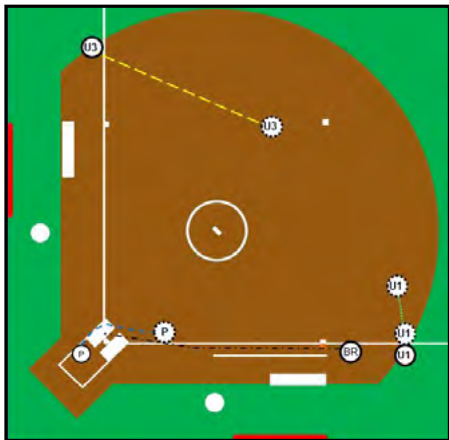
**GROUND BALL TO THE INFIELD:**

**P** - Trail the batter-runner no more than 1/3 of the way to 1B in fair territory, stop to see the play at 1B, if a subsequent play occurs, then read the play and move to 3B as BR approaches 2B. First, obtain the proper angle, then close your distance as the play develops working to get an unobstructed view of the play and to obtain a minimum distance of 10-12 feet from the play. Remember as the four elements come together; stop, read the play and make the call.

**U1** - Step into fair territory, at an angle 90 degrees to the path of the throw, no more than a 45 degree angle from the foul line, and let the ball take you to the play. Responsible for any play at 1B.

**U3** - Hustle into the diamond to a 90 degree angle to the path of the runner, just short of the base, and a minimum 10 – 12 feet from 2B. Responsible for any play at 2B.

[PLAY VIDEO](#)

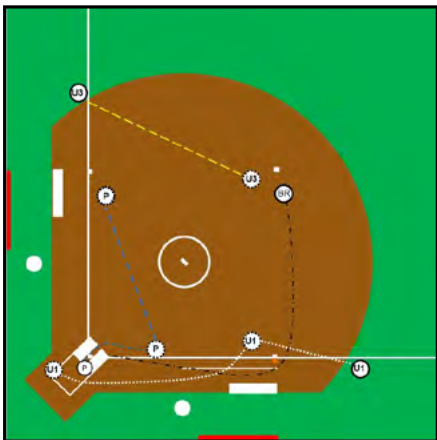
**BASE HIT TO THE OUTFIELD:**

**P** - Trail the batter-runner no more than 1/3 of the way to 1B in fair territory and read the play. If the runner rounds 1B and as they approach 2B the Plate Umpire should move across the diamond in front of the pitcher's plate to first obtain the proper angle, then close your distance as the play develops working to get an unobstructed view of the play and to obtain a minimum distance of 10-12 feet from the play. Remember as the four elements come together; stop, read the play, and make the call. As the runner reaches 3B take one or two steps toward home plate to see that the Base Umpire has rotated into position at home. Responsible for any play at 3B.

**U1** - Pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10 – 12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. If the runner continues to 2B take one or two steps toward 2B to visually confirm that the U3 has rotated to 2B. As the runner reaches 2B, start to rotate home in foul ground to the farthest back corner of the right hand batter's box, a minimum of 10 -12 feet from the plate, for any possible play at home plate. Responsible for any play at 1B and any play at the plate when rotated to the plate.

**U3** - While picking up the ball and glancing at the runner, rotate to a position, a minimum of 10 – 12 feet from 2B at a 90 degree angle to the path of the runner, just short of the base. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. As the runner reaches 2B, take one or two steps toward 3B to visually confirm that the Plate Umpire has rotated into position at 3B. Responsible for any play at 2B and any play at 1B when the U1 has rotated to the plate.

## PLAY VIDEO



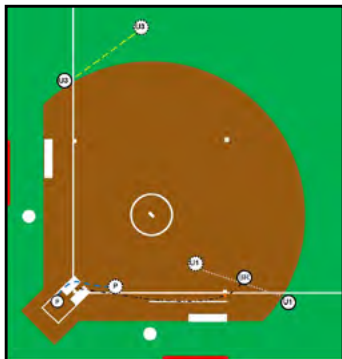
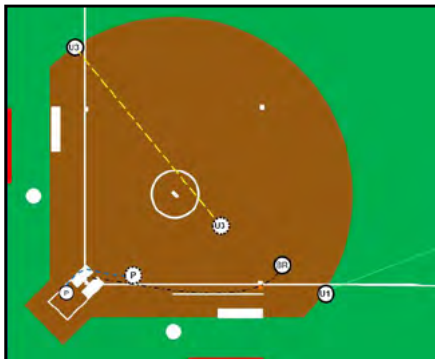
## FLY BALL TO THE OUTFIELD: PLAY VIDEO

**P** - Trail the batter-runner no more than 1/3 of the way to 1B in fair territory and read the play. When the batter-runner rounds 1B and as they approach 2B, move toward the holding zone about halfway to 3B in foul ground to an area where you have an unobstructed view of all four elements and read the play. Be prepared to move as the play develops as you are responsible for any play at the plate.

**U1** - Pick up the flight of the ball and glance at your partner. Responsible for any fly ball from center fielder to right field dead ball territory. Move parallel to the flight of the ball to obtain an unobstructed view of the play. Stop, see the play and make the call. When the ball is hit elsewhere and U3 goes out, pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10

10 – 12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner as you are responsible for any play at 1B, 2B and 3B.

**U3** - Pick up the flight of the ball and glance at your partner. Responsible for any fly ball from the centerfielder to left field dead ball territory. Move parallel to the flight of the ball to obtain an unobstructed view of the play. Stop, see the play and make the call. When the ball is hit elsewhere and U1 goes out, pick up the ball and glance at the runner while you hustle across the diamond toward 1st base. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner. Responsible for any play at 1B, 2B, and 3B.



### RUNNER ON FIRST BASE ONLY

**STARTING POSITION: U1 IS 12-15 FT BEYOND 1B IN FOUL TERRITORY AND SQUARE TO THE PLATE. U3 IS ABOUT 12-15 FEET AT A NEAR 90 DEGREE ANGLE BEYOND 2B AND SQUARE TO THE PLATE. BOTH UMPIRES GO TO A READY POSITION AT THE START OF THE PITCH.** PLAY VIDEO

**GROUND BALL TO THE INFIELD:** PLAY VIDEO

**P** - Trail the batter-runner no more than 1/3 of the way to 1B in fair territory and read the play. As the lead runner approaches 2B move directly to 3B. First obtain the proper angle then close the distance as the play develops working to get an unobstructed view of the play and to obtain a minimum distance of 10 - 12 feet from the play. Remember as the four elements come together you have to stop, read the play and make the call. As the runner reaches 3B take one or two steps toward home plate to see that the Base Umpire has rotated into position at home. Responsible for any play at 3B.

**U1** - Step into fair territory, at an angle 90 degrees to the path of the throw, no more than a 45 degree angle from the foul line, and let the ball take you to the play. Responsible for the runner leaving early at 1B and any play at 1B.

**U3** - Read the play. Responsible for any play on the lead runner at 2B.



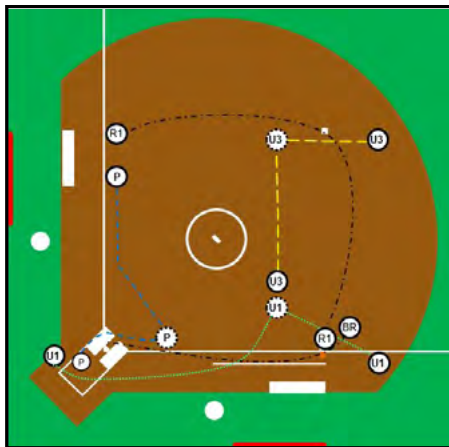
## **BASE HIT TO THE OUTFIELD:**

**P-** Trail the batter-runner no more than 1/3 of the way to 1B in fair territory and read the play. As the lead runner approaches 2B move directly to 3B. First, obtain the proper angle; then, close the distance as the play develops working to get an unobstructed view of the play and to obtain a minimum distance of 10 - 12 feet from the play. Remember as the four elements come together; stop, read the play, and make the call. As the runner reaches 3B take one or two steps toward home plate to see that the U1 has rotated into position at home plate. Responsible for any play at 3B.

**U1 -** Pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10 – 12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. As the runner from 1B approaches 2B rotate to home in foul ground to the farthest back corner of the right hand batter's box at a minimum of 10 - 12 feet from the plate, for any possible play at home plate. Responsible for any play at 1B when staying at 1B and any play at the plate when rotated to the plate.

**U3 -** Pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10 – 12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. As the runner reaches 2B, visually confirm that the Plate Umpire has rotated into position at 3B. Responsible for any play at 2B and any play at 1B when the U1 has rotated to the plate.

### **PLAY VIDEO**



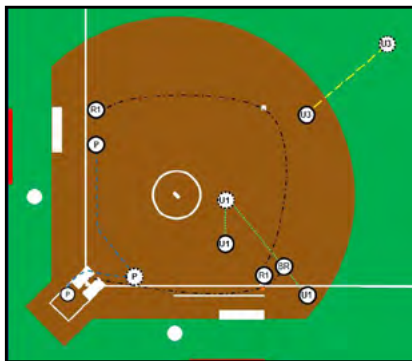
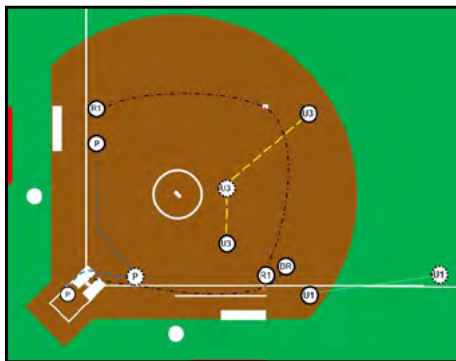
## **FLY BALL TO THE OUTFIELD:**

**P-** Pick up the flight of the ball and glance at your partners. Responsible for any fly ball from the left fielder up to dead ball territory step out from behind the plate and move up the 3B line to get an unobstructed view of the play. Stop, see the play and make the call. Responsible for fair or foul, catch or no catch, and any play at 3B. When the ball is hit elsewhere and a Base Umpire goes out, trail the batter runner no more than 1/3 the way to 1B in fair territory and read the play. As the lead runner approaches 2B, move to the holding zone halfway to 3B in foul ground to an area where you have an unobstructed view of all four elements and read the play. Be prepared to move as the play develops as you are responsible for any play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate.

**U1 -** Pick up the flight of the ball and glance at your partners. Responsible for any fly ball from the right fielder up to dead ball territory, move parallel to the flight of the

ball to get an unobstructed view of the play. Responsible for fair or foul, catch or no catch. When the ball is hit elsewhere and the U3 goes out, pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10 – 12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner. Responsible for the tag-up at 1B, any play at 1B, 2B and the last runner into 3B. When the ball is hit to the PU's flyball coverage area, pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you move inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10 -12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Responsible for the tag-up at 1B, any play at 1B and Home plate when PU rotates to 3B.

**U3** - Pick up the flight of the ball and glance at your partners. Responsible for any fly ball from the right fielder up to the left fielder, move parallel to the flight of the ball to get an unobstructed view of the play. Responsible for catch or no catch. When the ball is hit elsewhere and the U1 goes out, pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10-12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner. Responsible for the tag-up at 1B, any play at 1B, 2B and the last runner into 3B. When the ball is hit to the PU's flyball coverage area, pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you move inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10 -12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Responsible for any play at 2B and 1B when U1 rotates to home plate.



**PLAY VIDEO**

**STARTING POSITION: U1, SHADE THE RUNNER AT 2B. START BEHIND OR OFF THE SECOND BASEMAN SQUARE, TO THE PLATE AND ADJUST AS NEEDED. U3 IS 12 - 15 FT BEYOND 3B IN FOUL TERRITORY AND SQUARE TO THE PLATE. BOTH UMPIRES GO TO THE READY POSITION AT THE START OF THE PITCH.**

**PLAY VIDEO**

**GROUND BALL TO THE INFIELD:** **PLAY VIDEO**

**P** - Move out from behind the plate and read the play. Responsible for any play at the plate.

**U1** - Let the ball take you to the play. Responsible for the runner leaving early at 2B and any play at 1B or 2B.

**U3** - Step into fair territory and read the play. Responsible for any play at 3B.

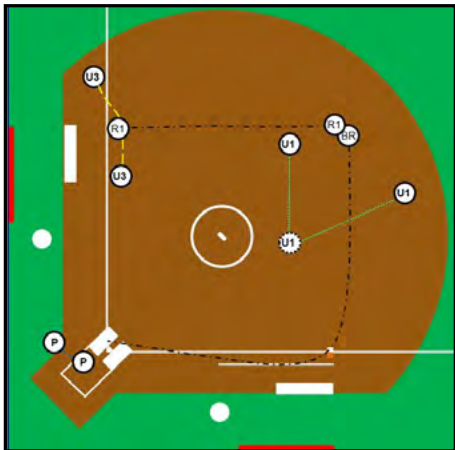
**BASE HIT TO THE OUTFIELD:**

**P** - Move out from behind the plate and read the play. Responsible for any play at the plate.

**U1** - Pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10 – 12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner. Responsible for any play at 1B or 2B.

**U3** - Pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you move inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10 – 12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Responsible for any play at 3B.

**PLAY VIDEO**



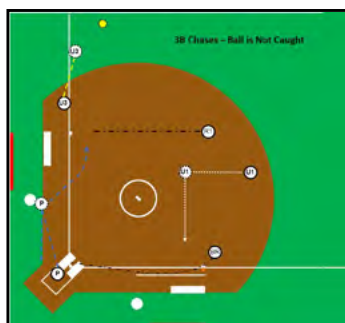
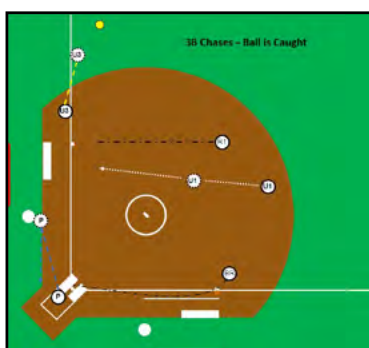
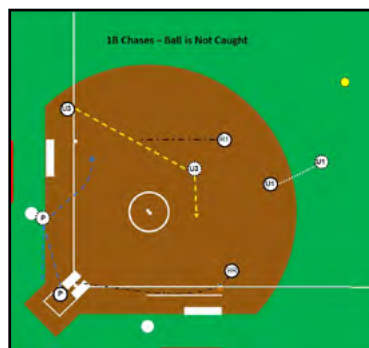
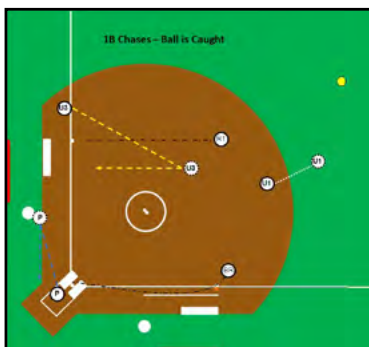
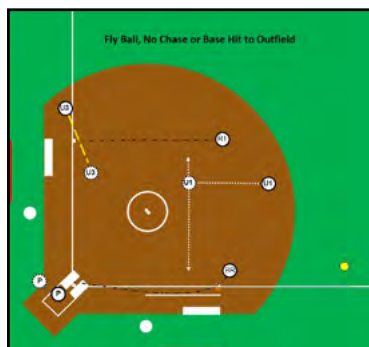
**FLY BALL TO THE OUTFIELD:** **PLAY VIDEO**

**P** - Pick up the flight of the ball and glance at your partners. Responsible for any fly ball from the right fielder up to dead ball territory, step out from behind the plate and move up the 1B line one or two steps to get an unobstructed view of the play.

Responsible for fair or foul, catch or no catch and any play at the plate. When the ball is hit elsewhere and a Base Umpire goes out, move out from behind the plate toward the holding zone halfway to 3B in foul ground to an area where you have an unobstructed view of all four elements and read the play. Be prepared to move as the play develops as you are responsible for any play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate.

**U1** - Pick up the flight of the ball and glance at your partners. Responsible for any fly ball from the right fielder up to the left fielder move parallel to the flight of the ball to get an unobstructed view of the play. Responsible for catch or no catch. When the ball is hit elsewhere and the U3 goes out, pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10 – 12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner. Responsible for the tag-up at 2B, any play at 1B, 2B and the last runner into 3B. When the ball is hit to the PU's flyball coverage area, pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you move inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10 -12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Responsible for the tag-up at 2B, and any play at 1B and 2B.

**U3** - Pick up the flight of the ball and glance at your partners. Responsible for any fly ball from the left fielder up to dead ball territory, move up the 3B line to get an unobstructed view of the play. Responsible for fair or foul, catch or no catch. When the ball is hit elsewhere and the U1 goes out, pick up the ball and glance at the runner while hustling across the diamond towards 1st base to a position to see the play at 1B and 2B. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner(s). Responsible for the tag-up at 2B, any play at 1B, 2B and the last runner into 3B. When the ball is hit to the PU's flyball coverage area, pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you move inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10 -12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. **Responsible for the tag-up at 2B, and any play at 1B and 2B.**



## RUNNER ON THIRD BASE ONLY

**STARTING POSITION: U1 IS 12 -15 FT BEYOND 1B IN FOUL TERRITORY AND SQUARE TO THE PLATE. U3 IS 12 - 15 FT BEYOND 3B, TAKING A POSITION TO GAIN AN UNOBSTRUCTED VIEW OF THE PLATE AREA, SLIGHTLY OFF THE LINE IN FOUL TERRITORY AND SQUARE TO THE PLATE. BOTH UMPIRES GO TO THE READY POSITION AT THE START OF THE PITCH. [PLAY VIDEO](#)**

**GROUND BALL TO THE INFIELD: [PLAY VIDEO](#)**

**P** - Move out from behind the plate and read the play. See the runner from 3B touch the plate and as the batter-runner approaches 2B rotate to 3B in fair territory to a 90 degree angle at a minimum depth of 10 - 12 feet from 3B. Responsible for the lead runner at the plate and the last runner at 3B.

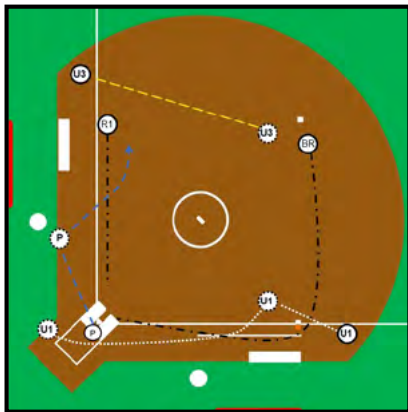
**U1** - Step into fair territory, at an angle 90 degrees to the path of the throw, no more than a 45 degree angle from the foul line, and let the ball take you to the play. Responsible for any play at 1B and any play at the plate when rotated to the plate. If the runner at 3B does not advance to the plate, U1 is also responsible for a play at 2B.

**U3** - Step into fair territory and read the play. If the runner on 3B advances to the plate the U3 should hustle into the diamond to a 90 degree angle to the path of the runner, just short of the base, at a minimum depth of 10 - 12 feet from 2B. Responsible for the runner leaving early at 3B, any play on that runner at 3B and any play at 2B if the runner at 3B advances to the plate.

**BASE HIT TO THE OUTFIELD:**

**P** - Move out from behind the plate and read the play. The Plate Umpire should see the runner from 3B touch the plate and as the batter-runner approaches 2B rotate to 3B in fair territory to a 90 degree angle to the path of the runner, just short of the base, at a minimum depth of 10 – 12 feet from 3B. When the runner reaches 3B take one or two steps toward home plate to see that the U1 has rotated into position at home plate.

**U1** - Pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10 – 12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. If the runner continues to 2B take one or two steps toward 2B, to visually confirm that the U3 has rotated to 2B. As the runner approaches 2B, rotate home in foul ground to the farthest back corner of the right hand batter's box, at a minimum of 10 -12



feet from the plate for any possible play at home plate. Responsible for any play at 1B and any play at the plate when rotated to the plate.

**U3** - While picking up the ball and glancing at the runner, rotate to a position at a minimum of 10 - 12 feet from 2B at a 90 degree angle to the path of the runner, just short of the base. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. As the runner reaches 2B take one or two steps toward 3B to visually confirm that the Plate Umpire has rotated into position at 3B. Responsible for any play at 2B and any play at 1B when the U1 has rotated to the plate.

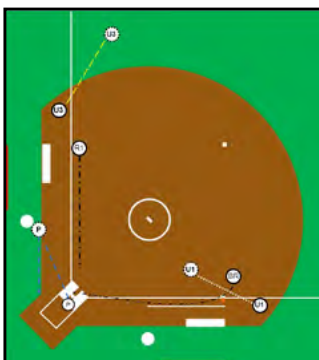
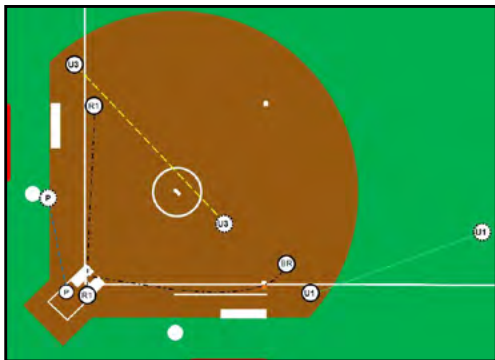
**PLAY VIDEO**

**FLY BALL TO THE OUTFIELD:** **PLAY VIDEO**

**P** - Move out from behind the plate to the holding zone in foul ground halfway to 3B in foul ground to an area where you have an unobstructed view of all four elements and read the play. Be prepared to move as the play develops. Responsible for the tag-up at 3B, any play on the lead runner at 3B, and any play at the plate.

