

## SECTION 1 NO RUNNERS ON BASE

- 1.1 The first base umpire should be about 10-12 feet behind the first baseman with both feet in foul territory. The third base umpire should be in the same approximate position behind the third baseman.
- 1.2 If the third base umpire is required to go out to the outfield to render a decision, you will revert back to the two-umpire system. Anytime you go out, **don't try to get back into the play**; wait until all action has ceased before returning to your position.
- 1.3 If the first base umpire goes out, the third base umpire will come straight into the center of the infield and take any play at second or third base on the batter-runner. The plate umpire will come down to first base and be responsible for the batter-runner touching first base and will take any play on the batter-runner returning to first base. The plate umpire will not release the responsibility of the batter-runner until the first base umpire has assumed his/her position after returning from the outfield. Should the batter-runner continue past first base, second, and third, the play at the plate, if any, will be the responsibility of the plate umpire.
- 1.4 With no runners on base, the third base umpire will come straight across to second base on all ground balls and fly balls to the infield and take all plays at second base and third base. The first base umpire will come in and set up in a position needed to render a decision at first base.
- 1.5 With no runners on base, the third base umpire will come straight across the infield toward second base on all fly balls, line drives, and base hits to the outfield and render all decisions on the batter-runner going into second base unless, of course, he/she has found it necessary to go out to the outfield. The first base umpire will come into the infield on all fly balls and line drives to the left side of the outfield (from the center fielder straight in and to the center fielder's right) whether or not the third base umpire goes out. If the ball is not hit in the air to the left side of the outfield, the first base umpire will drift toward the direction of first base so as to be in proper position for any play on the batter-runner returning to first base. (See item 1.7 below.)
- 1.6 With no runners on base, if the batter hits a base hit to the outfield which goes beyond or through the outfielder, the third base umpire will start toward second base, and the first base umpire will come in and pivot watching the batter-runner touch first and will continue to take the batter-runner into second. The third base umpire, seeing the ball has gone through the outfielder, will then hold up and be ready to take the batter-runner into third base. However, if the ball stays in front of the outfielder and is bobbled or is a slow hit ball and the batter-runner tries to stretch it into a double, the third base umpire, who has started across the infield, will be responsible for the play at second base. The first base umpire, who has come in and pivoted, will watch the batter-runner touch first and release the batter-runner to the third base umpire for the play at second base. Both **verbal and**

**hand** signals should be used to communicate with each other during this situation. Remember that if there is a **play** on the batter-runner at second base in this situation, it belongs to the third base umpire. If there is **no play** at second base (i.e., the batter hits a stand-up double), the first base umpire should take the batter-runner into second. Also, in situations where the ball gets loose *after the play at second* and the batter-runner attempts to reach third base, the plate umpire will be responsible for the play at third, and the first base umpire will cover home if necessary.

- 1.7** On all fly balls where neither umpire goes out, if the fly ball is to left field, left center, or where the center fielder is coming straight in as the third base umpire is coming straight across the infield toward second base, the responsibility of the catch or no catch decision will belong to the third base umpire. The responsibility of the play at second also belongs to the third base umpire. (*The third base umpire should not “rim” along the edge of the outfield grass in order to cover these responsibilities.*) On fly balls hit to right center or right field where neither umpire has gone out, the responsibility of the catch or no catch and the touching of first base belong to the first base umpire.

