

## **TWO MAN MECHANICS**

### **Conventions used to designate players or locations**

UIC = Plate Umpire

BU = Base Umpire

F# = Number designating a fielder position (F1 = Pitcher)

#B = base (1B = first base)

HP = home plate

Pos A/B/C = Position A/B/C

R# = Runner and base

B = batter

BR = batter-runner

IF = Infield

OF = Outfield

AB = At Bat

### **Definitions**

#### The Box

- An imaginary area in the IF that is a 45 foot square with one corner at HP and the opposite corner at the mound.

#### Working lane

- The area on the IF grass running parallel with the baselines between first and second and second and third in which the BU moves while the defensive is playing a batted ball.

#### Sweet spot

- The area behind the mound that allows for excellent angles on all plays made at the bases. Secondary sweet spots are designated on each side of the mound.

#### A Play

- The course of action in which the defense attempts to put out a runner. Two things are required; the ball and a runner.

#### The "V"

- The area on the field between F7 and F9 in which the BU has catch/no catch responsibility. This area is specified on Page 5.

#### Rotation

- A specific change in position made by each umpire in response to the ball put in play.

#### Pressure

- This term derives from the movement of F3 or F4 while making a play on a batted ball which forces the BU to clear the area around POS A so as not to impede play.

#### Time Play

- The situation in which the possibility exists that a run may cross the plate close to or at the same time the third out of an inning is made on the bases.

**PREGAME**

- UIC should coordinate the meeting place with a phone call or email to BU prior to the game date and arrive at the game site 30 minutes before game time. If you are unfamiliar with the field and/or ground rules you should arrive earlier to walk the field together. This will enhance your authority and help shorten the plate meeting.
- Both umpires are responsible for contacting the athletic director of the school at least 3 days in advance of the game date to confirm their intention to work the game. This can be done via phone or email. Both are available on the Arbiter.
- Ten minutes before game time, be on the field together to check the equipment. One umpire should check the helmets while his partner checks the bats at each dugout. Do not socialize with the coaches and players. Do what you need to do, and leave the dugout. If possible, acquire the game balls at this time so as to make sure they are prepared for use before the game starts.
- Start the plate meeting five minutes before game time. UIC is in charge of the plate meeting. BU does not speak. Directly following the plate meeting the base umpire should jog out to position in shallow right field. In the event the UIC fails to address a previously agreed upon question about ground rules, etc., BU should mention it to UIC after the plate meeting so he can inform the coaches. BU should count warm-up pitches until UIC returns to home plate.

**POST GAME CONFERENCE**

- ALWAYS meet with your partner after the game to debrief. This does not have to last long. Plan ahead and know what to deal with before the game ends.

Items to consider for discussion:

- Be honest. Level with one another about the validity of tough calls and the possibility of faulty positioning.
- Coverage mistakes made during the game.
- Situations that occurred that drew the attention of the coach, i.e., disputed calls, weird plays, changed calls.
- If your partner is more experienced, ask him what he saw in your performance and how you could be more effective.
- If your partner is less experienced, discuss any mechanics or positioning that surprised him.

Use caution:

- Avoid criticism.
- Keep an open mind and control your ego.

**BEFORE GAME AND IN BETWEEN INNINGS**

Plate Umpire:

- Assume a position on the first or third base line just above the home plate circle. Take the baseline opposite from the team taking the field (team from the 1B dugout goes on defense, UIC moves to a spot on the 3B line).

- Count the warm-up pitches and be prepared to give F2 another ball when one gets past him. Observe warm-up pitches, dugouts and the on deck batter. Do not turn your back on the infield to take substitutes from a coach.
- You are the soul judge of the fitness of a baseball in the game. Should a well used ball be hard to see during the game or warm-up pitches replace it with an appropriate baseball (this most likely occurs as dusk envelops the field). Do not be timid in this situation as the lawyer for an injured player will establish your authority in this matter.

**PUTTING THE BALL IN PLAY.**

Three situations must be in place before the UIC makes the ball ready for play: F1 must be on the rubber; F2 is squatted in the catcher’s box; B is in his box and ready to hit. It never hurts to glance at your partner to make sure he is ready.

**Mechanics**

UIC stands behind F2 and snaps off a pointed index finger toward F1 announcing “PLAY”, loud enough for the infielders to hear.