**U1** - Pick up the flight of the ball and glance at your partner. Responsible for any fly ball from the center fielder to right field dead ball territory. Move parallel to the flight of the ball to obtain an unobstructed view of the play. Stop, see the play and make the call. Responsible for fair or foul, catch or no catch. When the ball is hit elsewhere and U3 goes out, pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10 – 12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner. Responsible for any play at 1B, 2B and the last runner into 3B.

**U3** - Pick up the flight of the ball and glance at your partner. Responsible for any fly ball from the centerfielder to the left fielder and up to dead ball territory. Move parallel to the flight of the ball to obtain an unobstructed view of the play. Stop, see the play and make the call. Responsible for fair or foul, catch or no catch. When the ball is hit elsewhere and U1 goes out, pick up the ball and glance at the runner while hustling across the diamond towards 1st base to see the play at 1B. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner. Responsible for any play at 1B, 2B and the last runner into 3B.



**RUNNER ON FIRST BASE & SECOND BASE**

**STARTING POSITION:** U1 SHADE THE LEAD RUNNER AT 2B. START BEHIND OR OFF OF THE SECOND BASEMAN SQUARE TO THE PLATE AND ADJUST AS NEEDED. THIS MAY VARY DEPENDING ON WHETHER THE GAME IS FAST PITCH OR SLOW PITCH. U3 IS 12 - 15 FT BEYOND 3B IN FOUL TERRITORY AND SQUARE TO THE PLATE. BOTH UMPIRES GO TO THE READY POSITION AT THE START OF THE PITCH. [PLAY VIDEO](#)

**GROUND BALL TO THE INFIELD:** [PLAY VIDEO](#)

**P** - Move out from behind the plate and read the play. Responsible for any play at the plate.

**U1** - Let the ball take you to the play. Responsible for the runner leaving early at 2B and any play at 1B or 2B.

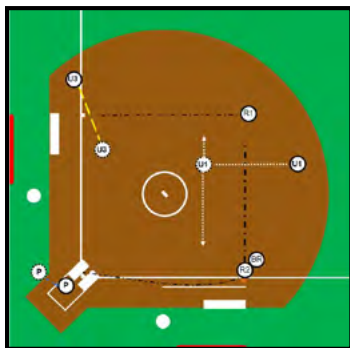
**U3** - Step into fair territory and read the play. Responsible for the runner leaving early at 1B and any play at 3B.

**BASE HIT TO THE OUTFIELD:**

**P** - Move out from behind plate and read the play. Responsible for any play at the plate.

**U1** - Pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you move inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10 – 12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner. Responsible for any play at 1B or 2B.

**U3** - Pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you move inside the diamond to button-





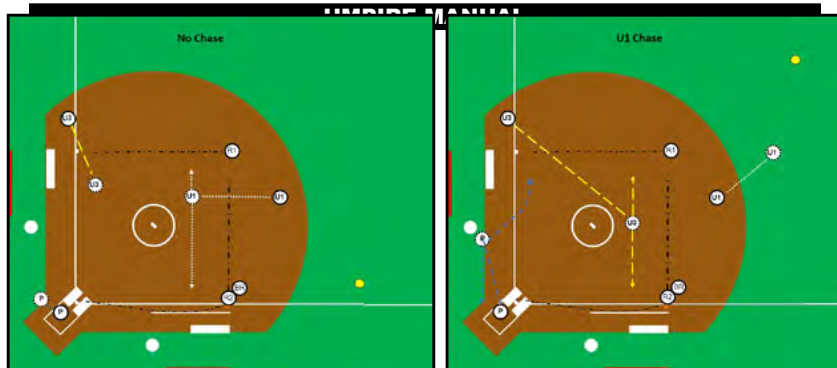
hook at a minimum depth of 10 – 12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Responsible for any play at 3B.

**FLY BALL TO THE OUTFIELD: PLAY VIDEO**

**P** - Pick up the flight of the ball and glance at your partners. Responsible for any fly ball from the right fielder up to dead ball territory, step out from behind the plate and move up the 1B line one or two steps to get an unobstructed view of the play. Stop, see the play and make the call. Responsible for fair or foul, catch or no catch and any play at the plate. When the ball is hit elsewhere and a Base Umpire goes out, move toward the holding zone halfway to 3B in foul ground to an area where you have an unobstructed view of all four elements and read the play. Be prepared to move as the play develops. Responsible for the tag-up at 2B, any play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate.

**U1** - Pick up the flight of the ball and glance at your partners. Responsible for any fly ball from the right fielder up to the left fielder, move parallel to the flight of the ball to get an unobstructed view of the play. Stop, see the play and make the call. Responsible for catch or no catch. When the ball is hit elsewhere and the U3 goes out, pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10-12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the base-line staying ahead of the runner. Responsible for the tag-up at 1B, any play at 1B, 2B and the last runner into 3B. When the ball is hit to the PU's flyball coverage area, pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you move inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10 -12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. **Responsible for the tag-up at 2B, and any play at 1B and 2B.**

**U3** - Pick up the flight of the ball and glance at your partners. Responsible for any fly ball from the left fielder up to dead ball territory, move up the 3B line to get an unobstructed view of the play. Stop, see the play and make the call. Responsible for fair or foul, catch or no catch. When the ball is hit elsewhere and the U1 goes out, pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle across the diamond towards 1st base to see the play at 1B and 2B. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner. Responsible for the tag-up at 1B, any play at 1B, 2B and the last runner into 3B. When the ball is hit to the PU's flyball coverage area, pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you move inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10 -12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. **Responsible for any play at 3B.**



## RUNNER ON FIRST BASE & THIRD BASE

**STARTING POSITION: U1 SHADES THE RUNNER AT 1B. START BEHIND OR OFF OF THE SECOND BASEMAN, SQUARE TO THE PLATE AND ADJUST AS NEEDED. THIS MAY VARY DEPENDING ON WHETHER THE GAME IS FAST PITCH OR SLOW PITCH. U3 IS 12 - 15 FT BEYOND 3B, TAKING A POSITION TO GAIN AN UNOBSTRUCTED VIEW OF THE PLATE AREA SLIGHTLY OFF THE LINE IN FOUL TERRITORY AND SQUARE TO THE PLATE. BOTH UMPIRES GO TO THE READY POSITION AT THE START OF THE PITCH. [PLAY VIDEO](#)**

### **GROUND BALL TO THE INFIELD: [PLAY VIDEO](#)**

**P** - Move out from behind the plate and read the play. Responsible for any play at the plate.

**U1** - Let the ball take you to the play. Responsible for the runner leaving early at 1B and any play at 1B or 2B.

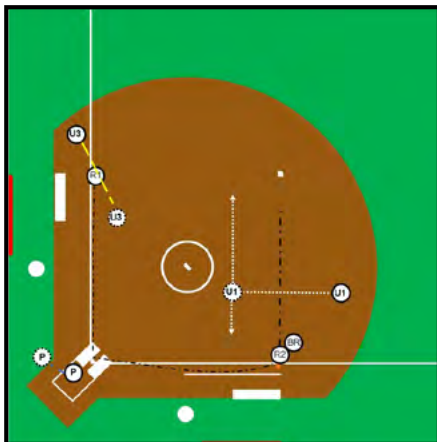
**U3** - Step into fair territory and read the play. Responsible for the runner leaving early at 3B and any play at 3B.

## **BASE HIT TO THE OUTFIELD:**

**P** - Move out from behind plate and read the play. Responsible for any play at the plate.

**U1** - Pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10-12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner. Responsible for any play at 1B or 2B.

**U3** - Pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10-12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Responsible for any play at 3B.



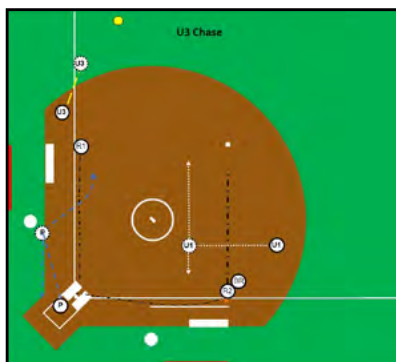
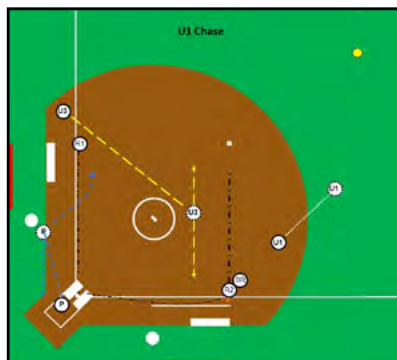
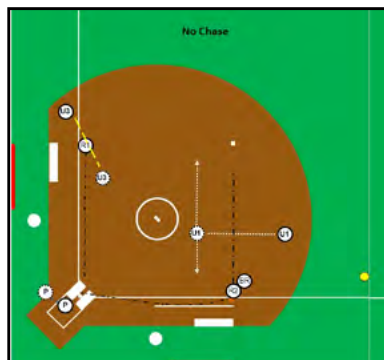
**PLAY VIDEO**

## **FLY BALL TO THE OUTFIELD:**

**P** - Pick up the flight of the ball and glance at your partners. Responsible for any fly ball from the right fielder up to dead ball territory, step out from behind the plate and move to the 1B line extended and get an unobstructed view and angle of the play. Stop, see the play and make the call. Responsible for fair or foul, catch or no catch and any play at the plate. When the ball is hit elsewhere and a Base Umpire goes out, move out from behind the plate toward the holding zone halfway to 3B in foul ground to an area where you have an unobstructed view of all four elements and read the play. Be prepared to move as the play develops. Responsible for the tag-up at 3B, any play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate.

**U1** - Pick up the flight of the ball and glance at your partners. Responsible for any fly ball from the right fielder up to the left fielder move parallel to the flight of the ball to get an unobstructed view of the play. Stop, see the play and make the call. Responsible for catch or no catch. When the ball is hit elsewhere and the U3 goes out, pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you move inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10-12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner. Responsible for the tag-up at 1B, any play at 1B, 2B and the last runner into 3B. When the ball is hit to the PU's flyball coverage area, pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you move inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10 -12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. **Responsible for the tag-up at 1B, and any play at 1B and 2B.**

**U3** - Pick up the flight of the ball and glance at your partners. Responsible for any fly ball from the left fielder up to dead ball territory, move up the 3B line to get an unobstructed view of the play. Stop, see the play and make the call. Responsible for fair or foul, catch or no catch. When the ball is hit elsewhere and the U1 goes out, pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle across the diamond towards 1B to see the play at 1B and 2B. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner. Responsible for the tag-up at 1B, any play at 1B, 2B and the last runner into 3B. When the ball is hit to the PU's flyball coverage area, pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you move inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10 -12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. **Responsible for the tag-up at 3B and any play at 3B.**



## RUNNER ON SECOND BASE & THIRD BASE

**STARTING POSITION: U1, SHADE RUNNER AT 2B. START BEHIND OR OFF OF THE SECOND BASEMAN, SQUARE TO THE PLATE AND ADJUST AS NEEDED. THIS MAY VARY DEPENDING ON WHETHER THE GAME IS FAST PITCH OR SLOW PITCH. U3 IS 12 - 15 FT BEYOND 3B, TAKING A POSITION TO GAIN AN UNOBSTRUCTED VIEW OF THE PLATE AREA SLIGHTLY OFF THE LINE IN FOUL TERRITORY AND SQUARE TO THE PLATE. BOTH UMPIRES GO TO THE READY POSITION AT THE START OF THE PITCH. [PLAY VIDEO](#)**

**GROUND BALL TO THE INFIELD: [PLAY VIDEO](#)**

**P** - Move out from behind the plate and read the play, Responsible for any play at the plate.

**U1** - Let the ball take you to the play. Responsible for the runner leaving early at 2B and any play at 1B or 2B.

**U3** - Step into fair territory and read the play. Responsible for the runner leaving early at 3B and any play at 3B.

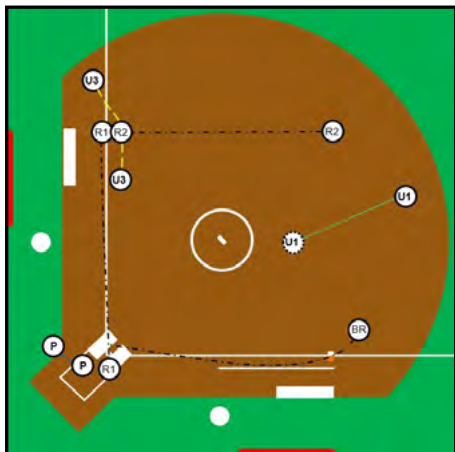
**BASE HIT TO THE OUTFIELD:**

**P** - Move out from behind plate and read the play. Responsible for any play at the plate.

**U1** - Pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you move inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10-12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner. Responsible for any play at 1B or 2B.

**U3** - Pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you move inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10-12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Responsible for any play at 3B.

[PLAY VIDEO](#)

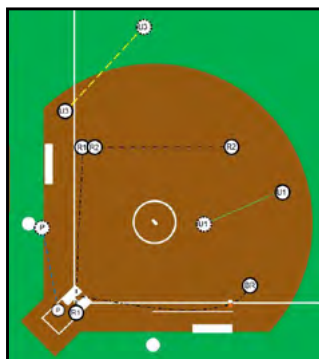
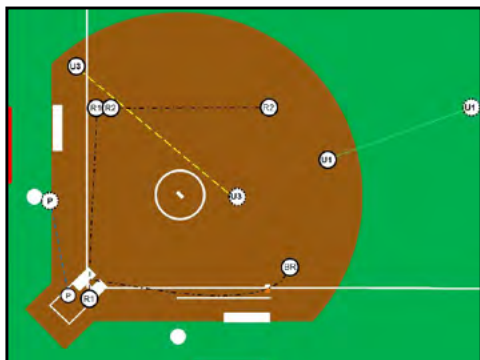
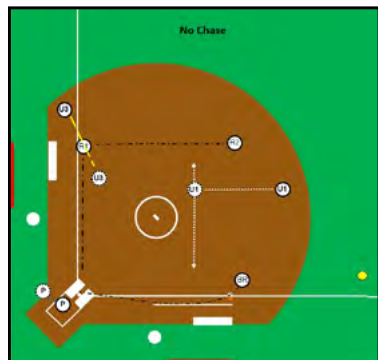


**FLY BALL TO THE OUTFIELD:**

**P** - Pick up the flight of the ball and glance at your partners. Responsible for any fly ball from the right fielder up to dead ball territory, step out from behind the plate and move to the 1B line extended and get an unobstructed view and angle of the play. Stop, see the play and make the call. Responsible for fair or foul, catch or no catch and any play at the plate. When the ball is hit elsewhere and a Base Umpire goes out, move out from behind the plate toward the holding zone halfway to 3B in foul ground to an area where you have an unobstructed view of all four elements and read the play. Be prepared to move as the play develops. Responsible for the tagup at 3B, any play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate.

**U1** - Pick up the flight of the ball and glance at your partners. Responsible for any fly ball from the right fielder up to the left fielder move parallel to the flight of the ball to get an unobstructed view of the play. Stop, see the play and make the call. Responsible for catch or no catch. When the ball is hit elsewhere and the U3 goes out, pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you move inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10-12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner. Responsible for the tag-up at 2B, any play at 1B, 2B and the last runner into 3B. When the ball is hit to the PU's flyball coverage area, pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you move inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10 -12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. **Responsible for the tag-up at 2B, and any play at 1B and 2B.**

**U3** - Pick up the flight of the ball and glance at your partners. Responsible for any fly ball from the left fielder up to dead ball territory move up the 3B line to get an unobstructed view of the play. Stop, see the play and make the call. Responsible for fair or foul, catch or no catch. When the ball is hit elsewhere and the U1 goes out, pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you hustle across the diamond to see the play at 1B and 2B. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner. Responsible for the tag-up at 2B, any play at 1B, 2B and the last runner into 3B. When the ball is hit to the PU's flyball coverage area, pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you move inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10 -12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. **Responsible for the tag-up at 3B, and any play at 3B.**



**STARTING POSITION: U1 SHADES THE RUNNER AT 2B. START BEHIND OR OFF OF THE SECOND BASEMAN, SQUARE TO THE PLATE AND ADJUST AS NEEDED. THIS MAY VARY DEPENDING ON WHETHER THE GAME IS FAST PITCH OR SLOW PITCH. U3 IS 12 - 15 FT BEYOND 3B, TAKING A POSITION TO GAIN AN UNOBSTRUCTED VIEW OF THE PLATE AREA SLIGHTLY OFF THE LINE IN FOUL TERRITORY AND SQUARE TO THE PLATE. BOTH UMPIRES GO TO THE READY POSITION AT THE START OF THE PITCH**

#### **GROUND BALL TO THE INFIELD:**

**P** - Move out from behind the plate and read the play. Responsible for any play at the plate.

**U1** - Let the ball take you to the play. Responsible for the runner leaving early at 2B and any play at 1B or 2B.

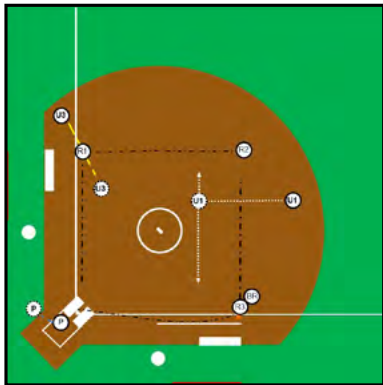
**U3** - Step into fair territory and read the play. Responsible for the runner leaving early at 1B and at 3B and any play at 3B.

#### **BASE HIT TO THE OUTFIELD:**

**P** - Move out from behind plate and read the play. Responsible for any play at the plate.

**U1** - Pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you move inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10 – 12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Responsible for any play at 1B or 2B.

**U3** - Pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you move inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10-12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Responsible for any play at 3B.



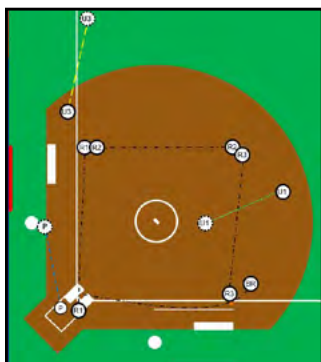
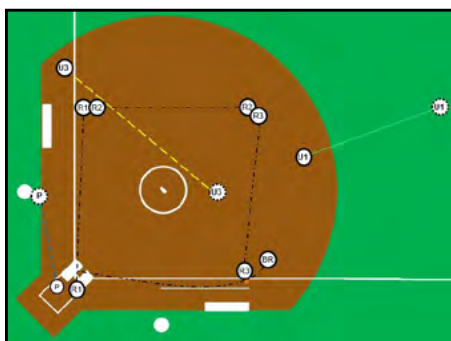
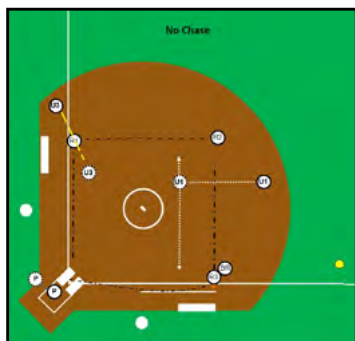


**FLY BALL TO THE OUTFIELD:**

**P** - Pick up the flight of the ball and glance at your partners. Responsible for any fly ball from the right fielder up to dead ball territory, step out from behind the plate and move to the 1B line extended and get an unobstructed view and angle of the play. Stop, see the play and make the call. Responsible for fair or foul, catch or no catch and any play at the plate. When the ball is hit elsewhere and a Base Umpire goes out, move toward the holding zone in foul ground about halfway to 3B to an area where you have an unobstructed view of all four elements and read the play. Responsible for the tag-up at 3B, any play on the lead runner at 3B and any play at the plate.