## SECTION 2 RUNNER ON FIRST BASE ONLY

- 2.1** The first base umpire will position himself/herself 6-8 feet beyond the first base bag with both feet in foul territory for the pick-off play at first base. You should be close enough to make the decision on a pick off without moving into the play.
- 2.2** The third base umpire will move into the center of the infield and assume a position on either side of second base that is most comfortable for him/her to take the steal play at second base. (Normally you will set up on the side of second base opposite the pitching arm. However, it is left up to you as to which side you are most comfortable in taking the steal play.) You will never be on the outfield side of the bag, always on the inside of the infield.
- 2.3** If the runner on first is picked off, the infield umpire will have that part of the rundown going into second base and any subsequent play into third base. The first base umpire should move toward second base as the runner continues on to third base and assume responsibility for the back end of a possible rundown between second and third base. The first base umpire should not commit toward second until after the runner has gained possession of second base since the runner over rounding second and returning is the responsibility of the third base umpire.
- 2.4** With a runner on first base only, if the first base umpire goes out for any reason, the infield umpire should slide over toward first base and assume full responsibility for the runner on first base and also have responsibility should the batter become a runner. The plate umpire should go down to third base and take the play on the runner coming from first base, and if that runner continues on to home plate, the plate umpire will also have that responsibility. In this situation it is also permissible for the plate umpire to move up the first base line to take any play at first base on the runner returning after a fly ball or line drive is caught.
- 2.5** With a runner on first base only, if the first base umpire does not go out to the outfield, then on a base hit, after the batter-runner touches first base, the first base umpire will start to move in the direction of home. The infield umpire, after watching the runner on first touch second and seeing that he/she has **committed** to third, will assume responsibility for the batter-runner going to second or returning to first base. The plate umpire will move in the direction of third base and will go into the cutout if there is any likelihood that the runner from first will advance to third on the batted ball. If it is obvious that the runner will not advance to third, it is not necessary for the plate umpire to go all the way to third. If the plate umpire does move into the cutout, he/she will remain at third base until all action has ceased. After the first base umpire has watched the batter-runner touch first and has seen the runner on first **committed** to third base, he/she will come to the plate for any play on the runner from first coming to the plate. However, if the runner originally on first does not go to third base, the first base umpire cannot over-commit to the plate and will have the responsibility for the batter-runner returning to first base. As the first base umpire, do not commit to home until the runner from first has committed to third.

- 2.6** With a runner on first base only, if the infield umpire goes out for any reason, you will revert back to the two-umpire system.
- 2.7** With a runner on first base only, the responsibility of catch or no catch of fly balls and line drives to the outfield belongs to the infield umpire. If the ball is hit down the right field foul line or if the ball is hit where the right fielder comes straight in, then the catch/no catch responsibility belongs to the first base umpire. If the ball is hit where the left field moves any distance toward the foul line, then the catch/no catch responsibility belongs to the plate umpire.

*(Note that some crews prefer to have the first base umpire cover all fly balls and line drives from the center fielder straight in all the way to the right field line. The infield umpire would then take the center fielder moving to his/her right all the way to the left fielder moving straight in. The plate umpire would take the left fielder moving to his/her right. These are also acceptable mechanics for fly ball-line drive coverage with a runner on first base only.)*

## SECTION 3

### RUNNERS ON FIRST AND SECOND; LESS THAN TWO OUT

- 3.1 The first base umpire will position himself/herself 6-8 feet behind the first baseman with both feet in foul territory.
- 3.2 The third base umpire will position himself/herself halfway between the pitcher's mound and second base on the third base side of the mound in a position ready for plays at second or third.
- 3.3 With runners on first and second base, fly ball and line drive responsibilities remains the same as with a runner on first base only. The plate umpire will remain home. The tag up at second base and the possible play at third belongs to the infield umpire. The tag up at first belongs to the first base umpire, but the play at second base belongs to the infield umpire. Again, let the ball take you to your play.

An optional method of covering the tag up with runners on first and second is for the plate umpire to take the play at third on the runner tagging up at second. In this case, the third base umpire will slide over and take responsibility of the runner on first base, and the first base umpire will move home to cover a possible play at the plate. This would be a crew mechanic and should be clearly understood by each member of the crew.