**Frequency**

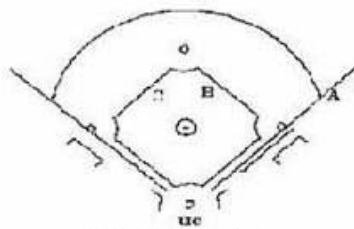
Must occur prior to the first batter of each half-inning and after every stoppage of play during an AB.

Make sure BU is in position and ready.

Since play is not stopped after base hits, fly ball outs, base on balls, etc, it is not necessary to put the ball in play for each new batter.

**Base Umpire:**

- Jog out to short right field. Do not worry about the ball unless it is adverse weather conditions.
- Jog to your first base position when the ball is thrown down. *Under no circumstances should BU be near a fence or bench area talking to bench personnel or people in the crowd.*
- Be aware of the UIC accepting substitutions at this time. If he is busy with a coach/coaches move into the infield dirt and count pitches until he finishes with the paperwork. Inform him of the number of warm-up pitches remaining with a finger gesture when he finishes with the paperwork and return to your position in right field. Although



Map of BU Positions

colder temperatures may influence this mechanic, you should not allow more than 5 warm-up pitches for a returning pitcher (8 for a substitute).

The adjacent map identifies the positions for the BU used at various times for specific situations. Pos A is used with no runners on base and is 10 to 12 feet behind F3 in foul territory. Pos B is used anytime there is a runner on first base only. Pos C is used in any situation with runners occupying bases other than first base only .

Revised Feb. 2008

### **NO RUNNERS ON BASE** **GROUND BALL TO INFIELD**

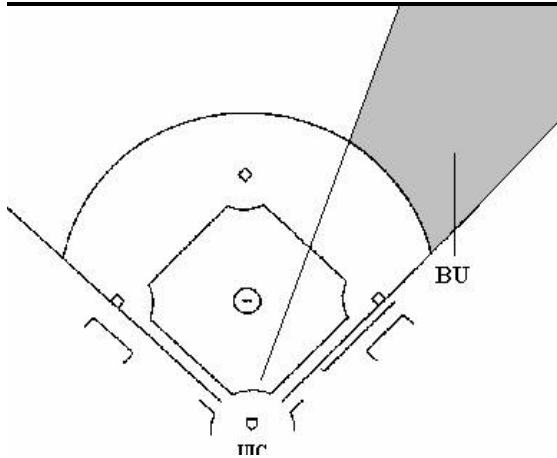
#### Plate Umpire:

- Ground ball to the infield you should get out from behind the catcher and trail the batter-runner up the line, striving to reach the 45 foot line before getting set. Be prepared to help the base umpire with a swipe tag or pulled foot. If BU requests your observation of the play, tell him what you saw and let him make the call.
- On an overthrow, you have the ball going into dead ball territory so move to a position that will allow you to observe the ball leaving the field of play
- You have fair/foul responsibilities on batted balls fielded or come to rest up to the front edge of 1B.

#### Base Umpire:

- Hustle from Pos A to a spot on the infield that will allow you to observe the runner's progress and the play of the ball. Typically, this will be a couple of steps into the infield close to the base line. Watch the release of the ball from the fielder, watch the runner hit the base and listen for the pop of the first baseman's glove.
- On an over throw, move onto the infield grass and be prepared to take the runner all the way to third.
- On a ground ball to F4 or F3 in which the play prevents you from entering the infield (pressure), stay out in foul territory to make the call at 1B. On an overthrow, be prepared to move quickly into the infield in so as to not interfere with the BR headed to 2B or back to 1B.
- You have fair/foul calls on any bounding ball that is hit beyond the front edge of 1B.

### **FLY BALL TO OUTFIELD OR BASE HIT**



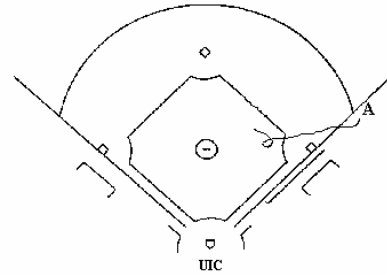
#### Plate Umpire:

- You have catch/no catch, fair/foul from the left field line to the right field line (when BU does not go out). Get out from behind F2 into to the infield (close to the mound) to develop an advantageous angle on the play of the ball. Always take your mask off to make a call on a ball batted to the outfield. Communicate with your partner as to the status of the play (“That’s an out, Tom.” or “The ball’s on the ground, Tom.”). On a fair/foul call, do not get too close to the play so as not to get blocked out.