**U1** - Pick up the flight of the ball and glance at your partners. Responsible for any fly ball from the right fielder up to the left fielder move parallel to the flight of the ball to get an unobstructed view of the play. Stop, see the play and make the call. Responsible for catch or no catch. When the ball is hit elsewhere and the U3 goes out, pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you move inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10-12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner. Responsible for the tag-up at 1B and 2B, any play at 1B, 2B and the last runner into 3B. When the ball is hit to the PU's flyball coverage area, pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you move inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10 -12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. **Responsible for the tag-up at 1B and 2B, and any play at 1B and 2B.**

**U3** - Pick up the flight of the ball and glance at your partners. Responsible for any fly ball from the left fielder up to dead ball territory, move up the 3B line to get an unobstructed view of the play. Stop, see the play and make the call. Responsible for fair or foul, catch or no catch. When the ball is hit elsewhere and the U1 goes out, pick up the ball and glance at the runner while hustling across the diamond towards 1B to see the play at 1B and 2B. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. Be prepared to move parallel to the baseline staying ahead of the runner. Responsible for the tag-up at 1B and 2B, any play at 1B, 2B and the last runner into 3B. When the ball is hit to the PU's flyball coverage area, pick up the ball and glance at the runner as you move inside the diamond to buttonhook at a minimum depth of 10 -12 feet. Continue to alternate between the ball and the runner keeping all four elements in front of you. **Responsible for the tag-up at 3B, and any play at 3B.**



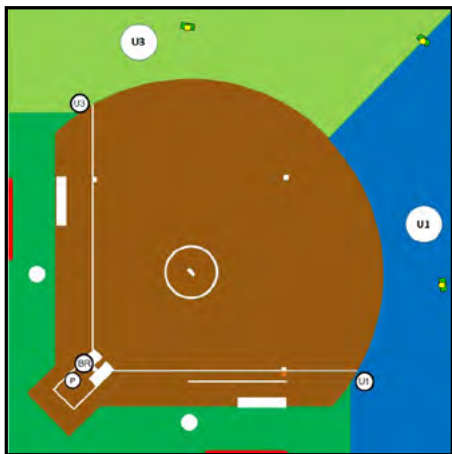
## UMPIRE MANUAL

### 4 KEY POINTS TO THE THREE UMPIRE SYSTEM

1. Rotation in the Three Umpire System is always in a clockwise direction
2. When the umpires start from a counter rotated position, there will be no rotation
3. When a Base Umpire goes to the outfield, the crew reverts to the Two Umpire System
4. When a Base Umpire goes to the outfield, that umpire should remain outside and allow the ball to turn them back to the infield and observe the remainder of the play

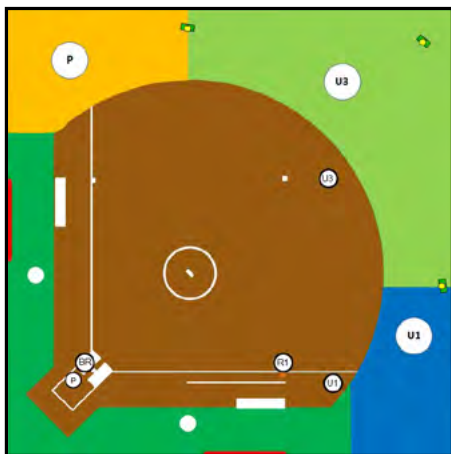
### FLY BALL COVERAGE NO RUNNER ON BASE, RUNNER ON 3B ONLY

**ON A FLY BALL TO THE OUTFIELD EACH BASE UMPIRE SHOULD PICK UP THE FLIGHT OF THE BALL AND GLANCE AT THEIR PARTNERS. U3 IS RESPONSIBLE FOR A FLY BALL FROM THE CENTER FIELDER TO LEFT FIELD AND UP TO DEAD BALL TERRITORY. U1 IS RESPONSIBLE FOR A FLY BALL FROM THE CENTER FIELDER TO RIGHT FIELD AND UP TO DEAD BALL TERRITORY.**



**FLY BALL COVERAGE WITH RUNNER ON 1B ONLY**

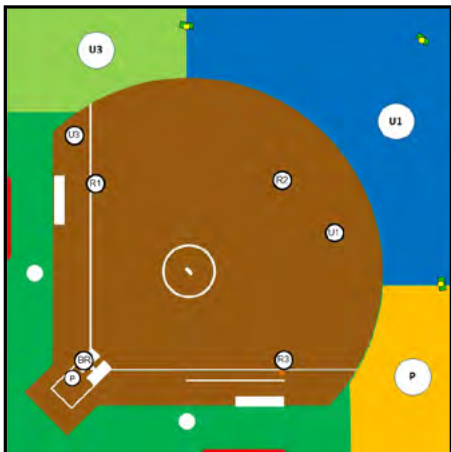
**ON A FLY BALL TO THE OUTFIELD WITH A RUNNER ON 1B ONLY EACH BASE UMPIRE SHOULD PICK UP THE FLIGHT OF THE BALL AND GLANCE AT THEIR PARTNER. U1 HAS ANY FLY BALL FROM THE RIGHT FIELDER TO DEAD BALL TERRITORY. U3 WHO IS ROTATED BEHIND SECOND BASE HAS ANY FLY BALL FROM THE LEFT FIELDER TO THE RIGHT FIELDER. THE PLATE UMPIRE HAS ANY FLY BALL FROM THE LEFT FIELDER TO DEAD BALL TERRITORY.**



## UMPIRE MANUAL

### FLY BALL COVERAGE WITH RUNNER ON 2B ONLY, RUNNERS ON 1B AND 2B, 1B & 3B 2B & 3B AND BASES LOADED

**ON A FLY BALL TO THE OUTFIELD EACH BASE UMPIRE SHOULD PICK UP THE FLIGHT OF THE BALL AND GLANCE AT THEIR PARTNERS. U1 HAS FLY BALL COVERAGE FROM THE RIGHT FIELDER TO THE LEFT FIELDER. U3 HAS FLY BALL COVERAGE FROM THE LEFT FIELDER TO DEAD BALL TERRITORY. THE PLATE UMPIRE HAS FLY BALL COVERAGE FROM THE RIGHT FIELDER TO DEAD BALL TERRITORY.**



### THREE UMPIRE TAG-UP RESPONSIBILITIES TABLE:

#### U1/U3 CHASES IN THEIR COVERAGE AREA

Situation	PU	U3/U1
Runner on 1st Only (R1)		R1
Runner on 2nd Only (R1)		R1
Runner on 3rd Only (R1)	R1	
Runners on 1st (R2) and 2nd (R1)	R1	R2
Runners on 1st (R2) and 3rd (R1)	R1	R2
Runners on 2nd (R2) and 3rd (R1)	R1	R2
Bases Loaded (R1 at 3rd), (R2 at 2nd), (R3 at 1st)	R1	R2 then R3

## UMPIRE MANUAL

### PU HAS FLY BALL COVERAGE IN THEIR COVERAGE AREA

Situation	U1	U3
Runner on 1st Only (R1)	R1	
Runner on 2nd Only (R1)	R1	
Runners on 1st (R2) and 2nd (R1)	R2	R1
Runners on 1st (R2) and 3rd (R1)	R2	R1
Runners on 2nd (R2) and 3rd (R1)	R2	R1
Bases Loaded (R1 at 3rd), (R2 at 2nd), (R3 at 1st)	R2 then R3	R1

## BETWEEN INNING MECHANICS

### ONE UMPIRE SYSTEM:

The Umpire shall take a position at the 1B baseline extended facing the 1B dugout when that team is coming to bat and the 3B baseline extended facing the 3B dugout when that team is coming to bat.

### TWO UMPIRE AND THREE UMPIRE SYSTEM:

The Plate Umpire shall take a position at the 1B baseline extended facing the 1B dugout when that team is coming to bat and the 3B baseline extended facing the 3B dugout when that team is coming to bat.

The Base Umpire(s) shall assume a position approximately 15 feet in the outfield off the foul line, standing in fair territory and facing the infield. Be alert to hustle players on and off the field. In a Two Umpire System the Base Umpire is responsible for brushing off the pitcher's plate after the conclusion of the inning. In a Three Umpire System U3 has primary responsibility for brushing off the pitcher's plate. U1 will also brush off the pitcher's plate when appropriate.

***THESE ARE THE PREFERRED POSITIONS, IF YOU NEED TO MOVE TO ANOTHER AREA, DO SO.***

## UMPIRE MANUAL

### LEAVING A BASE TOO SOON ON A PITCH RESPONSIBILITIES IN A THREE UMPIRE SYSTEM

RUNNERS ON:	WHICH RUNNER:	WHICH UMPIRE:
1B only or 2B only		First Base Umpire
3B only		Third Base Umpire
1B & 2B	On 1B	Third Base Umpire
	On 2B	First Base Umpire
2B & 3B	On 2B	First Base Umpire
	On 3B	Third Base Umpire
1B & 3B	On 1B	First Base Umpire
	On 3B	Third Base Umpire
Bases Loaded	On 3B & 1B	Third Base Umpire
	On 2B	First Base Umpire

### Umpire Uniform

The male and female umpire shall wear:

- A. A powder blue, navy blue or white short-sleeved polo shirt. USA Softball letters are worn on the left chest of the polo shirt.
- B. The approved navy cap with white USA Softball trimmed with light blue on the front.
- C. The approved navy blue ball bag with USA Softball letters to be worn with either navy or heather gray slacks. The approved gray ball bag(s) with USA Softball letters may be worn with heather gray slacks.
- D. The approved navy jacket with white USA Softball or USA Softball letters on the left chest.
- E. Black shoes and belt.
- F. Base Umpires should place their base brush in their back pants pocket, not visible.
- G. T-shirt is optional to wear under the powder blue, navy, and white polo shirt. If a t-shirt is worn it shall be;
  1. A Navy or White t-shirt under the USA Softball powder blue, or white polo shirt. Partners **MUST** match t-shirt color if worn.
  2. A Navy t-shirt under the USA Softball navy blue polo shirt. Partners **MUST** match t-shirt color if worn.
- H. The Plate Umpire in fast pitch SHALL wear a black or silver mask, with black or tan padding and a black throat protector. (An extended wire protector may be worn in lieu of a throat protector on the mask.) The plate umpire in Fast Pitch is also allowed to wear a HOCKEY Style Face Mask, if this mask is worn the plate umpire must have an approved navy cap with white USA Softball trimmed in light blue on the front, this cap must be worn between innings and during extended delays, coach's discussions and injuries.

## NATIONAL INDICATOR FRATERNITY

Listed below are the 2021 inductees into the National Indicator Fraternity. This fraternity is one of the most prestigious honors bestowed upon a USA Softball Umpire. To qualify, an umpire must have officiated in three national tournaments, been a USA Umpire for at least seven years and must be recommended by his/her commissioner and regional umpire-in-chief. A complete list of all National Indicator Fraternity members can be found on [www.USASoftball.com](http://www.USASoftball.com) or in the Umpire Case Book.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Hometown</b>	<b>Association</b>
Homer, Randy	Idaho Falls, ID	Idaho
Elkins, Michael	Blackfoot, ID	Idaho
Ford, John	Meridian, ID	Idaho
Smith, Lance	Notus, ID	Idaho
Shirley, Timothy	Battle Ground, WA	Washington
Cobb, Riley	Lawrence, KS	Kansas
Smith, Terry	Portland, OR	Portland
Obermiller, Vicki	Ravenna, NE	Nebraska
Birdsell, David	Deer Park, WA	Washington
Titus III, Delmar	Oakes, ND	North Dakota
Hudspeth, Justin	Heber Springs, AR	Arkansas
Lundgren, Reese	Junction City, KS	Kansas
Lock, Randy	Jefferson City, MO	Missouri
Bloedorn, Landon	Neligh, NE	Nebraska
Loving, Sean	Lincoln, NE	Nebraska
Cook, Samuel	Oswego, NY	New York
Keller, Merton	Newark, NY	New York
Flower, Martha	Palmyra, NY	New York
Christensen, Eric	New Hartford, NY	New York
Anderson, Frank	Rome, NY	New York
Arrington, Jared	Houston, TX	Houston
Williams, David	Vancouver, WA	Washington
Klueber, Lukas	Rapid City, SD	South Dakota
Priest, Garrett	Watertown, SD	South Dakota
Klug, Kevin	Rapid City, SD	South Dakota
Ronfeldt, James	Rapid City, SD	South Dakota
Holland, Rick	Rapid City, SD	South Dakota
Wame, Kevin	Sioux Falls, SD	South Dakota
Crigger, Dwight	Fort Perre, SD	South Dakota
Roberts, Ryan	Eaton Rapids, MI	Michigan
Hanscome, Norman	Elk Grove, CA	Sacramento
Escobar, Gregorio	Kansas City, MO	Kansas City
Catron, Larry	Windsor, MO	Missouri
Berger, Dean	Mandan, ND	North Dakota
Heisler, Darren	West Fargo, ND	North Dakota
McDonald, Thomas	Bismarck, ND	North Dakota
Richels, Jim	Fargo, ND	North Dakota
Geffen, Roy	Oak Hill, VA	Central Virginia
Ely, Jim	Vienna, VA	Central Virginia
Smith, Stephen	Sterling, VA	Central Virginia
Kashtock, Mike	Woodbridge, VA	Central Virginia
Wend, Richard	Forney, TX	Dallas
Casey, Michael	Bismarck, ND	North Dakota
Duncan, Chris	Belgrade, MT	Montana
Bueno, David	Braintree, MA	Massachusetts



## USA SOFTBALL UMPIRE MEDALS PROGRAM

Listed below are individuals who joined the USA Softball Umpire Medals Program in 2021. The Umpire Medals program recognizes USA Umpires for years of service. Each group is divided into gold (20 years), silver (15 years), bronze (seven years) and blue (over three years). For a complete list of Umpire Medals visit the USA Softball website at [www.USASoftball.com](http://www.USASoftball.com).

### GOLD

Umpire	Hometown	Association
Beckerling, Douglas	Edgerton, MN	South Dakota
Birdsell, David	Deer Park, WA	Spokane
Bjornson, Eric	Portland, OR	Portland
Burkhalter, Jeff	Ray City, GA	Georgia
Ford, John	Meridian, ID	Idaho
Francis, Josh	Snohomish, WA	Washington
Heitkamp, Gregory	Lisbon, ND	North Dakota
Hudspeth, Justin	Heber Springs, AR	Arkansas
Kamp, Shannon	St Louis, MO	St Louis
Kemmer, Blair	Reiles Acres, ND	North Dakota
Leblanc, Kenneth	Dover, NH	New Hampshire
Mummert, Daniel	Columbia, MD	Maryland
Rollins, Jim	Powder Springs, GA	Georgia
Smith, Lance	Notus, ID	Idaho
Smith, Terry	Portland, OR	Portland
Vacek, Beth	Rochester, NH	New Hampshire
Welch, William	Seabrook, NH	New Hampshire

### SILVER

Umpire	Hometown	Association
Birdsong, Cheryl	Lawrenceville, GA	Georgia
Carder, Russell "Kirby"	Fredericktown, OH	Ohio
Collins, Michael	St Peters, MO	St Louis
Francis, Josh	Snohomish, WA	Washington
Gaudet (Jim) James R	Manchester, NH	New Hampshire
Heitkamp, Gregory	Lisbon, ND	North Dakota
Homer, Randy	Idaho Falls, ID	Idaho
Hudspeth, Justin	Heber Springs, AR	Arkansas
Klump, Kristina	Ballwin, MO	St Louis
McKay, Don	Ramona, CA	Southern California
Miller, Brian (Barney)	Palm Desert, CA	Southern California
Pohaku, Craig	Gold Bar, WA	Washington
Radke, Robert	Walla Walla, WA	Washington
Smith, Terry	Portland, OR	Portland
Warren, Terri	New Boston, NH	New Hampshire

### BRONZE

Umpire	Hometown	Association
Blanchard, Alex	Oakes, ND	North Dakota
Gontkovic, Charles	Columbia, MD	Maryland
Haselwood, Denise	Centralia, WA	Washington
Hudspeth, Justin	Heber Springs, AR	Arkansas
Hunzeker, Stephen	Idaho Falls, ID	Idaho
Martin, John	Ft. Worth, TX	Dallas
Nicksic, Davis	Monroe, WA	Washington
Patterson, Laura	Walkertown, NC	North Carolina
Pearson, Jerry	Porter, OK	Oklahoma

## USA SOFTBALL UMPIRE MEDALS PROGRAM

Rickert, Carl	Lawton, OK	Oklahoma
Shirley, Timothy	Battle Ground, WA	Washington
Smith, Chad	lake Stevens, WA	Washington
Smith, Terry	Portland, OR	Portland
Titus III, Delmar	Oakes, ND	North Dakota

### BLUE

<b>Umpire</b>	<b>Hometown</b>	<b>Association</b>
Baird, Jeff	Idaho Falls, ID	Idaho
Barr, Brandon	Parker, ID	Idaho
Beseris, Tim	Idaho Falls, ID	Idaho
Buhler, Michael	Idaho Falls, ID	Idaho
Elkins, Michael	Blackfoot, ID	Idaho
Harvey, Dave	Idaho Falls, ID	Idaho
Haselwood, Denise	Centralia, WA	Washington
Hildebrand, Jeremy	Utica, OH	Ohio
Hoopes, BJ	Blackfoot, ID	Idaho
Horsley, Chris	Idaho Falls, ID	Idaho
Hudspeth, Justin	Heber Springs, AR	Arkansas
Hunzaker, Heather	Idaho Falls, ID	Idaho
Mantz, Arthur	Ellicott City, MD	Maryland
O'Connor, James	Cumming, GA	Georgia
Oliver, Don	Idaho Falls, ID	Idaho
Schneider, Andrew	Ammon, ID	Idaho
Smith, Terry	Portland, OR	Portland
Valerio, James	Rexburg, ID	Idaho
Williams, Tom	Idaho Falls, ID	Idaho

## 2021 ELITE UMPIRES

The USA Softball Elite Umpire program is designed to recognize umpires who have reached elite status within the program. These individuals must have participated in at least four (4) national championships, and umpired in two (2) of which must have been in the same category of play and from an upper level national championship. These individuals must have been a USA Softball registered umpire for at least seven (7) years, and a current member in good standing.

FAST PITCH			SLOW PITCH		
Name	City	State	Name	City	State
Angeli, Bob	Alexandria	VA	Duncan, Chris	Belgrade	MT
Arrington, Jared	Houston	TX	Head, Shane	Douglasville	GA
Brawner, Chris	Louisville	KY	Heckel, Matt	Bozeman	MT
Distel, Brett	Box Elder	SD	Hoekstra, Paula	Tucson	AZ
Francis, Josh	Snohomish	WA			
Frank, Douglas	Laurel	MT			
Hogan, Heather	Caldwell	ID			
Kaloi, Kelly	Richland	WA			
Lee, Jacob	Bristow	VA			
Schmid, Eric	Sioux Falls	SD			
Travis, John	Cicleville	OH			
Vargas, Richard	Virginia Beach	VA			

## NATIONAL HALL OF FAME

The USA Softball National Hall of Fame was established in 1957 to honor those men and women who have played a major role in the growth and development of softball in the United States. The following list of players, commissioners, umpires, managers, sponsors and other individuals have made outstanding contributions to the success of the sport of softball.