- 3.4 With runners on first and second base, on any base hit the plate umpire will remain at **home**, and the first and third base umpires will assume responsibility for all plays on the bases. On a base hit, the first base umpire will pivot and take the batter-runner into second; he/she is responsible for any play made on the batter-runner at second base or back into first base.
- 3.5 With runners on first and second base, if the first base umpire goes out on a fly ball, the plate umpire will move up toward third base and the first base umpire will come into the center of the infield. If both runners are tagging up to advance, both tag-up responsibilities belong to the first base umpire, and the play at third base on the runner from second base belongs to the plate umpire. The play at second base on the runner from first base and the responsibility of the runner from first belong to the first base umpire.
- 3.6 With runners on first and second base, if the first base umpire goes out, you will revert back to the two-umpire system.
- 3.7 With runners on first and second base and an obvious bunting situation, the third base umpire will stay behind third, and the first base umpire will move into the center of the infield setting up on the first base side of the infield. This is optional; however, it is much easier to cover the first play at third should the defense decide to throw there.

## **SECTION 4**

### **RUNNERS ON FIRST AND SECOND; TWO OUT**

- 4.1** The third base umpire will position himself/herself 6-8 feet behind the third baseman.
- 4.2** The first base umpire will position himself/herself halfway between the pitcher's mound and second base on the first base side of the mound.
- 4.3** With runners on first and second with two out, fly ball and line drive responsibilities remain the same as with runners on second and third. The plate umpire will remain at home.
- 4.4** With runners on first and second with two out, on any ball hit, the third base umpire is responsible for the touching of third base and possible plays at third base. The infield umpire is responsible for the touching of first and second and possible plays at first and second base, including plays on the batter-runner.
- 4.5** Note that some crews prefer to leave the first base umpire at first base with runners on first and second with two out. This is permissible, and in that case the mechanics for fly balls and base hits would be the same as in Section 3 of this manual.

## **SECTION 5**

### **BASES LOADED; LESS THAN TWO OUT**

- 5.1** The first base umpire will position himself/herself behind the first baseman with both feet in foul territory.
- 5.2** The third base umpire will position himself/herself halfway between the pitcher's mound and second base on the third base side of the mound in a position ready for plays at second or third.
- 5.3** On balls hit to the infield, the infield umpire will render all decisions at second and third base. The first base umpire will render all decisions at first base. The plate umpire will remain at the plate.
- 5.4** On fly balls and line drives to the outfield where neither umpires goes out, the infield umpire will be responsible for the catch/no catch on all balls hit directly at the left fielder and between the left fielder and the right fielder moving toward center field. The first base umpire will be responsible for fly balls directly at the right fielder. (*See Section 2, Item 7 for alternate catch/no catch responsibilities.*)
- 5.5** If the infield umpire goes out for any reason, the first base umpire will come into the center of the infield, and you will revert back to the two-umpire system. If the first base umpire goes out for any reason, you will again revert back to the two-umpire system for all coverage's.
- 5.6** The tagging up by the runner on third base belongs to the home plate umpire. The tagging up by the runner on second base going to third belongs to the infield umpire. The tagging up by the runner on first base going to second belongs to the first base umpire. Remember to let the ball take you to your play.
- 5.7** With bases loaded and less than two out, on any base hit the plate umpire will remain at home, and the first and third base umpires will assume responsibility for all plays on the bases. On a base hit, the first base umpire will pivot and take the batter-runner into second; he/she is responsible for any play made on the batter-runner at second base or back into first base.

## **SECTION 6**

### **BASES LOADED; TWO OUT**

- 6.1** The third base umpire will position himself/herself 6-8 feet behind the third baseman.
- 6.2** The first base umpire will position himself/herself between the pitcher's mound and second base on the first base side of the pitcher's mound.
- 6.3** With bases loaded and two out, fly ball and line drive responsibilities remain the same as with runners on second and third. The plate umpire will remain home.
- 6.4** With bases loaded and two out, on any ball hit, the third base umpire is responsible for the touching of third base and possible plays at third base. The infield umpire is responsible for the touching of first and second base and possible plays at first and second base, including plays on the batter-runner.
- 6.5** Note that some crews prefer to leave the first base umpire at first base with bases loaded and two out. This is permissible, and in that case the mechanics for fly balls and base hits would be the same as in Section 5 of this manual.