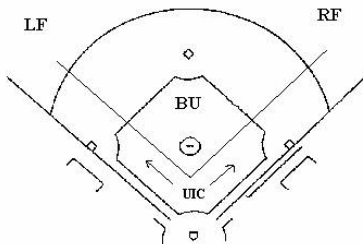
- If your partner goes out you have the batter-runner all the way around. If this batted ball results in a play at HP, make the call from the infield.

Base Umpire:

- Come inside the diamond and pivot. Watch the batter-runner touch first base and be prepared to take BR all the way to third.
- You should go out on any difficult catch by the right fielder or the center fielder moving in any direction other than towards the left fielder. Expect to go out on any fly ball to right or center that might involve a fair/foul call, a catch below the waist, or two fielders converging on the ball, or a possible home run. If you go out you should stay out. Don't return to cover home plate.



**FLY BALL COVERAGE IN THE 'V'**



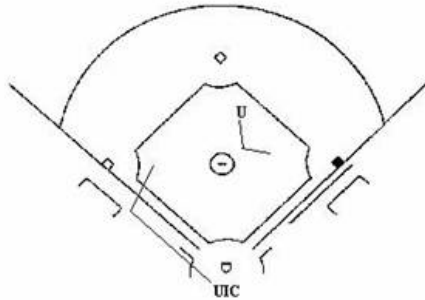
- The 'V' is the area from F7 to F9 (diagram to the left). BU will make calls on fly balls in this area when he is in the infield. UIC will call make calls on batted balls that approach the foul lines (from the 3B line to F7 or 1B line to F9).
- It is important to communicate who will make a call on balls hit to F7 or F9 that are on the boundary of the "V". Since UIC has the whole field in front of him, he should make the decision and communicate it to his partner in time for BU to react.

**ONE RUNNER ON BASE**

**FIRST BASE ONLY**

Plate Umpire:

- You have any fly ball hit from the left fielder to the line, and the right fielder to the line. *If you are taking the ball communicate that fact to your partner, so you are both not looking at the ball.*

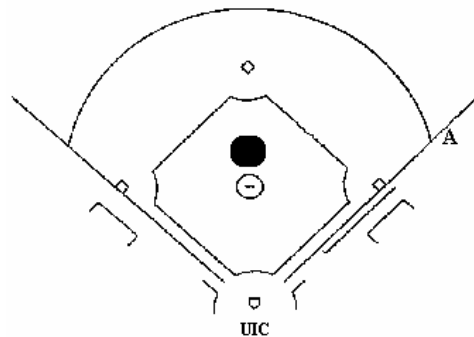


- On a ground ball to an infielder, get out from behind the catcher and be prepared for the interference call at second base on an attempted double play. If the fielder throws the ball to first the interference call belongs to you.
- If R1 is safe at second and they take off for third be prepared to take that runner into third base.

- On a base hit, start to rotate to third as a play on R1 at 3B is your responsibility. . You should start up the line in foul territory. *When both the runner and the ball are going to third enter the diamond, at about the cut out, to make the call.*
- On an overthrow at 3B, work inside the diamond and take the runner to home plate.

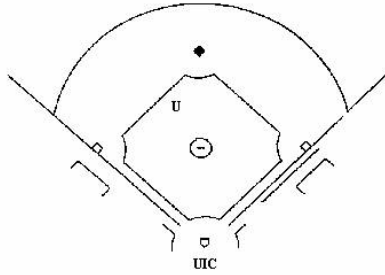
Base Umpire:

- You should start in Pos B.
- You have any fly ball hit in the “V”. Right fielder to the left fielder.
- On ground balls to the infield, be prepared for the double play. Move into the ‘sweet spot’ (as shown in the adjacent diagram) to observe the first play and fade toward 1B as the ball is released to 1B. In the event there is interference at 2B and the fielder does not throw the ball to 1B, the call belongs to you.
- On a base hit, watch runner touch second, and take a glance at BR touching first. Take the BR into 2B & 3B if he attempts to advance past 1B.
- If R1 attempts to advance all the way to third that is your call.



**SECOND BASE ONLY**

Plate Umpire:



for a play at HP.