### MEN'S FAST PITCH

* 1957	Harold (Shifty) Gears, Rochester, NY	Pitcher
* 1957	Sam (Sambo) Elliott, Atlanta, GA	Pitcher
* 1958	Al Linde, Milwaukee, WI	Pitcher
* 1959	Bernie Kampschmidt, Covington, KY	Catcher
* 1959	Clyde (Dizzy) Kirkendall, Findlay, OH	Pitcher
* 1960	Warren (Fireball) Gerber, Columbus, OH	Pitcher
1960	Clarence (Buck) Miller, Memphis, TN	Pitcher
* 1960	Jim Ramage, Paducah, KY	Shortstop
* 1961	John (Cannonball) Baker, Milwaukee, WI	Pitcher
* 1961	Ben Crain, Sloan, IA	Pitcher
* 1961	Hugh Johnston, Detroit, MI	First Base
* 1963	John Hunter, Nashville, TN	Pitcher
* 1963	Bill West, Cincinnati, OH	Pitcher
* 1964	Tom Castle, Rochester, NY	First Base
1965	Roy Stephenson, Muttontown, NY	Pitcher
* 1966	Jim Chambers, Oshkosh, WI	Pitcher
* 1966	Robert Forbes, Clearwater, FL	Outfielder
* 1967	Noland Whitlock, Mishawaka, IN	Shortstop
* 1967	Bill Wojje, Mishawaka, IN	Third Base
* 1967	Ronald Kronewitter, Mishawaka, IN	Pitcher
* 1968	Leroy Hess, Mishawaka, IN	Catcher
* 1968	Bob Sprentall, Ann Arbor, MI	Outfielder
* 1970	John Spring, Detroit, MI	Pitcher
1970	Frankie Williams, New Haven, CT	Second Base
* 1971	John (Buster) Zeigler, Miami, FL	Outfielder
* 1971	Ray (Ned) Wickersham, Palatine, IL	Outfielder
1972	Don Ropp, Aurora, IL	Third Base
1972	Jerry Curtis, Clearwater, FL	Outfielder
* 1973	Richard Tomlinson, Valois Quebec, CN	Shortstop
* 1974	Charles Justice, Detroit, MI	Pitcher
* 1976	Bobby Spell, Lake Charles, LA	Pitcher
* 1978	Tom Moore, Clearwater, FL	Infielder
* 1978	Doug Mason, Clearwater, FL	Infielder
1979	Bill Massey, Houston, TX	Pitcher
* 1979	Weldon Haney, Lorenzo, TX	Pitcher
1980	Ron Weathersby, Clearwater, FL	Outfielder
1981	Harvey Sterkel, Aurora, IL	Pitcher
* 1981	Bill Parker, Lake Wales, FL	Infielder
1981	George Adam, Branford, CT	First Base
* 1983	Bonnie Jones, Detroit, MI	Pitcher
* 1983	Robert Kuykendall, Waynesville, NC	Catcher
1984	Bob Barron, Aurora, IL	Second Base
* 1986	Herb Dudley, Clearwater, FL	Pitcher
1988	John Anquillare, New Haven, CT	Shortstop
1988	Vinnie Caserto, Marlboro, NY	First Base-Outfielder
* 1988	Al Lewis, Stratford, CT	Pitcher
1989	Joe Lynch, Nashville, TN	Pitcher
* 1989	Carl Walker, Detroit, MI	Outfielder

## NATIONAL HALL OF FAME

*	1990	.....Harry (Coon) Rosen, Chicago, IL	..... Pitcher
	1990	..... Abe Baker, Cranston, RI	..... Outfielder
*	1991	..... Eddie King, St. Petersburg, FL	..... Pitcher
	1991	..... Sam Lombardo, Detroit, MI	..... First Base-Outfielder
*	1992	..... Elmer Rohrs, Hamler, OH	..... Pitcher
*	1993	..... Leo Luken, Covington, KY	..... Pitcher
	1996	..... Ray Allena, Petaluma, CA	..... Outfielder
	1996	..... Jim Brackin, Fairfax, VA	..... Infielder
*	1996	..... Stan Nelson, Fort Dodge, IA	..... Pitcher
	1996	..... Bill Stewart, Bellevue, WA	..... Outfielder
	1996	..... Ray Truluck, Clearwater, FL	..... Outfielder
*	1997	..... Roy Burlison, Newport, AR	..... Pitcher
	1997	..... Chuck D'Arcy, Sacramento, CA	..... Pitcher
	1998	..... Mike Parnow, Novato, CA	..... Third Base
	1998	..... Tom Dallas, Winton, CA	..... Catcher
	1999	..... Ray Phillips, San Jose, CA	..... Second Base
	1999	..... Glenn Beamon, San Jose, CA	..... Outfield
	2000	..... Dennis Place, Maroa, IL	..... First base
	2000	..... Brian Rothrock, Decatur, IL	..... Outfield
	2000	..... Ted Hicks, Mt. Zion, IL	..... Third base
*	2001	..... Bobby Quinn, Somerville, MA	..... Pitcher
*	2001	..... Harry Kraft, Kenosha, WI	..... Pitcher
	2002	..... Harold (Butch) Batt, Seattle, WA	..... Catcher
*	2002	..... John S. (Sig) Lawson, Glenpool, OK	..... Pitcher
	2003	..... Bill Boyer, Sumner, WA	..... Outfielder
	2003	..... Jimmy Moore, Seattle, WA	..... Pitcher
	2004	..... Ty Stofflet, Coplay, PA	..... Pitcher
	2004	..... Jeff Borrer, Shoreline, WA	..... Infield
	2004	..... Metro Szeryk, London, Ontario, Canada	..... Pitcher
*	2005	..... Dave Scott, Decatur, IL	..... Pitcher
	2006	..... Avon Meacham, Upper Marlboro, MD	..... Outfield
	2007	..... Peter Turner, Stockton, CA	..... Infield-Outfield
	2007	..... Dave Grimes, Lakeland, FL	..... Infield
	2008	..... Mitch Munthe, Modesto, CA	..... Outfield
	2008	..... Jim Marsh, Yukon, OK	..... Catcher
*	2008	..... Kermit Lynch, Oklahoma City, OK	..... Pitcher
	2009	..... Jeff Seip, Boyertown, PA	..... Third Base
	2009	..... Al Yaeger, Seymour, CT	..... Outfield
	2010	..... Jody Hennigar, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada	..... Pitcher
	2010	..... Carl Solarek, Freeland, PA	..... Infield
*	2010	..... Norbert Warken, Covington, KY	..... Pitcher
	2011	..... Brian Martie, Bloomington, IL	..... Infield
	2011	..... Tim Wahl, Grayland, WA	..... Infield
	2014	..... Darryl Day, Hilton Head, S.C.	..... First Base
	2015	..... Mike White, Eugene, OR	..... Pitcher
	2015	..... Steve Padilla, Manteca, CA	..... Pitcher
	2016	..... Tom Penders, Narrangansett, RI	..... Infield
*	2016	..... Harry Haroian, Melvindale, MI	..... Catcher
	2016	..... Peter Meredith, Salt Lake City, UT	..... Pitcher
	2017	..... Rick Minton, Cerro Gordo, IL	..... Infielder
	2017	..... Bob Quinn, Branchville, NJ	..... Infielder
	2017	..... Evans Telegadas, Scottsdale, AZ	..... Infielder
	2018	..... Dick Brubaker, Elburn, IL	..... Pitcher
	2020	..... Terry Muck, Oakland, CA	..... Infield
	2020	..... Bill Pfeiffer, Aurora, IL	.....

## NATIONAL HALL OF FAME

### MEN'S MODIFIED PITCH

1997	Frank Cecero, Staten Island, NY	Third Base
1998	Peter Ralph Miscione, Staten Island, NY	Pitcher
2011	Al White, Canton, Mich	Pitcher

### MEN'S SLOW PITCH

*	1973	Myron Reinhardt, Alexandria, KY	Catcher-Outfielder
*	1974	Frank DeLuca, Stratford, CT	Pitcher
*	1975	Donald Rardin, Lexington, KY	Pitcher-Infielder
	1982	Bill Cole, Sterling Heights, MI	Third Base
*	1984	J.D. McDonald, McAdenville, NC	Shortstop
	1985	James Galloway, Westbury, NY	Infielder
*	1986	Hal Wiggins, Covington, KY	Outfielder
*	1987	Carl (Tex) Collins, Detroit, MI	Catcher
	1988	Eugene Fisher, Denver, NC	Catcher
*	1989	Raymond Brown, Williamstown, KY	Third Base
	1989	Mike Gouin, Detroit, MI	Outfielder
*	1989	Eddie Zolna, Chicago, IL	Pitcher
	1990	Dick Bartel, San Antonio, TX	Outfielder
*	1990	Tom Beall, Monticello, GA	Outfielder
*	1990	Ken Clark, Stratford, CT	Pitcher
*	1992	Lou Del Mastro, Pittsburgh, PA	Pitcher
	1992	Paul Tomasovich, Pittsburgh, PA	Third Base
*	1993	Don Arndt, Sherrills Ford, NC	Pitcher
	1993	Eddie Finnegan, Stratford, CT	Shortstop
*	1993	Steve Loya, Cleveland, OH	Catcher
*	1994	Bert Smith, Wantagh (L.I.), NY	Outfielder
	1994	Richard Willborn, San Antonio, TX	Outfielder
*	1996	Stan Harvey, Gastonia, NC	Outfielder, First Base
	1997	H.T. Waller, Chipley, FL	Second Base
	1999	Bruce Meade, Bradenton, FL	Outfield
	2000	Bill Gatti, Louisville, KY	Catcher
	2000	Dennis Graser, Waukesha, WI	First Base
	2001	Rick Scherr, Sherrills Ford, NC	Third Base
	2001	Don Clatterbough, Mechanicsville, VA	Outfield
	2003	Ronnie Ford, Jacksonville, FL	Outfield
	2007	Mike Macenko, Brunswick, OH	Second Base
	2010	Mike Shenk, Ephrata, PA	Infield
	2012	Jerry King, Maysville, KY	Second Base
*	2014	Craig Elliott, Wadley, AL	Pitcher
	2015	John Davide, Centereach, NY	Shortstop
	2017	Mark Martin, Fayetteville, AR	Infielder
	2017	Willie Simpson, Oak Lawn, IL	Outfielder
	2018	Ricky Huggins, Pembroke, GA	Outfielder
	2018	Todd Joerling, Defiance, MO	Infield
*	2018	Charles Wright, Columbus, GA	Infield
	2019	Britt Hightower, Houston, TX	Outfield
	2019	Mike Nye, Jacksonville, FL	Infield
	2019	Ron Parnell, Highland, CA	Infield
	2020	Curtis Williams, Milton, FL	
	2020	Cecil Whitehead, Valdosta, GA	Outfield
	2020	Carl Rose, Valdosta, GA	
	2020	Doug Roberson, Royal Palm Beach, FL	Outfield

\* Deceased

## NATIONAL HALL OF FAME

### WOMEN'S FAST PITCH

* 1957	Amy Peralta Shelton, Tempe, AZ	Pitcher
* 1957	Marie Wadlow, Peoria, IL	Pitcher
* 1959	Betty Evans Grayson, Portland, OR	Pitcher
* 1960	Nina Korgan, New Orleans, LA	Pitcher
* 1960	Ruth Sears, Taber Alberta, CN	First Base
* 1963	Kay Rich, Fresno, CA	Shortstop
* 1964	Margaret Dobson, Seattle, WA	Third Base
* 1965	Majorie Law, Phoenix, AZ	Pitcher-Infielder-Outfielder
* 1966	Carolyn Thome Hart, Peoria, IL	Outfielder
1969	Jeanne Contel, Fresno, CA	Infielder
* 1969	Micki Stratton, Stratford, CT	Catcher
1970	Dot Wilkinson, Phoenix, AZ	Catcher
* 1971	Virginia Busick, Fresno, CA	Pitcher
* 1972	Bertha Tickey, Dinuba, CA	Pitcher
* 1973	Estelle (Ricki) Caito, Oakland, CA	Second Base
1973	Gloria May, Kerman, CA	First Base
* 1975	Kathryn (Sis) King, Cincinnati, OH	Catcher
1976	Pat Harrison, Stratford, CT	Outfielder
1976	Pat Walker, Orlando, FL	Outfielder
1980	Jean Daves, Orlando, FL	Pitcher
1981	Carol Spanks, Tustin, CA	Infielder-Pitcher
1981	Shirley Topley, Tustin, CA	First Base
1982	Nancy Welborn, Tustin, CA	Pitcher
* 1982	Nance Ito, Denver, CO	Catcher
1982	Billie Harris, Phoenix, AZ	Pitcher-Infielder
1983	Donna Lopiano, Austin, TX	Pitcher-First Base
1983	Joan Joyce, Stratford, CT	Pitcher
1984	Mickey Davis, Sunset Beach, CA	Outfielder
1984	Jackie Rice, Monmouth, OR	Pitcher
1984	Diane Kalliam, San Francisco, CA	Outfielder-Shortstop
1985	Sharron Backus, Fullerton, CA	Shortstop
1985	Willie Roze, Wallingford, CT	Outfielder
1985	E. Louise Albrecht, New Haven, CT	Pitcher
1986	Chris Miner, Omaha, NE	Infielder
1986	Peggy Kellers, Stratford, CT	Catcher
1987	Lorene Ramsey, Pekin, IL	Pitcher
* 1987	Rose Marie Adams, Orange, CA	Infielder
1991	Marilyn Rau, Phoenix, AZ	Catcher
1991	Marlys (Taber) Watts, Mundelein, IL	Shortstop
1992	Diane Schumacher, West Springfield, MA	First Base
* 1992	Carolyn Fitzwater, Portland, OR	Second Base
1995	Dorothy Dobie, Yakima, WA	Infielder
1996	Kathy Arendsen, Zeeland, MI	Pitcher
1997	Gina Vecchione, New Rochelle, NY	Outfielder
* 1998	Freda Savona, New Orleans, LA	Shortstop
1999	Barbara Reinalda, Shelton, CT	Pitcher
2001	Suzie Gaw, Scottsdale, AZ	Infielder-outfield
2005	Pat Dufficy, Stratford, CT	Infield-outfield
2006	Sheila (Cornell) Douty, Diamond Bar, CA	Infield
2006	Michele Granger, Granite Bay, CA	Pitcher
2006	Dot Richardson, Orlando, FL	Infield
2006	Michele Smith, Califon, NJ	Pitcher

## NATIONAL HALL OF FAME

### WOMEN'S FAST PITCH (continued)

* 2007	Louise Mazzuca, Portland, OR	Pitcher
2008	Roberta (Robbie) Mulkey, CA	First Base/Catcher
2009	Leah O'Brien Amico, Corona, CA	Outfield
* 2009	Allyson Rioux, Stamford, CT	Second Base
2010	Suzy Brazney, Huntington Beach, CA	Catcher
2011	Lori Harrigan, Las Vegas, NV	Pitcher
2013	Laura Berg, Santa Fe Springs, CA	Outfield
2013	Lisa Fernandez, Long Beach, CA	Pitcher
2014	Stacey Nuveman, La Verne, CA	Catcher
2016	Jennie Finch, La Mirada, CA	Pitcher
2018	Crystl Bustos, Canyon County, CA	Infield
2018	Christa Williams, Houston, TX	Pitcher
2019	Jessica Mendoza, Camarillo, CA	Outfield
2020	Lovieanne Jung, Fountain Valley, CA	Infield
2020	Natasha Watley, Irvine, CA	Infield

### WOMEN'S SLOW PITCH

* 1976	Alberta Kohls Sims, Cincinnati, OH	Outfielder
1978	Norma Eschenbrenner Ante, Cincinnati, OH	Outfielder
1979	Donna Wolfe, Covington, OH	Outfielder
* 1982	Judy Hedgecock, Satellite Beach, FL	Pitcher
1983	Ida Jean (Hoppy) Hopkins, Cleveland, OH	Shortstop
1994	Carol Bemis, Golden Valley, MN	Outfielder
1994	Sherri Pickard, Raleigh, NC	Second Base
1994	Linda Polley, Champlin, MN	Shortstop
1999	Nancy Oldham, Sanford, NC	Third Base
2007	Brenda Smith Foster, Mechanicsville, VA	Second Base
2008	Jenni Harp Oliver, Chattanooga, TN	Catcher
2013	Shirley Simmons Snell, Shreveport, LA	Infield
* Deceased		



## NATIONAL HALL OF FAME

### COMMISSIONERS

* 1976 Nick Barack	Columbus, OH
* 1976 Fred Hoffman	St. Joseph, MO
* 1976 Carl Kelley	Omaha, NE
* 1976 W.W. (Bill) Kethan	Houston, TX
* 1976 Einar Nelson	Minneapolis, MN
* 1977 Lou Hamilton	San Antonio, TX
* 1977 John Nagy	Cleveland, OH
* 1977 Benny Turcan	Baton Rouge, LA
* 1978 Joe Barber	Stratford, CT
* 1978 Edward C. Clott	Cincinnati, OH
* 1978 Jerry Stremel	Hutchinson, KS
* 1979 Al Bishop	Marietta, GA
* 1979 Andrew Pendergast	Bremerton, WA
* 1980 Ward B (Bick) Auxier	OklaomaCity,OK
* 1980 George T. Cron	Elizabeth, NJ
* 1980 Matt Urban	Holland, MI
* 1981 Arnold (Red) Halpern	Coeur d'Alene, ID
* 1982 Fred G. Blum	Rochester, NY
* 1982 Fred Crosby	Phelps, NY
1982 Don Snyder	Biloxi, MS
* 1983 Duane (Tiny) Schafer	Jamestown, ND
* 1984 Lewis D. Brasell	Mobile, AL
* 1985 Jack Spore	Nashville, TN
* 1986 O.W. (Bill) Smith	Bennington, NE
* 1987 Alfred (Red) Morton	Redwood City, CA
* 1988 John Deaver	Louisville, KY
* 1988 Howard B. Honaker	Ashland, OH
1989 Andrew S. Loechner	Mechanicsburg, PA
1990 Bert Weeks	Winston-Salem, NC
* 1991 H. Franklin Taylor III	Richmond, VA
* 1993 Elliott Hawke	Kansas City, MO
* 1995 Francis Mott	Oswego, NY
1999 G. Pat Adkison	Rainbow City, AL
* 2000 Wayne L. Myers	Terre Haute, IN
2003 Cliff Warrick	Round Rock, TX
* 2004 Edward J. Lindsey	Buffalo, NY
* 2004 A. C. Williams	Prescott, AZ
* 2006 Pat Lillian	Anchorage, AK
2008 Garland Thompson	Wilmore, KY
2010 E.T. Colvin	Columbus, MS
2015 Andy Dooley	Thaxton, VA
2019 Joey L. Rich	Springfield, MO

\* Deceased

### UMPIRES

* 1976 George Dickstein	New York, NY
* 1976 Ray Ernst	Cincinnati, OH
* 1976 Bernard Lassogna	Stratford, CT
* 1976 Art Solz	Minneapolis, MN
* 1977 Robert Deal	Etowah, TN
* 1977 Ron Derr	Portland, OR
* 1979 Ferris Reid	Montgomery, IL
* 1980 Harold S. Adams	Topeka, KS
* 1980 Ivie C. Apple	Greensboro, NC
* 1980 Frank Susor	Poland, OH
* 1982 Tom Mason	Newark, DE
* 1982 Eddie Mayhew	Indianapolis, IN
* 1983 Ed Dressler	Bethpage, NY
* 1983 Bob Quillen	Indianapolis, IN
1987 Henry Flowers	Copley, OH
1987 Bill Humphrey	Midland, MI
* 1988 Rex R. Brown	Bremerton, WA
1989 Bill Finley	OklaomaCity, OK
* 1991 Merle O. Butler	Edmond, OK
1992 Henry D. Pollard	Highland Spgs, VA
* 1992 L.R. (Tarz) Timm	Jamestown, ND
* 1993 Dan Blair	Lowell, NC
* 1993 Billy Monk	Glenn Heights, TX
1993 Bernie Profato	Niles, OH
* 1999 Herman Beagles	Chickamuga, GA
2000 Billy Peterson	Woodbury, MN
2001 Horace Bruff	Piedmont, OK
2001 Walt Sparks	San Antonio, TX
2002 Jerry Hanson	Midland, MI
2004 Emily Alexander	Phoenix, AZ
* 2005 Nick Cinquanto	Bensalem, PA
2005 Craig Cress	Terre Haute, IN
2006 Ralph B. Miller	Emeryville, CA
2007 Dave Epperson	Topeka, KS
* 2008 Ron Galemore	Gaithersburg, MD
2008 Kevin G. Ryan	Ann Arbor, MI
2009 Newton Buckner	Brooklyn, NY
2009 Tony Walsh	Atoka, TN
2010 Richard Ribby	Eaton Rapids, MI
2010 Cheryl Simmons	Palo Alto, CA
* 2011 Julie Johnson	Alexandria, ID
2011 Jim Wolford	DeWitt, MI
2012 Chris Armijo	Grand Rapids, MI
2013 Randy Melvin	Dowagiac, MI
* 2014 Ted Germain	Mayville, MI
* 2015 Bonnie Anderson	Springfield, OR
2015 Mark Ingrao	Falls Church, VA
2016 John Nelson	Dalton, GA
2017 Jimmy Derrick	Douglasville, GA
2017 Gary Evans	Mason, MI
2018 Bill Silves	Mount Vernon, WA
2019 Rick Havercroft	Saginaw, MI

## NATIONAL HALL OF FAME

### MERITORIOUS SERVICE

* 1963 Byron Eugene Martin	Newark, NJ	2006 Norm C. Davis	Auburn, ME
* 1976 Leo Fischer	Chicago, IL	2007 Jack Mowatt	Gambrills, MD
* 1976 Raymond Johnson	Nashville, TN	* 2008 Freddie & Virginia Ezell	Midland, TX
* 1977 Bob Hoffman	York, PA	2008 Jerry L. Stewart	Arcola, IL
* 1977 Charles Jensen	Chicago, IL	* 2009 Ben Bunch	Enid, OK
* 1977 Charles L. McCord	Chillicothe, IL	* 2010 Guy Demaio	New Castle, PA
* 1979 Bernard F. (Bunny) Lee	Lynn, MA	* 2010 Ronnie Isham	Stephenville, TX
* 1980 Nick Frannicola	Newark, NJ	* 2011 Max Wilkes	Phenix City, AL
* 1980 James F. Jones	Boston, MA	2012 Ivan "Ike" Wheeler	Bossier City, LA
* 1980 Harold Engelhardt	Indianapolis, IN	2013 Margie Wright	Clovis, CA
1981 Charles (Budd) Gilbert	Cliffside Park, NJ	2014 Ron Radigonda	Edmond, OK
* 1981 Arthur Noren	Pompano Beach, FL	2015 Sue Enquist	San Clemente, CA
* 1981 Vince Scamardella	Staten Island, NY	2015 Charles Moss, Sr.	Lanexa, VA
* 1982 Percy L. Hedgecock	Satellite Beach, FL	2016 Ken Eriksen	Tampa, FL
* 1982 Eddie L. Moore	Shreveport, LA	2016 Mick Renneisen	Bloomington, ID
* 1983 Margaret (Toots) Nusse	Linden, NJ	2017 Mike Candrea	Tucson, AZ
* 1983 Cliff Smith	Aurora, IL	2017 Dick Gulmon	Valley City, ND
* 1986 Mack Phillips	Grosse Point Woods, MI	2019 Warren Jones	Ashland, OH
* 1988 Don E. Porter	Oklahoma City, OK	2019 Tony Laws	Burlington, NC
* 1989 Tom Beck	Tidewater, VA	2020 Phil Gutierrez	Las Cruces, NM
* 1990 Bill Svochak	Detroit, MI		
* 1991 Kay Purves	Lansing, MI	* Deceased	
1993 Jim (Sonny) Carman	West Babylon, NY		
1994 Buck Johnson	Soddy Daisy, TN		
1994 Dick Reinmiller	Lincoln, NE		
1995 Jack Aaron	Waco, TX		
* 1996 Lewis Rober Sr.	Minneapolis, MN		
1998 Claud (Chuck) Davenport	Branson, MO		
* 1999 Bill Plummer III	Syracuse, NY		
2001 Kinard Latham	Columbus, GA		
2002 Marty McGuire	Midland, MI		
* 2004 Bill Williams	Midland, TX		
2005 Robert "Bob" P. Savoie	Easton, MD		
2006 Don Brewer	Murphysboro, IL		