## SECTION 7

### RUNNERS ON FIRST AND THIRD; LESS THAN TWO OUT

- 7.1** The third base umpire will position himself/herself halfway between the pitcher's mound and second base on the third base side of the mound in a position ready for plays at second or third.
- 7.2** The first base umpire will position himself/herself 6-8 feet beyond the first base bag with both feet in foul territory.
- 7.3** Fly ball responsibility remains the same as with runners on first and second or with a runner on first base only. The plate umpire is responsible for the runner on third tagging up and advancing to home plate.
- 7.4** With runners on first and third base and less than two out, on a base hit the plate umpire will come up to third base and assume the responsibility of the runner going to third base from first base. The infield umpire, after watching the runner from first base touch second base and seeing that he/she is in fact going to advance to third base, will slide over to the first base side of the mound and assume responsibility for the batter-runner advancing to second base or returning to first base. After the first base umpire has watched the batter-runner touch first and has seen the runner on first **committed** to third base, he/she will come to the plate for any possible play there.
- 7.5** With runners on first and third base and less than two out, on a fly ball where the runner on third is tagging up, the responsibility for the tag up and the play at the plate belongs to the plate umpire. The first base umpire will come in and pivot, lining up the tag from first base and assuming responsibility of the runner on first. The infield umpire has the responsibility for the play at second base. Should the runner tagging up at third base hold up and true to third base, the infield umpire also has responsibility for the play back into third. In that situation (play back into third), if the runner on first base tags up and goes into second base, the responsibility for him/her belongs to the first base umpire.

## **SECTION 8**

### **RUNNERS ON FIRST AND THIRD; TWO OUT**

- 8.1** The third base umpire will position himself/herself 6-8 feet behind the third baseman with both feet in foul territory.
- 8.2** The first base umpire will position himself/herself halfway between the pitcher's mound and second base on the first base side of the mound.
- 8.3** With runners on first and third base with two out, on any ball hit, the plate umpire shall remain at home plate for possible plays. The third base umpire remains at third base for the touching of third and possible plays at that base. The infield umpire is responsible for plays at first and second, including plays on the batter-runner.
- 8.4** With runners on first and third with two out, fly ball and line drive responsibilities remain the same as with runners on second and third. The plate umpire will remain at home.
- 8.5** Note that some crews prefer to leave the first base umpire at first base with runners on first and third and two out. This is permissible, and in that case the mechanics for fly balls and base hits would be the same as in Section of this manual.

## SECTION 9 RUNNER ON SECOND BASE ONLY

- 9.1** With a runner on second base only the third base umpire will position himself/herself 6-8 feet behind the third baseman with both feet in foul territory.
- 9.2** The first base umpire will position himself/herself in the infield setting up on the first base side of the infield on the edge of the infield grass, approximately 10-12 feet from second base.
- 9.3** On any ball hit to an infielder, the third base umpire will be responsible for all plays at third base. The infield umpire will be responsible for all plays at second and first.
- 9.4** On fly balls and line drives to the outfield, the responsibility for the catch or no catch belongs to the infield umpire unless the ball is hit down the third base line or to the left fielder coming straight in or going to the foul line. In that case, the responsibility will belong to the third base umpire, who is on the foul line. With an umpire on the third base line and one in the center of the infield, on any ball hit where the right fielder moves any distance toward the foul line, the responsibility for fair/foul and catch/no catch belongs to the home plate umpire.