- You have fly ball coverage from the right fielder and left fielder to the respective foul lines.
- On a ground ball to an infielder, watch R2 touch 3B and be prepared to help BU on a sweep tag or pulled foot at 1B.
- On a base hit or error by an infielder observe R2 touching 3B and stay home

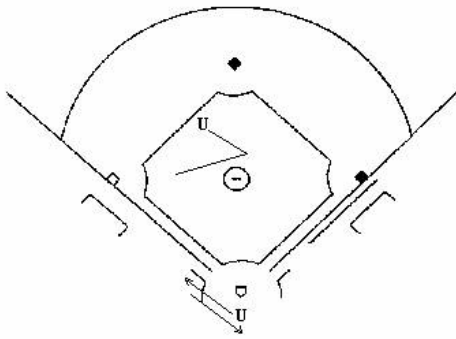
**Base Umpire:**

- You should start in Pos C.
- You have fly ball coverage in the “V”. Do not leave the infield.
- You have the tag up of the runner on 2<sup>nd</sup>, the touch of 1B by BR and the play into 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- On a ground ball to an infielder, you have the play at 1B and the return play at 3B should R2 attempt to advance.
- On a base hit you have the BR all the way to third and touches of all bases along the way.

**THIRD ONLY**

**Plate Umpire:**

- You have fly ball coverage from the right fielder and left fielder to either foul line.
- You have the tag of the runner at third. Move to get in best position to see the catch and the runner.
- On a ground ball to the infield, watch the BR up the line and observe the R3 touching home from 1B extended.
- Base hit stay home.
- Stay home during a run-down of BR. Be aware of the intention of R3 should the defense attempt to play on him.



**Base Umpire:**

- You should be in Pos C. Revised 2/08
- You have fly ball coverage in the “V”.
- On a base hit you have the BR all the way to third.
- You have responsibility for calling an attempted pick-off of R3.
- You have soul responsibility for a run-down involving BR between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>.

## MULTIPLE RUNNERS

### FIRST AND SECOND

Plate Umpire:

- Fly ball coverage from the left fielder and right fielder to either foul line. Communicate that you have the ball, so the BU knows he has the runners.
- You have the runner on 2<sup>nd</sup> into third if they tag after a caught ball in the outfield. Move up toward 3B in foul ground and come into the cut out when both the ball and the runner are coming into 3B.
- On a ground ball, get out from behind the catcher and be prepared to rule on interference on the front half of a double play.
- Observe runners touching third on a base hit and ground ball to an infielder and stay home for a play at the plate.

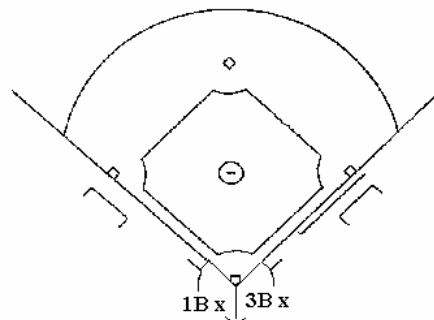
Base Umpire:

- You should be in Pos C.
- You have fly ball coverage in the “V”.
- You have the tag-up of the runner at 2<sup>nd</sup> and at 1<sup>st</sup> after catch in the outfield. Get best angle on runner at 2<sup>nd</sup> then look at runner at 1<sup>st</sup>. You have the runner coming into 2<sup>nd</sup> and plays at 3B, including attempted steals of that bag.
- On ground balls in the infield, be prepared for double play by moving into the sweet spot.
- Observe runners touching first and second bases on a base hit. Keep your eye on the ball and be prepared to rule on runners at any base.
- On a ball hit down the right field line that the Plate Umpire must rule fair/foul, catch/no catch he will not be able to come to third. *Communicate “I have the ball” In this case move to sweet spot and be aware that you have the call at either second or third.*

### SECOND AND THIRD

Plate Umpire:

- Fly ball coverage from right and left fielder to either foul line.
- You have the tag up of the runner at 3<sup>rd</sup> and the play at the plate. Be prepared to move to an appropriate angle to observe a catch in the OF and R3 tagging.
- Watch BR to first on ground ball but observe runner touching home (from 1<sup>st</sup> base line extended, as shown in the adjacent diagram).
- Stay home on a base hit. Observe runners touching third from 3<sup>rd</sup> base line extended.



