

NSA FAST PITCH UMPIRE MANUAL

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION I	3 – 10
NSA Umpire Code of Ethics	3
Do's and Don'ts of Umpiring	4
NSA Umpire Philosophy	5
NSA Umpire Techniques	6 – 7
Rules for Good Umpiring	8
Preparing Oneself for the Game	9 – 10
SECTION II	11 – 14
Umpire Mechanics – Home Plate Umpire	
Balls and Strikes	11
Ball Rotation Procedure	11
Fly Balls	11
Fair and Foul Balls	12
Leaving Home Plate	12
Pop Fly	12
Conferences	12
Calls at Third Base	12
Run Downs	13
Run Count	13
Tag Plays at Home Plate	13
Appeal at the Plate	13
Dead Ball Situations	13
Time Out – Suspension of Play	13
Catcher Obstruction	14
Illegal Pitch	14
Home Run Balls	14
Helpful Hints	14
SECTION III	15 – 18
Umpire Mechanics – Base Umpire	
Mechanics on the Bases	15
Calling the Bases	15 – 16
The Force Play and Tag Plays	16 – 17
Tag Plays	16
Pulled Foot	16
Swipe Tag	16
Running Out of the Base Line	17
Interference	17
Obstruction	17
Collision	17
Helpful Hints	17 – 18
SECTION IV	19 – 20
Checklist for Single Umpire System	19
Ground Ball Situation	19
All Other Situations	20

SECTION V	21 – 24
Checklist for Two Umpire System	21 – 22
No runners on base, infield ground ball	22
No runners on base, ball to the out field	22
Runner on 1 st base, infield ground ball	22
Runner on 1 st base, ball to outfield	23
Runner on 1 st and 2 nd , or 2 nd only, infield ground ball	23
Runner on 1 st and 2 nd , 2 nd only, ball to outfield	23
Bases loaded, 1 st & 3 rd , or 3 rd only, infield ground ball	23
Bases loaded, 1 st & 3 rd or 3 rd only, ball hit to outfield	23 – 24
 SECTION VI	 25 – 33
Checklist for Three Umpire System	25
Starting Positions	25
No Runners on Base	26
Runners on 1 st Base	26 – 27
Runner on 2 nd Base	27 – 28
Runner on 3 rd Base	28 – 29
Runners on 1 st and 2 nd Bases	29
Runners on 1 st and 3 rd Bases	30
Runners on 2 nd and 3 rd Bases	31 – 32
Bases Loaded	31 – 32
Position Between Innings	32 – 33
 SECTION VII	 34 – 41
Checklist for Four Umpire System	34
Starting Positions	34
Rotation when Umpire goes to outfield	34
No Runners on Base	35
Runners on 1 st Base	35 – 36
Runner on 2 nd Base	36 – 37
Runner on 3 rd Base	37
Runners on 1 st and 2 nd Bases	37 – 38
Runners on 1 st and 3 rd Bases	38 – 39
Runners on 2 nd and 3 rd Bases	39 – 40
Bases Loaded	40
Position Between Innings	40 – 41
 SECTION VIII	 42 – 45
Major Points in Fast Pitch Softball	42 – 44
Official Fast Pitch Umpires Uniform	45

SECTION I

NSA UMPIRE CODE OF ETHICS DO'S AND DON'TS IN UMPIRING NSA UMPIRE PHILOSOPHY UMPIRE TECHNIQUES RULES FOR GOOD UMPIRING PREPARING ONESELF FOR THE GAME

