

NSA UMPIRE MANUAL

Updated: April 3, 2009

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SECTION I

NSA UMPIRE CODE OF ETHICS

DO'S AND DON'TS IN UMPIRING

NSA UMPIRE PHILOSOPHY

UMPIRE TECHNIQUES

RULES FOR GOOD UMPIRING

NATIONAL SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION UMPIRE CODE OF ETHICS

1. Study and understand the rules of the game, observe the work of other umpires and make an attempt to improve at all times.
2. Know and master the mechanics of umpiring.
3. Be prepared both physically and mentally to administer the game of softball in a professional manner at all times.
4. Dress and maintain your appearance in a manner befitting the dignity of the National Softball Association.
5. Honor all contracts and assignments regardless of possible inconvenience or financial loss.
6. Enforce the rules of the game being fair and unbiased in all your decisions. Render the rules without regard to the score or to a particular incident that may have arisen during the game.
7. Remember that while you work as an umpire, that you conduct yourself in a manner that keeps the game, players and yourself under control.
8. Exhibit proper and ethical behavior while interacting with players, coaches and spectators at games.
9. Be firm but never overbearing, courteous but not ungrateful, positive but never rude, dignified but never cocky, friendly but not companionable, most importantly calm by always being alert.
10. Give your complete cooperation and loyalty to the National Softball Association.
11. Cooperate and be professional in your association with your fellow umpires, doing nothing to cause them public embarrassment.
12. Make sure you are in good position with good angles making sure that all the plays that occur are covered properly by you and your partner.
13. Do not smoke or use foul or abusive language in the vicinity of the playing field, nor drink any alcoholic beverages on the day you are scheduled to work.
14. Use your knowledge and judgment to become the most consistent umpire that you can be.
15. Always leave the field together.

SOME DO'S AND DON'TS OF UMPIRING

DO'S

Be neat and clean in appearance.

Accept assignments with being on time.

Hustle and be alert on every play.

Meet with your partner/go over everything that you feel needs to be covered.

Have a pre-game conference with the coaches/introduce yourself and your partner.

Keep the game, players, and yourself under control. Keep the game moving.

Keep your eye on the ball.

Be fair and unbiased in your decisions.

Cooperate and be professional with your partner, do nothing to cause them embarrassment.

Keep your hands off the players and coaches, and never let them do the same to you.

Be receptive to questions or comments concerning close plays.

Be in position and get good angles in making all your calls.

Call balls fair or foul using the proper mechanics.

Know what must occur in plays involving interference, obstruction or collisions.

Ensure that all plays that occur are covered properly by you and your partner.

Look right at the player when making a close call.

Leave the field together and have a post-game conference.

DON'TS

Wear the wrong or dirty uniform.

Don't only work on days you feel good.

Be lazy at any time during the game.

Don't take the field unless you are mentally and physically ready.

Try to be the center of attention.

Joke around with players or coaches.
DON'T LOOK FOR TROUBLE.

Never lose sight of the ball – EVER.

Do not develop rabbit ears. Don't lose your composure or your cool.

Don't be overbearing, uncourteous, rude, undignified, cocky, bait or intimidate players.

Do not get in a shouting match with anyone on the field, dugout or the stands.

Ignore negative criticism until you hear something that merits ejection.

Don't make your calls too fast.

Don't make players wait or guess if the ball is fair or foul.

Don't stand still on pitched, batted or thrown balls, or get in the player's way or view.

Don't turn too quickly on double plays, and never walk from one position to another.

Don't ever look away from a close call.

Do not ever leave your partner(s) unprotected in any situation.

NATIONAL SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION UMPIRE PHILOSOPHY

The National Softball Association softball umpires comprise a large group of men and women who find great satisfaction in maintaining direct contact with a sport in which they love. Being a NSA umpire is considered a highly refined profession, honest and honorable and should be regarded as such by all NSA umpires and those who are contemplating entering into it. The ability of the NSA to make umpiring attractive enough to continue to command the interest of such people with a good personality, sincerity, and good judgment is a very important factor. To be of maximum service, these individuals must be fully informed of the purposes of policies of the NSA as exemplified by the work of the state, regional and national offices. The NSA was formed to afford teams a greater opportunity to play softball; so it is with umpiring, the NSA affords its umpires greater opportunity based on the individual's ability on the field.

Good umpiring is dependent on having plenty of courage and a thorough knowledge of the softball rules. Umpires must have a genuine sense of fair play, be strong both physically and mentally, have the utmost confidence and use diplomacy well. Most importantly, an umpire must be able to forgive and forget and be able to close the book after every game and make a new start with every future game. Most of the decisions on the field require immediate judgment and must be made so quickly that they come by reflex. The only way the proper reflexes can be perfected is through the continuing study of all possible rules so that the fundamentals and correct interpretations are always clearly in mind. Studying the rulebook each day for about 15 to 30 minutes, may be the best way to retain the information that you will need to know.

Tactfulness is a talent, which will pay dividends in umpiring. A diplomatic manner will often prevent ill will and resentment. Tactfulness encourages a cooperative attitude on the part of the players, coaches and spectators. Use of it goes a long way in creating a willingness to accept decisions.

Courtesy is the lubricant for good human relations. Sometimes umpires are afraid that politeness implies softness or politics. This is far from the truth. A polite umpire can be very strict and exacting. Cheerfulness and optimism tend to bring out the same qualities in the players. A good umpire will be courteous, but will avoid visiting with players during the game. The quickest way to lose respect as an umpire is to get the reputation of being a "horse trader". All umpiring actions should reflect strict and total impartiality.

Quick and positive decisions are essential, especially on the close ones. Timidity or hesitation causes a lack of confidence. Self-confidence can be developed. Many decisions can be questioned no matter how they are called. Hesitation in making a decision tends to make everyone waver. The practice of making unhesitated decisions must be habitual.

Loyalty to fellow umpires implies an active, intelligent desire to carry out the intent of the rules by a well-coordinated team. Each umpire must be willing to share the responsibility and must avoid attempts to shift the blame.

An umpire cannot be overly sensitive about criticism. If the umpire has a chip on his shoulder, a surly attitude, or a short temper, umpiring will be difficult. Most player comments during a heated contest are half in jest. It is often a rebellion against authority in general, rather than against an umpire in particular. Everyone connected with a team is somewhat biased and prejudiced in favor of any advantageous call and against any adverse decision.

It is not desirable to show-off in making a call. The umpire should remain in the background. It is not the umpire, but the game itself that is the attraction. An umpire should not be overbearing, but should not tolerate disrespect from any player. The umpire should not attempt to "coach" the players.

Arguments with a player, coach, or team representative will not settle anything. After a game, if a coach asks what happened on a certain play, your explanation should be to the extent of the conversation. An easy way to end the conversation is to say, "Well, coach, if it happened the way you said it did, I just missed it." Never argue with a player or coach and do not lose your temper.

An umpire must be physically fit to meet all the requirements of a long hot season especially when working several games a night. Hustle and energy have no substitutions. An umpire must cultivate the habit of moving quickly and being in position to observe all of the action. One extreme is wild purposeless running. The other is "standing on a dime" and making decisions at long range.

An umpire's word is his or her bond. If you accept a game, be there, and be on time. If there is any doubt, be there at the appointed time. Excuses are a poor substitute for not being there at the appointed time.

A courageous umpire will be quick to call plays when they occur. Do this consistently without regard to the score, position on the field, whom it may be against, or how it may affect future relations with the coach. Regardless of pressure from the coaches, players, or fans, the umpire must go straight down the middle and have the courage to call them as they occur. Your honesty must be above reproach or you would not be an umpire in the first place. It takes *real* courage to resist pressure and intimidation. To a large extent, the personal reputation of an umpire will be built on this.

Proper field coverage requires a good system of mechanics to ensure the umpires will be at the proper place on the field at all times. The movements must be such that the umpire is constantly in position to observe any action, which falls under his responsibilities. An umpire not in the proper position on the field has committed the "unpardonable sin" of umpiring.

Complete knowledge of the rules is essential. There is no substitute for rules study. The rules should be reviewed well before the opening of the season and this study should be continued up to the final game. Knowing all the phases of the rules at the end of the season is no guarantee that it will carry over to the next season. Discussion of situations in small groups is effective.

NSA UMPIRE TECHNIQUES

JUDGEMENT: May be the inherent factor. No provocation should cause an umpire to lose sight of the fact that his primary responsibility is to keep the game going and that an angry person is never the master of the situation. Your use of sound judgment in applying the rules to the given situation may even be more important than knowing the rules. Get clear in your mind as the game's enforcer of the rules that it is up to you to handle all the game situations by your interpretation of the rules and ensuring that those interpretations will provide fair competition for the teams involved. Through your experience, exercising self control, and using sound judgment will enable you to manage any situation that occurs enabling you to keep the game on schedule

TECHNIQUE: Lack of technique is the difference between the best of amateurs and any professional. The polished umpire is never caught out of position. Umpiring calls for complete attention and energy for the entire duration of the game. Hustle in essence is the application of the principles of good umpiring. Technique consists of being in the right place at the right time, making calls effectively, staying out of the way of the players, along with strict attention to detail. You can increase your reputation as a highly respected umpire if you can master where you need to be and hustling to get there. Remember that you cannot make a good call until the play has been completed. Someone once said, "Good umpires come to the ballpark to work and not to see the game."

KNOWLEDGE OF THE RULES: A working knowledge of the playing rules are expected of every official. Umpires should devote time reading and studying the rulebook; it will help you be more familiar with the rules and improve your reaction time in making calls. There is no point in committing the rules to memory as their common sense application is the stamp of a master of umpiring. The more games you work, the more competent you become in interpreting the rules and the given situations. Each umpire should always attend a yearly NSA clinic to keep abreast of the recent rule changes and the recommended interpretations of those rule changes.

PRE-GAME UMPIRE PREPARATION

Most important pre-game preparation is for you to confirm the date, site and game time of your scheduled game. As you meet with your partner(s) in the pre-game preparation make sure you at least discuss the following:

1. Any special tournament rules.
2. Go over any special ground rules.
3. Discuss foul/fair ball coverage and dead ball area coverage.
4. Base coverage; out-safe; tags; tag-up responsibility; leaving a base too soon; how appeals will be handled.
5. Legal/Illegal bat.
6. Pitching rules.
7. Communication between umpires.
8. Check equipment.
9. Discuss signals.
10. Appeal plays.
 - a. Appeal play is a play where an umpire cannot make a ruling, until a manager or player requests a decision.
 - b. There can be four possible appeal plays: 1) runner leaving a base too soon; 2) runner not touching each base in legal order; 3) using an illegal/non-approved bat or other improper equipment; and 4) batting out of turn.
 - c. In making an appeal a positive identification of the player and the base involved must be identified and the appeal must be made before the next legal/illegal pitch.

PREGAME MANAGERS MEETING

The most important thing is to realize that what you decide to cover and how you go about covering it will be crucial to how the game will be played. Know your ballpark. Arrive at least 30 minutes before the game enabling you to find out what the distinctive features are. Make sure the field is properly marked with the bases and pitching distances legal and in proper distance. Both umpires should walk the field and set the ground rules together. Discuss coverage and proper tag up calls with your partner. Both umpires need to agree on the signals to be used to assist in making calls. However, don't get caught up in just signaling to your partner(s). If a partner doesn't acknowledge a signal **VERBALIZE**. It's far better, to attract the attention of your partner(s) by vocalization than to let a play potentially go uncovered.

Remember it is also better to admit to your partner that you do not know or are unsure about a certain situation and would like to cover it more fully. It's certainly wiser to admit that you are unclear about something before the game than it is to admit that you do not know how to rule on a situation during the playing of the game. This may attract the player's attention as well, but will leave an impression on them that you and your partner(s) are on top of your game. Make sure you go over with your partner(s) on what you are going to cover in the pre-game manager's meeting. Then five minutes before game time meet with the coaches introducing yourself and your partner(s). Go over

ground rules, the batting order, official scorebook, starting time and time limit if applicable. Make sure during the meeting you and your partner are friendly, answer question(s) any of the coach's may have and most importantly be professional. Don't let this meeting become an umpiring clinic. Make sure that this meeting is short and handled professionally Wish everyone present good luck and PLAY BALL.

RESPONSIBILITIES DURING A GAME: Be neat in your appearance on the ball field; the first appearance makes a big impression to everyone at the park. Don't go out on the field with a chip on your shoulder because you can get more out of a player by being human and civil. Umpires should study and know the rules, and then you will be able to interpret them properly on the field. A thorough knowledge of the pitching rules is essential. Umpires are to judge plays and to preserve undeviating neutrality toward all the players. Umpires must decide all plays fairly and impartially and there his/her responsibility ceases. Avoid mingling with the players. Your sole duty is to umpire a ball game as the representative of the NSA. Keep in mind that your conduct and actions are for settling controversies and not in starting them. Give any rule interpretation quickly and courteously, but refrain from general conversation, and discussion of plays and players. Remember you are there to judge plays, not players. You are there to advertise yourself, your profession, the NSA and most of all the game itself.

THE PLATE UMPIRE: Will be involved in nearly every play in the game, dictating that you stay alert and hustle on every pitch. Your primary calls will include calling balls and strikes, illegal pitches, and appeals. Try and develop a rhythm and consistency to the game to keep it moving and exciting.

Don't take any guff from the catcher. Do not call balls and strikes too quickly. Follow the ball at all times, meaning keep your eyes on the ball at all times. Be sure that third base is covered in a run-down situation and be certain to cover third base when your partner is properly covering first and second base. Good plate technique can contribute to the players' enjoyment of the game.

THE FIELD UMPIRE: Watch all tag plays. Keep the players hustling at all times. Back up your partner on all rulings of fair or foul balls. Call with him on the infield fly. The plate umpire will make the majority of decisions. Your primary responsibility is first and second base. Be close enough to both plays on a double play, yet stay out of the fielder's way. IN THE DOUBLE PLAY situation since you cannot be on top of both calls, determine which call will be the closest, position yourself closest to that play. Be on your toes at all times, know where the ball is and who had it last. Be on the play at all times, work your angles on the bases. The proper angle will have the ball, the bag and the runner in view. Watch the tag on a slide; make sure the base is in view. In force outs, let the ball turn you toward the play. Remember; everything starts with the ball.

HANDLING OF ARGUMENTS AND GAME PROTESTED: The ordinary grounds for expulsion are well known to players and umpires alike, and any infraction of these results is an automatic expulsion for the players. Expulsion is the umpire's last means of punishment and should be used sparingly. It should never be applied unless a player is delaying the game or attempting to draw the crowd or his teammates upon the umpire. Umpires do not like a player seeking to shift responsibility for his own mistakes to the umpire. Umpires should never hear too much on the field. In fact, he should make it a point to hear only what the player intends for him to hear. Treat any protest upon its merits. Avoid any actions that may show up a player and never raise your voice so spectators can hear. It's a good rule for an umpire to guide his own actions by the actions he demands toward himself. Most importantly, never argue with spectators over any incidents. Remember you are there to umpire.

The ability of a NSA umpire to remain cool and calm in the face of a heated argument or controversy will be further proof of an accomplished NSA umpire. Some thoughts to keep in mind when facing adversity during a heated game/argument:

- 1) Listen to the complaints of the manager/coaches on disputed calls, being firm and calm through it.
- 2) Situations are often defused by letting the individual to air their feeling, usually resulting in a "cooling" off period making it easier to handle.
- 3) Making the individual "write up" a protest on exactly what occurred will usually cool off the situation.
- 4) Make sure you limit the time in listening to the controversy making it clear that you made the decision on what had occurred and order the game to be resumed.
- 5) If the game is not immediately resumed, eject the offending individual and then re-start the game. Always remember: Never remove a player unless its absolutely necessary to maintain order.
- 6) When an argument is started as a result of a rule being mis-interpreted consult with your partner(s) and if the decision was an incorrect one, make sure the proper umpire makes the correct call to avoid any protest of the game.

PROCEDURE AT END OF GAME: When the game is completed, the crew should always leave the field together. The game is officially over once all the umpires have left the field. A good rule of thumb to go by is for the crew to always exit through the winners' side of the field if no other exit is available. If there has been any flagrant irregularity associated with the game, report it at once to the proper people. When applicable, ALWAYS have a post-game conference between you and your partner(s). A good post-game conference may be the most beneficial aspect of umpiring, especially in the event that you and your partner(s) may have had a rough outing. No game is perfect; no aspect of umpiring is perfect, though sometimes you work an outstanding game. There is always some little something that you may

pick up in a good post-game conference. Sometimes a post-game conference can be done with a simple handshake, sometimes not. Get in the habit of talking to your partner(s) when the game is over about what just happened out there. A pat on the back if your partner has struggled sometimes goes a long way.