**Base Umpire:**

- You should be in Pos C. Revised Feb. 2008
- You have fly ball coverage in the “V”.
  - You have the tag-up of the runner on 2<sup>nd</sup> and the play into third if R2 advances after a caught ball in the OF.
- Observe runners touching first and second on a base hit. Keep your eye on the ball and be prepared to rule on plays at any base.

**FIRST AND THIRD****Plate Umpire:**

- Fly ball coverage from right and left fielder to either foul line.
- You have the tag up of R3 and play at the plate.
- Get out from behind F2 on a ground ball as you have the interference call at 2<sup>nd</sup> base on the front end of a double play. Be aware of the runner coming home as there might be a play there.
- On a base hit, start to rotate to 3B but look back to observe R3 touching HP.
- Stay home during a run-down between 1B and 2B until R3 crosses HP.
- There may be a situation where the ball stays in the infield where you can go to third to help your partner. *You must communicate with your partner that you are covering third.*

**Base Umpire:**

- You should be in Pos C. Revised Feb. 2008
- You have fly ball coverage in the “V”.
- You have the tag up and advance of R1 on an out in the outfield.
- Be ready for the double play on a ground ball in the infield.
- On a base hit, take R1 into 2<sup>nd</sup> and observe runners touching 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> base.
- You have soul responsibility for a run-down involving R1 or BR between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- Possible exception with runners on first and third. If you feel you need to be in “B” to cover pickoff attempt at first, double play, or steal then in this situation it is allowed.

**BASES LOADED****Plate Umpire:**

- Fly ball coverage from the right and left fielder to either foul line.
- You have the tag up of R3 and the play at the plate.
- You have the interference call on the front end of a double play but remain aware of R3 advancing to HP.
- Base hit you are staying home. Read the play from behind HP and move into the most advantageous position to see the play (runner and ball).

**Base Umpire:**

- You should be in Pos C. Revised Feb. 2008
- You have fly ball coverage in the “V”.
- You have the tag up of R2 and R1 on an advance after a catch in the outfield. If R2 advances to 3B after an out in the outfield, do not forget about the possible advance of R1 during a play on R2. You have to read the play from the third base side of the mound. Do not over commit to 3B before or after a play there as it is a long way to 2B on a snap throw by F5 in an attempt to put out a following runner.
- On a ground ball, read the play from the sweet spot and be prepared to rule at any base.

**OBSERVING PLAYS AT THE PLATE**

Typical positioning for use in most situations;

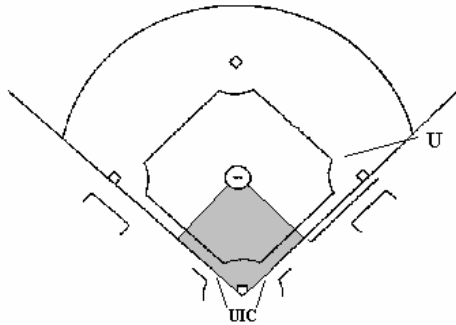
- When the ball is waiting for the runner, use 1B extended.
- When the ball and the runner will arrive together, use 3B extended.

**Hints;**

- Watch the play develop from behind the plate and move to the appropriate position based on the above generalities.
- Above all, choose a position that will allow you to see the ball and the runner. **DO NOT GET BLOCKED BY EITHER PLAYER.**
- Remain flexible! The play can change instantly as the result of a bad bounce or the runner changing direction. Be prepared to change your angle.
- Do not anticipate the call. Allow the play to finish before you make a call. If you lose sight of the ball and you saw an out, ask F2 to show you the ball.



## OTHER SITUATIONS



### BATTED BALL FIELDDED IN 'THE BOX'

The shaded portion of the adjacent diagram is an imaginary section of the field called 'The Box' (45 foot square). Batted balls fielded in this area require appreciably different mechanics than those specified previously in these instructions. Typically, this batted ball is a bunted ball, a 'Baltimore chop' or a 'dribbler'.

#### Plate Umpire:

- You have responsibility for the fair/foul call.
- When BU is in POS A and has to move into foul territory due to pressure from F4, you must follow the play into the IF to cover possible plays at 2B or 3B.
- With a runner approaching the plate, stay outside of the box to judge fair or foul and watch the touch of HP (or the play at the plate).
- Without runners advancing home, move out from behind the plate to observe the fielding of the ball and the advancing BR. This is the kind of play which requires you to judge interference by the BR running outside the running lane.