NSA 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) Be prepared both physically and mentally to administer the game of softball in a professional manner at all times.
- 3) Dress and maintain your appearance in a manner befitting the dignity of the National Softball Association.
- 4) Honor all contracts and assignments regardless of possible inconvenience or financial loss.
- 5) Be fair and unbiased in all your decisions. Render the ruling without regard to the score or to a particular incident.
- 6) Exhibit proper and ethical behavior while interacting with players, coaches and spectators at games.
- 7) Give your complete cooperation and loyalty to the National Softball Association.
- 8) Be professional in your association with your fellow umpires, doing nothing to cause them public embarrassment.
- 9) 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...
- 10) Responsibility for generating public confidence in the sport of Softball.
- 11) Umpires shall hold and maintain the basic tenets of officiating which includes history, integrity, neutrality, respect, sensitivity, professionalism, discretion, and tactfulness
- 12) Umpires shall display and execute superior communication skills, both verbal and non-verbal.
- 13) Umpires shall recognize that anything that may lead to a conflict of interest, either real or apparent, must be avoided. Gifts, favors, special treatment, privileges, employment or a personal relationship with a school or team that can compromise the perceived impartiality of officiating must be avoided.
- 14) Umpires shall resist temptation and outside pressure to use ones Position as an umpire to benefit oneself.
- 15) Umpires shall not make false or misleading statements regarding their qualifications, rating, credentials, experience, training or competence

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.

DONT'S

Wear the wrong or dirty uniform.

Don't 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 cool.

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

Do not get into 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.

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

JUDGMENT: 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 a 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. Its 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: 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. 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.

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, 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) Move on all pitched, batted and thrown balls .
- 21) 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!
- 22) 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.
- 23) 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.
- 24) 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.

PREPARING ONESELF FOR THE GAME

RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS MENTAL PREPARATION AND GAME STRATEGY STAYING IN THE GAME PERFECT FOCUS GETTING IT BACK AFTER YOU HAVE LOST IT UMPIRE CHECKLIST

Be very careful of what you say to anyone about your work as an umpire. Whether you are talking directly to a person or not, be aware that what you say can be overheard and misinterpreted. You should not socialize in any way with anyone from the host institution or teams. Whenever possible umpires should enter and exit together. If confronted by a coach, player, or fan do not enter into a discussion, simply excuse yourself and leave.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

- 1) Perfection is impossible. Excellence is not. Strive for perfection and you will achieve excellence.
- 2) In addition to administering the game according to prescribed set of rules and rendering decisions on the results of action in accordance with these rules, umpires must accept their role as a model for the fair play.
- 3) With greater knowledge comes greater responsibility. An umpire seeks self improvement through the study of the game, the rules, the mechanics, and the techniques of personal and personal management.
- 4) Umpiring is a science, but it is also an art. There are formulas for some parts of umpiring, but no formulas for other parts. Rules and mechanics are science, and for the most part, have formulas. Savvy, discretion and management are art with no formulas that will work for all umpires all times. Mastery of both is absolutely necessary and integral for the consummate umpire.
- 5) In addition to administering the game according to prescribed set of rules and rendering decisions on the results of action in accordance with these rules, umpires must accept their role as a model for the fair play.
- 6) Umpires must:
 - a) Ensure that every athlete has a reasonable opportunity to perform to the best of his/her ability;
 - b) End any situation that threatens the safety of the athletes;
 - c) Not tolerate intimidation by word or action of athletes, coach, or umpire;
 - d) Maintain a healthy atmosphere and environment for completion;
 - e) Handle conflicts firmly but with dignity and respect for those involved.
- 7) Every umpire is always representing every other umpire. Whatever one umpire does reflect on all umpires. Every umpire has an obligation to treat the other umpire with dignity, courtesy, and respect and to cooperate with them if they are his partner.
- 8) Umpire must realize and accept that some time they will err in judgment—no matter how diligent and conscientious they are, and regardless of their positioning and knowledge of the rules. This is not cause to express shame, be overly humble, seek absolution, or hang your head. The ability to separate who you are from what you do is crucial. Making one bad call does not make you a bad umpire. Umpires must possess the ability during a game to put the error aside to be examined later), maintain concentration for future plays and continue to work at their highest level.
- 9) Umpires must be able to admit errors or poor judgment without becoming defensive, trying to justify, feeling insecure or experiencing self doubt.

MENTAL PREPARATION AND GAME STRATEGY

Master the concept, Embrace the Philosophy. Approach your game and your umpiring in a methodical, rational fashion. Know in advance how you would like to umpire this game. Ascribe specific qualities or actions to your umpiring. Determine how you want to feel when the game is over.