25 RULES FOR GOOD UMPIRING

- 1) Hustle; out hustle the players if possible.
- 2) Be neat and clean in appearance, and in the proper NSA uniform.
- 3) Whenever possible make decisions at a complete stop.
- 4) Keep the game moving.
- 5) Keep the game, the players and yourself under control.
- 6) Put some action in calling close plays. SELL THEM!
- 7) Wait until the play is over before making calls, especially on tags.
- 8) See that the runner(s) touch each base and home plate.
- 9) Be on top of all your plays.
- 10) Be as close as you can on all plays without being "too close" to see the whole play.
- 11) Keep your eye on the ball. Remember everything starts with the ball.
- 12) Call interference, obstruction, fair or foul balls with your partner.
- 13) Remember there is no such thing as a crucial game. All games are crucial from an umpiring viewpoint.
- 14) Look right at the play when making a call on a close play. See it, replay it, and then call it." Never look away from your call.
- 15) When you miss one (and you will) bear down and get the next one right. Never try to even them up.
- 16) Think ahead while on the field, it makes "The Art of Umpiring" easier.
- 17) Don't take the field unless you are mentally and physically ready to give the teams your best!
- 18) Watch the whole play until completion – you never know what is going to happen when your back is turned.
- 19) SELL SAFE/ OUT! On every call, work as hard as you can.
- 20) Start at least 15 feet beyond 1st and 3rd bases when working the bases. When the pitch starts, start moving inward towards the base. This enables you to get a moving start to get to the best position possible to see the play. Even if the play ends up being behind you and goes down the foul lines.
- 21) Move on all pitched, batted and thrown balls no matter what position that you begin at.
- 22) Don't turn too quickly on a double play, keep your eye on the ball and let the ball turn you. Interference or a dropped ball may occur and to call it you must see it!
- 23) Take positions that will keep you out of the player's view – check with the players when changing position – remember umpires are the players' greatest alibi.
- 24) Never walk from one position to another, hustle and the ball players will follow your example. No player likes to be out hustled by an umpire.
- 25) Leave the field with your partner(s). Remember the game officially ends when you and your partner(s) leave the playing field.

When it happens, it isn't anything; when you call it... Then that's it...

SECTION II

UMPIRE MECHANICS

PLATE UMPIRE

HOME PLATE MECHANICS

The home plate umpire must develop proper timing and rhythm in making decisions. Develop a certain rhythm in making all calls and that rhythm should not vary. Change only the emphasis of the various calls.

The plate umpire sets the tempo and controls the game. In order to do that, he must be in total control of himself, and developing a good sense of timing and rhythm does this. Good plate technique is essential to calling a good game.

NSA SLOW PITCH PLATE TECHNIQUES

- 1) You need to position yourself slightly to the right or left depending upon the batter, behind the catcher in order to determine whether the pitch is legally reaching a maximum height of ten (10) feet and not lower than six (6) feet.
- 2) Position yourself to see the plate and batter without being obstructed or interfering with the catcher.
- 3) Start in an upright position when the pitch is about to be delivered.
- 4) Drop to a SET position when you can determine the pitch is going to be legal and drop in a manner that is fluid and relaxed.
- 5) Do not make a call until the pitch crosses the plate or has been caught by the catcher.
- 6) In making the call, your first move is to step back with the left foot while coming up to a standing position.
- 7) In calling a pitch, move slightly toward the pitch to see where the pitch was located making a crisp call "BALL" or "STRIKE".
- 8) Raise your right hand above your head with an open hand, with your palm of your hand facing your right ear.
- 9) Make a brisk verbal call "STRIKE" as you drop your right arm to a 90-degree position while closing your right hand into a fist.
- 10) Drop your arms to your sides and relax between pitches awaiting your next call. NEVER take your eyes off the pitcher or the ball.
- 11) When the ball is hit always leave the home plate area to the left side of home plate and move into the infield.
- 12) Your mask should always be in your LEFT HAND when making a call.

NSA FAST PITCH PLATE TECHNIQUES

- 1) Assume a stance with a line of sight between the catcher and the pitcher.
- 2) Your inside ear should be lined-up with the inside of home plate (Position is known as being in the SLOT).
- 3) If you are in the proper SLOT you can see all of home plate, the batter's strike zone and the catcher can move without interference or obstructing your view.
- 4) Assume an up-right position waiting for the pitcher to pitch will help in keeping your muscles from getting too tight.
- 5) The toe of your foot that is closest to the batter should be almost even with the heels of the catcher.
- 6) The other foot should be behind the catcher with your toe on a line from the heel of your other foot.
- 7) Drop to a SET position when the batter is ready to receive the pitch, bending your knees and leaning forward at the waist keeping your back straight.
- 8) You must be in a SET position when the pitch is released and should never be moving when the ball is in flight.
- 9) Your line of sight must be clear between the batter and the inside of home plate. In order for you to have a clear view of home plate this is critical. Always have the batter's feet and hands in sight along with seeing home plate.
- 10) Your eyes should be even with the armpits of the batter and looking through the strike zone.
- 11) Do not make a call until the pitch crosses the plate or has been caught by the catcher.
- 12) In making the call, your first move is to step back with the "left foot while coming up to a standing position."
- 13) Raise your right hand above your head with the hand open. The palm of your hand should be facing the right ear.
- 14) Make a brisk verbal call "STRIKE" as you drop your right arm to a 90-degree position while closing your right hand into a closed fist.
- 15) Drop your arms to the sides and relax between pitches awaiting your next call. Never take your eyes off the pitcher or the ball.
- 16) In calling a ball, move slightly toward the pitch to see where the pitch was located.
- 17) Make a crisp verbal call, "BALL".
- 18) Your mask should always be in your LEFT HAND when making a call.

BALLS AND STRIKES

Always use a count indicator and hold it in your left hand. The plate umpire is responsible for keeping the proper count on the batter. Always give the number of balls on the batter with your left hand and the number of strikes on the right hand. Give the count verbally and always with the number of balls on the batter first and strikes second.

When to verbally give the count depends upon the situation. When the field has a scoreboard, it is only necessary to give the count when requested by a player or manager or to correct the scoreboard if it is incorrect.

When no scoreboard is available, the count should be given as follows:

- 1) When requested.
- 2) After a delay in the normal flow of the game.
- 3) Whenever the plate umpire feels the next pitch would create a change.

BALL ROTATION PROCEDURE

In keeping with the NSA Official Rulebook, the ball is in play until such time as it goes out of play. Keep in mind, the pitcher does have a choice of balls at the start of each inning. If both balls do not get into play in the first half of the first inning, the pitcher in the bottom half of the first inning **MUST** pitch with unused ball. In this situation, **NO CHOICE** is offered.

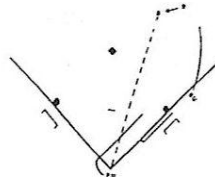
The plate umpire, before he relinquishes the second ball, must make sure that the pitcher hands or tosses the ball presently in the game to him. Then and only then, will the umpire toss the second ball into the game for play. The pitcher has now made a choice and must pitch that ball.

FLY BALLS

The plate umpire shall call all fly balls, fair or foul, safe or out, except in the event the base umpire should turn his back to the infield and go to make a call in the outfield. Once the base umpire turns his back to the infield, it becomes his call, fair or foul, safe or out. The base umpire should not return until the play is over.

NOTE: No vocal call is given on a fair ball. Only indicate by pointing toward the diamond that the ball is fair.

On fly balls, especially on possible trapped balls, do not work directly at the play, try to work for a good angle by looping around to get a good view of the ball coming down so you can see if a good catch is made. Give a good signal and use a loud voice to indicate safe or out.



CALLING FAIR OR FOUL BALLS

For fly balls hit near the base lines, the call is always fair or foul then safe or out. Batted balls that are either fair or foul need only to be called out. The calls should be called in a loud and decisive manner, leaving no doubt whether the ball is fair or foul.

Remember in order for a batted ball to be called fair, the ball must be on or bouncing over fair territory including any portion of first or third base. Most importantly, remember that the position of the ball is always and the only determining factor in calling a batted ball fair or foul.

NOTE: No vocal call is given on a fair ball. Only indicate fair ball by pointing toward the diamond that the ball is fair.

When there is no field umpire positioned at either foul line and the ball is hit into the outfield near a foul line, against or over the fence, the plate umpire should go out as far as possible to get a good look at the ball.

In judging balls hit a great distance directly down the foul lines fair or foul, the ball should be judged fair or foul as it passes the point where the outfield fence and the foul pole join. The umpires are not to judge the ball fair or foul before it reaches this point, nor are they to judge the ball by where it lands outside the playing field. Always judge the ball fair or foul, when it leaves the park.

LEAVING THE HOME PLATE AREA

Since the catcher usually leaves the plate area on the right side, the plate umpire should always leave on the left of the catcher and the plate. The main reason to develop this habit is avoiding a collision with the catcher. Usually with no runners on base or a runner at first base, the plate umpire should leave the plate on the left side, proceed about halfway to first base to observe the play being made at first. Try to straddle the foul line to get a good angle on this type of play. This type of positioning will assist you in the following:

- 1) Possibly assist on sweep tags made by the first baseman.
- 2) Three-foot line violations.
- 3) Any collisions made by the catcher and runner.
- 4) When a defensive player pulls his foot off the base.
- 5) On any overthrows and when the ball becomes blocked.

- 6) If a catch is bobbled or juggled.
- 7) Should the base umpire go to the outfield, you are in position to make a call any plays that might take place.
- 8) Any tags made by the catcher or any other infielder on the batter-runner.

When there is a runner on first base, prepare yourself for a possible play at third on the lead runner. This is the plate umpire's responsibility, so be in position by moving directly toward third base to make the call.

POP FOUL FLIES

The plate umpire's first priority is to avoid a collision with the catcher. Do not watch the ball once it has been popped-up close to the plate area. The catcher must move his shoulders to move in any direction, so watch his shoulders, pivot out of his way, clear the area and find the ball.

Find the ball, watch the catcher move toward the backstop or the fence area, and observe the catch and look for the trapping of the ball against the screen or fence. On a pop fly near the lines, call fair or foul first, then whether the catch is out and legal.

A foul ball hit after two strikes, whether the ball is caught or not, is declared a third strike and the batter is out. The ball is dead and baserunners can not advance.

REMEMBER: If there is a runner at third, your responsibility is the play at home if there is one.

CONFERENCES

It is the plate umpire's responsibility to enforce the rules governing conferences both by the offensive and defensive teams.

Once either teams holds a conference, the umpire should inform that team that was their last charged conference for that inning.

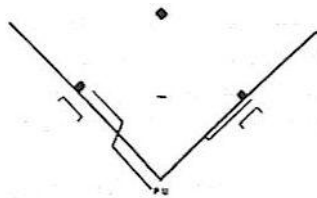
The offensive team's conference can include any number of runners, players, coaches or the batter.

The defensive team's conference is charged when the manager, coach, or team representative confers with the pitcher. There is no charged conference when there are instructions yelled from the dugout area or talking with the other players, unless those players talk to the pitcher before the next pitch.

There is no charged conference if the offensive team confers with a batter or base runner when the defensive team requests a time out for a conference. Nor is it a charged conference when the defensive team takes advantage of the offensive team having a conference.

When the umpire calls to play ball, both teams must start to play ball or be in jeopardy of having a charged conference called on them and enforcing the appropriate penalty.

CALLS AT THIRD BASE



In making a third base call, the plate umpire should be in foul territory halfway between third and home plate, watching the play develop. If there is going to be a play at third, the plate umpire should cut inside the infield and move as close to the base to make the call. This position provides the umpire with the best position to make the call and also if there is an overthrow, the umpire being inside, will avoid any interference with the players if the play continues. This position also provides good coverage of the home plate area, if the runner on an overthrow, continues home.

RUN DOWNS

When a rundown occurs, it is important that the umpire moves to get the best perspective of both ends of the play. The best position of the umpire should be at least fifteen (15) feet from the runner and moving parallel to the base line. It is not as important to run back and forth trying to follow the runner, as it is important to follow the ball. When the tag is ready to be applied, move quickly toward the tag getting at the best angle, also watching for an obstruction. Since most rundowns happen quickly, usually one umpire covers the play.

When a single runner gets caught in a rundown, the two umpires should work according to the following:

- 1) A runner between first and second base - the plate umpire should take the trail position closest to first base. The base umpire should take the lead position at second base. The plate umpire should be inside the infield while the base umpire should be outside the infield.
- 2) A runner between second and third base - the plate umpire should take the lead position closest to third base, inside the infield while the base umpire takes the trail position closest to second, outside the infield.
- 3) A runner between third base and home plate - the plate umpire will take the lead position nearest home plate, outside the baseline in foul territory if possible.

Important reminder that communication is a **MUST** between the umpires, telling each other who has the lead or the trail runner, and also call the play as a team rather than making a possible double call.

3RD OUT (RUN COUNT)

When the situation occurs where the third out of the inning is the result of a tag play, with a runner close to or crossing home plate, the base umpire should realize the situation at hand and make his call loud and clear to aid the plate umpire with his situation at home.

It is of the utmost importance that the plate umpire immediately indicates whether the run counts or does not count, and notify the scorekeeper. The sole responsibility for a run counting or not counting is the plate umpire unless rotation on a particular play dictates otherwise.

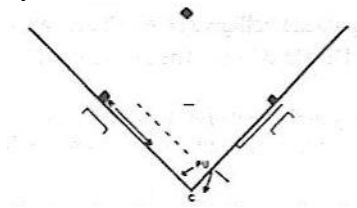
A run does not count if the third out of the inning is a result of:

- 1) A batter being put out before reaching 1st base.
- 2) A runner leaving a base too soon.
- 3) A preceding runner being put out on an appeal play.
- 4) A force out.

TAG PLAYS AT HOME PLATE

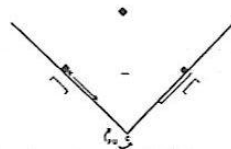
There are two positions for making calls on tag plays at the plate:

- 1) When returning from third base to make a call.
- 2) When the play is coming from fair territory or a throw from the outfield.



When the plate umpire is returning from third base, the plate umpire should stay inside the infield, moving parallel to the base line and getting into a position ten (10) feet from home plate and ninety (90) degrees from the path of the runner.

When making the call, don't plant your feet. Make sure the weight of your body is on the balls of your feet, move toward the play as it develops, find the ball after the tag and then make your call with authority. The inside position is important on this situation because all four elements remain in front of you - the ball, the defense, the runner and the base.



When the plate umpire has a play where the ball is coming from fair territory or a throw from the outfield, the plate umpire should assume a position in foul territory, ninety (90) degrees from the path of the runner just outside the deepest corner of the right hand batter's box. Make sure the weight of your body is on the balls of your feet, move toward the play as it develops, find the ball after the tag and then point at the ball with your left hand making your call with authority.

APPEAL PLAY AT HOME

When a runner misses home plate and if the catcher misses the tag, the umpire needs to hesitate momentarily to allow the players to complete the play. If the runner is not tagged, the runner shall be declared safe. However, if the proper appeal is made to the umpire, the runner is called out.

The reason for the hesitation is to not give either team any indication that the play may not be over. Also, the runner is always assumed safe in this situation until being put out. In order for the runner to be declared out, a proper appeal must be made.

DEAD BALL SITUATIONS

The most important element in calling a dead ball situation is the proper mechanics. When calling a dead ball give an emphatic call, arms held high in the air and calling loudly DEAD BALL. The proper dead ball call serves two purposes:

- 1) It kills the play and avoids further confusion.
- 2) Gives you the umpire the opportunity to make the proper call.

TIME OUT

To indicate the pitcher not to start a pitch, the plate umpire should raise his right hand if there is a right handed batter and the left hand if there is a left handed batter, with the palm facing the pitcher. A "NO PITCH" shall be declared if the pitcher pitches while the umpire has signaled in this position.

Time out shall be called for the purpose of suspending play. The proper signal is both hands, extended high above the head along with a verbal call. The time out call should be forceful, distinct, and very apparent to the fact that play has been suspended.

CATCHER OBSTRUCTION

Catcher obstruction occurs when the catcher hinders or prevents a batter from swinging at or hitting the ball.

The penalty for catcher obstruction is that the offensive team shall be given the option of accepting the play or the award for catcher obstruction. If all runners (including the batter-runner) have advanced one base, the catcher obstruction is ignored and the option not granted.

Catcher obstruction can occur during the back or the front swing and is ruled upon as a delayed dead ball.

If catcher obstruction occurs prior to the pitch, anytime the contact is prior to the pitch, call DEAD BALL, move around in front of the plate and give everyone a chance to reset.

ILLEGAL PITCH

In keeping with the NSA Official Rulebook, the plate umpire does not have to indicate either by voice or use the delayed dead ball signal to call an illegal pitch (Slow Pitch only).

HOMERUN BALL

When the batter passes third, get the next game ball out of your bag, watch the batter touch home, then throw out the next ball to the pitcher. Then swing around to dust home plate, resume your position behind the catcher ready to play ball.

REMEMBER AS THE PLATE UMPIRE:

- 1) Hustle.
- 2) You should have control of the game at all times.
- 3) Get the batting order from either managers or coaches.
- 4) Go over the ground rules.
- 5) Introduce all other umpires to the managers.
- 6) Always keep home plate clean, using a lot of snap, with your back to the pitcher.
- 7) When brushing off the plate, warn the batter or catcher whenever necessary.
- 8) Say ball or strike only; don't locate the pitch; and don't point to first base on ball four.
- 9) Do not verbally describe a pitch or use a hand signal.

SECTION III

UMPIRE MECHANICS

THE BASE UMPIRE

MECHANICS ON THE BASES

When umpiring the bases you are responsible for:

- 1) Calling plays at or between the bases.
- 2) Help in calling plays in the outfield that the home plate umpire may have difficulty in seeing and calling.
- 3) Help in determining checked swings and illegal pitches.
- 4) Assisting your partner(s) when called upon.

The plate umpire makes most of the decisions during the game. The base umpire has fewer decisions to make and since all are rendered upon base runners their importance increases as those potential scores progress around the bases.

The base umpire must be sharp on every pitch and be ready for any situation that occurs on the field. Remember that umpiring demands complete concentration, your undivided attention and all your energies, until the final out is made. Be ready to make a call on every play before it happens.