## NATIONAL HALL OF FAME

### MANAGERS

* 1976	Commie Currens	Cincinnati, OH
* 1976	Willard Fenton	Seattle, WA
* 1977	Vincent (Wee) Devitt	Stratford, CT
* 1977	Bud Gagel	Louisville, KY
* 1977	George (Doc) Linnehan	Levittown, NY
1978	Duke Denson	Jacksonville, FL
1978	Leroy Rutenschroer	Cincinnati, OH
* 1979	Johnny Moon	Atlanta, GA
* 1980	Ford Hoffman	Phoenix, AZ
* 1980	Marge Ricker	Orlando, FL
* 1983	Bobby Lutz	Denver, NC
* 1984	Al Brausch	Newport, KY
1984	Bill Caye	Pittsburgh, PA
* 1985	Erv Lind	Portland, OR
* 1988	William (Red) Jenkins	McAdenville, NC
* 1988	Roy Lombardo	Detroit, MI
* 1988	Maxine Thayer	Indianapolis, IN
* 1989	Charles (Sonny) Keeble	Jacksonville, FL
* 1993	Ralph Raymond	Worcester, MA
1993	Rocky Santilli	Leesport, PA
* 1998	Dave Neale Sr.	Brook Park, OH
* 2000	Russ Boice	St. Louis, MO
2002	Tom Wagner	Federal Way, WA
2003	Eugene Kwalek	Shelton, CT
2007	Hank Bassett	Monticello, KY
2009	RB Thomas	Nokesville, VA
* 2011	Rod Peterson	Madison, WI
* 2012	Denny Bruckert	Grand Rapids, MI
* 2012	Leon Grunalt	Warren, MI
2012	Larry Mays	Canyon Lake, CA
2014	Tommy Orndorff	Vienna, VA

### SPONSORS

* 1976	William J. Pharr	McAdenville, NC
* 1976	William S. Simpson	Stratford, CT
* 1976	Fred Zollner	Duluth, MN
* 1976	Charles Hurd	Aurora, IL
* 1982	Richard Howard	Denver, NC
1992	Fred and Carl Nothdurft	Detroit, MI
1992	Jerry Pendergast	Miami, FL
1993	Harry (Robbie) Robinson	Portland, OR
* 1994	Woody and Pat Bell	Tampa, FL
1997	Abbott Laboratories	Ashland, OH
* 1998	Walt and Ray Guanella	Santa Rosa, CA
1999	Immor Clyde Franklin Jr.	Baltimore, MD
2002	Bill Fraley	Lexington, KY
2011	Lewis Secory, Jr.	Port Huron, MI
2011	Gary Tharaldson	Fargo, ND
2014	Bruce Tanski	Clifton Park, NY
2016	Terry Petersen	Omaha, NE
2018	John Daniels	Alberville, MN

\* Deceased

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**WARNING, DISCLOSURE AND DISCLAIMER**

Use of the techniques in this Softball Safety Awareness Guide should not be considered a guarantee that participants, spectators or others will be safe or free from injury or harm while participating in the sport of amateur softball. There are risks and dangers incidental to the game of softball, including specifically (but not limited to) the danger of being injured by thrown bats, thrown balls, batted balls or other objects softball poses a risk to its participants, spectators and other persons at or near USA Softball events or practices. Softball is a vigorous team sport at times involving severe cardiovascular stress and violent physical contact. Softball involves certain risk, including but not limited to death, heat-stroke, serious neck and spinal injuries resulting in complete or partial paralysis, brain damage and serious injury to virtually all bones, joints, muscles and internal organs, and equipment provided for the protection of the participants may be inadequate to prevent serious injury. It is further disclosed that softball involves a particularly high risk of ankle, knee, head, and neck injury. In addition, participation in USA Softball events may involve activities incidental thereto, including but not limited to, travel to and from the site activity, participation at sites that may be remote from available medical assistance, and possible reckless conduct of other participants. Participants engaging in softball and activities incidental to softball do so with knowledge of the danger involved and agree to accept any and all inherent risks of property damage, personal injury, or death. Parents, family, guests, participants and spectators assume all risk and danger of personal injury, losses, damages to person or property and all hazards arising from, incidental to or related in any way to the game of softball.

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## **PREAMBLE**

Use of the techniques in this Softball Safety Awareness Guide should not be considered a guarantee that participants, spectators or others will be safe or free from injury or harm while participating in the contact sport of amateur softball. Please read the entire document, including the Warning, Disclosure and Disclaimer at page 176.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Anyone who has played softball, or any other contact sport, knows that there are inherent risks. Many of these risks are listed in the Warning Disclosure and Disclaimer found in this Guide. While no contact sport can ever be free from risk, many times risks can be minimized. The participants in contact sports must take ownership of these issues and make it their personal responsibility to be aware of their surroundings and take steps to minimize these risks.

This guide, and our dedicated on-line library of documents contained in this guide, are formulated to assist you in educating yourself to minimize risks and prevent unnecessary injuries.

Over the years, USA Softball has educated its participants in the area of safety awareness. The USA Softball web site, [USASoftball.com](http://USASoftball.com), and USA Softball's insurance agent's web site, [RPSBollinger.com](http://RPSBollinger.com), have made these documents available. With this Safety Awareness Guide, USA Softball is launching an aggressive campaign designed to educate its members.

This guide is designed to help you minimize and/or prevent injuries and accidents. We hope you find the information useful.

Also, please keep in mind that it is always best to be insured in the event that something does happen. If your USA Softball team or league is not already insured, USA Softball has made both accident and liability insurance easy, affordable and available to you. The accident insurance will help pay the cost of medical bills, while the liability insurance will protect you if you are ever sued in your capacity as an USA Softball coach, player or volunteer. For information on how to insure yourself or your team, please contact your local USA Softball JO or Adult Commissioner.

## Topics addressed in this Guide include:

- Softball Safety Recommendations
  - Equipment
  - First Aid
  - Youth-Specific Considerations
  - Adult-Specific Considerations
  - Field Condition Issues
- Lightning Safety Guidelines
- Physical and Sexual Abuse Information and Prevention
- US Center for SafeSport Requirements and Resources
- Mandatory Minor Abuse Prevention Policies
- Medical Condition Issues
- Crisis Management Plan
- CDC Concussion Awareness
- Air Quality Awareness

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- Your friends at USA Softball!

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405-424-5266  
USASoftball.com

**USA SOFTBALL AND THE HISTORY OF ITS RULE MAKING RESPONSIBILITIES**

ASA was founded in 1933. In 2013, ASA Softball celebrated its 80th year as an organization promoting the sport of softball. In 2017, ASA/USA Softball was rebranded to USA Softball.

USA Softball's longstanding support and promotion of amateur softball was one of the primary reasons that the copyright to the Official Rules of Softball were assigned by the International Joint Rules Committee on Softball to ASA Softball on May 31, 1980. Those Official Playing Rules were adopted by ASA Softball's Council on October 10, 1980, and became effective January 1, 1981. The Official Rules have been revised almost every year since. Amendments to the Rules are proposed, voted upon and enacted at an annual legislative session of USA Softball's Council, a legislative body consisting of over two hundred USA Softball volunteers and staff from across the United States.

USA Softball's Official Rules include certain equipment standards and mandatory equipment requirements for USA Softball Championship Play. USA Softball's rule making authority and official playing rules govern only USA Softball's championship play. Participants playing in non-championship play are not governed by USA Softball's Official Playing Rules and, as explained below, are free to modify USA Softball's Official Playing Rules as appropriate.

The Official Playing Rules set forth mandatory equipment requirements, such as batting helmet requirements in USA Softball's youth program. This section explains the type of mandatory equipment and for which events the equipment is required to be used under USA Softball's official playing rules. This section also sets forth various 'recommended' types of protective equipment. Please note that USA Softball's official playing rules generally describe mandatory equipment and prohibited equipment. USA Softball's official rules do not contain references to 'recommended' protective equipment. Therefore, the below 'recommendations' are not the official playing rules of USA Softball or official USA Softball policy. Instead, these recommendations are merely provided in this Guide for the reader's consideration. The recommendations are also not exhaustive. Participants are encouraged to use all available protective equipment. Please note that USA Softball does have an official policy and rule that promotes and gives each player the right to the use of additional protective equipment beyond that which is required under its official playing rules. Rule 3, Section 5(F) of USA Softball's Official Playing Rules states that any defensive or offensive player has the right to wear any non-mandated additional protective equipment he/she desires.

USA Softball's official playing rules are designed to be used at USA Softball championship events and implemented by USA Softball officials and volunteers. USA Softball is



aware that its Official Playing Rules, or modifications of its Official Playing Rules, are used by leagues and organizations participating in non-championship play. Please be aware that because USA Softball's official playing rules (including its mandatory equipment) are designed for USA Softball championship play, the Official Playing Rules have built-in assumptions concerning the competition. For instance, there is a heightened risk of injury where games are played among players with a wide disparity in skill levels (i.e. 12 year old team playing against an 18 year old team or Coed teams with highly skilled and lesser skilled players). To attempt to address the disparity among participants in USA Softball championship play, USA Softball has implemented a classification system that classifies teams or players according to their respective age or skill level. For instance, youth players are classified by USA Softball by age, such as 18-U (18 and under), 16-U (16 and under), 14-U (14 and under) and 12-U (12 and under) for USA Softball championship play. Adult players are classified for USA Softball championship play under Class A, Class B, Class C or some other designation. USA Softball maintains rules concerning eligibility and movement between classification levels. All USA Softball championship play is governed by this classification system. USA Softball's classification system for USA Softball championship play minimizes players participating against each other with a wide disparity in skill levels. In the event a participant elects to play in a higher classification level, or in the event a youth player elects to play with adult players, there may be a heightened risk of harm or injury due to a disparity in size, weight, skill level and/or other factors.

To the extent a local league uses USA Softball's official playing rules for non-championship play and does not maintain a classification system, that local league may want to implement more restrictive equipment standards and/or require certain additional protective equipment than is already contained in USA Softball's official playing rules.

One of the primary purposes of USA Softball is to promote the sport of softball. One of the purposes of USA Softball's official playing rules, including its equipment standards and classification system, is to promote softball, promote competitive balance and to preserve the integrity of the sport. USA Softball recognizes that every year, at varying levels, all different types of softball games are played, including youth, Coed, recreational, league, tournament and national championships. Please recognize that USA Softball's official playing rules are not designed to fit every situation. No set of rules can effectively address such a wide array of situations. USA Softball recognizes that the imposition of mandates requiring the use of cutting-edge, expensive or over-extensive equipment during play will not promote the game of amateur softball but instead hinder it. An exhaustive list of mandatory equipment in its rules to fit all players and all situations would be counterproductive to the sport. Such rules would also likely hinder the widespread participation in amateur softball. Therefore, although not mandatory, players are encouraged to consider and wear additional protective equipment. No protective

equipment can make the game entirely safe or free from injury, but additional equipment can lessen the risks of injury.

### **USE OF USA SOFTBALL'S OFFICIAL RULES OUTSIDE THEIR INTENDED PURPOSE**

USA Softball, as National Governing Body for Softball in the United States understands that local, recreational, city or county leagues may adopt and use USA Softball's official playing rules. The use of any or all of USA Softball's playing rules is strictly a local matter and the rules may be altered as league officials deem necessary to conduct their own non-championship league play. USA Softball's official playing rules, or any modification thereof, should not be considered a guarantee that participants, spectators or others will be safe or free from injury or harm. To the extent USA Softball's official playing rules are modified by local leagues; such modification may increase the potential or likelihood of injury, death or property loss, including the dangers associated with increased batted ball speeds. USA Softball expressly disclaims any and all liability associated with the use of its official playing rules or any modification of its official playing rules.

### **BASIC SOFTBALL EQUIPMENT INFORMATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Proper fitting softball equipment is just as important to your team's success as learning proper softball fundamentals and skills. To see if your equipment is legal for USA Softball Championship Play look in the equipment section of the latest USA Softball Participant Manual/Rule Book or on the USA Softball website at [USASoftball.com](http://USASoftball.com) under "Approved Equipment." The following provides a general outline of USA Softball's official playing rules concerning mandatory equipment to be used in USA Softball championship play. As explained above, this section also contains some recommendations concerning equipment.

**Balls:** Softballs generally come in three sizes 11", 12", and 16" and are used in both Fast Pitch and Slow Pitch depending on the age group. To give you a better idea of just how big that is—a baseball is nine inches. Keep in mind that the word softball doesn't mean that the balls are "soft." In fact, they are similar to a baseball in overall hardness. So whether you are coaching a group of inexperienced kids or whether you are participating in a Coed adult game with players possessing a wide disparity of softball skills you should consider using a softer ball, safety ball or a lower COR/compression softball available from many of the ball manufacturers. All manufactures that are licensed to manufacture balls that meet USA Softball's certifications for championship play can be found by visiting the certified equipment section of [USASoftball.com](http://USASoftball.com). You can also find a list of balls that have been previously certified that are no longer approved for USA Softball Championship play.

**Bats:** USA Softball publishes a list of approved bats along with a list of Non-approved bats with 2000 or 2004 certification marks and can found at USASoftball.com. The Non- approved bats with 2000 or 2004 Certification marks contain bats previously approved that have been found to no longer meet our equipment testing and certification standards. Therefore these bats are no longer approved for USA Softball Championship play. Bats used in USA Softball Championship play must appear on the approved Bat list, have a 2000, 2004, or 2013 ASA certification mark, or the new **USA Softball Approved Certification marks** and not be on the Non-approved list with 2000 or 2004 certification marks list.

We encourage all coaches, parents, players and league directors to check for USA Softball's certification logo and to check the non approved list often as it changes on a reoccurring basis. If skill disparity among the players or local conditions warrant, the USA Softball has provided bat descriptions allowing league directors and tournament directors to specify certain specifications.

**Note:** *Sections 1 and 3 of Rule 3 of USA Softball's official rules discusses USA Softball's certification of balls and bats for use in USA Softball Championship Play. The preamble to Rule 3 states: Rule 3 governs the equipment to be used in USA Softball Championship Play. Equipment bearing USA Softball's approved certification mark(s) should not be construed as a warranty or guarantee that the equipment is safe or will safeguard participants or spectators from injury. Instead, USA Softball's certification marks merely indicate that the equipment model has been tested and complies with USA Softball's rules for Championship Play. The primary purpose of Rule 3 and USA Softball's equipment standards is to promote competitive balance and to preserve the integrity of the sport of amateur softball. The use of USA Softball approved equipment in Championship Play or otherwise should not be considered a guarantee that participants, spectators or others will be safe or free from injury or harm. There are risks and dangers incidental to the game of softball, including specifically (but not limited to) the danger of being injured by thrown bats, thrown balls, batted balls or other objects.*

**Catcher's Mask:** Catcher's masks protect the catcher's face. Catcher's masks are mandated by USA Softball's Official Playing Rules in all games except for Adult Women's slow pitch, Adult Men's slow pitch and Adult Coed. The masks come in different weights depending upon the thickness of the material. One important part of the catcher's mask is the throat protector. It can be either a large piece of plastic connected to the mask by two strips of leather, or a metal extension at the bottom of the mask. The throat protector is as important to the catcher's safety as the mask itself, we recommend you make sure your catcher's mask includes one. Make sure your catcher's face mask fits properly. Adjustable straps on the back of the mask allow the mask to be adjusted for a proper fit. Also, if your catcher is using the adjustable throat protector, make sure that it fits

properly (it should completely cover the throat). It should dangle just enough to be flexible, but it should not be too loose or too low. Catcher's Masks are required for all fast pitch (i.e. youth and adult fast pitch) and for youth slow pitch. Throat protectors are required for all fast pitch (i.e. youth and adult fast pitch) and are recommended for all catchers.

**Catcher Masks and Throat Protectors for Adult Fast Pitch:** Catchers must wear masks with throat protectors. An extended wire protector may be worn in lieu of an attached throat protector. Helmets are optional by fast pitch catchers, and if worn any style is approved. In adult fast pitch, a plastic face mask/guard by itself is not an acceptable substitute for a catcher's mask.

**Catcher Masks and Throat Protectors for Junior Olympic Fast Pitch:** Catchers must wear a mask with throat protector, approved helmet with ear flaps. An extended wire protector may be worn in lieu of an attached throat protector. Any player warming up a Junior Olympic pitcher must wear a mask with throat protector and approved helmet with ear flaps. FP catchers cannot nearly wear the plastic face mask/guard. NOTE: (Section A-B-C) The ice hockey goalie style face mask is approved for use by catchers. If the throat protection built into the mask is inadequate, in the judgement of the umpire, a throat attachment must be added to the mask before using.

**Catcher Masks for Junior Olympic Slow Pitch:** Catchers must wear an approved batter's helmet with ear flaps, the catcher's helmet and mask, or an approved plastic face mask/guard with catcher's helmet. A throat protector for Junior Olympic Slow Pitch catchers is not mandatory but recommended.

**Catcher's Chest Protector:** The chest protector protects the catcher's chest. It has adjustable straps on the back. Chest protectors come in different sizes, so your catcher should have one that covers the chest without being too bulky to prevent quick movement. This is required only for fast pitch youth catchers, but is recommended for all catchers (adult and youth, fast pitch and slow pitch).

**Catcher's Shin Guards:** Shin guards protect the catcher's legs from foul balls and from runners sliding into home plate. They fit over the front portion of the catcher's legs with small extensions going over the top of the foot and knee. Shin guards have adjustable straps in the back to make them fit snugly. Make sure your catcher selects a set of shin guards that are the same length as his or her legs. They come in youth and adult sizes so be aware of this when buying shin guards for your catcher. Shin Guards are required for J.O./Youth Fast Pitch catchers but are recommended for all catchers.

**Fielder's Glove:** A glove has individual fingers and can be worn by all defensive players.

Gloves come in adult and youth sizes, and in outfield and infield lengths. The outfielder's glove is longer than an infielder's glove, but either type may be worn by infielders and outfielders. Do not think that the more expensive the glove, the better it is. When choosing a glove, the player should be able to control it (not too big), and it should be comfortable.

**The USA Softball glove rule now allows any player to wear a mitt or glove at any position. We only regulate the glove's size and colors. The USA Softball glove rule is as follows:** A Glove/Mitt may be worn by any player. The dimensions of any glove/mitt used by any fielder shall not exceed the specifications set forth below (see drawing and specifications [in Rule 3, Section 4]). (Fast Pitch) The Pitcher's glove may be of one solid color or multicolored as long as the color(s) are not the color of the ball being used in the game.

**Helmets:** All batters in fast pitch softball must wear batting helmets. Not just while they are batting, but also while they are base runners. All Junior Olympic players acting as coaches in the coach's box must properly wear double ear flap helmets. Please note: A NOCSAE-approved face guard is mandatory on all fast pitch youth batting helmets.

Helmets also come in different sizes, usually Small, Medium and Large, so make sure you have enough helmets in the different sizes for everyone on your team. Helmets must be NOCSAE approved in order to be legal and safe. Don't buy helmets without the NOCSAE seal. Helmets must also be equipped with a securely fastened NOCSAE certified mask or guard. The mask must bear the NOCSAE seal on it also. If the mask and helmet are molded as one piece only one NOCSAE seal is required.

In addition, any defensive or offensive player may wear a helmet at any time. It is recommended that offensive players (not batting) wear a helmet even though it may not be mandatory under USA Softball's rules. For instance, base runners often have their backs to the fielders so their heads may be more vulnerable to thrown balls than defensive players. It is recommended that all coaches and other persons on the playing field wear helmets.

**Home Plate:** There is only one home plate on each softball field, with the exception of Senior Slow pitch which has two, and its shape is totally different from the other three bases. It gets its unusual shape because the two foul lines (first base and third base) come together at the point of home plate. Home plate is in fair territory, with the point facing away from the pitcher.