#### Base Umpire:

- When starting from Pos A, move quickly into the infield dirt to assume 90 degree angle on the play at 1B. Your best position will allow you to watch the ball enter F3's glove and see BR touch 1B. You have concurrent jurisdiction in judging BR interference but your partner has a better position to observe the play. When the ball is fielded by F3, be careful that your path into the infield does not interfere with F4 covering 1B. If you decide to stay in foul territory to cover this play you must be aware of the movement of the base coach as he urges the BR to hustle to 1B.
- When you start in the infield you already have a great angle on the play so you should move into the sweet spot for the call at 1B. This position will not compromise your angle on subsequent plays at other bases. A sweep tag of BR by F3 may require you to request help from your partner. Make the request before you make a call on the play at 1B by asking the UIC if he saw a tag prior to the runner touching 1B. He will say yes or no and you will make the call the corresponding safe or out call.

### COVERAGE OF POP UPS IN THE IF

#### Plate Umpire

- Cover all pop ups excluding those covered by BU when he is in POS A.

- With BU in the IF, and the ball will be played near either foul line, straddle the line so you will be in position to accurately judge fair/foul if the ball is dropped.
- When BU is in the IF, cover only those that bring F3 and F5 toward the respective foul line.
- Cover all pop ups in foul territory except those called by BU when F3 or F4 make an attempt behind 1B. When BU stays out on this pop up, move out from behind HP to cover the BR at all bases and HP. Communicate to BU, "I have the runner, Tom".
- Cover the tag up and advance to HP by R3

#### Base Umpire

- Cover all with no runners (start in POS A) and F3 or F4 fades back into the OF or down the foul line behind you. Stay 15 to 20 feet away from the play and in position to see the play on the ball. Do not allow the defensive player to get between you and the ball.
- On all those covered by UIC, hustle into the IF, pivot and carry BR to any base.
- You are responsible for all pop ups in 'the V' when your in POS B/C.
- Should there be a tag up and advance by R1 or R2, you must cover.

### **LINE DRIVES IN THE IF**

#### Plate Umpire

- With no runners on, cover all line drives except for F4 moving toward BU.
- With runners on base and BU in the IF, cover only those which take F3 or F5 toward the foul line.
- Cover all line drives caught by F1.

#### Base Umpire

- With no runners on , cover attempts by F4 moving to his left. This play is right in front of you.
- From POS B or C, cover all except for F3 and F5 moving toward the foul lines. Be patient and allow the fielder to make the call for you.

### **RUNDOWN COVERAGES**

- DO NOT get sucked into a rundown between 1B and HP. Call out the BR if tagged or he gets back to HP

#### Between 1B and 2B

#### Plate Umpire

- As the play is made on the runner, move up the first baseline in foul territory. Shift into the IF (at the 1B cut out) as the play moves toward 2B and announce to BU, "I've got this end, Tom".
- You make the call on the play if it is moving toward your position or if made at 1B.

### Base Umpire

- Stay in the 'working lane' and move with the play. **DO NOT GET TOO CLOSE TO THE PLAY.** You make the call if a play on the runner is made while it is moving toward you or at 2B.
- Do not try to stay up with the ball. Instead, strive to get an angle on the play so that neither player involved moves between you and the play on the runner.

### Between 2B and 3B

#### Plate Umpire

- Treat as you would at 1B in the above mechanics.
- Be prepared to cover HP from inside the IF on an over throw of 3B.

#### Base Umpire

- Treat as you would in the mechanics above.
- If there are multiple runners you are responsible for all plays on following runners so be careful not to stray too far away from the sweet spot.

### Between 3B and HP

#### Plate Umpire

- Stay in foul territory. Make a call on all plays if BU has not had time to move in to fill his spot from POS B.
- Be prepared to cover the play at HP. This will be the play that is hardest for you to get a good angle on as you are out in foul territory and do not have time to move to 3B extended. Be patient and allow the players to help you make the call.

#### Base Umpire

- From POS B/C or the sweet spot move into position at the 3B cut out as the play moves away from you. Announce to BU "I've got this end, Tom". Make a call on the play if the tag of the runner is made while the play is moving toward you or is made at 3B.
- If there are multiple runners you are responsible for all plays on following runners so be careful not to stray too far away from the sweet spot until another runner reaches 3B.