Hustle to be on top of the play at all times, remembering to work your angles on the bases. Being in position to call the plays will eliminate leaving yourself open on a play and most importantly, letting a player or coach call your play. Be consistent on your calls. On a close play use emphatic signals and words; on plays that are obvious use a routine signal. Remember, no matter where you start or where you may wind up after making the initial call always make sure that you are in position to make any additional calls. If you have to move on a play, keep the ball, the players involved (both offensive and defensive) and where the call will be made in clear view.

Like the players, be on top of the situation at all times. Don't get caught out of position by being flatfooted. Don't call your plays running; come to a stop position and make your call emphatically. The most important thing to remember is to never lose sight of the ball - know where the ball is and who had it last.

Base umpires are likely to use the upright and set position in umpiring the bases. When there are no runners on base, the umpire should be in an upright position being balanced on both feet ready to move in any direction and always keeping your arms at your sides. Always avoid crossing your arms across your chest or putting your hands on your hips. In the set position your hands should be in a fist and positioned on your thighs or when you are in a full set position hands may be positioned on your knees.

On a ball hit to the outfield that appears to be trouble, turn your back and go out to it. If the ball becomes a home run make sure as the umpire that you know as exact as possible where and when the ball left the park.

When umpiring the bases remember:

- 1) What is the count on the batter and how many outs there are.
- 2) Where are the runners and who is responsible for each runner.
- 3) What is likely to happen if the batter hits the ball.
- 4) Where are the fielders positioned.
- 5) Most importantly, do not lose sight of the ball.

CALLING THE BASES

A. Calling an out on a routine play the following should occur:

- 1) From your set position with your hands on your knees or thighs keeping your head forward and the eyes staying on the play.
- 2) Rise to an upright position bringing your left-hand close to your body near your belt.
- 3) Give a brisk verbal call of "Out" with your right arm forming a 90 degree angle.

B. Calling a routine play safe the following should occur:

- 1) From your set position with your hands on your knees or thighs, keeping your head forward and the eyes staying on the play.

- 2) Rising to a upright position bring both arms and hands, keeping them open with the palms facing down, up to your chest with the fingers touching.
- 3) Give a brisk verbal call of “Safe” extending your arms outward so they are pointed sideways, being away from your body and parallel to the ground with your palms facing downward.

C. Calling close play the following should occur:

- 1) Observe the above routine safe play procedures.
- 2) Sell the call by intensifying the verbal call and using a more powerful hand signal.
- 3) For a close tag play use a forceful overhand out signal using the basic set position, planting your feet and “selling” your call. The closer the play the need for more emphasis on making the call is important in order for you to “sell” the call.

The base umpire makes known his decisions by using both the vocal and manual expression. Indicate “safe” when the runner beats the throw, and “out” when the play beats the runner.

When there is a close play it deserves the entire vocal force and power of gesture at hand. An easy or routine out should be given by the hand making it obvious that the runner is out or safe.

For fairly close plays, wide-open tag plays and run-downs, the easy decisions, call with medium emphasis as to voice and gesture that is called for. Keep full power in reserve for the really close ones.

The “safe-out” or “out-safe” calls are the result of poor timing. If the base umpire (or any umpire calling a player out or safe) would give a “slight hesitation” and replay over in your mind what you saw, you as an umpire will never have another “out-safe” call. On the close plays “SEE IT, REPLAY IT, AND THEN CALL IT”. If you will hesitate for the length of time it just took you to read that last quote, your timing will automatically improve. Your judgment will improve as well and you will become a more consistent umpire because you have just seen the play twice. Remember your judgment can't do you any justice without good timing. Judgment and timing go hand in hand. On these calls or any other call always hold it and sell it.

Anytime the base umpire's back is turned away from the plate umpire for the deep fly ball or the possible trap play, the base umpire has all the responsibility for fair or foul, and out-safe decisions on the ball. It is most important that the base umpire who goes out remembers that he must stay in the outfield and never drift back to the infield for a play on the bases. This decision would cause two umpires to make a decision on the same play. Even if both calls were right, it still would look bad.

When the base umpire has the proper angle on the play, the ball, the defensive player and the runner are all in one view. When calling the tag play make sure you have a good view of the base. In force outs, keep your eyes on the base and look and hear the ball come into the glove. As a field umpire make sure you know where the ball is being thrown from and never take your eyes off the thrower until the ball is released.

The most important part of umpiring is to hustle on all the plays that occur. When you run just to run it is not hustling, at least productive hustling. The good umpire quickly finds the position for the best possible angle and makes the call.

THE FORCE AND TAG PLAYS

The two basic calls for the base umpire that he must master are as follows:

- 1) Force play, and
- 2) The tag play.

*NOTE: *We will use the principles of the force play at first base.*

When the ball is hit and the fielder is getting into position to field the ball, the base umpire should also be getting into position. When the fielder gets the ball, the umpire should stop at least fifteen (15) feet from first base. As the fielder releases the ball, then and only then should the umpire turn into the base. Watch and let the ball take you into the play for a play cannot be made without the ball.

Concentrating on the base, the umpire should be looking for the following:

- 1) The runner touching the base.
- 2) The first baseman catching the ball and staying on the base.
- 3) If the fielder is juggling the ball.

Proper positioning, at least fifteen (15) feet from the bag is most important because a position too close to the bag restricts the angle, closes the range of vision and may cause the umpire to interfere in the play.

Sound is another important element in making your calls. While concentrating on the base and allowing peripheral vision to aid you in seeing the play develop, the sound of the ball hitting the glove will help determine which arrived first -- the ball or the runner. It is always important to never take your eyes off the ball, but equally important, never depend on sound alone to make a call. There may be crowd noise, infielders or the coach yelling, that may interfere with your hearing the ball hit the glove.

In making the call, the only consideration left to ensure proper timing, is the slight hesitation to allow a clear mental picture to develop in your mind. This technique shows that you are in control of yourself and it is the manner in which you handle yourself that is more convincing.

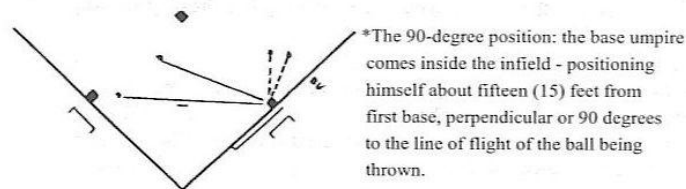
Always try and show consistency in making your calls. If you are too quick on every call and then use the "slight hesitation", the players will think you may be guessing or undecided on that play. So it's important that you try and be consistent in all your calls, the easy ones as well as the hard ones.

Remember that by positioning yourself at the proper distance (at least fifteen- 15 feet) from the base, your peripheral vision will allow you to see the entire play.

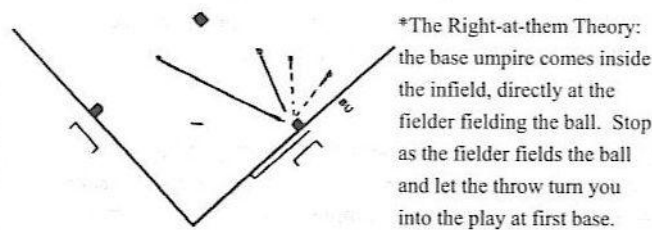
There are four basic positions for calling force plays at first base:

NOTE: *The following theories are not exact positioning on every play. However, they are good basic positions to approach most plays with. The NSA is more interested in gaining the proper angles on every play. The definition of a proper angle is any angle that allows the umpire to view the **WHOLE PLAY**. Remember to consider: 1) whether you assume a position in the infield or the outfield side of the diamond or 2) whether you should be in fair or foul territory.*

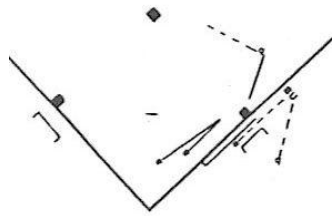
- 1) On all ground balls hit from the shortstop to the third base line, this includes most balls hit to the third baseman, the base umpire should come inside the infield to get in position, staying a minimum of fifteen (15) feet from first base and perpendicular or 90 degrees to the line of flight of the ball when thrown. This position allows excellent use of your peripheral vision, which is a basic, to good timing and sound judgment.



- 2) On all ground balls hit from the shortstop's left side to the second baseman, the base umpire should move inside the infield, right at the player who is fielding the ball. When the fielder fields the ball, the umpire should stop and let the player's throw turn him into the play at first base. The umpire should be at least fifteen (15) feet from the base and remembering not to turn your head or body toward first base until the throw takes you there. **REMEMBER** always keep your eyes on the ball.



- 3) The "foul ground theory" should be used only when absolutely necessary. Only on balls hit to the first baseman's extreme left, or to a short right field, where the throw is coming to the first baseman from near the foul line, the umpire should stay outside the infield in foul territory and move towards home to make the call. This position leaves the umpire very vulnerable and whenever possible, the umpire moves inside the infield unless forced to stay outside by the throw to the first baseman or another fielder coming near the first base line.



*Foul Ground Theory: Position yourself outside of the infield in foul territory and move toward home to make the call. Only on balls hit to the first baseman, the second baseman's extreme left or to short right field where the throw is coming to the first baseman from near the foul line. This outside position should be used *only* when *absolutely necessary*.

- 4) On a double play, take two steps toward second base then quickly run parallel to first base - second base line. Don't take your head and eyes off the ball and let the flight of the ball turn your head and body into the play at first base.

There are four basic elements an umpire should keep in front of him and unobstructed as much as possible. They are as follows: 1) The ball; 2) The defensive player making the play; 3) The batter-runner, and; 4) The base and the area where all four elements meet.

From the outside position there are problems that can develop. These are some examples: 1) Hard to determine whether a first baseman juggled the ball or pulled his foot; 2) The umpire winds up in position too close to the play, affecting his peripheral vision, timing and usually his judgment; 3) A coach legally in the coach's box must be asked and or assisted in vacating the box if you need the room; 4) An overthrow might hit you, and; 5) Puts the umpire behind the runner who may advance the second base. To overcome some of these problems, don't crowd the play, maintain a distance to keep your peripheral vision and feet movement and remember on an errant throw, get quickly inside the infield and take the runner into second base.

TAG PLAYS

As the play develops, positioning, angles and peripheral vision play an important role in tag plays, just as they did in force plays. The major difference on a tag play is the fact that the umpire should complete his call with his "nose" right on the tag.

As the tag play develops, make sure you keep all the elements in front of you - the ball, the defense, the runner and the base, as well as the area where they all come together. As the runner and the ball near the tag area, start to move in. Come in to about five (5) feet from the play, positioning yourself at the best angle to see the tag. Usually the best unobstructed angle is 90 degrees from the path of the runner, just short of the base at the point of contact.

The unobstructed angle is the most important thing to remember and that not letting the defensive player or the runner get between you and the tag being made. Remember, the best angle may move as the tag and the runner's slide is being made. The umpire must also move to keep an unobstructed view of the play.

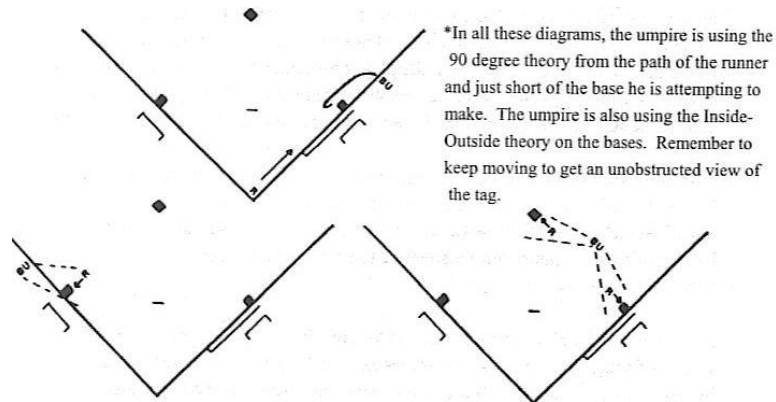
As you watch the play develop and start to move in, turn your concentration on whether the tag was made prior to the runner reaching the base or the runner beating the tag to the base. If the runner beats the throw and the tag, indicate safe providing the runner doesn't slide past the base. If on the other hand, the ball beats the runner and the tag is made, making sure the fielder has the ball in his possession, point to the ball with your left hand and declare the runner out.

In both of these plays, remember, it's best to "hesitate slightly" before making your call of safe or out.

On a play where a good hard slide causes a collision making you lose sight of the ball tell the defensive player immediately to show you the ball as you are pointing at him and moving around the play. When you see the ball, keeping your head right on the play, call the runner out.

It is important to remember as the umpire to not stand still, but move around the play to watch the tag and find the ball.

The following diagrams will show your proper positioning on tag plays:



EXPLANATION -- INSIDE OUTSIDE THEORY

When the ball is hit inside the diamond (anything on the dirt infield) the umpire stays on the outside of the diamond. When the ball is hit outside the diamond (on the grass) the umpire moves inside the diamond. The purpose is to keep all the elements in front of you - the ball, the runner, the defensive player and the base.

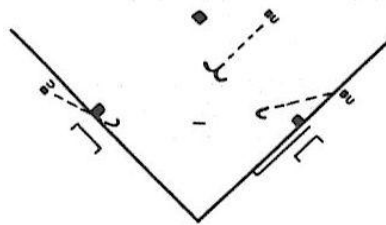
PULLED FOOT

When the ball arrives before the runner at a base and the fielder pulls his foot, you as the umpire do not want anyone to think the runner has beaten the throw. As the umpire, move toward the base, pointing with your left hand at the base or the fielder, and vocally telling everyone he pulled his foot off the base.

SWIPE TAG

When a throw pulls a fielder off a base and it is necessary for the fielder to make a swipe tag, the umpire should move toward the base, point with his left hand and indicate vocally that the fielder has made a tag, calling the runner out.

BUTTON HOOK



Movement is the key to the inside-outside theory and the key movement regarding the inside-outside theory is the "button hook". The button hook is a term used for the method of moving from the outside of the diamond to the inside of the diamond. When the ball is hit and the umpire starts to move inside the diamond, he should concentrate on the runner he is responsible for while making sure he does not interfere with anyone. The umpire should also watch for obstruction or interference with anyone. The umpire should also watch for obstruction or interference while glancing to pick up the ball in the outfield.

THREE FOOT LINE

A violation of the three-foot line is interference and calls for the umpire to take charge. The umpire should step into the play, throwing his arms high above the head, shouting "DEAD BALL". Step toward the point of interference with the left hand and give a strong overhead out signal. Runners must be instructed to return to the last legally touched base at the time of the interference.

RUNNING OUT OF THE BASE LINE

Running out of the base line to avoid a tag is also a violation, but does not result in a dead ball. The umpire should point with his left hand indicating that the runner ran out of the base line and follow with a strong over-head signal. Other runners may continue to advance at their own risk and the umpire should react accordingly.

INTERFERENCE

For interference calls, a vigorous dead ball signal should be given with both arms extended high in the air above your head with a vocal call of "DEAD BALL". Halt any further play as soon as possible, as continued play only adds to the confusion. Three things must occur on an

interference call: 1) the ball becomes dead; 2) an out is called; and 3) all runners must return to the base they were at, at the time of the interference.

OBSTRUCTION

There are three types; 1) obstruction on a runner who is not being played on (DELAYED DEAD BALL); 2) obstruction on a runner being played on (DEAD BALL); and 3) catcher obstruction (DELAYED DEAD BALL).

For obstruction on a runner who is not being played on, it requires a delayed dead ball signal. Remember, you are only going to protect that runner to the base he would have reached had there been no obstruction. Once the runner has reached the base he would have reached, there is no obstruction.

If the runner is put out prior to reaching the base he would have reached had there been no obstruction, it should be treated the same as a runner being played on, DEAD BALL. Award that runner the base he would have reached and award ALL other runners the base they would have reached had there been no obstruction.

If obstruction is called on a runner being played on, throw your arms high above your head giving the dead ball signal, and call "DEAD BALL." Stop play, point to the violator and award the bases accordingly.

Catcher obstruction is a DELAYED DEAD BALL call, with the plate umpire waiting to see the result of the play, prior to enforcement. The reason why catcher interference has changed to catcher obstruction, is that none of the three interference requirements exist -- 1) an out may not be called, 2) the ball is not dead, 3) nor are the runners required to return to the base held prior to the interference call.

COLLISION

When there is contact between an offensive and defensive player, it doesn't necessarily mean that either interference or obstruction has occurred. This is definitely not the case. The field is laid out in such a manner that it, in itself puts the defensive and the offensive players on a collision course.

If a batter hits or tops the ball on a slow roller toward first base close to the foul line, and the batter-runner, running in a direct line to first base, can be on a collision course with the first baseman or the catcher -- so each player has the legal right -- the batter-runner running at a direct line to first base; the catcher coming out from behind home plate to field the ball; or the first baseman coming toward the ball to field it.

The umpire has three questions to answer before interference or obstruction can be called: 1) Did the batter-runner alter his direction in any way to draw contact in an attempt to get an obstruction call? 2) Did the catcher or first baseman alter their attempt to field the ball in any way to draw the interference? 3) Could the catcher or the first baseman actually make an out on the play?

Another example that may cause a collision is the errant throw up the line at first base. The batter-runner collides with the first baseman while attempting to make a play on an errant throw up the line. The runner certainly has the right to the base line in this case and equally so, the first baseman should have the right to field an errant thrown ball. It is the result of the normal flow of the game and should be ruled as incidental contact with no effect or penalty on the play.

What adds to the pressure of making the call is that the umpire must make a decision immediately. The umpire has to react, and not have the time to think about it. That's why the umpire must have a thorough understanding of the situation so that an immediate decision can be made with authority and decisiveness.