Use your past knowledge of and experience with these teams, coaches, players, and partners to ascertain some probabilities about the game—the likelihood of things happening. Determine what your role in the game needs to be. Acknowledge how you feel about what you know. Admit how your feeling might affect you. Decide how you will deal with them.

Are there things that could happen in this game that have the potential to distract you—a gregarious catcher? Peanut gallery in the stands? Irritating announcer? Resolved what actions you will take to avoid being distracted.

Do you have biases? Perhaps you eject the coach, a player embarrassing you, or you booted a call. Admit these are prejudices and decide, right now, that it is more important to you to be just than to be vengeful. Go ahead and feel a little self-righteous about it too.

Is this game a rivalry or is there “bad blood” among the teams? Remind yourself to look for signs. Plan your action for issuing warning or impose sanctions. Define what you will or will not tolerate. Be specific.

You can make these deliberate choices on how you will think, how you feel, or how you will act, but you must make them before encountering a situation. Be prepared. Visualize yourself being the umpire you want to be. See yourself in the tough situation. See yourself taking charge, managing and resolving. See you hustling, getting into perfect position and making a good, crisp signal. This is

powerful stuff. This type of honest attention paid to yourself will make you more attuned to circumstances and sensitive to people. When situation arise you have "been there-done that" in your mind, and you will know just how to act

All your preparations will have been for naught if you are hungry, thirsty, tired, or worried. Always control the things you can control. Do not create your own distraction if it is hot; begin hydrating a few days before. Plan to eat when it is most comfortable to you. Plan your drive route and arrival time to include at least a half hour pad and arrive an hour or more before game time. Do not allow being physical unprepared to destroy your mental preparation.

STAYING IN THE GAME

Sometimes the mental part of umpiring is the most difficult of all. We can acquire the mechanical skills, perfect our timing and be able to recite the rules verbatim, but the mental aspect can be most elusive. We can have our focus, attitude and confidence under our control and then, inexplicable, we may lose them doe a time.

We get bored, we lose focus, we let our minds wander and then....we blow a call or just never get in the zone we wish to have. We dwell on an error, relive it and silently berate ourselves for losing focus, only to find ourselves behind on the next play.

The very best umpires are able to consistently maintain their focus and concentration inning after inning, game after game. They are not distracted by external events or internal thoughts. Those umpires at the top of the game work each game pitch-by-pitch, entirely focused and in the present. The best umpires like the best athletics, are able to focus and concentrate at will.

PERFECT FOCUS

Focus, concentration and intensity are closely tied. We have all experienced perfect focus at some point in our lives, through perhaps not on the diamond. On the field, perfect focus is the feeling of "being in the zone" or the experience of seeing a play develop in slow motion. You feel as though you are in complete control and nothing seems to be a surprise. Your performance seems to you to be automatic and effortless. You are on your game.

Your focus is so pointed; your concentration so narrowly directed that there are no distractions, external or internal. It is the ultimate living in the moment, in the present, allowing nothing from the past or the future to distract you. It is the single-mindedness of purpose and duty.

As umpiring, being in the zone means the pitch seems to be as big as volleyball as it comes through the strike zone, which itself appears to have been drawn by a laser.

GETTING IT BACK AFTER YOU HAVE LOST IT

Routine and habit will not always be enough. If you're in a game in which nothing much has been happening and you suddenly realize, "Whoa, how many outs are there? Is she the first batter?" You realize you are not focused and your mind has wandered from the present.

Getting your focus back when you realized it's gone comes down to one simple act: **Bring yourself immediately into the present.** Right here, right now. Immediately note of your present surroundings. Is it the top or bottom of the inning? Which players are on base? What's the inning? The count? The score?

- a) If you lose your concentration or if you are having trouble getting in the zone, Immediately take note of the present.
- b) Consciously decide to work one pitch at a time
- c) Use positive talk.
- d) Before the next pitch, run through your mind all the possible scenarios that could occur on the next pitch.
- e) Break your umpiring mechanics down into the basic steps.
- f) Use a trigger to bring you into the zone.
- g) Use positive self talk and visualization to see yourself being a solid umpire.