**Double First Base:** A base is normally 15" x 15" in size. A double first base is either two separate bases or one base 15" x 30" in size, half inside and half outside the foul line. The inside base is white and the outside base is of a contrasting color. A double first base is mandatory in all levels of USA Softball championship play.

**Bases:** There are three bases on a softball field (first, second and third). When running the bases, there are various risks of injury. These risks include injuries from sliding, being hit by a thrown ball and/or collision with other players. Certain injuries from sliding may be heightened or mitigated by the type of bases used. There are a variety of different types of bases (i.e. hard or soft, moveable or permanent). When participating in softball, make yourself aware of the type of bases used during each game so that you can employ base running techniques that minimize risk of injury to your hands, wrists, arms, feet, ankles, legs or other areas.

### Summary of USA Softball-Mandated Protective Equipment For USA Softball Championship Play:

The below chart, dated as of October 1, 2008, details which USA Softball Championship Play games require which mandatory protective equipment. The last column indicates that, although not required in all situations, protective equipment is permitted to be worn by any player in any game at any time under Rule 3 of USA Softball's Official Playing Rules.

EQUIPMENT:	JO/Youth Slow Pitch Program (Male & Female)	JO/Youth Fast pitch Program (Male & Female)	Adult Women Slow Pitch	Adult Men Slow Pitch	Coed	Adult Women Fast Pitch	Adult Men Fast Pitch	Permitted to be worn if participant so desires
Double First Base	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Catcher's Mask	X	X				X	X	X
Catcher's Throat Protector		X				X	X	X
Catcher's Chest Protector		X						X
Catcher's Shin Guards		X						X
Batting Helmet	X	X				X	X	X
Chin Strap for Batting Helmet								X
Face Mask (usually for pitchers)								X
Other Protective Equipment								X

The above rules are shown as of the date this chart was prepared. Please consult the latest version of the rules for any updated requirements.

\*In addition, all offensive youth players acting as coaches or otherwise must wear a helmet when standing anywhere outside the dugouts. Examples include but are not limited to coaching, bat girl/boy, etc.

**SOFTBALL AND YOUTH SAFETY AWARENESS**

Safety is and has always been a concern of USA Softball, and the organization has implemented many safety initiatives over the years. Safety issues are thoughtfully considered along with other factors such as competitive balance and preserving the integrity of the sport of softball. USA Softball was the first association to require all of its youth batters and base runners to wear helmets; to require catchers to wear a mask with a throat protector and an approved helmet with ear flaps; to allow the use of a double-base system at first base; and to recommend the use of safety balls and bats for players at the 10-under levels. USA Softball created a nationwide coaching education program to assist volunteer coaches in better educating, training and preparing young players to participate in the sport.

The USA Softball JO program is dedicated to building healthy, productive, confident children. Sometimes adults fail to realize just how difficult the skills of softball can be for youngsters. Therefore, we encourage coaches and parents to allow children to learn at their own rate, and to praise players as they progress in their development.

Everyone wants to be a winner. USA Softball's purpose is to create a team of winners - winners not only on the softball field, but in life.

Foremost, the USA Softball Junior Olympic Youth program is about children - it's about creating a positive environment where they can grow and develop, and learn a sport they can enjoy for a lifetime. Most importantly, it's about making sure they come away from their softball experience feeling confident about themselves and who they are.

**SOFTBALL AND ADULT SAFETY**

As adults, we play softball for many of the same reasons that children do. We like to compete, have fun, and continue to share the excitement of playing a sport we love with friends. However, just as youth players play against others in their own age group to achieve a relatively fair and safe playing field, adults have to make certain considerations regarding fair and safe play. While it is common sense that an "A" player should not bat against a novice pitcher, some leagues form in ways that could produce just such a situation. Coed leagues often bring together a wide range of skill levels. And while it is nice to try to accommodate everyone, it is wise to keep players of widely different ability levels from playing against each other in the same game or league. There is a greater likelihood of injury in games where players having a wide disparity of skill levels are playing in the same game.

As a general rule, adults are going to hit the ball faster and harder and therefore there is often a greater risk of injury. The game of softball is played with bats and balls. Although termed a ‘softball’, a softball is a hard object that can cause serious injury or even death. As such, at all levels of the game, especially adults, horseplay with bats and balls should never be tolerated.

Adults should also ensure that they do not participate in softball while under the influence of alcohol, drugs or medication, as doing so creates a greater risk of injury to the person under the influence and those around him/her. Playing under the influence of alcohol or any other substance that causes reaction times to slow down is very dangerous. Most people are keenly aware of the dangers of driving while intoxicated. Driving while intoxicated is dangerous, in part, because of slowed reaction times. For these same reasons, participating in softball while intoxicated is likewise dangerous and should never be undertaken.

## **COACHES**

While players have a responsibility for their own safety, a coach also must be aware of safety issues and use common sense and safety practices. This includes a concern for the mental as well as physical well-being of the participants.

Overlooking a safe environment can seriously affect how your players learn softball skills and fundamentals. How many of your players pull their heads on ground balls, catch fly balls off to one side, or jump out of the way as soon as the pitcher pitches the ball? These are the results of an unsafe learning experience, or to put it in coachspeak, “fear of the ball.”

Keep in mind that what might be safe to you is not necessarily safe to your players. To a child who is just learning to play softball and who knows that he or she cannot throw or field a ball, the last thing they want to do is stand in front of or underneath a hard hit ball. They fear they cannot catch it, and they know that if they miss they are liable to get hurt. Although this may not be good thinking for a ballplayer, it is a perfectly logical train of thought. Would you want to do something that you know will cause you great pain? How do you “make it all safe?” Instead of using regular softballs, use a softer, safety ball. You will be pleasantly surprised at the tremendous amount of improvement you see in your players in a short period of time. Once your players realize that the ball will not hurt them, they will get down in front of the ground ball and correctly position themselves underneath the fly ball.



Using a safety ball is not “sissy,” or just for little children. It is an important tool to your softball success if it helps your players improve and learn in a safe environment.

### **FIRST AID**

During a typical softball season, in spite of the very best injury prevention plan, some injuries will occur. Most of these will be during practice, and you or another competent adult must provide care as best you can. You want to know as much as you can about treating injuries to keep the damage from an injury to a minimum. Consider enrolling in a first aid class and taking a CPR course. You should have a first aid kit at your practices and games (suggested contents below), and know the telephone numbers of emergency personnel. Do you have medical release forms? As a coach, you should make every effort to expand your knowledge of first aid so that you can minimize the damage from injuries received in practices and games.

**AIDS and Injuries:** You should not let a fear of acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) from stopping you from helping a player. If you are aiding an injured player, you are at risk if you allow contaminated blood to come in contact with an open wound. That is why you should always have a pair of rubber gloves with you. The rubber gloves will protect you from AIDS should one of your players carry this disease. Check with your league director or a medical professional for more information on how to protect yourself from AIDS.

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### **Suggested First Aid Kit Supplies**

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Ice or Impact Ice Bags	Splint Material	Plastic Bags
Scissors	Band Aids	Sun Screen
Athletic Tape	Gauze	Antibiotic Tape
Q-Tips/Cotton Swabs	Antibiotic Ointment	Sting Kill
Safety Pins	Tweezers	Bug Spray
Cell Phone	4 Pairs of Rubber Gloves	Medical Release Form
	Towel	

**R.I.C.E. Principles:** You may have heard of the R.I.C.E. Principles for injuries. Below is an overview of the R.I.C.E. Principles for treating injuries:

**R-est:** Activity should be discontinued as soon as the pain or injury is noticed. Continued exercise may further aggravate the injury. The concept of “no pain, no gain” is replaced with “train, don’t strain; if stressed, get rest.” The rest should continue until symptoms of pain and injury subside.

**I-ce:** An ice pack should be applied immediately to a new injury. Ice decompresses

swelling and blood flow and reduces pain. Where there is swelling, application should be continued intermittently for 72 hours. Ice should never be applied directly to the skin and the maximum time for each pack application is 20 minutes. Using ice at bedtime is not necessary unless the pain interferes with sleeping.

**C-ompression:** Initially, a wet wrap can be applied to give compression. Start distal (i.e. farthest from a point of reference) to the injury and wrap toward the heart. Later, an elastic bandage can be used. It should be wrapped firmly, but not tightly enough to cut off circulation around the injured area. During the early stages when swelling is severe, the wrap should be loosened every half hour, then reapplied. Compression reduces swelling and blood pooling. Compression at bedtime is not necessary unless the pain interferes with sleeping.

**E-levation:** Elevate the injured part so that it is higher than the heart at all times initially (including during sleep) and whenever possible until swelling has subsided. In this way, gravity prevents pooling of blood and other fluids. See a physician immediately following any major injury.

**Heat Related Injuries:** When playing summer outdoor sports such as softball, precautions should be taken to avoid heat injuries. Heat exhaustion and heat stroke are two summer afflictions to be aware of. Be aware that athletes are sensitive to the heat. Every player will have a different tolerance level so one person may be fine and the others may require attention even in the same conditions.

**Heat Exhaustion:** Heat related injuries like heat exhaustion and heat stroke are very serious and can be life-threatening. Softball is played outside during the heat of the summer and heat related injuries are always possible. Be alert to this.

**Signs and Symptoms of Heat Exhaustion:**

- Moist and clammy skin
- Pale skin color
- Normal body temperature
- Profuse sweating
- Dizziness, nausea, weakness and fainting

**Do:**

- Get the athlete out of the heat into a cool, shady area
- Loosen or remove clothing and take off helmet and/or hat
- Lie the athlete down and elevate feet
- Cool down the athlete with wet towels, ice water, air-conditioning
- Transport athlete to emergency room if athlete does not recover after a short rest

**Do Not:**

- Give athlete any more fluids if they vomit
- Allow athlete to become chilled
- Allow athlete back into the game or practice
- Take this problem lightly; call for help immediately if you are unsure

**Heat Stroke:** Heat stroke is life-threatening! The athlete's entire system is shutting down because of extreme heat, and death is possible if immediate action is not taken.

**Signs and Symptoms of Heat Stroke:**

- Hot, dry skin and body temperature is very high (104-105F)
- Rapid pulse and breathing
- Behavior may be irrational
- Athlete may lose consciousness
- Eye pupils are constricted (very small)
- Weak, loose muscles

**Do:**

- Cool athlete immediately and as fast as possible
- Call emergency help immediately
- Remove athlete from heat
- Put athlete in cold water, if possible

**Do Not:**

- Give the athletes fluids
- Leave the athlete
- Allow athlete back in the game or practice

Do not underestimate the dangers associated with heat and/or humidity. These dangers are recognizable and preventable. Be aware that each of your athletes has different heat tolerance levels, and be sensitive to these differences.

**The Most Important Nutrient - Water:** Water loss for an athlete can be critical and, in severe cases, can lead to death. Maintaining an adequate level of water in the body can be easy if the athlete understands the importance of water.

The body cools itself much like the cooling system of an automobile. As muscles produce the energy needed for training and competition, they generate heat. This heat, in turn, causes body temperature to rise. Blood picks up heat from the muscles and carries it to the skin's surface where it is lost as sweat evaporates. Sweat is the body's main

method of cooling itself.

As you sweat, you lose water - water which must be replaced if you want to perform at your best. Losing as little as two or three percent of your weight via sweat can cause a decrease in concentration, coordination, strength and stamina. More importantly, if lost water is not replaced, your body begins to conserve water by slowing the sweating and thus, the cooling process. You must replace lost water.

Do not give your athletes salt tablets. Water will be pulled from the body to dilute the salt. If the team physician or trainer feels that additional salt is needed, it should be added to foods at meals or eaten in salty foods such as ham, chips or other snack foods.

### **ALWAYS BE AWARE OF FIELD CONDITIONS**

All participants in softball should be aware of their surroundings at all times. This includes both on and off the playing field. Prior to participating, each individual should review the playing field and surrounding area to be sure he/she is aware of hazards or dangers so he/she can avoid them. For instance, each participant should follow these general principles:

- 1 Make yourself aware of any holes, depressions, raised sprinkler heads and other hazards.
- 2 Clear the infield of stones, pieces of glass, foreign objects and debris.
- 3 Check the field for equipment from other sports – football tackling sleds, portable soccer goals, little league baseball pegs, etc.
- 4 Position backstop to be sure it is the proper distance from home plate. Ensure that screening is secure with no sharp protruding edges.
- 5 Be sure all fences are in good repair and free of protruding hazards or sharp edges.
- 6 Be sure dugout areas are properly positioned and set back from the field of play.
- 7 Be aware of your property. If you park your car near a field, be aware of the risks of a foul ball or home run possibly doing damage to your car.

While events such as USA Softball National Championships are mostly played on well-manicured fields, recreational players often do not have such privileges. Therefore, you should always be aware that there will likely be various hazards present at local parks or playing fields. To prevent injury, make yourself aware of these hazards from the outset so you can avoid them. You should also make other participants aware of any hazards you observe.

Also, please be aware that non-hazardous field conditions may vary from field to field or from location to location. For instance, the types of bases used, warning track diameter, wall distance, wall material, heat, humidity storm activity, weather conditions, type of grass, sunken or level dugouts, on deck-circle location, obstructions and protrusions in or around the field of play (i.e. light poles, standpipes), fence height, etc. cetera. Be aware of your surroundings at all times by familiarizing yourself with your surroundings

prior to play.

### **USA SOFTBALL GUIDELINES FOR LIGHTNING SAFETY**

All individuals participating in or observing an outdoor softball event are responsible for their own safety and should monitor threatening weather conditions. Umpires are responsible for monitoring weather conditions with respect to games and will make the call to stop play, remove individuals from the field, and announce a warning to the spectators.

The umpire should keep an eye on weather conditions, including observing weather conditions. Storm watches or warnings known to the umpire should be heeded.

When the weather becomes dangerous, the umpire will announce that all play activities are suspended and all individuals, including players and spectators, should seek appropriate shelter. In instances where there is more than one umpire, any umpire may suspend a game when weather becomes dangerous. No place is absolutely safe from lightning threat; however, some places are safer than others. Large, enclosed structures (substantially constructed buildings) tend to be safer than smaller structures or open structures. In general, a fully enclosed vehicle with the windows rolled up tends to be safer than being outside so long as contact with metal surfaces inside and outside the vehicle is avoided.

The following areas are not appropriate shelter and should be avoided: Any area of higher elevation; wide-open areas such as sports fields, tall isolated objects such as flag poles, light poles, or trees; metal fences and metal bleachers, unprotected open buildings like dugouts, picnic pavilions, rain shelters and bus stops.

When determining whether or not to suspend play, the umpire should use his/her common sense and good judgment. If a thunderstorm appears imminent before or during an activity or contest (regardless of whether lightning is seen or thunder heard), postpone or suspend the activity until the hazard has passed. Signs of imminent thunderstorm activity are darkening clouds, high winds and thunder or lightning. Even storms that are many miles away can pose a lightning danger. This may mean the appropriate decision is to suspend activities even before the first sight of lightning or sound of thunder.

All individuals should have the right to leave an athletic site or activity in order to seek a safer structure or location if they feel they are in danger from impending lightning activity. Lightning Safety is the number one consideration. The activity, the completion of the game or the outcome of the game are all secondary.

Unless an advanced lightning detection device is in use, if activity has been suspended due to lightning, the umpire should wait at least 30 minutes after the last lightning flash or sound of thunder prior to resuming activity. Unless an advanced lightning detection device

is in use, each time additional lightning is observed or thunder is heard, the minimum 30-minute waiting period should be reset. A clear sky or lack of rainfall are not adequate indicators for resuming play. Unless an advanced lightning detection device is in use, the minimum 30-minute return-to-play waiting period should not be shortened. Play should not be resumed even after the 30 minute waiting period if any signs of thunderstorm activity remain in the area or if the weather forecast indicates the threat is not over.

NO LIGHTNING SAFETY GUIDELINES CAN GUARANTEE ABSOLUTE SAFETY. THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE STATES THAT EACH YEAR MORE THAN 400 PEOPLE ARE STRUCK BY LIGHTNING AND, ON AVERAGE, SEVENTY PEOPLE ARE KILLED EACH YEAR BY LIGHTNING. IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF EVERY PERSON TO BE AWARE OF WEATHER CONDITIONS AND TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION TO PREVENT OR MITIGATE THE RISKS OF WEATHER RELATED INJURIES. PLEASE USE COMMON SENSE AND GOOD JUDGMENT. PLAN AHEAD AND REMAIN AWARE OF YOUR SURROUNDINGS.

### **Lightning Safety At-A-Glance:**

- Lightning safety is the number one consideration; the activity can be made up later.
- The umpire(s) should monitor weather conditions and determine whether or not to suspend play.
- Signs of imminent thunderstorm activity are darkening clouds, high winds and thunder or lightning. Even storms that are many miles away can pose a lightning danger.
- When determining whether or not to suspend play, the umpire should use his/her common sense and good judgment.
- If a thunderstorm appears imminent before or during an activity or contest (regardless of whether lightning is seen or thunder heard), postpone or suspend the activity until the hazard has passed.
- No place is absolutely safe from lightning threat; however, some places are safer than others. Large, enclosed structures (substantially constructed buildings) tend to be safer than smaller structures or open structures.
- Unless an advanced lightning detection device is in use, if activity has been suspended due to lightning, the umpire should wait at least 30 minutes after the last lightning flash or sound of thunder prior to resuming activity. Unless an advanced lightning detection device is in use, each time additional lightning is observed or thunder is heard, the minimum 30-minute waiting period should be reset. A clear sky or lack of rainfall are not adequate indicators for resuming play.

- Unless an advanced lightning detection device is in use, the minimum 30-minute return-to-play waiting period should not be shortened.

Depending on the particular area in which you are located, there may be other weather-related risks such as tornado, earthquake, hurricane, flooding or other conditions. For more information about severe weather threats and tips, see publications available from the NOAA National Weather Service website ([www.nws.noaa.gov/om](http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om)) or visit the National Severe Storm Laboratory website (<http://www.nssl.noaa.gov>).

### **SEXUAL AND PHYSICAL ABUSE**

The sexual and physical abuse of children remains a societal problem that requires attention. While not specific to the sport of amateur softball, the threat of abuse in sports programs does exist. USA Softball is committed to creating and upholding traditions of excellence in softball by building and maintaining a supportive and nurturing environment in which children and youth may grow, develop, and prosper. To ensure such an environment, USA Softball seeks to attract the most qualified and enthusiastic staff and volunteers to assist in USA Softball programs. Whether the children involved in USA Softball programs are our own, or the children of others, each of us has a responsibility to protect them. It is the policy of USA Softball that there shall be no abuse, either physical, mental, emotional or sexual, of any participant involved in any of USA Softball's programs. USA Softball will not tolerate any abuse.

There is no such thing as a so-called “‘consensual’ sexual relationship with a minor.” Neither applicable law nor USA Softball recognize such relationships as ‘consensual’ relationships. All such relations with a minor constitute sexual abuse under the law and, therefore, will be treated by USA Softball and law enforcement authorities as sexual abuse. If you are aware of a ‘consensual’ sexual relationship between a minor and an adult, you must report it immediately to your local Child Protective Services (CPS) office. USA Softball takes all allegations of abuse very seriously, and USA Softball refers all allegations to the local or state law enforcement authorities for investigation in which USA Softball will fully cooperate.

**Reporting:** Local law enforcement authorities and other state agencies, including those responsible for Child Protective Services (CPS), have the primary responsibility in the field of child protection. Child Protective Services (CPS) is a program mandated by individual states for the protection of children who are alleged to be abused or neglected. The function of this program is to screen and investigate allegations, perform assessments of the children's safety and risk of harm, and evaluate the conditions that support or refute the allegations and need for intervention.

USA Softball is an amateur softball organization. USA Softball does not possess the expertise, power, authority or resources to investigate claims of abuse. Child Protective Services and local law enforcement are best suited and trained to investigate and pursue claims of abuse.

Those who believe they have identified an instance of child abuse or neglect shall report it to their local Child Protective Services (CPS) office, which will investigate the matter. A list of states with toll-free (800, 866, 877 or 888) phone numbers for reporting child abuse or neglect is available at [www.childwelfare.gov](http://www.childwelfare.gov). You may also report abuse and contact local authorities by calling the 24-hour Childhelp® USA National Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-4-A-CHILD (1-800-422-4453). Urgent or life threatening situations shall be reported immediately by calling “911.”

Additionally, persons known or believed to be a threat to USA Softball participants or youth should be reported to the U.S. Center for SafeSport and/or USA Softball so USA Softball can determine whether such persons should continue to be eligible to participate in USA Softball on a going forward basis. Please refer to the USA Softball Bylaws, available at [USASoftball.com](http://USASoftball.com), for the procedure by which such a complaint may be reported. Filing a complaint pursuant to the USA Softball Bylaws or pursuant to the SafeSport Code is not a substitute for notifying local authorities of an instance of child abuse or neglect. Those persons who believe they have identified an instance of child abuse or neglect must immediately report it to their local Child Protective Service (CPS) office or to local law enforcement authorities.

**Resources:** At <http://www.nsopr.gov/>, the U.S. Department of Justice maintains the Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender Public Website in which the public can search various sex offender registries.