CHECK LIST FOR BASE UMPIRES

- 1) Always hustle.
- 2) When stationed at first or third base, the umpire should stand twelve (12) to fifteen (15) feet beyond the base and in foul territory and one step deeper than the first baseman in a normal position.
- 3) Move on all pitched, batted and thrown balls.
- 4) Call all your plays from fair territory, except when the ball is fielded in front of the plate, the pitcher covers first; when a ground ball is fielded in front of the plate, the pitcher covers first; or when a ground ball is hit to the 1st or 2nd baseman going to the left.
- 5) On a double play ball, take two steps toward second base then quickly run parallel to first base-second base line. Don't take your head and eyes off the ball and let the flight of the ball turn your head and body into the play at first base.
- 6) Don't make a call until the catch and/or the play is completed. Don't be forced to make two calls on the same play.
- 7) Always keep your eyes on the ball.
- 8) Don't ever let players or coaches call plays for you.
- 9) Check to make certain the bases are secured and keep the pitcher's rubber clean.
- 10) Move forward one or two steps with each pitch and then return.

- 11) Line up runners on all fly balls to the outfield so you can view the timing of them leaving the base on a ball that is caught.
- 12) Keep the game moving.
- 13) Always hustle to be on top of your plays.
- 14) Position yourself not to interfere with the players. Every time you move, check with the players to see that you are not obstructing their view.
- 15) Hustle out on fly balls to the outfield and stay out until the play is completed.
- 16) Never walk from one position to another - hustle and the ball players will follow your example.
- 17) Make your close calls with a lot of voice and enthusiasm.
- 18) Base Umpires cardinal rule: Keep the ball, the runner, the base and the fielder in your sight, never losing sight of the ball.

SECTION IV

SINGLE UMPIRE SYSTEM

Slow and Fast Pitch

Checklist for single umpire system

Mechanics on ground balls

Mechanics on fly balls

Mechanics for base hits

Positioning between innings

**NOTE: For the veteran NSA umpire the starting positions listed are “recommended” starting positions. For the experienced umpire these starting positions may dictate an adjustment based upon a given situation.*

For the inexperienced NSA umpire make sure that you MASTER these “recommended” starting positions that will enable you to handle any new situations or surprises that may occur during the playing of the game.

****THE MECHANICS USED IN THE ONE UMPIRE SYSTEM LISTED IN THIS MANUAL ARE APPLICABLE AND CAN BE USED IN BOTH SLOW AND FAST SOFTBALL.**

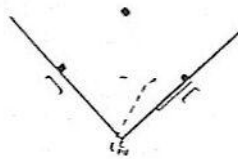
CHECKLIST FOR THE SINGLE UMPIRE SYSTEM

THE ONE UMPIRE SYSTEM CAN BE ONE UMPIRE DOING HIS BEST TO SURVIVE. THE TWO THINGS THAT WILL ENABLE YOU TO WORK THE GAME SUCCESSFULLY IS HUSTLE AND ANGLES.

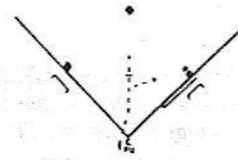
- 1) Be prepared to hustle the entire game.
- 2) Always work behind the plate.
- 3) Once the game begins be alert and try to anticipate where the ball is going.
- 4) Once the ball is hit, come out left of the catcher moving towards the pitchers mound, (unless the ball is hit down the lines) hustle to obtain the best angle to call a play at any base. **IMPORTANT** – watch the feet of the players; most of the time he will step in the direction he will throw the ball.
- 5) Hustle and be as close as possible the entire game to make any call.
- 6) Make all of your calls inside the infield, except at a play at home plate.
- 7) Remember the angles to make sure you are able to see the ball, base and base runner.
- 8) Make sure to watch the runners tag all the bases.
- 9) Make sure you call “TIME” after a base hit, a play at a base, etc., when the ball is held by an infielder or in your opinion all play has ceased.
- 10) **MOST IMPORTANT** – Try to never take your eyes off the ball unless you are forced to. You may need to on occasion such as watching a runner touch a base, re-tag a base or to tag up.

SINGLE UMPIRE SYSTEM FOR GROUND BALLS

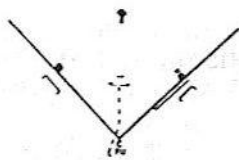
- 1) **NO RUNNER ON BASE** –
Come out left of the catcher to about midway between the pitching rubber and home plate to make the call at first base. Move toward first base to get the angle to make the call.



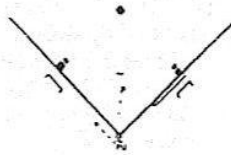
- 2) **WITH A RUNNER ON FIRST BASE** – When the ball is hit, come out left of the catcher to about midway between the pitching rubber and home plate. Be ready on the situation to make a call either at second base or first base, or both bases.



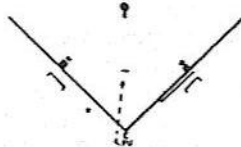
- 3) **RUNNERS ON FIRST AND SECOND BASE** – When the ball is hit, come out left of the catcher to about midway between the pitching rubber and home plate. Be ready for the situation to make a call at any of the bases.



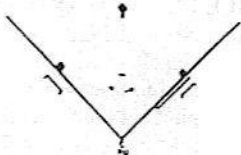
- 4) **RUNNERS ON FIRST AND THIRD BASE** – When the ball is hit, come out depending on the play to the left of the catcher ten (10) to twelve (12) feet down the third base line, or if the situation calls midway between the pitching rubber and home plate. In any situation your position in this procedure should cover angles to all bases.



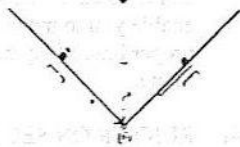
- 5) **BASES LOADED** – When the ball is hit, come out depending on the play to the left of the catcher ten (10) to twelve (12) feet down the third base line, or if the situation calls, midway between the pitching rubber and home plate. In any situation your position in this procedure should cover angles to all bases.



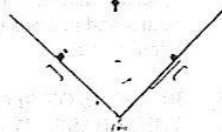
- 6) **RUNNER ON SECOND BASE** – When the ball is hit, come out to the left of the catcher midway between the pitching rubber and home plate. React to the situation, if the play is at third base, move ten (10) to twelve (12) feet down the third base line or if the play is at first base, move midway between the pitching rubber and home plate. Your position in this procedure should cover angles to the bases.



- 7) **RUNNER ON THIRD BASE** – When the ball is hit, come out to the left of the catcher. React to the situation, if the play is at third base, move ten (10) to twelve (12) feet down the third base line or if the play is at first base, move midway between the pitching rubber and home plate. Your position in this procedure should cover the angles to all bases.

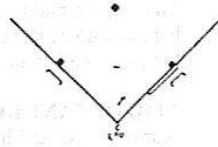


- 8) **RUNNERS ON SECOND AND THIRD BASE** – When the ball is hit, come out to the left of the catcher. React to the situation, if the play is made at third or home, move ten (10) to twelve (12) feet down the third base line, or if the play is at first base, move midway between the pitching rubber and home plate. Your position in this procedure should cover angles to the bases.

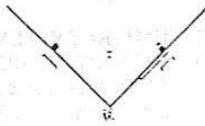


SINGLE UMPIRE SYSTEM ON FLY BALLS

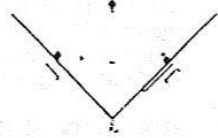
- 1) **NO RUNNERS ON BASE** – When the ball is hit come out to the left of the catcher. Move midway between the pitching rubber and home plate.



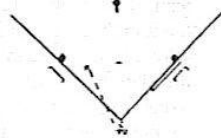
- 2) **RUNNER ON FIRST BASE** – When the ball is hit, come out to the left of the catcher. Move to about four (4) feet past the pitching rubber enabling yourself to make a call at any base including home plate and staying ahead of the lead runner.



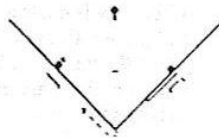
- 3) **RUNNERS ON FIRST AND SECOND BASE** – When the ball is hit, come out to the left of the catcher. Move about the midway point between the pitching rubber and third base. This position will enable you to make a call at the proper base. Stay ahead of the lead runner.



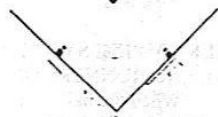
- 4) **RUNNER ON SECOND BASE** – When the ball is hit, come out to the left of the catcher. Move to about the midway point between the pitching rubber and third base. This position will enable you to make a call at the proper base, stay ahead of the lead runner and in a position to make a foul ball call.



- 5) **RUNNERS ON SECOND AND THIRD BASE** – When the ball is hit, come out to the left of the catcher. Move to the middle of third base and home plate line, ready to make a call at either base.



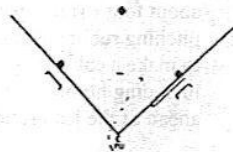
- 6) **RUNNERS ON FIRST AND THIRD BASE** – When the ball is hit, come out left of the catcher. Move to the middle of the third base and home plate line, ready to make a call at any base.



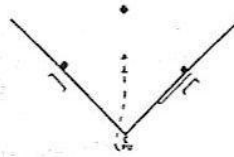
*** IMPORTANT REMINDER** – A ball hit near the foul line, stay near or on the foul lines to make the call a fair or foul, then move into the infield to make the calls on the runner(s).

SINGLE UMPIRE SYSTEM ON BASE HITS

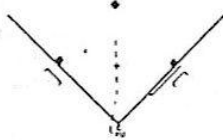
- 1) **BASE HIT, NO RUNNER ON BASE** – Come out to the left of the catcher. Move toward an angle to first base. **Don't lose sight of the ball.**



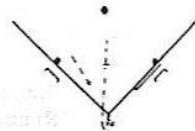
- 2) TWO BASE HIT, NO RUNNERS ON BASE – Come out to the left of the catcher. move toward the pitching rubber, keeping an angle toward first base. Continue past the pitching rubber to get in position to make a call at second if you need to. **Don't lose sight of the ball.**



- 3) THREE BASE HIT, NO RUNNERS ON BASE – Come out to the left of the catcher. Move past the pitching rubber, keeping an angle toward first and second base, just in case there is a play at either base. If there is no play, continue toward third base to make the call. **Don't lose sight of the ball.**

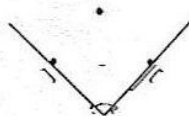


- 4) HOME RUN, NO RUNNERS ON BASE – Come out to the left of the catcher. Move past the pitching rubber keeping an angle to call a play at first, second or third base. If there is no play, continue to back up toward home plate, ready to be in position to make the call. **Don't lose sight of the ball.**



POSITION BETWEEN INNINGS

- 1) Position between innings should be approximately fifteen (15) feet from home plate, on or near foul territory, facing the infield.
- 2) Alternate foul lines between innings by being on the side of the field as the team is coming off the field and enters the dugout area.



SECTION V

TWO UMPIRE SYSTEM

Slow and Fast Pitch

Checklist two umpire system (Slow Pitch)

No runners on base
Runner on first base
Runner on second base
Runner on third base
Runners on first and second base
Runners on second and third base
Runners on first and third base
Bases loaded
Position between innings

Checklist two umpire system (Fast Pitch)

No runners on base
Runner on first base
Runner on second base
Runner on third base
Runners on first and second base
Runners on second and third base
Runners on first and third base
Bases loaded

THE TWO UMPIRE SYSTEM

**NOTE: For the veteran NSA umpire the starting positions listed are "recommended" starting positions. For the experienced umpire these starting positions may dictate an adjustment based upon a given situation.*

For the inexperienced NSA umpire make sure that you MASTER these recommended starting positions that will enable you to handle any new situations or surprises that may occur during the playing of the game.

CHECKLIST FOR TWO UMPIRE SYSTEM – SLOW PITCH

Plate Umpire

- 1) On balls hit down the lines, stay close to home and call all balls fair or foul. Don't call foul balls too soon.
- 2) Be prepared to take a share of the base calls.
- 3) Remember that the lead runner, if there is more than one base runner, is the home plate umpire's responsibility.
- 4) Prepare yourself by going into the infield to make a call on the runner, whether it's at third base or home plate.
- 5) On an extra base hit with other runners on base, the plate umpire makes sure the lead runner touches third base and home plate, then turns his attention to a possible call on the batter-runner.
- 6) The plate umpire has the responsibility of all tag-ups at third base.
- 7) The plate umpire has the responsibility of the tag-up at first base, with runners at first and second base. (EXCEPTION – if the ball is hit near the foul lines making it necessary to call the ball fair or foul.)
- 8) When working slow pitch, the plate umpire still has throw back responsibility at first base.
- 9) Making the infield fly rule call clear and concise.
- 10) Always be alert and be in a position to help your partner in case of a rundown.
- 11) If the base umpire goes out to the outfield to make a call on a trapped ball, the plate umpire will revert to a one umpire system covering all the bases.
- 12) As a general rule, the plate umpire is responsible for watching the batter runner touch first base on base hits, and takes the 1st throw on the infield, if to first or third base.
- 13) Ask for assistance if necessary whether a batter hits the ball twice.
- 14) Ask for assistance if necessary if there is catcher's obstruction.

Base Umpire

- 1) Position yourself twelve (12) to fifteen (15) feet beyond first base and at least a step behind the first baseman in foul territory.
- 2) Position yourself three (3) or four (4) steps behind the second baseman and to his left staying between the second baseman and the first base (if possible) with runners on first.
- 3) Always be aware to stay out of the view of the outfielder's sight of the batter or the play of the infielders.
- 4) Make sure runners touch all bases.

- 5) When the plate umpire has a play at home plate, your responsibility is to make the call if needed at third base. If that call is the third out, make the call loud and concise, making sure the plate umpire can hear you to determine if a run will count.
- 6) Hustle to get into the proper position and angle to make a call.
- 7) Be prepared to take the tag play at first if the plate umpire has to determine whether a ball hit is fair or foul, and take all throw backs to 3rd base.
- 8) The base umpire has the tag responsibility at second base with runners at first and second, second and third, and second only.
- 9) The base umpire has the tag responsibility at first and second base when the bases are all occupied.
- 10) Hustle to get the best possible angle on a trapped ball hit to the outfield.
- 11) REMEMBER – anything you do something different from the normal procedures, COMMUNICATE VOCALLY WITH YOUR PARTNER.
- 12) On base hits, the home plate umpire, in most instances, is responsible for watching the batter runner touch first base. The base umpire has the 1st call in the infield at first and second base.

NO RUNNER ON BASE

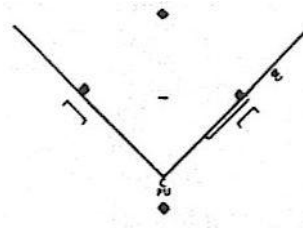


Plate Umpire

- 1) On balls that are hit come out left of the catcher.
- 2) Stay close to home plate in order to call all balls that are hit fair or foul.
- 3) On balls hit, come out left of the catcher, moving up toward first base watching the play and ready to help your partner.
- 4) Be ready to cut across the infield for a possible play at third base after the play at first base is completed.
- 5) On base hits, watch batter runner touch first base.

Base Umpire

- 1) Position yourself twelve (12) to fifteen (15) feet beyond first base and a step behind the first baseman in foul territory.
- 2) When the ball is hit through the infield or to the outfield move to the inside of the infield, picking up the ball and watching the runner touch first base.
- 3) Be prepared to turn your back and go to the outfield to make a call on a trapped ball.
- 4) On routine fly balls, watch the batter-runner touch first base.

RUNNER ON FIRST BASE

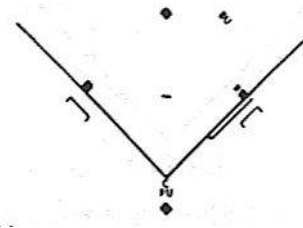


Plate Umpire

- 1) On balls that are hit come out left of the catcher.
- 2) When there is no play on the third base line in front of the plate, watch and trail the batter-runner down to first base prepared to help your partner on a call.
- 3) Be ready to cut across the infield for a possible play at third base.
- 4) Plate umpire is responsible for the tag at first base on a fly ball to the outfield, except if the ball is hit near the foul lines and you need to call the ball fair or foul.
- 5) When working slow pitch, the plate umpire still has the throw back at first base.

Base Umpire

- 1) Position yourself three (3) or four (4) steps behind the second baseman and to his right or left between him and second base, depending on the given situation of the infielders and/or the outfielders.
- 2) Always be aware to stay out of the outfielders' view of the batter or the play of the infielders.
- 3) Be ready to cut across the infield for a possible play at third base.
- 4) Plate umpire is responsible for the tag at first base on a fly ball to the outfield, except if the ball is hit near the foul lines and you need to call the ball fair or foul.
- 5) On hits to the outfield, come immediately inside the infield ready to take the batter-runner to third base.
- 6) On a double play ball, take one step towards second base and then immediately start moving toward first base watching the ball. Always let the ball turn you to first base and try to position yourself close enough to first base to make the right call.
- 7) When working slow pitch, the plate umpire will have the throw back to first base.

RUNNER ON SECOND BASE

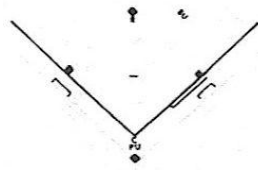


Plate Umpire

- 1) On balls hit close to the foul line, stay at home plate ready to make the call.
- 2) On balls hit, come out left of the catcher moving toward third base. Watch the play develop, if the play is at third, move inside the infield to call the play. This position will help you on covering home plate on any over-throws, especially if the base umpire is not there to back you up. Plate umpire takes the first throw on the infield, if it is to third base.
- 3) If the play is at first base, then a throw to third after the play, the plate umpire has the call.