## **BUNT COVERAGES**

### No Runners

#### Plate Umpire

- Cover as you would on a batted ball in the IF.
- You have coverage of fair/foul situations.
- Watch for interference by the BR outside of the running lane and obstruction by F1 crossing in front of BR in the running lane.
- You make all calls on attempted plays on BR near the HP circle.
- Pay attention on sweep tags by F1 and F3 so as to accurately respond to BU if he needs help.

### Base Umpire

- When the ball is fielded in 'the box', hustle into the IF toward the corner of the cut out up the 2B line to make the call at 1B. Don't get caught flat footed as you will have to change your angle on a bad throw. If you get caught out of position on a sweep tag, ask UIC if he saw a tag then make the safe or out call.
- Be aware of F4 covering 1B if F3 moves in to field the bunt (pressure). Make this call from the foul side of 1B without getting too close to the play.
- If the bunt is fielded by F3 just outside the box, F1 will attempt the put out at 1B. Make this call from the same spot you would on a grounder fielded by an infielder (two steps into the IF dirt)

### One Runner

#### On 1B

### Plate Umpire

- Be prepared to make a fair/foul call then carry R1 to 3B if the first play is at 1B. Make this call from inside the IF.
- In the event of an overthrow at 3B you have the play at HP. Stay inside the IF and make the call at HP from near the HP cut out.

### Base Umpire

- You are responsible for all put out attempts of BR (except for those made by UIC near HP circle) and those of R1 at 2B. Be prepared to carry BR to all bases on an overthrow of 1B.

#### On 2B

### Plate Umpire

- Cover all fair/foul calls and plays at HP
- Stay home with R2 on base.

### Base Umpire

- Your responsibility is the first play in the infield.
- Cover all plays on the BR.

#### On 3B

### Plate Umpire

- Cover all fair/foul calls and plays at HP

### Base Umpire

- Your responsibility is the first play in the infield except for the play at HP.
- Cover all plays on the BR.

### Multiple Runners

### Plate Umpire

- You have all fair/foul calls and plays at HP.

- With R1 and R3, you cover the touch of HP and the advance of R1 to 3B as you would on a single. Remind BU of your coverage by announcing, “I’ve got 3<sup>rd</sup>, Tom”.

#### Base Umpire

- Cover any play at any base or tags of runners on base lines away from HP. The best position to read plays of this type is in the sweet spot, in case there are put out attempts at multiple bases.
- DO NOT attempt to get too close to the first play with multiple runners.

### **COMMUNICATIONS WITH PARTNER**

- Prior to an AB with men on base, UIC should initiate hand signals to specify his responsibilities in the event the ball is put in play. BU should respond in kind to indicate understanding. If the UIC has indicated an inappropriate cover for the situation, the BU should return the proper coverage signals. Do not argue with each other in this situation but discuss it at the next half inning.

#### Types:

##### Hand signals:

Used prior to an AB or after an advance of runners to specify rotation when the ball is put in play or request information from your partner.

##### Examples:

- Typical signals used prior to an AB with runners include the number of outs followed by the rotation of the UIC.
- In the IF fly situation the UIC shows the number of outs, followed by the IF signal, followed by (the rotation) pointing to HP (because he has to stay home in the event of a safe hit or error), followed by a point to 3B. This final signal means that in the event of a fly ball to deep CF/RF and an advance by R2 after the catch, UIC will cover the touch of or play at 3B.
- To request the count from your partner you should pat the top of your head and your partner will respond with a finger count and the number of outs.
- A foul tip signal is used to tell you partner (and other participants) that the ball is still alive.
- With two outs and a runner at 2B include a touch of your left wrist with your right hand (where your watch would be) to indicate a timing play.
- With two outs and two strikes and the batter swings at a pitch near the ground the UIC can get help from the BU to determine if the pitch was caught prior to touching the dirt by peeking in his direction before making a call. BU should hold his right fist near his right pants pocket if he saw a clean catch.

#### How and when to show the count and outs

##### Mechanics

- Always point your palms outward, arms extended with hands in front of your shoulders and slightly above.
- Use your: fist to designate no balls or strikes; index finger to show one ball/strike; index and middle finger to show two balls/strikes; middle, ring and little finger to show three balls.