Please note that the regular use of background checks is not a guarantee of a child's safety or that children will be free from harm. For instance, a background check will not detect a first time offender or a person using a false identity. Background checks may also not detect persons who have prior convictions in jurisdictions that do not maintain searchable databases or whose records contain typographical or other errors. As a result, background checks can not replace the need for all persons to be diligent, to be attentive, to take all abuse allegations seriously and/or to refer all allegations of abuse to law enforcement authorities.

The best source of information on the registered sex offenders in your community is quite often your local law enforcement authorities. Additional information and resources



are available at <https://uscenterforsafesport.org/>

**Zero Tolerance Policy Against Abuse:** We are committed to providing a safe environment for our members and participants, and to prevent abusive conduct in any form. Every member of this organization is responsible for protecting our participants and ensuring their safety and well-being while involved in sponsored activities.

### **Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies (M.A.A.P.P. policies)**

To that end, USA Softball has adopted the following Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies (M.A.A.P.P. policies), which are mandatory policies that its members are required to adhere to. They include the following:

1. One-on-One Interactions Policy, including meetings and individual training sessions (Covered Organizations are required to establish reasonable procedures to limit one on-one interactions, as set forth in federal law).
2. Massages and rubdowns Policy /athletic training modalities
3. Locker rooms and changing areas Policy
4. Social media and electronic communications Policy
5. Local travel Policy
6. Team travel Policy

USA Softball's mandatory M.A.A.P.P. policies are available for download or printing at <https://www.teamusa.org/USA-Softball/SafeSport>

Additionally, we have established the following guidelines of behavior and procedures for our staff, volunteers and participants. All members of this organization, as well as parents, spectators and other invitees are expected to observe and adhere to these guidelines.

- 1 Abuse of any kind is not permitted within our organization. This means we do not tolerate physical, sexual, emotional or verbal abuse or misconduct from our players, coaches, officials, volunteers, parents or spectators.
- 2 Physical and sexual abuse, including, but not limited to, striking, hitting, kicking, biting, indecent or wanton gesturing, lewd remarks, indecent exposure, unwanted physical contact, any form of sexual contact or inappropriate touching, are strictly prohibited within our organization.

- 3 Emotional abuse or verbal abuse is also prohibited. These include, but are not limited to such forms of abuse as: yelling, insulting, threatening, mocking, demeaning behavior, or making abusive statements in regard to a person's race, gender, religion, nationality/ethnicity, sex or age.
- 4 Every member of this organization is responsible for reporting any cases of questionable conduct or alleged mistreatment toward our members by any coach, official, volunteer, player, parent, sibling or spectator.
- 5 Buddy System for Players: We recommend that every activity sponsored by our program put a Buddy System in place. Each youth participant should be assigned a buddy during sponsored activities. No child should go anywhere – to the bathrooms, locker rooms, or other location – without his or her buddy.
- 6 Buddy System for Adults: To further protect our youth participants, as well as our coaches, officials and volunteers, two adults should always be present at every activity. In particular, we recommend that.
  - No adult person should allow him/herself to be alone with a child.
  - Do not drive alone with a child participant in the car.
  - Do not take a child alone to the locker room, bathrooms or any other private room
  - Provide one-on-one training or individual coaching only with the assistance of another adult.
  - If you must have a private conversation with a youth participant, do it within view of others, in the gym or on the field, not in a private office.
  - Coaches and other adult members of this organization should not socialize individually with participants outside of sponsored activities. This would include one-on-one social networking, emailing and texting. Coaches and other adult members of the organization should not nurture one-on-one relationships and/or participate in one-on-one texting, emailing or social networking relationships with individual participants. This would not include team-wide or group communications.
- 7 Supervision/Chaperone ratio: We recommend that for any sponsored activity, the ratio of adults to youth participants be 1:8 – one (or more) adults for every eight children, with a minimum of two adults for every activity.
- 8 When traveling overnight with youth participants, children should be paired up with other children of same gender and similar age group, with chaperones in separate but nearby rooms.

- 9** We encourage parents to become as active as possible in sponsored activities, games, practices and other events. The more the parents are involved, the less likely it is for abusive situations to develop.
- 10** Empower our children to trust their feelings and let them know that their concerns, fears and hopes are important by listening to them. Open communication between children and parents, or between children and other adults in the organization may help early warning signs of abuse to surface.
- 11** We will respond quickly to any and all allegations of abuse within this organization. This information will be communicated to the authorities for investigation and will be reviewed by the organization. The alleged offender will be notified of such allegations promptly.
- 12** Any person accused of sexual or physical abuse may be asked to resign voluntarily or may be suspended on an interim basis until the matter is resolved. In each case, the person accused will have an opportunity to be heard before a final decision concerning eligibility to participate is made by the organization. Regardless of criminal or civil guilt in the alleged abuse, the continued presence of the person could be detrimental to the reputation of the organization and could be harmful to the participants. A person who is accused but later cleared of charges, may apply to be reinstated within the organization. Reinstatement is not a right, and no guarantee is made that he or she will be reinstated to his/her former position.
- 13** We promote good sportsmanship throughout the organization and encourage qualities of mutual respect, courtesy and tolerance in all participants, coaches, officials and volunteers. We advocate building a strong self-image among the youth participants. Children with a strong self-image may be less likely targets for abuse; similarly, they may be less likely to abuse or bully others around them.

Traveling teams present an opportunity for abuse or an opportunity for a credible accusation of abuse to be made. We require local associations, leagues and teams to adopt and follow the M.A.A.P.P. policies concerning travel. These policies are designed to assist with the protection of adults and children and to clearly outline the conduct expected of participants. For further information, please consult the USOC SafeSport policies and informational materials at <https://uscenterforsafesport.org/>

## Signs and Symptoms of Possible Child Abuse

### Physical Abuse

- Unexplained bruises
- Unexplained cuts or scrapes
- Unexplained stomach injuries
- Fear of adults
- Withdrawn behavior
- Fear of parents
- Fear of going home

### Physical Neglect

- Underfed or constant hunger
- Unattended medical needs
- Constantly tired
- Constantly unclean

### Sexual Abuse

- Difficulty walking or sitting
- Poor peer relationships
- Stomachaches
- Sudden onset of behavior problems

### Emotional/psychological Abuse

- Speech problems
- Antisocial behavior
- Habit of sucking, biting or rocking
- Loss of appetite
- Learning difficulties

### Sex Offender Facts

- Sex offenders come from all walks of life, and from all socio-economic groups. They can be male or female, rich or poor, employed or unemployed, religious or non-religious, highly educated or uneducated or from any race.
- Usually non-violent and have few problems with the law (pedophiles are frequently respected community members).
- The suspect is known to the victim in over 80% of sex crimes. In other words, the suspect is a parent, relative, caregiver, neighbor, co-worker, or significant other.
- May seek employment or volunteer with programs involving children of the age of their preference.
- Strangers can be “good guys” or “bad guys” (this includes females). Persons known

to you or your children can be “good guys” or “bad guys” (again, this includes females).

- Sex offenders have great social skills. This is what enables them to gain the confidence and trust of not only the children but the parent.
- Sex crimes flourish in secrecy. Sex offenders have secretive lifestyles, and many of their sexual assaults are so well planned that they appear to occur without forethought. Many sex offenders are otherwise highly functioning people who use their social skills to commit their crimes.
- Many pedophiles seek out mothers or single parent families for the purpose of victimizing their children. They offer food, money and baby-sitting services – anything to be helpful and put them in a position to gain confidence and trust.
- Most sex offenders “groom” their victims prior to any sexual abuse. They play games with the children, take them to fun restaurants, to get ice cream, etc. They do whatever the child wants in order to gain confidence and trust.
- The single most effective means of protecting your child is communicating with your child. They have to feel comfortable discussing sensitive matters with you. If they don’t feel they can talk with you about their true feelings or that they will be “put down” for it, then you can’t expect they will tell you when they are put in an uncomfortable situation by a child molester.
- Teach your child that they should not be asked to touch anyone in the bathing suit areas of their body, or allow anyone to touch them in those areas. Teach them types of situations to avoid. It’s not good enough to tell a child to avoid strangers.
- Most child molestations are committed by someone known to or related to the child.

**INFORMATION RE: MANDATORY REPORTING OBLIGATIONS FOR SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE****RE: PROTECTING YOUNG VICTIMS FROM SEXUAL ABUSE AND SAFE SPORT AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2017 [FEDERAL LAW SIGNED ON FEB 14, 2018]**

On February 14, 2018, the Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017 was signed into law (the “Act”). The Act extended various mandatory child abuse reporting obligations to persons associated with national governing bodies (“NGB”)s and amateur sports organizations, as that term is defined in the Act. 34 U.S.C § 20341.

As a result of the Act, certain persons associated with amateur sports organizations or NGBs now have mandatory child abuse reporting obligations under federal law. In summary, if such persons learn “of facts that give reason to suspect that a child has suffered an incident of child abuse” (as ‘child abuse’ is defined in the Act), then that person must file a report with governmental authorities within 24 hours. A failure to do

so may result in criminal liability under federal law, including imprisonment for up to one (1) year and/or a fine.

The website <https://www.childwelfare.gov/> contains a web page that explains “How to Report”. It is found here: <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/responding/reporting/how/> That webpage maintains a list of agencies authorized to receive reports in each State. These appear to be the child protective services agencies for each state. A recent link to the list is as follows: [https://www.childwelfare.gov/orga nizations/?CWIGFunctionsaction=rols:main.dspList&rolType=Custom&RS\\_ID=%205](https://www.childwelfare.gov/orga%20nizations/?CWIGFunctionsaction=rols:main.dspList&rolType=Custom&RS_ID=%205) All state agencies have a hotline telephone number for reporting. Some permit online reporting through a website interface.

Again, whether mandatory reporting applies to you or not, please immediately report all suspicions of child abuse to governmental authorities for investigation and follow up by those authorities. That should be your first step. Other steps you may and should take include reporting your suspicions to the U.S. Center for SafeSport (<https://uscenterfor-safesport.org/>) and/or USA Softball for discipline or a determination of future eligibility to participate in USA Softball programs.

### **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS CONCERNING SAFESPORT AND THE USA SOFTBALL COMPLAINT AND DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES.**

#### **What types of conduct might subject a USA Softball Member to discipline and ineligibility?**

- Unsportsmanlike conduct.
- Physical violence, such as an attack on an umpire, tournament official or participant immediately preceding, during or immediately following a game or arising out of USA Softball Activities.
- Commission of fraud, such as playing under an assumed name, falsifying an affidavit or roster or giving false information to tournament officials.
- Participating when they do not meet the eligibility requirements of USA Softball.
- Knowingly competing with or against individuals or teams which are suspended from USA Softball play.
- Commission of any act while participating in USA Softball activities such as: failure to pay indebtedness, destruction of property, violation of state or local laws or any other acts that are contrary to the objectives and purposes of USA Softball or arising out of USA Softball Activities.
- Violation of USA Softball substance abuse policies and procedures.
- Forfeiting a game in championship play.
- Bullying, hazing, harassment, emotional misconduct, physical misconduct, and

sexual misconduct (including child sexual abuse and sexual harassment) as defined by the U.S. Center for SafeSport's SafeSport program at <https://uscenterforsafesport.org/>.

- Interference with any USA Softball Hearing Process as cited in the Bylaws.
- Other misconduct that reasonably calls into question the participants suitability to participate in the applicable activity. (as of Nov 2017)

### **What is the U.S. Center for SafeSport?**

The U.S. Center for SafeSport is an initiative started by the United States Olympic Committee whose mission is to make athlete well-being the centerpiece of sports participation. SafeSport requires that athletes participate in sports free from bullying, hazing, sexual misconduct or any form of physical or emotional abuse. The Center is headquartered in Denver, Colorado and administers complaints and imposes discipline on behalf of each National Governing Body of the United States Olympic Committee.

### **Who specifically is subject to the Jurisdiction of the Center for SafeSport?**

Any person who qualifies under the definition of a "Participant" is subject to the jurisdiction of the Center for SafeSport.

"Participant" is defined in the SafeSport Code as follows:

Any individual who is seeking to be, currently is, or was at the time of the alleged SafeSport Code violation:

- a. A member or license holder of an NGB [national governing body], LAO [Local Affiliated Organization] or USOC [United States Olympic Committee]
- b. An employee of an NGB, LAO, or USOC
- c. Within the governance or disciplinary jurisdiction of an NGB, LAO or USOC
- d. Authorized approved, or appointed by an NGB, LAO, or USOC to have regular contact with Minor Athletes.

(SafeSport Code, eff. 4/15/2019, notes omitted). The USOC is now known as the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC). NGB is defined as a National Governing Body of the USOC, of which USA Softball is a national governing body for the sport of amateur softball.

LAO is defined in the SafeSport Code as a Local Affiliated Organization, which is defined as a regional, state or local club or organization that is directly affiliated with an NGB or that is affiliated with an NGB by its direct affiliation with a regional or state affiliate of said NGB. LAO does not include a regional state or local club or organization that is only a member of a National Member Organization of an NGB.

**What types of disciplinary complaints are administered by the Center for SafeSport and what types of disciplinary complaints are administered by USA Softball?**

The Center for SafeSport has the exclusive jurisdiction to investigate and resolve allegations that a Participant has engaged in one or more of the following:

1. Sexual Misconduct;
2. Criminal Charges or Dispositions involving Child Abuse or Sexual Misconduct;
3. Misconduct related to reporting, where the underlying allegation involves child abuse or sexual misconduct;
4. Aiding and Abetting, when it relates to the Center for SafeSport's process;
5. Misconduct related to the Center for SafeSport's process; and
6. Other Inappropriate Conduct (as defined in the SafeSport Code, and including )

**Unless specifically instructed otherwise by the Center for SafeSport, USA Softball will generally investigate, administer and resolve allegations that a member engaged in one or more of the following:**

1. Non-Sexual Child Abuse;
2. Emotional and physical misconduct
3. Bullying
4. Hazing
5. Non-Sexual Harassment;
6. Criminal Charges or Dispositions not involving Child Abuse or Sexual Misconduct;
7. Violations of the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies, or other proactive policy violations.

**How does a person file a Disciplinary Complaint with the Center for SafeSport?**

Form and Manner of SafeSport Sexual Misconduct Disciplinary Complaints. For Disciplinary Complaints involving "Sexual Misconduct or "Other Inappropriate Conduct" against by a "Participant" (as those term is defined in the SafeSport Code), Complaints shall be made directly to SafeSport pursuant to the SafeSport rules and procedures at <https://uscenterforsafesport.org/>. To the extent a Disciplinary Complaint alleges any form of "Sexual Misconduct" or "Other Inappropriate Conduct", it will be administered by the U.S. Center for SafeSport of Denver, Colorado (<https://uscenterforsafesport.org/>) and, in lieu of reporting to USA Softball, should be reported directly to the U.S. Center for SafeSport by calling (720) 524-5640 (M-F 8am-5pm MT) or online at <https://uscenterforsafesport.org/>. The U.S. Center For SafeSport administers its investigations, complaints and discipline pursuant to its own procedures and SafeSport Code, which can be found at <https://uscenterforsafesport.org/>

Is Reporting Mandatory? Yes, Adult Participants are REQUIRED to report suspected sexual misconduct to the U.S. Center for SafeSport and also may be required under



federal law to report such suspicions to law enforcement or child protective services. A failure to timely report may result in being charged under federal criminal statutes and/or subject the person to discipline by the U.S. Center for SafeSport.

### **What procedures govern Complaints and Discipline not administered by the Center for SafeSport?**

All non-SafeSport disciplinary complaints (including non-sexual hazing, harassment bullying, physical misconduct, emotional misconduct) will be administered by the USA Softball Local Association Commissioner for the area in which the offending conduct occurred, in accordance with the procedures and rules outlined in Article 15 of the By-laws of USA Softball at <https://www.teamusa.org/usa-softball/about-usa-sb/governance>

USA Softball requires all persons to immediately report any suspicions of child abuse to local law enforcement, Child Protective Services agencies, and/or the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Additional information and resources, including Awareness and Prevention Resources are available at: <https://uscenterforsafesport.org/>

<b>Requirements</b>	<b>USAS Board of Directors and Staff</b>	<b>Adults in J.O. Youth Program</b>	<b>Adult Participants</b>
Background Check Through PYS	X	X	
Background Check Through NCSI	X		
SafeSport Training and Regular Refresher	X	X	
Adherence to M.A.A.P.P.	X	X	
Centralized US Center for SafeSport Disciplinary Complaint Adjudication for Sexual Misconduct and Other Inappropriate Conduct	X	X	X

### **CARDIOPULMONARY RESCUSITATION (CPR)**

CPR is a specialized skill to endeavor to revive victims of cardiac arrest (no breathing, no pulse). CPR training is regularly available by certified instructors trained by the American Red Cross, American Heart Association and other organizations. Traditionally, CPR includes clearing the air passage, mouth-to-mouth breathing and chest-compressions. Recent studies and advisories suggest that untrained bystander-rescuers should be

encouraged to provide compression-only CPR (a/k/a hands-only CPR) if they are unable or unwilling to provide mouth-to-mouth breathing, although the best method of CPR is still compressions coordinated with mouth-to-mouth breathing.

Being trained in CPR is an invaluable skill not only in connection with softball but also in connection with your workplace environment, your family, and your everyday life. USA Softball has no particular expertise in this area but everyone is encouraged to become familiar with these issues and/or certified in CPR. For more information:

- Please visit [www.americanheart.org/handsonlycpr](http://www.americanheart.org/handsonlycpr) to learn more about Hands-Only CPR.
- Please visit: [www.americanheart.org/cpr](http://www.americanheart.org/cpr) to learn more about conventional CPR or to find a CPR class near you.

<sup>1</sup> Source: Sayre, M.R., et al. "Hands-Only (Compression-Only) Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation: A Call to Action for Bystander Response to Adults Who Experience Out-of-Hospital Sudden Cardiac Arrest. A Science Advisory for the Public From the American Heart Association Emergency Cardiovascular, March 31, 2008 © 2008 American Heart Association, Inc. <http://circ.ahajournals.org/cgi/content/full/117/16/2162>

### **A GUIDE TO CRISIS MANAGEMENT FOR USA SOFTBALL**

The headlines seem to come with increasing frequency. Child severely injured sliding into home plate...lightning strikes player in the outfield...fight breaks out after game. As a youth-serving professional, would you and your staff know what to do if something terrible were to happen? How would you and your staff react to an unexpected life-threatening, chaotic and emotionally charged situation?

While it is impossible to anticipate every event, you can develop a framework for responding to crises that may increase the likelihood of a good outcome.

The purpose of this section is to provide you with the tools and critical thinking skills which you can use to help you make the best decisions when you are challenged by circumstances beyond your immediate control.

If you already have a crisis plan in place, use this guide to refine or reaffirm what you have developed. If you don't have a plan, we hope that you will use this outline as a starting point. In either instance, share your plan and crisis management information with your coaches. Educate them. Practice.

Just don't wait for a crisis to happen before you begin figuring out what to do.

**What is a crisis?** When asked to define "crisis," most people would respond by describing

a cataclysmic event, like a tornado, hurricane, medical emergency or an emotionally trying situation. Because the experience of a crisis is highly individualized, what represents a crisis for one person may not be experienced as a crisis by someone else.

When a crisis has occurred, we are faced with incomprehensible uncertainty. We don't know what lies ahead. The aftermath might include serious injury, loss of life, damage to property and reputation, or litigation.

No two people will define "crisis" in the same way. It may help, however, to keep the following in mind:

- A crisis is an unstable or crucial time or state of affairs, an emotionally significant event, a radical change in the status of a person's life due to bodily injury or death, or a serious endangerment to property in which a decisive change for better or worse is impending.
- In crisis situations, it is obvious or highly likely that a third party (such as the police, medical personnel, or an insurance company) will be involved in some way.

**Before the Crisis:** Preparation is the key to effective crisis management. The best time to think about how to handle a potential situation is well before it happens. Setting aside "Think Time" now to outline a crisis management plan may increase the likelihood of a positive outcome and minimize "Response Time" after a crisis has occurred. We urge you to put together a kit that contains these guidelines and other materials you may need in a crisis.

Call your local emergency management agency (EMA) to identify potential natural and man-made disasters that may affect your area. Once you have identified potential exposures, arrange a meeting with your EMA for additional suggestions that will help make your crisis management responses more specific to the disasters that may occur in your area.

Remember, in addition to preserving life and health, your crisis management plan should also protect your organizational structure and operations, personnel, and services you provide. Consider storing duplicate business records in a secured, offsite location. Review your plan at least once a year with your coaches and volunteers, so it is practiced and current.

**Responding to a Crisis:** As you develop your crisis management plan, design your communications strategy. You may need to communicate while the crisis is happening. For example, you have just become aware of an allegation of molestation in the locker room. Developing a code word or signal ahead of time and using it when a crisis occurs will let your coaches know it's time to implement the crisis management plan. Immediately following the event, the steps you take should be responsive in nature.