Base Umpire

- 1) Position yourself three (3) or four (4) steps behind the second baseman and to his right between him and second base.
- 2) Always be aware to stay out of the outfielders' view of the batter or the play of the infielders.
- 3) On balls hit to the infield, the base umpire has the first throw, except if it is to home plate or third base; and after the first throw, the plate umpire should cover any throw to third base.
- 4) On hits past the infield or to the outfield that you don't go out on, come immediately inside the infield and take the batter-runner all the way to third base.
- 5) On fly balls to the outfield, position yourself between the pitching rubber and the base, to watch the tag-up of the runner. When you see the play is over at second base, drift back toward home plate, ready to take the play at home plate if there is one.
- 6) Watch the batter-runner tag first and second base.

RUNNER ON THIRD BASE

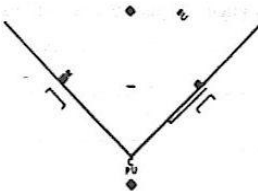


Plate Umpire

- 1) On balls that are hit, come out left of the catcher.
- 2) Stay close to home plate in order to call all balls that are hit fair or foul.
- 3) On fly balls, line up the runner on third base, and watch the catch and tag-up.
- 4) On base hits move toward third base; if the runner on third goes home, drift back toward third base and watch the runner touch home plate.
- 5) While working slow pitch the base umpire is responsible for the throw back at third base.

Base Umpire

- 1) Remain on the playing field positioning yourself three (3) or four (4) steps behind the second baseman and to his right between him and second base.
- 2) Call all plays made on the first throw, unless the first throw is to home plate.
- 3) Take the batter-runner into third base and see that all bases are touched.
- 4) Is responsible for any throws back to first base.

RUNNERS ON FIRST AND SECOND BASE

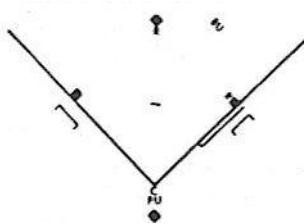


Plate Umpire

- 1) On base hits come out left of the catcher, taking the lead runner to third base and home plate.
- 2) On a wild throw, pick up the runner coming into third base.
- 3) To get in position to make the call at third base, go down the left field line in foul territory until you get between fifteen (15) to twenty (20) feet from the base, move inside the infield for a good angle to make the call on a tag play. Plate umpire has the first throw if it is to third base.

- 4) On base hits, move toward third base; if there is no play on the lead runner drift toward third base, but watch the runner touch home plate.
- 5) Plate umpire is responsible for the tag-up at first base and the first throw on infield if throw is to third base.

Base Umpire

- 1) Position yourself three (3) or four (4) steps behind the second baseman and to his right between him and second base; you have any throw back to third base.
- 2) Be aware not to interfere with the outfielders' view of the batter or the play of the infielders.
- 3) On balls hit to the infield, you take the first throw, unless it is to third base. If the throw goes to either first or second base, the plate umpire covers any subsequent throw to third base.
- 4) On fly balls, move inside the infield positioning yourself between the pitching rubber and second base watching the tag-up play at second base.
- 5) While working slow pitch the plate umpire is responsible for the throw back to first base.

RUNNERS ON SECOND AND THIRD BASE

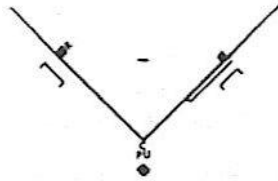


Plate Umpire

- 1) On a fly ball, line up the runner on third base and watch the tag-up.
- 2) On a base hit move toward third base watching the lead runner touch home plate if there is no play on him.
- 3) On a play at home plate get in position at a good angle to call the play. Plate umpire takes the first throw on the infield, if that throw is to third base.
- 4) On a play at first base, watch the lead runner touch home plate.

Base Umpire

- 1) Position yourself three (3) or four (4) steps behind the second baseman and to his left or right depending on the positioning of the fielder.
- 2) Make sure you don't interfere with outfielders' view of the batter or the play of the infielders.
- 3) On balls hit to the infield, take the first throw unless it's to home plate or third base.
- 4) If the first throw is to first or second base, the base umpire has that responsibility; the plate umpire covers any subsequent throw to third base.
- 5) On fly balls, move inside the infield, positioning yourself between the pitching rubber and second base, watching the tag-up play at second base.
- 6) On balls hit through the infield or to the outfield that you do not go out on, move inside the infield and take the batter-runner all the way to third base.
- 7) Watch for the quick throw back to second base on a line drive.

RUNNERS ON FIRST AND THIRD BASE

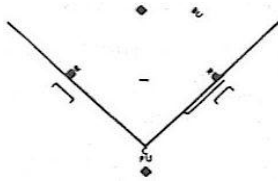


Plate Umpire

- 1) Take all plays at home plate.
- 2) On a fly ball, get out left of the catcher, line up to determine if the ball is fair or foul.
- 3) On a fly ball, line up the runner on third base; watch the catch and the tag-up play.
- 4) On base hits move toward third base; if the lead runner goes home, watch the runner touch home plate.
- 5) On a play at home plate, get in position at a good angle to call the play.
- 6) While working slow pitch take all throw backs to first base.

Base Umpire

- 1) Position yourself three (3) or four (4) steps behind the second baseman to his left, between him and first base.
- 2) On the balls hit to the infield, take the first throw unless it's to home plate.
- 3) If the first throw is to first or second base, the base umpire has responsibility; the plate umpire covers any subsequent throw to third base.
- 4) On base hits, move inside the infield watching the runner on first touch second base and being alert for a play at that base. Watch the batter-runner as far as third base, making sure he touches each base.
- 5) Take all throws back at third base while working slow pitch.

BASES LOADED

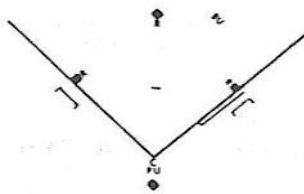


Plate Umpire

- 1) On a fly ball, move out left of the catcher and line-up the runner on third base, watching the tag-up.
- 2) On a base hit, move toward third base watching the lead runner touch home plate if there is no play on him.
- 3) On a play at home plate, get in position at a good angle to call the play.
- 4) Make the call at third base if the first throw on the infield goes to third base. Watch the lead runner touch home plate.
- 5) On a play at first base, watch the lead runner touch home plate; hustle toward third base for a possible play on the second runner.

Base Umpire

- 1) Position yourself three (3) or four (4) steps behind the second baseman and to his left between him and first base. If the situation dictates, your positioning may vary. (Example: The fielder's location on the diamond.)
- 2) Make sure you don't interfere with the outfielders' view of the batter or the play of the infielders.
- 3) On balls hit to the infield, take the first throw unless it is to home plate or third base.
- 4) If the first throw is to first or second base, the base umpire has that responsibility; the plate umpire covers any subsequent throw to third base.
- 5) On a ball hit to the infielders, wait until he commits himself to making a play. Remember do not take your eyes off the ball.
- 6) On balls hit through the infield or to the outfield which you do not go out on, move inside the infield and position yourself to make a call at either first, second or third base.
- 7) On fly balls hit to the outfield, move inside the infield quickly taking responsibility of the tag-ups on first and second base.

BETWEEN INNING MECHANICS

Plate Umpire

- 1) Position yourself fifteen (15) feet from home plate, near the line in foul territory and facing the infield.
- 2) Alternate foul lines between innings by being on the side of the field as the team coming off the field crosses to enter the bench or dugout area.

Base Umpire

- 1) Clean off the pitching rubber before the pitcher warms up.
- 2) Position yourself on the edge of the outfield grass behind the second baseman, or where the second baseman would normally field his/her position.

THE TWO UMPIRE SYSTEM - FAST PITCH

The PLATE UMPIRE shall be responsible for the following situations:

- 1) The runner at first with runners at first and second base tagging up.
- 2) Runners at first and third with bases loaded tagging up.
- 3) All runners at first and third base tagging up.
- 4) The plate umpire may have the responsibility on a line drive to any infielder, or making the call on the throw back to first base on a possible double play.

NOTE: In most situations, the plate umpire is responsible for watching the batter/baserunner touch first base.

- 5) Ask for assistance from your partner if necessary for:
 - a) Check swing.
 - b) Batter being hit by the pitch.
 - c) Hitting the ball twice.
 - d) Catcher's obstruction.

The BASE UMPIRE shall be responsible for the following situations:

- 1) Takes all steals
- 2) First throw in the infield (unless home).
- 3) Tag up at second base.

NOTE: *Certain circumstances may dictate that these procedures cannot be followed at all times. However, every effort should be made to adhere to these guidelines. In any case, communication with your partner is imperative.*

NO RUNNER ON BASE (FP)

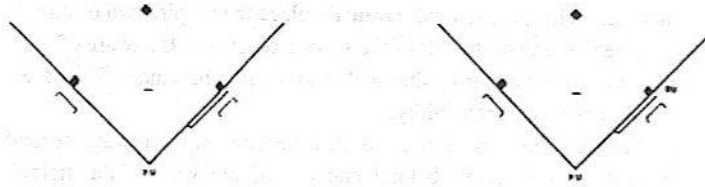


Plate Umpire

- 1) On balls that are hit come out left of the catcher, moving toward first base watching the play and ready to help your partner.
- 2) Stay close to home plate on fly ball determine fair/foul - safe/out.
- 3) On ground balls hit near the foul line, stay at home plate and make the call.
- 4) On ground balls hit to the infield, move toward first base to aid your partner should he/she need your help.

Base Umpire

- 1) Position yourself twelve (12) to fifteen (15) feet beyond first base in foul territory.
- 2) On base hits move inside diamond to second base for a possible play there.
- 3) On fly ball, buttonhook and watch batter/runner touch first base.

RUNNER ON FIRST BASE (FP)

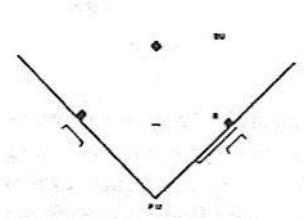


Plate Umpire

- 1) On balls that are hit to the infield, come out left of the catcher. Move towards first base in case you are needed to help with the play then drift toward third base to cover the baserunner.
- 2) Should the runner on first base steal second base and in the event of a wild throw at second base, pick up the baserunner at third base for a possible play there.
- 3) The plate umpire is no longer responsible for the runner going back to first base on a line drive to the infield or a throw back from the outfield.

Base Umpire

- 1) Take a position outside the baseline off the second baseman's left shoulder. This position will normally place the umpire two or three steps behind and to the left of the second baseman. Be aware of the possible throw back from the catcher to the first baseman. The base umpire has this responsibility.
- 2) In the event the runner tries to steal second, move toward second base, keeping yourself behind and out of the way of the fielder. Should the throw be wild, work yourself inside the base paths and be prepared to pick up the possible runner at home. The PLATE UMPIRE covers third base.
- 3) For double play situations, take one step toward second base, make the call there. Allow the flight of the ball to turn and move you toward first base, for the play at first.
- 4) On base hits to the outfield work inside the diamond, coming inside behind the runner at first. Take the batter-runner all the way to third base.
- 5) The base umpire is now responsible for the throw back to first base.

RUNNER ON SECOND BASE (FP)

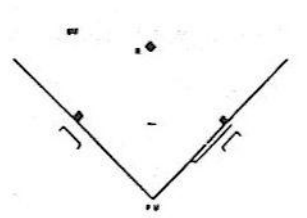


Plate Umpire

- 1) On base hits, ensure the lead runner legally touches third base.
- 2) When the ball is hit, work yourself toward third base. Prepare yourself and work yourself into position by moving toward third base in foul ground. At about fifteen (15) feet from third base, work inside the infield for good position to make the call.
- 3) The plate umpire always has the call at third base if there is a throw to third base when the first play is at first base.

Base Umpire

NOTE: *The positioning of the base umpire has changed from the left shoulder of the shortstop to the right shoulder when there is a runner on second base or multiple runners on base. This is ONLY intended to be a starting position. Should the situation dictate, the umpire starting on the left shoulder of the shortstop is acceptable in certain situations.*

- 1) If a ball is hit to the infield, wait until the fielder commits himself, being prepared to make a call at either first or second base. Do not take your eyes off the ball.
- 2) Call all plays made on the first throw unless it is to third base. Take the batter-runner into third base and see that all bases are touched.
- 3) Position yourself off the right shoulder of the shortstop. Position yourself as to not interfere with the view of the outfielder.

RUNNER ON THIRD BASE (FP)

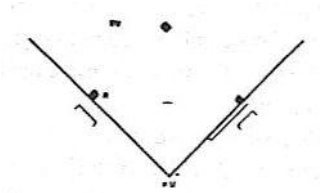


Plate Umpire

- 1) If a fly ball is hit, get out from behind home plate and line up the runner on base and watch the tag-up.
- 2) On base hits - move toward third base watching the runner. If the runner goes home, drift back toward home plate and watch the runner touch home plate.

Base Umpire

- 1) Take a position two or three steps behind and off the right shoulder of the shortstop (not down the third base line). Be cautious; try not to interfere with the outfielders' view of the batter or play by the infielders.
- 2) If a ball is hit to the infield, wait until the fielder commits himself then move quickly toward the base the play is being made at. Do not take your eyes off the ball.
- 3) Call all plays made on the first throw unless it is to home plate. Take the batter-runner into third base and see that all bases are touched.
- 4) The base umpire has throw back responsibilities at third.

RUNNERS ON FIRST AND SECOND BASE (FP)

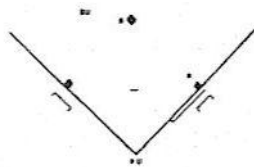


Plate Umpire

- 1) When the ball is hit, you are responsible for the lead runner at third base and at home. In the event a runner tries to steal second base, you are responsible for the runner coming to third.
- 2) When the ball is hit, work yourself toward third base; you have the call on the first throw. Prepare yourself and work yourself into position by moving towards third base in foul ground. At about fifteen (15) feet from third base, work inside the infield for good position to make the call.
- 3) When the ball is hit, work towards third base. Should the lead runner come home and there is no play there, make sure the runner touches home then work on into position for a possible call at third.
- 4) The tag at first base is also your responsibility.
- 5) The plate umpire is responsible for the play at first base on a line drive to the infield on the quick throw back to first base.

Base Umpire

- 1) If a ball is hit to the infield, wait until the fielder commits himself. Do not take your eyes off the ball.

- 2) Call all plays made on the first throw unless it is to home plate or third base. Take the batter-runner into third base and see that all bases are touched.
- 3) Position yourself off the right shoulder of the shortstop. Position yourself as to not interfere with the view of the outfielder.

RUNNERS ON SECOND AND THIRD BASE (FP)

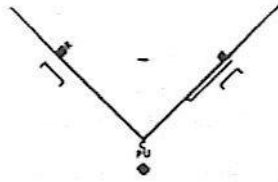


Plate Umpire

- 1) In case of a fly ball, position yourself in line with the runner on third and the fielder making the play to give you the best advantage of seeing the tag-up.
- 2) When the ball is hit, work yourself toward third base. Should the lead runner advance to home, be sure to watch him/her touch home. If the first throw is to third, this is your call. Should there be a play at home, work yourself back into a position to the back of the right-handed batters box.
- 3) Should there be a play at first, be sure to watch the lead runner touch home. After you watch the runner touch home, work yourself into position for a possible call at third base.

Base Umpire

- 1) If a ball is hit to the infield, you are responsible for the first throw, unless it is to home or third base. Any throw to third after a throw to first or second, shall be the responsibility of the home plate umpire.
- 2) Should there be a fly ball, work inside the infield. Position yourself in line with the runner on second and the fielder making the play.
- 3) Position yourself off the right shoulder of the shortstop. Position yourself as to not interfere with the view of the outfielder.
- 4) On any balls hit to the outfield that you stay in the infield, work inside the diamond and take the batter-runner to third.

RUNNERS ON FIRST AND THIRD BASE (FP)

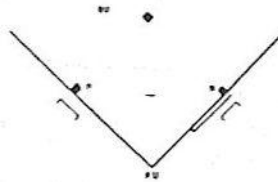


Plate Umpire

- 1) If a fly ball is hit, get out from behind home plate and line up the runner on first and third base and watch the tag-up.
- 2) On base hits, move toward third base. If the lead runner comes home and there is no play made on him, drift toward third but watch the runner touch home plate. If there is a play at home, move back to a position in the rear of the right handed batter's box.
- 3) Should take tag-up on runner opposite the field of play. Ball hit to center field take both runners tagging up.
- 4) The plate umpire takes all throws back to third base unless it is the first throw.
- 5) Take all throws back to first base.

BASE UMPIRE

- 1) Take a position, two or three steps behind and off the right shoulder of the shortstop. Be cautious, try not to interfere with the outfielders' view of the batter or play by the infielders.
- 2) On any ball hit to the infield, take the first throw unless it is to home plate. If the first throw is to first or second base, the plate umpire covers any subsequent throw to third base.
- 3) On a base hit, get inside the infield quickly, and watch the runner on first touch second base and be alert for a play at that base. Take the batter-runner as far as third base and watch him touch each base.
- 4) On fly balls, get inside the infield quickly, buttonhook and be prepared to make the call at second base.
- 5) On fly balls hit to centerfield, the home plate umpire has tag-up responsibilities for both runners. If ball is hit to left or right field, the base umpire has the tag-up at the base (left field – third base; right field – first base).
- 6) Take all throws back at third base while working fast pitch.