*(Note that with a runner on second base only, some crews prefer to have the third base umpire take responsibility for coverage from the centerfielder straight in all the way to the left field line. In this situation the first base umpire would take the center fielder moving to his/her left all the way to the right fielder coming straight in. The plate umpire would then take the right fielder moving toward his/her left. These are acceptable mechanics.)*

- 9.5** With a runner on second base only, if the infield umpire goes out, the third base umpire will come into the center of the infield, and you will revert back to the two-umpire system.
- 9.6** If the third base umpire goes out for any reason, you will again revert back to the two-umpire system.

## SECTION 10 RUNNERS ON SECOND AND THIRD

- 10.1** With runners on second and third base, the third base umpire will position himself/herself 6-8 feet behind the third baseman with both feet in foul territory.
- 10.2** The first base umpire will position himself/herself in the infield setting up on the first base side of the infield on the edge of the infield grass, approximately 10-12 feet from second base.
- 10.3** On any ball hit to an infielder, the third base umpire will be responsible for all plays at third base. The infield umpire will be responsible for all plays at first and second.
- 10.4** On fly balls and line drives to the outfield, the responsibility for the catch or no catch **belongs** to the infield umpire unless the ball is hit down the third base line or to the left fielder coming straight in or going to the foul line. In those cases, the responsibility will belong to the third base umpire, who is on the foul line. With an umpire on the third base line and one in the center of the infield, or any ball hit where the right fielder moves any distance toward the foul line, the responsibility for fair/foul and catch/no catch belongs to the home plate umpire. (See Section 8.9, Item 4 for optional method of covering fly balls and line drives to the outfield with runners on second and third.)
- 10.5** With runners on second and third base, if the infield umpire goes out, the third base umpire will come into the center of the infield, and you will revert back to the two-umpire system.
- 10.6** With runners on second and third base, if the third base umpires goes out for any reason, you will revert back to the two-umpire system.

## SECTION 11 RUNNER ON THIRD BASE ONLY

- 11.1** With a runner on third base only, the third base umpire will position himself/herself 6-8 feet behind the third baseman with both feet in foul territory.
- 11.2** The first base umpire will position himself/herself 10-12 feet behind the first baseman with both feet in foul territory.
- 11.3** On balls hit to the infield, the third base umpire will remain at third base for a possible play there. The first base umpire will come in and set up for a possible play at first base. Should the ball be overthrown, then the first base umpire will continue on into the infield, pivot, and take the batter-runner into second base or back into first base.
- 11.4** On a fly ball where the runner from third base may be tagging up to advance, the third base umpire will position himself/herself in such a position as to line up the tag. The first base umpire will come in and pivot; assuming full responsibility for the batter-runner going into second base or returning to first base should the ball be dropped.
- 11.5** On a clean base hit, the third base umpire will come into the infield and take responsibility for the batter-runner going into second base **except** that the responsibility for the batter-runner on a stand-up double will be the same as outline in paragraph 6 of Section 1, “No Runners on Base.” The first base umpire will come in, pivot, and take the batter-runner into second base or back into first base, again as outlined in paragraph 6 of Section 8.1 of this manual.
- 11.6** With a runner on third base only, if the third base umpire goes out, the first base umpire will come in, pivot, and take responsibility for the batter-runner. You will then revert back to the two-umpire system.
- 11.7** With a runner on third base only, if the first base umpire goes out, the third base umpire will come into the center of the infield and take responsibility for the batter-runner going into second base or returning to first base. The home plate umpire will drop back into foul territory and take responsibility for the runner on third tagging up. In this situation, the third base umpire is responsible for the batter-runner touching first base.
- 11.8** With a runner on third base only, on a fly ball or line drive from left field to center field where neither umpire goes out, the third base umpire will have responsibility of the tag up at third base and will also have the responsibility of the catch/no catch decisions. The first base umpire will come in, pivot, and take responsibility of the batter-runner going into second base or returning to first base.

## **SECTION 12 CHECKED SWINGS**

When the batter checks his/her swing and the plate umpire requests help from his/her partner, the plate umpire shall, in all cases, ask the first base umpire with a right-handed batter at bat or the third base umpire with a left-handed batter at bat.