Planned, practiced actions can help you avoid chaos and lower the risk of additional negative consequences.

During the first few minutes, concentrate on gathering accurate, concise information. This information will help you respond immediately and eliminate confusion later.

Realize that things are likely to happen rapidly and often simultaneously. Stay focused, but flexible when carrying out the first steps of your plan. You may need to change the order of the following actions.

### Action Steps

- 1 Find Out:** Find out and record exactly what happened; which individuals were involved; and their current location, present condition, and immediate needs. Note any actions that have been taken so far. Ascertain who was in charge or supervising when the incident occurred, and determine who is in charge now. Assess which resources you now have available, which outside resources may be called in, and how such assistance will be delivered. Document the facts as you learn them. Keep a notebook and pen or pencil in your crisis response kit.

#### Essential facts checklist

- What happened?
- Who was involved?
- Where are they now?
- What is their present condition?
- What action has been taken so far?
- Who was supervising/coaching?
- Who is in charge?
- What internal resources are available?
- What outside resources are needed?
- How will assistance be delivered?
- When did the incident occur?

As you get the facts about what happened or is still happening, it's important to determine if the crisis is life threatening or not. If you are faced with an encroachment of a life-threatening situation, you may need to take immediate action before you contact emergency services.

- 2 Call Emergency Services:** Equipped with facts, call 911 or the appropriate emergency services. Telephone numbers to emergency services should be prominently maintained in your coaching manuals, and kept in cell phones so that they can be

accessed quickly and easily. Always carry directions to the ball field where you are playing. In a crisis, it may be difficult to provide precise directions to emergency personnel. Consider adding a fully-charged cellular telephone, with telephone number clearly posted on it, to your crisis response kit. This way, if no telephone services are available, you may still be able to communicate.

Calls made at this time should be kept to an absolute minimum. Limit your calls to the following:

**Emergency Medical Services:** Describe the situation accurately and quickly. The facts you have gathered will help you to respond to the dispatcher's questions and increase the likelihood of a prompt and proper response. Remember to ask relevant questions. For example, if children or adults have been injured, find out what actions should be taken before the emergency medical personnel arrive.

We recommend having one or more coaches certified in CPR and First Aid on the premises at all times.

**Fire Department:** You may need to alert the fire department, even if there is no evidence of fire. There may be unknown hazards present—gas leaks, hazardous chemical spills, for example—that the fire department can identify and remedy.

**Police Department:** If a crime has occurred, notify the police immediately. The police can also be helpful in securing and controlling access to the area.

Special circumstances may require calls to other authorities or agencies. For instance, call the Poison Control Center if you suspect that a child or adult has ingested a harmful substance. If you suspect that a child is missing, immediately call the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. The Center can mobilize resources and coordinate a search with the FBI and local authorities. Keep in mind that the first minutes and hours after a child is suspected missing are often the most important in obtaining a successful recovery.

- 3 Stabilize the Situation:** With help on the way, your attention can be directed to stabilizing the situation. You can accomplish this by accounting for those involved, assessing their condition, removing everyone from further harm, and controlling the activity at the scene.

When you develop your plan, identify individuals who can act as “greeters.” Greeters help monitor the flow of traffic, keep unauthorized individuals out of the crisis area, and direct press inquiries to a designated spokesperson. The individuals you select for this role should be diplomatic but authoritative, articulate, and level-headed. Greet-

ers also need to be well versed on your crisis management plan. Provide them with brief, bullet points of information about how the media can contact the designated spokesperson, as well as how, when, and where parents can retrieve their children.

As soon as possible, disperse these greeters to strategic areas (entrances, exits) with appropriate instructions. When something terrible happens, people who want to help, onlookers, media and less well-intentioned people often flock to the site.

Account for all individuals involved. In the confusion of the moment, it may be difficult to remember everyone's name. A current roster and list of players and volunteers should be placed in your crisis response kit. Consider making a duplicate of your sign in sheet, and periodically placing the duplicate in your crisis response kit.

**Checklist for Stabilization**

- Deal with hazards in the area.
- Disperse greeters.
- Account for individuals; gather in a central location.
- Attend to the needs of the injured.
- Look for additional injuries.
- Attend to the needs of the non-injured.
- Assign a coach or trusted parent volunteer to care for the uninjured children.
- Preserve everything involved in the incident.

Immediately attend to the needs of those people who are obviously injured, and search for others who may have been injured. Administer care following the instructions you receive from Emergency Services. After injured individuals have been cared for or placed in the care of a qualified person such as an EMT, turn your attention to the non-injured individuals who may have witnessed the event.

If possible, gather the non-injured individuals in a centralized location. This area should be free from hazards and access should be restricted. Use barriers if they are available, and station a greeter at the entrance and exit to the area.

Assign an adequate number of staff members to care for the uninjured children. It is important to maintain a balance between the demands of the crisis and the need for continuity of everyday activities. Children should be closely observed. Some children may seem to be okay, even though they may be hurt or deeply affected by the incident. Sometimes the crisis will elicit memories of earlier trauma. Watch for these "silent sufferers," and make sure that they receive appropriate care and attention.

In your crisis planning, consider using a, child care center, school, church or

synagogue as a possible evacuation site. Make arrangements to use these facilities in advance, and store emergency supplies at these locations. If necessary, plan ahead for the safe transportation of the children in your care to these alternative emergency facilities.

Finally, preserve the integrity of the scene to the best of your ability. Some items can provide important forensic evidence for police, medical personnel, insurance companies and others. Restrict as much of the affected area and objects as circumstances allow.

- 4 Establish Crisis Headquarters:** Once the immediate pressure of the crisis has abated and the situation has been stabilized, organize crisis headquarters. Look for an area that is reasonably quiet and secluded. A calm atmosphere will allow for clear thinking and an opportunity to make phone calls without distraction. Scout possible locations in advance, and find at least one alternative that fits the bill.

Store emergency equipment and supplies in a pre-designated area or backpack so that they can be easily and rapidly moved into crisis headquarters. When headquarters is functional, take some time to think about a protocol for the phone calls you will make. A telephone protocol is a statement or script that you and designated staff can use to impart information about the crisis accurately and consistently. This procedure can help reduce speculation and contain the “emotional temperature.”

Set up a log for incoming and outgoing telephone calls. It's extremely important that you maintain a record of what has been communicated, with whom you spoke and when the conversation occurred. This log should be maintained until the crisis is completely resolved.

- 5 Contact Parents/Guardians of Children Involved:** Your first communication with the parents and guardians of children involved in the incident can be a very difficult task. At this point, take some time to think about what you want to communicate. Put yourself in a parent's place. How would you want someone to deliver this kind of news? What would you want to know? How might you react?

For now, focus on informing the parents and guardians of the children who have been directly involved — injured, harmed or adversely affected — in the crisis. Carefully compose a script for these conversations that provides the facts of the situation, and reflects your concern for the well-being of parents, guardians, and children. Offer to make arrangements for parents or guardians to travel to the hospital, your

facility or emergency location. Coordinate their arrival and arrange for suitable accommodations once they have arrived.

- 6 Mobilize the Crisis Team:** Your professional and business advisors, as well as community leaders and agencies, may be able to offer you assistance in responding to the aftermath of a crisis. Activate these resources now.

In assessing the range of care and supervision needed, consider the crisis' impact on each of the following groups:

- Individuals directly involved in the incident;
- those closely affected by the incident; and
- your community — other children, parents, guardians, volunteers, and others with whom you regularly interact.

Once you have an understanding of the kind of care you need, begin to plan the level of intervention that the situation requires. There are three levels of intervention to consider: the team's crisis response team; local community resources; and outside resources. Identify the areas in which you will need assistance. Seek clergy and mental health providers who have experience in responding to crises.

Each member of your team should have a clearly defined role. During implementation, coordinate the flow of information between team members.

Realize that children, other coaches and volunteers may show secondary effects of involvement in or having witnessed an incident. Keep track of everyone involved in the event, even if they withdraw from your program. Unexpressed anger, for example, can lead to an accumulation of resentment. Follow up with those involved and find out how they are doing.

- 7 Call Emergency Resources:** Contact the appropriate emergency resources to help with cleanup, repair, and continued management of the crisis. Your crisis response kit should contain a list of these resources, contact names and their office and emergency phone numbers. For your convenience, we have prepared a list of emergency resources and have supplied phone numbers for national resources such as the American Red Cross, the Center for Disease Control, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.



**Suggested Emergency Resources:**

<b>National:</b>	<b>Community:</b>	<b>Facility Specific:</b>
<b>American Red Cross</b> 1-800-REDCROSS	Animal Control Agency	Electrician
<b>Centers for Disease Control</b> 800-CDC-INFO Emergency Hotline 770-488-7100	Hospitals, local and regional	Equipment Rental Services
<b>Environmental Protection Agency</b> National Response Center 1-800-424-8802	Gas and Electric Company	Fire Equipment Service Company
<b>Child Protective Services/ Childhelp®</b> USA National Child Abuse Hotline at 800-4-A-CHILD (1-800-422-4453)	Health Departments, local and state	Food Service Vendors
<b>Poison Control Center Hotline</b> 800-222-1222	Telephone Company	Plumber
<b>FEMA/Department of Homeland Security</b> 1-800-621-FEMA (3362) DHS Citizen Line: 202-282-8000	Water Company	Transportation Services
	Family or Women's Shelter	Tree Care Specialist

- 8 Call Support Resources:** Establish relationships with advisors and community resources well in advance of a crisis so that they can be quickly mobilized if a crisis occurs. Identify people who have had specific experience in crisis response. When you solicit the assistance of these individuals, ask whether there will be a fee associated with their participation. Note this in your crisis response files, along with the day and after-hours telephone numbers for your contacts.

**Suggested support resources:**

- Insurance agent/company
- Appropriate USA Softball Officials
- Business partners/Board of Directors
- Attorney/law firm
- Neighboring schools, child care centers, camps
- Clergy
- Mental health professionals
- Physicians
- Professional associations
- Public relations advisors

- 9 Contact Other Parents/Guardians:** Contact the parents and guardians of those who were not directly involved in the incident, and tell them what has occurred. You can do this by telephone or letter, depending on the level of urgency required by the situation.

Begin your message by acknowledging that an incident has occurred. Assure parents that their child was not involved in the incident. Provide basic facts about the incident, but do not discuss details or identify individuals who were involved in the incident. Inform parents about the level of support that was or will be provided to their child.

Close by thanking the parents for their patience and understanding, and encourage them to contact you if they have any questions or concerns.

We suggest having your attorney review the notice prior to its release. Whether you communicate by phone or mail, keep a log of all telephone calls and correspondence received in response to your message. Maintain the log until the issue has been fully resolved.

- 10 Manage the Media:** Crises which involve children seem to attract a large amount of media attention. If your program experiences a crisis, you should expect that the media will become involved. How you handle the media can have a significant impact on your personal, your team and your organization's reputation.

Fortunately, there are steps you can take that may alleviate "bad press." Consider notifying media contacts after a crisis has occurred — before they contact you. Review all of the information that you plan to provide the media with your attorney before releasing it. Consider asking your attorney to be present when you speak with media representatives.

Make arrangements to meet with the press in one place, at one time. During this meeting, try to place the incident in a historical perspective. Describe your program, your overall safety record and business practices. Ask the media for balanced, not sensational, reporting of the incident. Provide them with the basic facts of the incident, avoid speculation and assigning blame. Do not release the names or any other personal information about the people involved in the event. Also, keep in mind that when meeting with the media, nothing is "off the record."

### **Post Incident Follow-Up**

- 11 Post Incident Actions:** In the weeks and months following the incident, carry out status checks with those persons involved, their families and others affected by the

incident. Similarly, contact members of your crisis response team. Ask them to help evaluate your response. Focus on what you could do better, and update your crisis response plan accordingly. Periodically check your crisis response supplies and kit, so that they are complete and up-to-date.

### **Crisis Response Kit**

- Notebooks, pencils, pens
- A cell phone/charged/extra battery/with number posted on phone
- Emergency services telephone numbers
- Current roster with medications & special needs
- Child profile kits
- List of coaches and volunteers
- List of emergency contact numbers for children & coaches
- List of emergency resources and telephone numbers
- List of support resources and telephone numbers
- List of media contacts
- Copy of crisis response plan
- Flashlight
- National Oceanographic & Atmospheric Administration weather radio (battery-operated)
- Blankets
- First aid kit
- Batteries
- Bottled water—at least a 24-hour supply
- Snacks
- Permission to treat/health forms
- Disposable camera with flash
- Current phone book
- Change for pay phones
- Whistles

**12 Organize Files and Prepare Reports:** During the course of the crisis, you will have compiled a great deal of information. Shortly afterward, you should organize the data you have collected. Make copies of your incident notes, telephone logs, prepared statements, etc., so that you can use this material in compiling reports you write or file.

Reports should be prepared and preserved in consultation with your attorney and insurance agent. These reports should be factual in content and should contain a description of everything that happened and how you and others responded. Do not release reports to anyone who is not specifically authorized by your attorney or others representing your interests. If you can, arrange face-to-face meetings with

investigators or confirm their identity with a third party.

Be sure to file all claims and incident reports with the appropriate authorities in a timely manner. These include medical, property, liability and workers' compensation insurance claims, reports to child welfare authorities, OSHA and other state/local regulatory agencies. Cooperate fully with any ongoing investigations conducted by the authorities.

#### **File and reports checklist**

- Incident notes
- Telephone logs
- Scripts and statements
- Correspondence
- Insurance claims
  - Accident Medical Insurance
  - Worker's Compensation
  - Liability
  - Property
- Reports
  - Child welfare agencies
  - OSHA
  - Health Department
  - State and local agencies
- Press clippings and videos of television coverage

### **THE IMPORTANCE OF "PLAN B"**

You awaken in the morning and discover that a power outage during the night has reset your alarm clock, causing you to oversleep.

- You're driving to a meeting and find yourself hopelessly stuck in traffic.
- Your plane arrives in Denver as planned, but your baggage is sent to Atlanta. It's midnight and you have a 10 am meeting with an important client.

**What do you do?** When confronted with obstacles or "what ifs," we're often challenged to come up with "Plan Bs."

In dealing with crisis, "Plan Bs" take on additional importance. People may not be able to perform the tasks they've been assigned; services expected may not be available; the situation may have aspects that were unanticipated.

When you review your crisis response plan, take time to develop and document "Plan Bs." Help your coaches and parent volunteers understand the multiple tasks or duties they may be asked to perform.

## TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

Throughout this process you have been attending to the needs of everyone. Do not neglect your own care. There are sources of support for you “inside” and “outside” your facility. Spend time with your staff and children in your care. Reconnect with your core beliefs (why and how you started coaching).

Take time for physical exercise and relaxation. Give yourself permission to participate in and enjoy everyday routines, as well as special events. Treat yourself with kindness. Be aware of, appreciate, and generate humor. Maintain involvement in professional and community activities.

Remember, none of us is alone. Avoid isolation. Spend time with friends. Don’t hesitate to develop a relationship with a mental health professional who can help you work through this difficult experience.

## ISSUES CONCERNING SOFTBALL PARTICIPATION WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS, INCLUDING PREGNANCY

Participants who have certain medical conditions, including pregnancy, may have heightened risks or may be susceptible to additional risks of injury from softball activities.

USA Softball has no particular medical expertise and therefore cannot advise participants as to the risks associated with their participation in softball with a particular medical condition or while pregnant.

Before deciding to proceed with participation in softball, (if the participant has not already done so), the participant should consult with a qualified medical professional concerning whether it is safe for him/her (and/or her unborn child) to continue participating in softball while pregnant or with said medical condition and, if so, the participant should consult with their doctor concerning how he/she should continue to participate and/or how long he/she should continue to participate.

Please be aware that there are risks and dangers associated with participation in softball while having a medical condition or while you are pregnant. Continued participation in softball during pregnancy poses risks to your health and well being and the health and well being of your unborn child. This Guide contains a copy of the Warning, Disclosure and Disclaimer contained in our organization’s governing documentation. As a result of your medical condition or pregnancy, there may be additional risks and dangers associated with your participation in softball activities and/or the existing risks and dangers may be heightened while your medical condition exists. For those who are pregnant, the existing, heightened and/or additional risks and dangers will apply not only to you but also to your unborn child.

Depending on the circumstances, you may be required to present a signed authorization from a qualified medical professional before being able to continue to participate.

To the extent you choose to take a temporary leave of absence from participation while you are pregnant or have a medical condition, upon your return, you will not be penalized in any manner by USA Softball as a result of your temporary leave of absence.

Please consider the above information and consult with your medical professionals concerning your continued participation in softball activities.

## CONCUSSIONS AWARENESS

### CDC Concussions Awareness — The Facts:

- A concussion is a brain injury.
- All concussions are serious.
- Most concussions occur without loss of consciousness.
- Concussions can occur in any sport or recreation activity.
- Recognition and proper response to concussions when they first occur can help prevent further injury or even death.

A bump, blow, or jolt to the head can cause a concussion, a type of traumatic brain injury (TBI). Concussions can also occur from a blow to the body that causes the head to move rapidly back and forth. Even a “ding,” “getting your bell rung,” or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious.

**Recognizing A Possible Concussion:** To help recognize a concussion, you should watch for and ask others to report the following two things among your athletes:

- A forceful bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body that results in rapid movement of the head.

**and**

- Any change in the athlete’s behavior, thinking, or physical functioning.

Athletes who experience one or more of the signs and symptoms listed below after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body should be kept out of play the day of the injury and until a health care professional, experienced in evaluating for concussion, says they are symptom-free and it’s OK to return to play.

### Signs Observed By Coaching Staff

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets an instruction
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent

- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes
- Can't recall events prior to hit or fall
- Can't recall events after hit or fall

**Symptoms Reported By Athlete**

- Headache or “pressure” in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light
- Sensitivity to noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Just not “feeling right” or is “feeling down”

**Danger Signs:** In rare cases, a dangerous blood clot may form on the brain in a person with a concussion and crowd the brain against the skull. An athlete should receive immediate medical attention if after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body s/he exhibits any of the following danger signs:

- One pupil larger than the other
- Is drowsy or cannot be awakened
- A headache that not only does not diminish, but gets worse
- Weakness, numbness, or decreased coordination
- Repeated vomiting or nausea
- Slurred speech
- Convulsions or seizures
- Cannot recognize people or places
- Becomes increasingly confused, restless, or agitated
- Has unusual behavior
- Loses consciousness (even a brief loss of consciousness should be taken seriously)

**When A Concussion Is Suspected:** If you suspect that an athlete has a concussion, implement your four-step action plan:

- 1 Remove the athlete from play. Look for signs and symptoms of a concussion if your athlete has experienced a bump or blow to the head or body. When in doubt, sit them out.

- 2 Ensure that the athlete is evaluated by a health care professional experienced in evaluating for concussion. Do not try to judge the severity of the injury yourself. Health care professionals have a number of methods that they can use to assess the severity of concussions. As a coach, recording the following information can help health care professionals in assessing the athlete after the injury:
  - Cause of the injury and force of the hit or blow to the head or body
  - Any loss of consciousness (passed out/knocked out) and if so, for how long
  - Any memory loss immediately following the injury
  - Any seizures immediately following the injury
  - Number of previous concussions (if any)
- 3 Inform the athlete's parents or guardians about the possible concussion and give them CDC's fact sheet on concussion. This fact sheet can help parents monitor the athlete for sign or symptoms that appear or get worse once the athlete is at home or returns to school.
- 4 Keep the athlete out of play the day of the injury and until a health care professional, experienced in evaluating for concussion, says s/he is symptom-free and it's OK to return to play. A repeat concussion that occurs before the brain recovers from the first—usually within a short period of time (hours, days, or weeks)—can slow recovery or increase the likelihood of having long-term problems. In rare cases, repeat concussions can result in edema (brain swelling), permanent brain damage, and even death.

**Get more information and educational resources on concussion, at:**  
**<https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/basics/index.html>**

*Please also familiarize yourself with and comply with any State or Local laws that govern concussion awareness, concussion education and training, concussion protocols and/or other legal requirements which may apply in your jurisdiction.*

*The above information was provided by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control. Also, please note that concussion awareness disclosures, protocols and requirements may be mandated by state or local law. Consult applicable laws for legal requirements. Also, take a free online training course on Concussion in Sports at [www.nfhslearn.com](http://www.nfhslearn.com).*



## AIR QUALITY AWARENESS

All persons, especially children, are at risk for health effects from exposure to wildfire smoke or poor air quality conditions. When participating in outdoor events, please be aware of air quality conditions that may adversely affect participants and take necessary precautions to minimize such risks.

A Wildfire Smoke Fact Sheet is available from the U.S. E.P.A. at:  
[https://www3.epa.gov/airnow/smoke\\_fires/protecting-children-from-wildfire-smoke-and-ash.pdf](https://www3.epa.gov/airnow/smoke_fires/protecting-children-from-wildfire-smoke-and-ash.pdf)

Current Air Quality information (Current AQI) is available online from the website [www.airnow.gov](http://www.airnow.gov) or your State's air quality agency website.