BASES LOADED (FP)

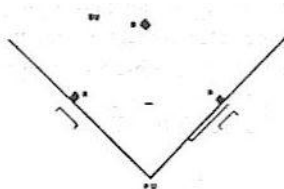


Plate Umpire

- 1) If a fly ball is hit, get out from behind home plate and line up the runner on base and watch the tag-up.
- 2) On base hits, move toward third base in foul territory. If the lead runner comes home and there is no play made, drift toward third base, but watch the runner touch home plate. If there is a play at home plate, move back to a position in the rear of the left batter's box.
- 3) If the play is at first base, watch the lead runner touch home plate then go to third for a possible play on the second runner.
- 4) Ball hit on infield, plate umpire has call at home or third on first throw.

Field Umpire

- 1) Take a position two (2) or three (3) steps behind and off the right shoulder of the shortstop. Be cautious - try not to interfere with the outfielder's view of the batter or play by the infielders.
- 2) On any ball hit to the infield, take the first throw unless it is to home plate or third base. If the first throw is to first or second base, the plate umpire covers any subsequent throw to third base.
- 3) After coming inside the infield, line up runner at second base on fly balls.
- 4) If a ball is hit to the infield, wait until the fielder commits, then move quickly toward that base. Don't take your eyes off the ball.
- 5) On any ball hit to the outfield, get inside the diamond quickly, buttonhook and be prepared to make a call at first, second or third base.

NOTE: *The Base Umpire takes the throw back to third base and the Plate Umpire takes the throw back to first base.*

BETWEEN INNING MECHANICS

Plate Umpire

- 1) Position yourself fifteen (15) feet from home plate, near the line in foul territory and facing the infield.
- 2) Alternate foul lines between innings by being on the side of the field as the team coming off the field crosses to enter the bench or dugout area.

Base Umpire

- 1) Clean off the pitching rubber before the pitcher warms up.
- 2) Position yourself on the edge of the outfield grass behind the second baseman or where the second baseman would normally field his/her position.

SECTION VI

THREE UMPIRE SYSTEM

Slow and Fast Pitch

Checklist three umpire system

No Runners on base

Runner on first base

Runner on second base

Runner on third base

Runners on first and second base

Runners on first and third base

Runners on second and third base

Bases loaded

Position between innings

THE THREE UMPIRE SYSTEM

**NOTE: For the veteran NSA umpire the starting positions listed are "recommended" starting positions. For the experienced umpire these starting positions may dictate an adjustment based upon a given situation.*

For the inexperienced NSA umpire make sure that you MASTER these "recommended" starting positions that will enable you to handle any new situations or surprises that may occur during the playing of the game.

CHECKLIST FOR THE THREE UMPIRE SYSTEM

1) The four rules for coverage are:

- a. Once the umpires start the basic position from a counter rotated position* there will be no rotation.
- b. When the field umpires go to the outfield, revert to the two-umpire system.
- c. When the field umpires turn their backs to the infield to go out to the outfield on a play, they should remain outside until the play is completed.
- d. Always rotate in a clockwise direction.

**EXPLANATION: The counter rotated position shall be the position the umpire takes prior to any pitch. The third base umpire shall be positioned down the line at third and the first base umpire shall be positioned behind the second baseman.*

- e. Vocal communication and eye contact are the most important elements in the covering of all plays.
- f. Vocal communication is a must with your partners so they will know a base is covered.
- g. Glance at a forward base, if there is no vocal communication heard it would lead to mix-ups in covering the bases.
- h. Assures complete coverage of everything that can occur on the ball field.
- i. The field umpires should position themselves twelve (12) to fifteen (15) feet outside the base lines behind first and third bases at the beginning of the play.
- j. The plate umpire will judge batted balls and calls fair or foul balls up to first and third base. (In some instances, especially in Men's Open divisions, the first and third base umpires will judge foul/fair or sinking fly balls down the lines in the outfield when in starting position. Under these circumstances, the 3 man crew will revert to a 2 man crew).
- k. The plate umpire has the responsibility to make decisions on bounding balls hit over first and third base.
- l. The field umpires should only help the plate umpire on these decisions when they turn their backs to the infield and go out on a ball hit near the fence or on a sinking line drive to watch for a trapped ball. NOTE: *Once a field umpire turns his/her back to go out on a call, that umpire NEVER returns back to the infield to make a call.*
- m. The plate umpire has no tag responsibilities except when a base umpire goes out to the outfield and leaves a runner behind him.
- n. The third base umpire has the following tag responsibilities at third base:
 1. Runners at third base.
 2. Runners on second and third base.
 3. Runners on first and third base.
 4. Runners at first, second and third base.
 5. He will take the tag at second base and also with runners on first and second base only when the first base runner goes out to the outfield and turns his back.
- o. The first base umpire has the following tag responsibilities at second base:
 1. A runner on second base only.
 2. Runners on first and second base.
 3. Runners on second and third base.
 4. Runners on first, second and third base.
- p. The first base umpire has the following tag responsibilities at first base when the plate umpire has a call on a batted ball that is close to the foul line and he has to determine if the ball is fair or foul and therefore cannot watch the tag.
 1. Runner on first base only.

2. Runners on first and second base.
3. Runners on first and third base.
4. Runners on first, second and third base.

**NOTE – On all tag up responsibilities, the procedures should be followed unless the umpires communicate with each other.*

- q. On batted balls, the plate umpire should move in front of the plate and make all fair/foul ball calls, unless one of the base umpires goes out to the outfield to make the call.
- r. Always be prepared to revert to the two-umpire system if one of the two base umpires goes to the outfield.
- s. The first base umpire should position himself twelve (12) to fifteen (15) feet beyond the base in foul territory, also a step behind the first baseman.
- t. When at first base, go with the first and second baseman and the right fielder on fly balls in foul territory to observe the legal catch.
- u. The base umpires must be careful not to interfere with a quick throw to any base by the outfielders.
- v. Do not cross in front of the fielder covering first base, instead move toward home plate in foul territory. As the batter-runner passes, hook immediately behind the runner so as to have the runner, base, fielder and ball in front of you.
- w. Always watch the third base umpire and observe his movement. When the third base umpire goes to the outfield, be prepared to revert to the two-umpire system.
- x. Be prepared as the first base umpire on balls hit on the right side to go out and make the call on possible trapped balls.
- y. As the third base umpire, position yourself twelve (12) to fifteen (15) feet beyond the base in foul territory and a step behind the third baseman.
- z. Be prepared as the third base umpire on balls hit on the left side to go out and make the call on possible trapped balls.
- aa. When positioned at third base, go with the third baseman, the shortstop or the left fielder on fly balls to observe a legal catch.
- bb. On run-downs between third and home, the third base umpire should position himself on the infield side of the base and make the call if the runner is returning to third base. Watch for obstruction.
- cc. IMPORTANT REMINDER – Should you ever deviate from these procedures, communicate with your partners.

NO RUNNER ON BASE

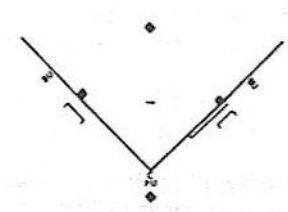


Plate Umpire

- 1) On balls that are hit, come out left of the catcher.
- 2) When there is no one on third base or there is no play at third base, trail the runner down the first base line ready to help your partner.
- 3) If second base is covered, hold your inside position until you know there is no play at first base.
- 4) When you are certain there is no play at first, release the runner and be ready to move toward home plate to cover a possible play there.

First Base Umpire

- 1) Post yourself twelve (12) to fifteen (15) feet beyond first base and a step behind the first baseman in foul territory.
- 2) When the ball is hit through the infield or to the outfield, move to the inside of the infield, picking up the ball and watching the batter/runner touch first base.
- 3) Glance to your left on the play to make sure the umpire at second base has moved to the inside of the infield.
- 4) When you are sure the play is over at first base, prepare yourself to move toward home plate for a possible play there.

Third Base Umpire

- 1) Position yourself twelve (12) to fifteen (15) feet beyond third base and a step behind the third baseman in foul territory.
- 2) When the ball is hit through the infield or to the outfield move to a position on the inside of second base for a possible play there.
- 3) When the first base umpire goes out to cover the outfield, the plate umpire has responsibility to cover first base. When this happens, an umpire is ahead as well as behind the runner.
- 4) If the batter-runner continues past second base, glance to your left to make sure the plate umpire has third base covered. If the base is not covered, take the batter-runner to third base.

RUNNER ON FIRST BASE

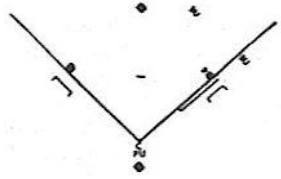


Plate Umpire

- 1) On balls that are hit, come out left of the catcher.
- 2) When there is no play on the third base line or in front of the plate, watch and trail the batter-runner down to first base prepared to help your partner on a call.
- 3) Be ready to cut across the infield for a possible play at third base.

First Base Umpire

- 1) Position yourself twelve (12) to fifteen (15) feet beyond first base and a step behind the first baseman in foul territory.
- 2) When the ball is hit through the infield or to the outfield, move to the inside of the infield, picking up the ball and watch the runner touch first base.
- 3) Glance to your left on the play to make sure the umpire at second base has moved to the inside of the infield.
- 4) Make sure on a ball hit that a tag is made or if the batter-runner touches first base.
- 5) When you are sure the play is over at first base, prepare yourself to move toward home plate for a possible play there.
- 6) First base umpire is responsible for the double play tag off a line drive.

Third Base Umpire

- 1) Position yourself three (3) or four (4) steps behind the second baseman and to his/her right between him/her and second base.
- 2) Always be aware to stay out of the outfielders' view of the batter or the play of the infielders.
- 3) On a ball hit through the infield, move to the inside of the infield so you can pick up the ball and be in good position to make a call at second base.
- 4) Glance over at third base to see if the plate umpire has that base covered, if not, be prepared to follow the runner to third base.
- 5) Make all calls at second base; be prepared to help your partner at first base, if the plate umpire fails to do so, especially if the first base umpire has moved to the outfield.

RUNNER ON SECOND BASE

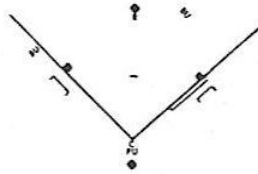


Plate Umpire

- 1) On balls hit, come out left of the catcher.
- 2) On all balls hit, move toward third base for a possible call.
- 3) On balls hit close to the foul line, stay at home plate ready to make the call.

First Base Umpire

- 1) Position yourself three (3) or four (4) steps behind the second baseman and to his/her left between him/her and first base.
- 2) On a ball hit through the infield or to the outfield that you don't go out on, move to the inside of the infield, picking up the ball and watch the runner touch first base. You now have throw back responsibilities at first on the batter-runner.
- 3) Glance to your left on the play to make sure the third base umpire has moved to cover second base. If not, take the batter-runner into second base.
- 4) Watch for the quick throw back to first base.
- 5) When you are sure the play is over at first base, prepare yourself to move toward home plate for a possible play there.

Third Base Umpire

- 1) Position yourself twelve (12) to fifteen (15) feet beyond third base and a step behind the third baseman in foul territory.
- 2) When the ball is hit through the infield or to the outfield, move to a position on the inside of second base for a possible play there.
- 3) When the first base umpire goes out to cover the outfield, the plate umpire has responsibility to cover first base. (An umpire behind and ahead of the runner).
- 4) If the batter-runner continues past second base, look to your left to make sure the plate umpire has third base covered. If not, take the batter-runner to third base.
- 5) Prepare yourself for the throw back to third base on a line drive to the infield.

RUNNER ON THIRD BASE

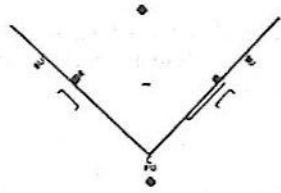


Plate Umpire

- 1) On balls that are hit, come out left of the catcher.
- 2) When and if the third base umpire goes to the outfield, move down toward third base, line up the runner and make sure he tags up. Don't move more than halfway down the line, enabling you to get back to home plate, just in case there is a play there.
- 3) Take all plays at home plate when the ball remains in the infield.
- 4) On a base hit, move toward third base making sure the runner from third base touches home plate.
- 5) If the batter-runner goes to second base, make sure to look and see if the first base umpire is moving toward home plate.

First Base Umpire

- 1) Position yourself twelve (12) to fifteen (15) feet beyond first base and a step behind the first baseman in foul territory.
- 2) On a ball hit through the infield or to the outfield that you don't go out on, move to the inside of the infield, picking up the ball and watch the runner touch first base.
- 3) Glance to your left on the play to make sure the third base umpire has moved to cover second base. If not, take the batter-runner in to second base.
- 4) Watch for the quick throw back to first base.
- 5) When you are sure the play is over at first base, prepare yourself to move toward home plate for a possible play there.

Third Base Umpire

- 1) Position yourself twelve (12) to fifteen (15) feet beyond third base and a step behind the third baseman in foul territory.
- 2) When the ball is hit through the infield or to the outfield, move to a position on the inside of second base for a possible play there.
- 3) When the first base umpire goes out to cover the outfield, the plate umpire has responsibility to cover first base. (An umpire behind and ahead of the runner.)
- 4) If the batter-runner continues past second base, look to your left to make sure the plate umpire has third base covered. If not, take the batter-runner to third base.
- 5) Prepare yourself, for the throw back to third base on a line drive to the infield.

RUNNERS ON FIRST AND SECOND BASES

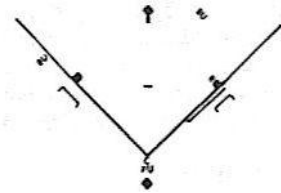


Plate Umpire

- 1) The plate umpire will stay at home since the third base umpire has third base covered.
- 2) When the third base umpire goes out to the outfield on a batted ball, plays at third base will be the responsibility of the home plate umpire.
- 3) If the first base umpire goes out to the outfield on a batted ball, the plate umpire should move toward first base and watch for a throw behind the runner at first.
- 4) The tag-up at first base is the responsibility of the home plate umpire, unless he has to watch the ball close to the foul lines to call it fair or foul.
- 5) The plate umpire has responsibility on line drives to the infield or outfield on the throw back to complete the double play.

First Base Umpire

- 1) Position yourself three (3) or four (4) steps behind the second baseman and to his/her left between him/her and first base.
- 2) Be aware not to interfere with the outfielders' view of the batter or the play of the infielders.
- 3) On a double play ball, take one step towards second base and then immediately start moving toward first base watching the ball. Always let the ball turn you to first base and try and position yourself close enough to first base to make the right call.
- 4) On fly balls hit to the outfield, move inside the infield to take the tag at second base.
- 5) If on a fly ball close to the foul lines that the plate umpire has to call fair or foul, tag up responsibility of the runner at first base is the responsibility of the first base umpire.

Third Base Umpire

- 1) Position yourself twelve (12) to fifteen (15) feet beyond third base and a step behind the third baseman in foul territory.
- 2) Take all calls at third base so the ball and runner are always in front of you by using the inside-outside system.
- 3) On balls hit to the outfield, move inside third base to watch the play on the runner at third base.

- 4) If the first base umpire goes out to the outfield, the third base umpire is responsible for the tag at second. Move far enough inside the infield to watch both tags at first and second base.
- 5) If the throw is behind the runner at first base, the plate umpire may move down the first base line to make the call; if not, the third base umpire is responsible. In this type situation, VOCAL COMMUNICATION is vital by all umpires.

NOTE: *With runners on first and third base, the umpire that is lined up on the first or third base foul line should be in position of at least three (3) feet inside foul territory. This will enable the covering umpire the proper angle to observe the runner(s) leaving base early and/or illegal pitches.*

RUNNERS ON FIRST AND THIRD BASES

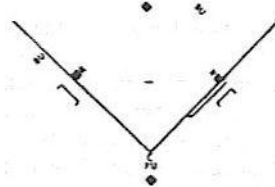


Plate Umpire

- 1) Take all plays at home plate.
- 2) If the third base umpire goes out, the plate umpire is responsible for the tag at third base. Move halfway between home plate and third base; from this position you can return to home plate if a play develops there.
- 3) If the third base umpire goes out and there is no play at home plate, the plate umpire is responsible for the play at third base. The first base umpire will pick up the batter-runner. VOCAL COMMUNICATION is vital.
- 4) On line drives to the infield, the plate umpire is responsible for the tag up situation at first base.

First Base Umpire

- 1) Position yourself three (3) to four (4) steps behind the second baseman and to his/her left between him/her and first base.
- 2) Be aware not to interfere with the outfielders' view of the batter or the play of the infielders.
- 3) On the double play, take one step toward second base and then immediately start moving toward first base, keeping your eyes on the ball. Always let the ball turn you to first base to make the right call.
- 4) On fly balls hit to the outfield, move inside the infield to take the tag at second base.
- 5) If on a fly ball close to the foul lines that the plate umpire has to call fair or foul, tag up responsibility of the runner at first base is the responsibility of the first base umpire.
- 6) On a line drive to the infield, the first base umpire is responsible for the throw back to first base.

Third Base Umpire

- 1) Position yourself twelve (12) to fifteen (15) feet beyond third base and a step behind the third baseman in foul territory.
- 2) Take all calls at third base so the ball and runner are always in front of you by using the inside-outside system.
- 3) On balls hit to the outfield, move inside third base to watch the play on the runner at third base.
- 4) If the first base umpire goes out to the outfield, the third base umpire is responsible for the tag at second. Move far enough inside the infield to watch both tags at first and second base.
- 5) If the first base umpire goes out to the outfield, the third base umpire is responsible for the play at second.
- 6) If the throw is behind the runner at first base, the plate umpire may move down the first base line to make the call; if not, the third base umpire is responsible. In this type situation, VOCAL COMMUNICATION is vital by all the umpires.