UMPIRE CHECKLIST

- a) Be aware of the importance of your position
- b) Exhibit and uphold the standards of integrity
- c) Be honest and ethical
- d) Base decisions on circumstance and fact
- e) Eschew arrogance, sarcasm, and treats
- f) Have ambition but also patience
- g) Be receptive
- h) Be honest with yourself
- i) Be passionate
- j) Be courageous
- k) Become a leader

SECTION II

UMPIRE MECHANICS

HOME 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 FAST PITCH PLATE TECHNIQUES

- 1) Work the slot to get a clear view of the plate.
- 2) Do not touch the catcher.
- 3) Track the ball from the pitcher's hand to the catcher's mitt. Keep your head and body still until you come up to signal. Don't lean.
- 4) Your eyes are like a camera. If you move during the pitch, your view will be blurred.
- 5) You may give the verbal "strike" or "ball" in the set position, then come up with the strike signal (hammer), or come up with the hammer in unison with the verbal "strike".
- 6) Keep your feet set from the release until after you give the signal. Moving the feet distracts from the hammer.
- 7) Relax between pitches.
- 8) On foul balls behind the plate, don't look up initially. Watch the catcher. She will take you to the ball.
- 9) Calling position for tag plays at the plate – the standard position is 6-10' from the plate in foul territory, at a right angle to the path of the runner. A throw drawing the catcher up the 3B line creates the potential for a swipe tag. When this happens, move toward the baseline for a better view of the swipe tag.
- 10) Plate has all fair/foul and catch/no-catch decisions. *Exception* – if the base umpire chases a ball to the outfield, he/she has the initial play. When **U1** chases, **P** has the BR all the way around the bases.
- 11) Infield ground balls, move out to the left side of the catcher. Trail the batter-runner down the 1B line, no more than 10-15'.
- 12) Help with interference/obstruction, swipe tags, and bobbled balls at 1B. See the batter-runner touch the base.
- 13) Ball to the outfield, clear to the catcher's left side. Move toward the circle on a base hit. Move toward the fielder on a fly ball. Help with int/obst as the batter-runner rounds 1B.
- 14) If the base umpire goes to foul territory for a play at 1B, move forward to the circle. Continue on to 2B, take the call if the runner advances.

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 bobbed 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 team 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 trial 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 trial 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
BASE UMPIRE

MECHANICS ON THE BASES

- 1) Keep all elements of the play in front of you whenever possible – the ball, the fielder, and the runner.
- 2) Reaching your Primary requires anticipation and hustle.
- 3) Help P with checked swings, hit-by-pitch, and batter interference.
- 4) From the A position – take 1-2 steps forward during the pitcher’s delivery. Have your weight on your left foot, be ready to move into fair territory as the pitch reaches the plate.
- 5) Have sufficient distance (15 to 18’) on a force out in order to see the elements of the play – the runner’s foot, the fielder’s foot, the base, the ball, and the catch.
- 6) Don’t turn away from the ball too soon. See the fielder release the ball.
- 7) Force out - see the ball released, then turn your focus to the base. See the runner hit the base and listen for the ball hitting the glove.
- 8) Close to 6-10” on tag plays. If the ball comes loose, or the runner over slides the bag, step forward to look down on the play.
- 9) Take the BR to 3B in all situations.
- 10) Rule on all tag-ups at 1B and 2B.
- 11) Buttonhook on balls to the outfield to stay ahead of the runner and keep the play in front of you. *Exception - do not* buttonhook if it will put you in a possible throwing lane. For instance, don’t buttonhook on a base hit to LF.
- 12) Chase only with bases empty (2-man crew) and only on balls to the right half of the outfield. Observe fly balls to the left side, help as needed, but don’t chase. When U1 chases, he/she has fair/foul and catch/no-catch. P has all calls on the BR. U1 does not return to the infield until the play is complete, or a rundown develops.