- To show a full count, show three fingers on the left hand and 2 fingers on the right hand.
- Stand away from F2 and the batter to display the count to your partner (behind the empty batter's box) then move behind F2.
- To show the number of outs, extend your arm (typically the right arm) to the side at shoulder height with the appropriate fingers extended. Your palms should be facing your partner or player/coach requesting the information.
- If a coach requests the count between pitches, face him, show the count and announce it.

#### Frequency

- Signal the outs to your partner between AB's with runners on base along with the rotation. (To show rotation, point the index finger at your partner and scribe a small circle in the air)
- You must signal and verbalize the count during an AB after a stoppage of play (foul ball, a substitution, a time out, passed ball with no runners on and you give F2 another ball, etc.) prior to putting the ball in play. The announcement is for the benefit of the batter and F2. It should be loud enough for them to hear it as they are the only participants not watching the UIC. ("You guys ready? Three balls, two strikes. Here we go.", as you point to the pitcher indicating the ball is alive.)
- During an AB in which there is no stoppage of play, you must signal and announce a full count. It is also wise to announce the count as you show it for the benefit of the batter and catcher when it reaches the maximum number of balls or strikes prior to a walk or strike out. For example, no balls and two strikes or three balls and one strike or two balls and two strikes.

#### Verbal:

Verbal signals are used to specify position changes during play or changes in responsibilities during play.

#### Examples:

- With no runners on base and a fly ball to RF or that gap (in which the BU does not go out), the UIC can help BU by announcing the result of the play. The BU has his back to the play and is responsible for the touch at 1B. For example, "The ball is on the ground, Tom", lets the BU know he should be prepared to go to 2B with the BR or "We've got an out, Tom", lets him know to give up on the BR.
- The above technique is also appropriate when an error occurs in the OF with no runners on base.
- With less than two outs, R1 or R1/R2 (BU in the IF) and a fly ball hit to F7, F8 or the CF gap, the BU must judge catch/no catch and is responsible for tag ups at each base. Since the runners can leave base when the outfielder first touches the batted ball, UIC can assist the BU by announcing, "I've got your back, Tom". In this way he is telling everyone that he will watch R1 tag up, thus shifting the responsibility for that runner. UIC will make the call on an appeal at 1B (but not plays on R1 returning to that base).

### **PASSED BALL COVERAGE**

Plate Umpire;

- Cover plays at the plate and the ball leaving the field of play.
- Don't get too far away from HP with R3 on base on a pop up behind HP.

Base Umpire;

- You are responsible for plays at all bases.
- Respond in kind when UIC announces "Dead Ball!" so advancing runners will be aware.



**ONE MAN MECHANICS****KEY TO SUCCESS .... HUSTLE!**

- Game participants are less likely to be argumentative if you are hustling to the best positions to view plays.

**HELPFUL HINTS:**

- Sacrifice distance for angle. Don't try to get close to the play. The angle from which you view the play is more important than your proximity to the play. Most of your calls will be made from the front of the pitcher's mound.
- DO NOT remind the coaches at the beginning of the game that you are working by yourself. The situation is a game management handicap. Don't rub it in. You should not allow much complaining from coaches and players so long as you are hustling. Your best response to a whining coach is to remind him that you are working as hard as you can for him. Then walk back to the plate and continue the game.
- Usually when you brush the plate the ball remains alive. In this situation remember to call time when your back is to the IF and runners are on base.
- When the ball is put in play in fair territory and there are no runners in scoring position, hustle out from behind the plate toward the front of the mound to observe the play. Remember to stop your momentum before the play is made (angle before distance). In this case, the sweet spot is in front of the mound.
- When you have to judge fair/foul, stay on the line to make the judgment, then, hustle into the IF to observe a play by the defense.
- Remember this baseball mantra; Ball beats runner and the tag is down, call the out.
- DO NOT LOSE TRACK OF THE BALL. Don't turn your back to the players after calling a play. Chest the ball and follow it back to the mound.
- You can't call everything happening on the field when you're working alone. Consider the priorities for baseball situations; Fair/foul, catch/no catch, safe/out, runners touching bases, tag ups on fly balls, lead runner/following runners, interference/obstruction.
- Get to the game site earlier than usual so as to walk the field, check the equipment, pay attention to outfielder's arms; don't let them see you sweat. Behaving professionally prior to game time will help during the game.
- Be assertive with all of your calls. There is no one to back you up. SELL'EM ALL!