RUNNERS ON SECOND AND THIRD BASES

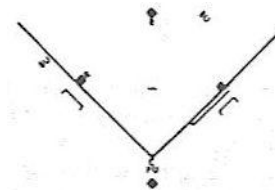


Plate Umpire

- 1) Take all plays at home plate.
- 2) If the third base umpire goes out, the plate umpire is responsible for the tag at third base. Move halfway between home plate and third base. From this position you can return to home plate if the play develops there.
- 3) If the third base umpire goes out and there is no play at home plate, the plate umpire is responsible for the play at third base.

First Base Umpire

- 1) Position yourself three (3) to four (4) steps behind the second baseman and to his/her left between him/her and first base.
- 2) Be aware not to interfere with the outfielders' view of the batter or the play of the infielders.
- 3) On the double play, take one step toward second base and then immediately start moving toward first base, keeping your eyes on the ball. Always let the ball turn you to first base and try and position yourself close enough to first base to make the right call.
- 4) On balls hit to the outfield, move inside the infield to see the ball being caught and the runner at second tagging up.
- 5) If the plate umpire has to call fair or foul and cannot watch the tag at first, this becomes the first base umpire's responsibility.

Third Base Umpire

- 1) Position yourself twelve (12) to fifteen (15) feet beyond third base and a step behind the third baseman in foul territory.
- 2) Take all calls at third base using the inside-outside system so that the ball and the runner are always in front of you.
- 3) The third base runner is your responsibility on tag ups, unless you go out to make a call on a trapped ball, then it's the responsibility of the home plate umpire.
- 4) If the first base umpire goes out, move to the center of the infield and be ready to move either to first or second base for a call.
- 5) Watch for the quick throw back to third base on a line drive.

BASES LOADED

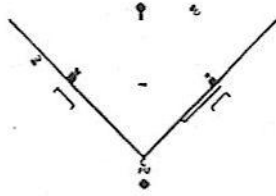


Plate Umpire

- 1) Take all plays at home plate when the ball remains in the infield.
- 2) If the third base umpire goes out, plays at third base and home plate are the home plate umpires' responsibility.
- 3) On a line drive to the infield, the plate umpire is responsible for the play at first base on a throw back to that base.

First Base Umpire

- 1) Position yourself three (3) or four (4) steps behind the second baseman and to his left between him and first base.
- 2) Be aware not to interfere with the outfielders' view of the batter or the play of the infielders.
- 3) On the double play, take one step toward second base and then immediately start moving towards first base, keeping your eyes on the ball. Always let the ball turn you to first base and try to position yourself close enough to first base to make the right call.

Third Base Umpire

- 1) Position yourself twelve (12) to fifteen (15) feet beyond third base and a step behind the third baseman in foul territory.
- 2) Take all calls at third base using the inside-outside system so that the ball and the runner are always in front of you.
- 3) The third base runner is your responsibility on tag ups, unless you go out to make a call on a trapped ball, then it becomes the responsibility of the home plate umpire.
- 4) If the first base umpire goes out, move to the center of the infield and be ready to move either to first or second base for a call.
- 5) Watch for the quick throw back to third base on a line drive.

BETWEEN INNING POSITIONING

Plate Umpire

- 1) Position yourself fifteen (15) feet from home plate near the line in foul territory and facing toward the infield.
- 2) Alternate foul lines between innings by being on the side of the field as the team coming off the field.

First Base Umpire

- 1) Position yourself on the edge of the outfield grass behind the second baseman or where the second baseman would normally field his/her position.

Third Base Umpire

- 1) Clean the pitching rubber
- 2) Position yourself on the edge of the outfield grass behind the shortstop or where the shortstop would normally field his/her position.

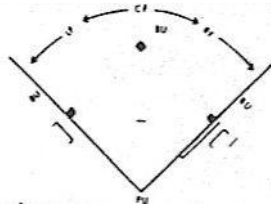
SECTION VII

FOUR UMPIRE SYSTEM

Slow and Fast Pitch

**NOTE: For the veteran NSA umpire, the starting positions listed are “recommended” starting positions. For the experienced umpire these starting positions may dictate a change based upon a given situation. For the inexperienced NSA umpire make sure that you MASTER these “recommended” starting positions that will enable you to handle any new situations or surprises that may occur during the playing of the game.*

THE CHECKLIST FOR THE FOUR UMPIRE SYSTEM



- 1) Provides an umpire at every base allowing for the best possible coverage for force or tag plays on each base or on outfield balls.
- 2) In the four umpire system, one of the three base umpires will go to the outfield on each fly ball hit.
- 3) The first base umpire is responsible for all balls hit between the right fielder and the out of play line or fence.
- 4) The second base umpire is responsible for all balls that are hit in the outfield area between left and right field
NOTE: The second base umpire will spend more time in the outfield observing possible trapped balls, balls hit near the fence, batted balls that either bounce over or go under the fence or go completely over the fence on a fly ball, than he will making calls at second base.
- 5) The third base umpire is responsible for all batted balls hit between the left fielder and the foul ball line and balls hit close to the fence.

**REMEMBER – Any time an umpire goes out to the outfield, the remaining three umpires should revert to the three-umpire system. Equally important to remember is that the umpire who goes out stays out until all play has ceased.*

SECTION VIII

MAJOR POINTS IN SLOWPITCH SOFTBALL MAJOR POINTS IN FASTPITCH SOFTBALL

MAJOR POINTS IN SLOWPITCH SOFTBALL

- 1) **ALTERED BAT:** When the physical structure of a legal bat has been changed, or an illegal or non-approved bat has been changed to resemble a legal bat.
Effect: *The ball is dead, the batter is declared out, and baserunners may not advance. In adult slow pitch play the batter is ejected from the game. In the slow pitch youth divisions, the batter and coach are both ejected.*
- 2) **BAT INFORMATION:** Shall be round (three sided bats are no longer legal) and shall be smooth. Shall not be more than 2 ¼ inches in diameter at it's largest part. Shall be free of deep or dangerous dents. All bats approved for NSA Play must have a BPF of 1.20 or less. Exception: *The 8 & Under Division can use any bat stamped official softball bat.*
MAXIMUM DIMENSIONS ARE:
 - a. Weight – 38 ounces
 - b. Length – 34 inches
 - c. Diameter – 2 ¼ inches
 - d. Safety grip – 15 inches from handle endMINIMUM DIMENSIONS ARE:
 - a. Weight – none
 - b. Length – none
 - c. Diameter – none
 - d. Safety grip – 10 inches from handle end

*NSA BAT REQUIREMENTS - Due to changes each year please refer to Rule 3, Section 1 of the NSA Official Rulebook for updated information and requirements.
*NOTE: *The Official NSA approved bat list can be found on the NSA Web Page (PlayNSA.com). The bat approval list is changed weekly.*
- 3) **ILLEGAL PLAYER:** A player who enters the line-up without the right to the offensive or defensive position.
Examples of an illegal player:
 - a. Illegal use of the re-entry rule.
 - b. Illegal use of the courtesy runner rule.
 - c. Using a player to pitch who was removed from the pitching position.
 - d. Unreported substitute.Effect: *Handled as a protest and can be made at any time while the player is in the game.*
- 4) **INELIGIBLE PLAYER:** A player who is unregistered or who does not meet requirements to register.
Examples of an ineligible player:
 - a. Playing under an assumed name.
 - b. Players not on the team roster.
 - c. Violating residence requirements.
 - d. Violating divisional age requirements.
 - e. Player(s) listed on two separate official NSA rosters without an official release from the State Director.Effect: *Result in a forfeited game if appealed properly.*
- 5) **SHOES:** Offensive player wearing metal cleats will be declared out and ejected from the game. Defensive player will be ejected from the game. Baserunner(s) must return to the last base occupied at the time of the pitch.
- 6) **JEWELRY:** In all NSA Youth Division play no jewelry is allowed. Unexposed jewelry is allowed in youth play as long as it remains unexposed.
Effect: *First warning/a team warning. Second offense/player will be ejected.*
- 7) **PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT:** Players are permitted to wear any approved protective equipment. Protective equipment cannot be detached/can cause obstruction. Repeated acts could cause ejection from the game.
- 8) **COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PROCEDURE:** A player bleeding or has an open wound, the bleeding must be stopped and the open wound covered with a covering strong enough to withstand the rigors of competition. Treatment must be immediate with the game being suspended for a “reasonable amount of time”. Player must be substituted for if the time becomes unreasonable.
- 9) **FITNESS OF FIELD:** Shall be decided by the Tournament Director, Tournament UIC and the Home Plate Umpire.
- 10) **RUN SCORES:** A run shall not be scored if the third out of the inning is the result of:
 - a. The batter being put out before legally touching first base.
 - b. A baserunner being forced out due to the batter becoming a baserunner.
 - c. A baserunner leaving base before a pitched ball reaches home plate or before the pitched ball is batted.
 - d. An appeal play at first base on the batter/runner for the third out of the inning.
- 11) **HOME RUN RULE/PENALTIES:** Due to possible changes each year please refer to Rule 5, Section 12, 13, 14, and 15 of the NSA Official Rulebook for updated home run limits and penalties.
- 12) **BATTING OUT OF BATTER’S BOX:** To be called out of the box, one or both feet must be completely outside the lines of the box when contact is made with the ball.
 - a. The lines are considered inside the box – batter is not out if any part of the batter’s foot is touching the lines.

- b. The ball must be hit; and the foot must also be on the ground at the time the batter hits the ball.
 - c. The batter is out if his/her foot is touching home plate while batter is making contact with the ball.
 - d. Batting out of the batter's box is not an appeal play.
 - e. Call "Out of the Box" immediately whether the ball is fair or foul.
 - f. If there are not batting box lines evident, use good judgment and give the benefit of doubt to the batter.
- 13) DELIBERATELY CRASHING INTO A FIELDER WITH THE BALL:
- a. The ball becomes dead.
 - b. If it was an attempt to break up an obvious double play, the succeeding runner shall also be declared out.
 - c. If the collision occurs after the runner was declared out, the runner closest to home plate is declared out.
Note: *Keep in mind that a player DOES NOT have to slide. He/she may not deliberately (with great force) crash into a fielder WITH the ball.*
- 14) EXTRA PLAYER(S) (EP):
- a. A team provided it is made known prior to the start of the game may use one or two extra player(s).
 - b. The extra player(s) must remain in the same position in the batting order for the entire game.
 - c. The extra player(s) can play defense at any time – may go in and out of the defensive lineup as long as he keeps his position in the batting order.
 - d. One or both extra player(s) may be substituted for at any time. The substitute must be a player who has not been in the game. The substitute becomes the EP.
- 15) RE-ENTRY RULE:
- a. Any of the starting players may be withdrawn and re-entered once during the game. Both players must occupy the original position in the batting order.
 - b. The original player and his substitute can not be in the game at the same time.
 - c. Violation of the re-entry rule is considered use of an illegal player.
 - d. Penalty is the ejection of the illegal player immediately when the violation is brought to the attention of the Umpire.
- 16) REQUIREMENTS FOR THE NUMBER OF PLAYERS:
- a. A team may play a maximum of ten (10) players on defense and a minimum of nine (9) players. If a team starts with nine (9) players the vacant tenth spot in the batting order is subject to the "automatic out" and shall be declared an out the entire game. If the tenth player arrives, he/she may not enter the game in the tenth spot. EXCEPTION: *In league play only.*
 - b. A team may play with eleven (11) or twelve (12) players if the EP(s) is used.
 - c. If the EP or any other player is removed or ejected from the game with no substitute to replace him or her, the vacated spot in the batting order will be scored as an out.
 - d. If the EP or any other player is removed because of an injury and no substitute is available to replace him or her, the vacated spot in the batting order will be scored as an out.
 - e. If a team using an EP has a player removed because of an injury or ejection with no substitute available, the team may finish with ten (10) players, but is still subject to the penalty having the vacated spot(s) being scored as an out.
 - f. If there are two (2) outs, the opposing team may not intentionally, or unintentionally walk the previous batter to get to the automatic out. If the previous batter is walked, the vacated spot(s) is skipped the automatic out is waived and the next batter will be the player whose name follows the vacated spot – THIS ONLY APPLIES WHEN THERE ARE TWO OUTS.
- 17) FAKE TAG: Occurs when a fielder deceives the runner, causing him to slide or stop running when no play is being made on him.
- a. Obstruction is called when a fake tag is made as mentioned above. The Umpire gives the delayed dead ball signal and lets the play continue to its completion. The Umpire awards the base(s) the runner would have gotten had there been no obstruction.
 - b. When the obstruction occurs on a fake tag, the fielder will be automatically ejected from the game.
- 18) FALLING OVER THE FENCE ON A CATCH: When a fielder catches the ball in the air and his momentum carries him through, or over the fence, the catch is good, the batter is out, and with less than two (2) outs all runners advance one base without liability to be put out.
- a. When the fielder catches the ball *before* he touches the ground outside the playing area, the catch is good.
 - b. When the fielder catches the ball *after* he touches the ground outside the playing area, the catch is not allowed.
- 19) FORFEITS: Only the plate umpire may forfeit a game.
- a. Team fails to appear on the field, or refuses to begin the game when it has been scheduled to start.
 - b. When the game is being played, a team refuses to play or resume play when instructed to by the umpire.
 - c. Team uses tactics to delay or hasten the playing of the game.
 - e. Player/manager who has been ejected fail to leave the field immediately when ordered to do so.
 - f. Team does not have the designated number of players to begin or continue a game.
 - g. When the base umpire forfeits a game and the plate umpire agrees, the plate umpire should announce the forfeit to prevent a protest from being filed.
 - h. If the plate umpire disagrees with the called forfeit by the base umpire, the plate umpire can and should reverse the forfeit decision.
 - i. The umpire may forfeit the game if physically attacked by a player/coach or spectator.
- 20) ILLEGAL PITCH: Is a pitch that does not reach a minimum height of six (6) feet or exceeds ten (10) feet at its highest point above the ground.
- a. The umpire shall not or will not give a vocal warning or a delayed ball signal to the batter or the pitcher on an illegally pitched ball.

- 21) ORANGE BASE: Due to possible changes to the rule each year, please refer to Rule 8, Section 8 (z) of the NSA Official Rulebook for updates and changes.
- 22) IMAGINARY OR DEAD BALL AREA: When the fielder carries a live ball into a dead ball area, the ball becomes dead and a base or bases are awarded to all baserunners.
 - a. If the act is unintentional, one base is awarded.
 - b. If the act is intentional, two bases are awarded.
- 23) INTERFERENCE: The types of interference are:
 - a. An act of the offensive player or coach which impedes, hinders, or confuses a defensive player attempting to execute a play. Including vocal interference.
 - b. When a spectator interferes with a defensive player who, in the judgment of the umpire, could have caught a live ball.
 - c. When an umpire causes offensive interference
- 24) OBSTRUCTION: The three major types of obstruction are:
 - a. An obstructed runner being played on – the ball is dead and all runners are awarded the bases they would have gotten had the obstruction no occurred.
 - b. An obstructed runner not being played on – umpire signals delayed dead ball – other runners may be put out; the obstructed runner may not be put out unless he advances past the base he would have gotten if he were not obstructed.
 - c. When a defensive player hinders or prevents a hitter from striking or hitting a pitched ball.
- 25) INTENTIONAL COLLISION: The baserunner must be called out if he remains on his feet and deliberately (with great force) crashes into the defensive player who has the ball. The ball becomes dead and all runners must return to the bases last touched when the collision occurred. If the act is determined to be flagrant, the offender shall be ejected. NOTE: *Runners DO NOT have to slide, the runner just can't deliberately cause a collision.*
- 26) OVERTHROWS:
 - a. Runners are always awarded two (2) bases on overthrows that become blocked.
 - b. When it's the first throw from an infielder, two bases are awarded from the last base possessed at the time of the pitch.
 - c. When all runners, including the batter-runner have advanced at least one base when an overthrow occurs, the two bases will be awarded from where the runners were at the time of the throw.
- 27) PITCHING REGULATIONS:
 - a. One or both feet must be in contact with the pitching rubber.
 - b. Ball can be held in one or both hands.
 - c. Ball must be held for one (1) second, and not more than five (5) seconds before delivering the next pitch.
 - d. Must release the ball the first time past the hip on the forward swing.
 - e. If a step is taken, it can be forward, backward or sideways.
 - f. The ball must be delivered with moderate speed at a height of between six (6) to ten (10) feet.
 - g. The catcher must stay in the catcher's box until the ball reaches home plate or is batted.
 - h. The ball must be returned directly to the pitcher on any ball not hit.
 - i. If the batter swings at an illegal pitch, the illegal pitch is ignored.
- 28) TIME: When a ball is held in the infield after a hit, and in the judgment of the umpire, all is play is completed the umpire shall call time. Players should realize that time is not automatic, nor is time out until the umpire calls time. EXCEPTION: *Men's Open the ball remains alive.*
- 29) FOUL BALL: Baserunners may not advance on a third strike foul ball including a legally caught foul fly. Prior to the third strike all foul balls are playable and runners may advance.
- 30) UMPIRE UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS:
An Official NSA Sanctioned Umpire must wear an Official NSA Umpiring Uniform as written in the NSA Official Rule Book, consisting of the following:

OFFICIAL SLOW PITCH UMPIRE'S UNIFORM:

All NSA Umpires must be registered and have a valid registration number, prior to placing an order for umpires or taking the field. All NSA umpires must wear an Official NSA umpiring uniform consisting of the following:

- 1) Official NSA umpire shirt w/embroidered logo.
NOTE: *Any clothing worn under the official umpire shirt must be plain white with no writing or graphics of any kind.*
EXCEPTION: *The embroidered official NSA mock turtleneck*
- 2) Black trousers with belt loops (Slowpitch).
- 3) Heather grey trousers with belt loops (Fastpitch).
NOTE: *Trousers do not include jeans, sweatpants, jogging pants, or other pants or slacks that would not be considered dress trousers.*
- 4) Black shorts with belt loops with official NSA logo.
*NOTE: *Black shorts, with belt loops, may be worn at all levels of NSA sanctioned play. Exception – Fastpitch Softball. It is up to the discretion of the Tournament Director to allow umpires to wear shorts or trousers during all post-season play. It is recommended that umpires, in cooperation with the league/tournament Umpire-In-Chief, coordinate their uniforms to look alike, i.e. one Umpire wears shorts, both wear shorts. This is the same for trousers. When shorts are worn, solid white crew socks must be worn. Ankle socks or footies are not acceptable as part of the NSA OFFICIAL UNIFORM.*
- 5) Black Belt.
- 6) Black socks with trousers and white crew socks with black shorts.