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.

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.

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. 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.

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 from the base, your peripheral vision will allow you to see the entire play.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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)
- 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) Move on all pitched, batted and thrown balls.
- 3) 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.
- 4) 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.
- 5) Always keep your eyes on the ball.
- 6) Don't ever let players or coaches call plays for you.
- 7) Check to make certain the bases are secured and keep the pitcher's rubber clean.
- 8) 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.
- 9) Keep the game moving.
- 10) Always hustle to be on top of your plays.
- 11) 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.
- 12) Hustle out on fly balls to the outfield and stay out until the play is completed.

- 13) Never walk from one position to another - hustle and the ball players will follow your example.
- 14) Make your close calls with a lot of voice and enthusiasm.
- 15) 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

**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.**

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

NO RUNNERS ON BASE

GROUND BALL TO INFIELD

- 1) Move out from behind home plate on the left side.
- 2) Position yourself about 15-20 ft from HP and about 10 ft inside the 1st base line to make your call.
- 3) Priorities: fair/foul, contact with base, tags swipe tag, obstruction/interference, pulled foot, read/react,, adjust/re-adjust
- 4) Make all calls from a set position.

FLY BALL / BASE HIT

- 1) Move out from behind home plate on the left side, position yourself to determine fair/foul.
- 2) On fly ball make call signal for out, signal safe if not caught.
- 3) On base hits move out near the pitcher’s mound, read and react for possible play at 1st, 2nd, 3rd, or home.
- 4) Priorities: fair/foul, contact with base, tags, swipe tag, obstruction/interference, pulled foot, read/react, adjust/re-adjust.
- 5) Make all calls from a set position.

RUNNERS ON 1ST BASE

GROUND BALL TO INFIELD

- 1) Move out from behind home plate on the left side.
- 2) Position yourself about 15- 20 ft. from HP and about 10ft inside the 1st base line to make your call. Note: If ball is bobbled and only play is at 2nd, move toward 2nd to make your call.
- 3) If play is at home plate position yourself in the holding area 10-15 ft. up the 3rd base line, 10-15 ft from the base line in foul territory.
- 4) Priorities: fair/foul, contact with base, tags, swipe tag, obstruction/interference, pulled foot, read/react, adjust/re-adjust.
- 5) Make all calls from a set position.

FLY BALL/BASE HIT

- 1) Move out from behind home plate on the left side, position yourself to determine fair/foul.
- 2) On fly ball make call signal for out, signal safe if not caught.
- 3) On base hits move out near the pitcher’s mound, read and react for play at 1st, 2nd, 3rd.
- 4) If play is at home plate position yourself in the holding area 10-15ft up the 3rd base line, 10-15 ft from the base line in foul territory.
- 5) Priorities: fair/foul, contact with base, tags, swipe tag, obstruction/interference, pulled foot, read/react, adjust/re-adjust.
- 6) Make all calls from a set position.

ALL OTHER SITUATIONS WITH RUNNER ON

GROUND BALL TO INFIELD

- 1) Move out from behind home plate on the left side.
- 2) Position yourself 15-20 ft. from HP near the pitcher's mound to make your call. NOTE: If ball is bobbled and there is only one play, move toward that base to make your call.
- 3) Priorities: fair/foul, contact with base, tags, swipe tag, obstruction/interference, pulled foot, read/react, adjust/re-adjust.
- 4) Make all calls from a set position.

FLY BALL/BASE HIT

- 1) Move out from behind home plate on the left side, position yourself to determine fair/foul.
- 2) On fly ball make call signal for out, signal safe if not caught.
- 3) On fly balls that are caught watch lead runner for tag, move into position for a play at any base.
- 4) On base hits move out near the pitcher's mound, read/react for possible play at 1st, 2nd, 3rd, or HP.
- 5) Priorities: fair/foul, contact with base, tags, swipe tag, obstruction/interference, pulled foot, read/react, adjust/re-adjust.
- 6) Make all calls from a set position.