- 7) Black jacket with official NSA logo.
- 8) Black half-sleeve jacket with official NSA logo
- 9) Black shoes.

NOTE: *Black official (umpire) shoes bearing the white logo, trademark or manufacturers name is legal. NO WALKING BOOTS OR CASTS PERMITTED.*

- 10) White mock with official NSA logo or plain white regular turtleneck.
- 11) Black rain gear (top and bottom).
- 12) Black cap w/official NSA Logo.
- 13) Black ball bag w/official NSA logo.

NOTE: *Ball bag must be worn on the hip or slightly to the rear of hip.*

***NOTE:** *Any umpire apparel (hat, jacket, etc) that is issued to an umpire for being assigned to a special event (NIT, World Series, a Super World Series, etc) may NOT be worn after the conclusion of said special event as a part of the official NSA Umpire uniform*

UNIFORM REQUIREMENT: The following items sold by NSA that bears the official NSA logo is mandatory wear and to be purchased from the NSA National Office: NSA Official Jacket, NSA Official Shorts, NSA Official Half Sleeve Jacket, NSA Official Cap, NSA Official Shirt, NSA Official Rain Gear, NSA Official Mock Turtleneck, NSA Official Ball Bag. To place an order go to www.nsasportinggoods.com.

MAJOR POINTS IN FASTPITCH SOFTBALL

- 1) **ALTERED BAT:** When the physical structure of a legal bat has been changed, or an illegal or non-approved bat has been changed to resemble a legal bat.
Effect: *The ball is dead, the batter is declared out, and baserunners may not advance. In youth fast pitch play the batter and coach are both ejected.*
- 2) **APPROVED BAT:** A bat model becomes approved after the bat manufacturer submits the bat to the NSA after being tested by the official test facility and said bat meets all requirements of a legal NSA bat.
***Note:** *An updated NSA approved bat listed can be found on the NSA Web page (Play NSA.com).*
- 3) **ILLEGAL PLAYER:** Player who enter the line-up without the right to as offensive or defensive position.
Examples of an illegal player:
 - a. Illegal use of the re-entry rule.
 - b. Illegal use of the courtesy runner rule.
 - c. Using the designated hitter (DH) on defense with the exception of adult fast pitch.
 - d. Using a player to pitch who was removed from the pitching position.
 - e. Unreported substitute.
 Effect: *Handled as a protest and can be made at any time while the player is in the game. Violation of the illegal player rule is the immediate ejection of the coach from the game.*
- 4) **INELIGIBLE PLAYER:** A player who is unregistered or who does not meet requirements to register.
Examples of an ineligible player:
 - a. Playing under an assumed name.
 - b. Players not on a official team roster.
 - c. Violating residency requirements.
 - d. Violating divisional age requirements.
 - e. Player(s) listed on two separate official NSA roster without gaining an official release from the State Director.
 Effect: *Penalty for using an ineligible player is a forfeit of any/all games played or in progress.*
- 5) **LEAP:** The pivot foot must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate or the ground until the non-pivot (front foot) touches the ground or the pitcher shall be considered leaping.
Effect: *An illegal pitch is called on the pitcher.*
- 6) **OBSTRUCTION:** A defensive team member who hinders or impedes a batter's attempt to make contact with a pitched ball, or who impedes the progress of a runner or batter/runner who are legally running the bases, unless the fielder has possession of the ball or is fielding a batted ball. The act may be intentional or unintentional, physical or verbal.
- 7) **PITCHING/BASE DISTANCE:** If found to be incorrect, the error should be corrected immediately. There shall be a sixteen (16) foot circle drawn around the pitcher's plate and eight (8) feet in radius. When the ball is in possession of the pitcher within the circle, any runner(s) between bases must immediately advance to the next base or return to the last base touched with liability to be put out. Any runner(s) that fail to return or advance immediately will be declared out. A fake throw by the pitcher from within the circle is considered as making a play on the runner(s) between bases.
- 8) **NSA BAT REQUIREMENTS:** Due to changes each year please refer to Rule 3, Section 1 of the NSA Official Rulebook for updated requirements.
***Note:** *The Official NSA Approved Bat list can be found on the NSA Web Page (PlayNSA.com).*
- 9) **SHOES:** Offensive player wearing metal cleats will be declared out and ejected from the game. Defensive player will be ejected from the game. Baserunner(s) must return to the last base occupied at the time of the pitch.
- 10) **UNIFORM:** Team not in compliance with the uniform rule, the opposing team will have the option of being home or the visiting team. If both teams are not in compliance, a coin flip will be used to determine home or visitors.
- 11) **JEWELRY:** In all NSA Youth Division Play no jewelry is allowed with the exception of medical alert jewelry. Prosthesis may be worn, but all metal parts must be covered. Effect: *First warning will be a team warning/second offense the player will be ejected.*

- 12) **BATTING HELMET:** Helmet must bear a NOCSAE stamp and is mandatory. A face guard protection is also mandatory. Effect: *First warning will be a team warning/second offense the player will be ejected.*
- 13) **PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT:** Catchers must wear approved protective equipment (including those catchers warming up pitchers within the confines of the park). All other players are permitted to wear any approved protective equipment. If used all protected equipment must not be detached/can cause obstruction. Repeated acts could be grounds for ejection.
- 14) **COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PROCEDURE:** A player bleeding or has an open wound, the bleeding must be stopped and the open wound covered with a covering strong enough to withstand the rigors of competition. Treatment must be immediate with the game being suspended for a “reasonable amount of time”. Player must be substituted for if the time becomes “unreasonable”.
- 15) **TEAM:** Shall consist of a minimum of nine (9) players and a maximum of twelve (12) players if the two optional extra player(s) (EP) and the designated hitter (DH) are used. Team must have the required number of players present in the team area to start or continue a game. Players listed in the starting line-up and not available at game time may be substituted for and re-entered later. The line-up card/sheet shall contain the player’s first and last name, position, and uniform number. The DH should be listed in the proper batting order with the DH as the player’s position. The player being DH for should be listed as “defensive player” in the designated substitute box at the bottom of the card and should be the first name listed.
- a. If a team starts the game with the EP(s), the team must finish the game with EP(s) or be penalized.
- Penalty: If the EP(s) or any other player is removed, with the exception of the DH, injured or ejected from the game with no substitute to replace the player, the vacated spot automatically becomes an out each time the vacant spot comes to bat. Neither the DH nor the player being DH for may be used to replace the injured EP. A team playing with nine (9) players and no available substitute may finish the game with eight (8) players if an injury occurs with the vacant spot being an out as described in Rule 4, Section 4 c of the Official NSA Rulebook. However, the team must start the game with the minimum of nine players. Team may not with two outs intentionally or unintentionally walk a batter to get to the automatic out, the automatic is waived and the next batter is the player whose name follows the vacant spot.
- *NOTE: *If a team has a vacant spot and a substitute arrives, he/she must be inserted immediately into the vacant spot.*
- 16) **DESIGNATED HITTER (DH):** May not play defense. EXCEPTION: Adult Fast Pitch Softball.
- a. May be used for any player in the line-up.
- b. Must be made known prior to the start of the game with name and number listed on the line-up card or sheet.
- c. Must remain in the same position in the batting order for the entire game.
- d. May be substituted for at any time by the player being hit for, a pinch hitter or a pinch runner. If by the player he/she is hitting for he/she must bat in the same position as the DH was and the DH is terminated for the remainder of the game. If substituted by a pinch hitter or pinch runner other than the player he/she is hitting for/, must be player who has not yet been in the game and that substitute becomes the DH for the remainder of the game unless substituted for. By substituting in this manner, the original DH retains re-entry.
- e. Failure to complete the game with the DH (unless the substitute is the player being hit for) results in the forfeiture of the game.
- 17) **EXTRA PLAYER (EP)**
- a. Can play defense.
- b. EP’s are optional. Coaches can use two EP’s.
- c. If EP is used, must be made known prior to the start of the game and be listed on the line-up sheet or scorecard.
- d. Must be used the entire game.
- e. Must remain in the same position in the batting order for the entire game.
- f. If used, all players (10 or 11) must bat and any nine (9) can play defense. Defensive positions can be changed but the batting order must remain the same.
- g. May be substituted for at any time either by a pinch hitter or pinch runner or then becomes the EP. Substitute may be a player who has yet been in the game.
- 18) **RE-ENTRY RULE**
- a. Any of the starting players may be withdrawn from the game and re-entered once.
- b. Includes the starting EP(s) and/or the DH must occupy the same position in the batting order whenever they are in the game.
- c. Violation of the re-entry rule results in the use of an illegal player.
- d. Violation of the re-entry rule is handled as a protest that can be made anytime during the game.
- Penalty: In youth division softball, the violation of the illegal player rule results in the ejection of the coach.
- 19) **COURTESY RUNNER:** The player in the batting order where the last out was recorded or any player not currently in the game may be used as a courtesy runner for the pitcher or the catcher.
- a. Player can only be used once per inning.
- b. Should the player that made the last recorded out be on base for any reason, batting or already been used as the courtesy runner in that inning, the new courtesy runner would be determined by going back to previous outs or to any player not currently in the game.
- c. In the first inning if a courtesy runner is used for the pitcher or catcher (who are listed in the lineup when the lineups are turned in) and there are no outs, the courtesy runner will be the player furthest removed from the catcher or the pitcher needing the courtesy runner or any player not currently in the game.
- d. In the event the pitcher/catcher has made the last out, the team shall have the following options for the use of a courtesy runner:
1. A player not in the game.
 2. The pitcher/catcher (who made the last out).
 3. Go back to the previous out.

- e. The player in the batting order where the last out was recorded or any player not currently in the game may replace the current (the player physically playing the position when the 3rd out was recorded) pitcher or catcher as courtesy runner at any time.
 - f. The pitcher or catcher may be used as the courtesy runner.
Penalty: Using the wrong courtesy runner constitutes the violation of the illegal player rule, which in youth softball is the ejection of both the coach and the player.
- 20) TIE BREAKING RULE: Game tied after the regulation innings have been played the tie breaking system will be used to determine the winner. This would involve that the last batter of the previous inning whose turn at bat had been completed will assume a position on second base as a runner. This would be done at the beginning of each half inning.
- 21) PITCHING REGULATIONS:
- a. Pitcher takes his position with both feet on the pitching rubber, with the hands being separated with the ball in either the glove or the pitching hand.
 - b. Pitcher shall take or simulate taking a signal from the catcher from this position.
 - c. Pitcher shall bring the hands together to touch them together for no more than ten (10) seconds.
 - d. Pitcher shall not be considered in the pitching position unless the catcher is in position to receive the pitch.
 - e. Pitch starts when the hands are separated or when the pitcher makes any motion that is part of her windup.
 - f. Hands may only be separated one time per pitch.
 - g. When delivering the ball the pitcher shall not take more than one step which must be forward toward the batter and simultaneous with the delivery of the ball.
 - h. Women and girls may not step backward with the non-pivot foot.
 - i. The pivot foot must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate or ground until the non-pivot foot touches the ground. If a step is taken, the step must be taken within or partially within the 24" of the pitching plate.
 - j. A legal delivery is one which the ball is delivered with an underhand motion.
 - k. The hand must be below the hip and the wrist not farther from the body than the elbow.
 - l. When a forward step is taken toward the batter, the pitch is completed.
 - m. Catcher must return the ball directly to the pitcher after each pitch, except after a strike out, putout made by the catcher or a play on a baserunner. Ball is awarded to the batter.
 - n. Once the ball has been returned to the pitcher, the pitcher has ten (10) seconds to receive the signal from the catcher. Ball is awarded to the batter.
 - o. No motion can be made to pitch without delivering the ball to the batter.
 - p. No rocker action can be used in which having the ball in both hands in the pitching position, the pitcher removes one hand from the ball/takes a backward and forward swing and returns the ball to both hands in front of the body.
 - q. No wind-up can be used where there is a stop or reversal of the forward motion.
 - r. No more than one revolution of the arm in the windmill pitch. The pitching arm may be dropped to the side and to the rear before starting the windmill motion. The ball does not have to be release the first time past the hip.
 - s. Pitcher makes no continuous wind-up after taking the forward step which is simultaneous with the release of the ball.
- 22) The pitcher may not use tape or any other substance on the ball, pitching hand or fingers, nor apply any foreign substance to the ball. EFFECT: *Umpire will indicate delayed dead ball and verbally declare an illegal pitch. Ball is awarded to the batter, all runner(s) advance one base without liability to be put out. If the batter hits the illegal pitch and all runner(s) including the batter/runner do not advance at least one base, the offensive coach has the option of taking the result of the play or the result of the pitch.*
- 23) CHARGED CONFERENCE: One charged conference with the pitcher per inning/Second charged conference results in removing the pitcher from the pitching position for the remainder of the game
- a. If the pitcher is removed from the pitching position on the second conference/ the pitcher can remain in the game at any other position excluding the pitching position for the remainder of the game
 - b. Exception: It is not a charged conference when the manager enters the field of play and removes the pitcher from the pitching position. Player may return to the pitching position.
 - c. Starting or substitute pitcher must pitch to a batter until the batter reaches a base or is put out
 - d. The rules for a charged conference do not change in extra innings.
- 24) BATTING: Batter must take his position in the batter's box within ten (10) seconds after the umpire has declared "Play ball".
- a. Ball is dead
 - b. Strike is called on the batter and issued a warning to take his/her position or risk being called out. The batter will be called out if he/she refuses. Warnings will be given to a batter once an inning; repeated violation during the game by the player will result of the batter being called out.
- 26) BATTING OUT OF ORDER: Appeal play made by the defensive team only.
- a. If discovered while the incorrect batter is batting, correct batter takes his place and legally assumes any balls/strikes.
 - b. If discovered after the incorrect batter has batted and before the next pitch is delivered to the next batter, batter who should have batted is declared out. Any advance or score made because of the batted ball by the incorrect batter's advance to first base on a hit, error or base on balls shall be nullified. The next batter is the player whose name follows that of the player called out for failing to bat
NOTE: *Any out(s) that have been made prior to discovering the infraction remain an out(s).*
 - c. If discovered after the first pitch to the next batter, the turn at bat by the incorrect bat is legal. All runs scored and bases run are legal. The next batter shall be the one whose name follows that of the incorrect batter. No one is called out for failure to bat. Players who have not batted and not been called out lose their turn at bat until reached again in the regular order.
 - d. Baserunner cannot be removed from the base in order to bat in their proper order of the line-up. Their place in the order will be accessed with penalty and the batter following him/her in the order becomes the legal batter.

OFFICIAL FAST PITCH UMPIRES UNIFORM:

All NSA Umpires must be registered and have a valid registration number, prior to placing an order for umpires or taking the field. All NSA umpires must wear an Official NSA umpiring uniform consisting of the following:

- 1) Official NSA umpire shirt w/embroidered logo.
NOTE: Any clothing worn under the official umpire shirt must be plain white with no writing or graphics of any kind.
EXCEPTION: The embroidered official NSA mock turtleneck
- 2) Black trousers with belt loops (Slowpitch).
- 3) Heather grey trousers with belt loops (Fastpitch).
NOTE: Trousers do not include jeans, sweatpants, jogging pants, or other pants or slacks that would not be considered dress trousers.
- 4) Black shorts with belt loops with official NSA logo.
**NOTE: Black shorts, with belt loops, may be worn at all levels of NSA sanctioned play. Exception – Fastpitch Softball. It is up to the discretion of the Tournament Director to allow umpires to wear shorts or trousers during all post-season play. It is recommended that umpires, in cooperation with the league/tournament Umpire-In-Chief, coordinate their uniforms to look alike, i.e. one Umpire wears shorts, both wear shorts. This is the same for trousers. When shorts are worn, solid white crew socks must be worn. Ankle socks or footies are not acceptable as part of the NSA OFFICIAL UNIFORM.*
- 5) Black Belt.
- 6) Black socks with trousers and white crew socks with black shorts.
- 7) Black jacket with official NSA logo.
- 8) Black half sleeve jacket with official NSA logo.
- 9) Black shoes. *Black official (umpire) shoes bearing the white logo, trademark or manufacturers name is legal. NO WALKING BOOTS OR CASTS PERMITTED.*
- 10) White mock with official NSA logo or plain white regular turtleneck.
- 11) Black rain gear (top and bottom).
- 12) Black cap with official NSA logo.
- 13) Black ball bag with official NSA logo. *Ball bag must be worn on the hip or slightly to the rear of hip.*
**NOTE: Any umpire apparel (hat, jacket, etc) that is issued to an umpire for being assigned to a special event (NIT, World Series, a Super World Series, etc) may NOT be worn after the conclusion of said special event as a part of the official NSA Umpire uniform*

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