SECTION V

TWO UMPIRE SYSTEM

The NSA Fastpitch Staff used the “*CCA Softball Umpires Manual*” as our guide in developing this manual. It provides more detail than is required for most NSA/recreational softball. Umpires who want to improve and advance their skills will benefit from the manual. NSA umpires should always hustle to be in the best position on every play. The Staff recognizes we often work many games per day and/or games in extreme heat. Use care and pace yourself in extreme conditions. That being said, when the end of a tournament is near and the umpire crew is rested, the Staff expects hustle and effort. We expect plays to be properly covered. We expect umpires in the correct positions as outlined in this manual.

DEFINITIONS

- 1) Slot – the position of the plate umpire (P) between the catcher and the batter.
- 2) Pre-pitch positions for base umpire (U1):
 - A – no runners on base, 16-20’ past first base (1B) on the foul side of the line.
 - B – runner on 1B (R1), no more than 6’ behind the fielders. Laterally, set up between 15’ from 1B and 30’ from 2B*. The mid-point is recommended.
 - C – R2; R3; R2&R3, or R123, no more than 6’ behind the SS. Laterally, between 15’ from 2B and 15’ from 3B. R2 only, be no more than 30’ ahead of the runner. *Note - R2&R3 and R123, the mid-point is recommended.*
- 3) Primary, primary calling position – the optimal point from which to view the play:
 - force out, 15-18’ from the base and 90 degrees from the throw.
 - tag play, 6-10’ from the play and 90 degrees from the path of the runner.
- 4) Holding zone – a temporary position while waiting for a play to develop in your area of responsibility.
- 5) Chase - when a base umpire moves to the outfield to make the call, catch/no-catch or fair/foul.
- 6) Buttonhook – A movement by a base umpire to move forward inside the diamond and pivot 180°, allowing the umpire to see the runner, the fielder, and the ball when the movement is complete.

**General rule: U1 should be no more than 30’ ahead of the lead runner.*

FUNDAMENTALS / PHILOSOPHIES

- 1) Make calls in your area of responsibility, but see all areas. Help your partner with tough plays.
- 2) Keep the ball in your field of vision whenever possible.
- 3) Anticipate the action and *hustle* to be in the best position to view the play.
- 4) As the play develops, identify the Primary (calling position) and hustle to that position.
- 5) Communicate with your partner during the play if an unusual play develops, if there is a rundown, or if you deviate from standard mechanics.
- 6) Don’t rush the call. Let the play finish, decide ball/strike, or out/safe, then make the call.
- 7) Develop strong signals. Strong signals show conviction and confidence. Weak signals make us look unsure of the call.
- 8) Build in enough decision time for complex plays. Examples - bobbled or dropped balls, pulled foot, checked swing, or obstruction/interference. Let the play finish, mentally replay it (*quickly*), then make the call. Use this delay for all calls, no matter how routine to help avoid rushed calls in critical situations.
- 9) Close to 6 – 10’ for tag plays, as the elements of the play are in a smaller area. See the ball caught. Follow the ball/glove to the runner.
- 10) If the ball is dropped, or the runner overslides the base, step forward and look down on the action.
- 11) Close plays or confusing situations create comments from coaches and fans. Ignore the fans unless they use profanity, are abusive, or are aggressive toward game participants or umpires.
- 12) Comments from coaches should not be ignored, but not all comments require a response.

PLATE FUNDAMENTALS

- 1) Work the slot to get a clear view of the plate.
- 2) Do not touch the catcher.
- 3) Track the ball from the pitcher’s hand to the catcher’s mitt. Keep your head and body still until you come up to signal. Don’t lean.
- 4) Your eyes are like a camera. If you move during the pitch, your view will be blurred.
- 5) You may give the verbal “strike” or “ball” in the set position, then come up with the strike signal (hammer), or come up with the hammer in unison with the verbal “strike”.
- 6) Keep your feet set from the release until after you give the signal. Moving the feet distracts from the hammer.
- 7) Relax between pitches.
- 8) On foul balls behind the plate, don’t look up initially. Watch the catcher. She will take you to the ball.
- 9) Calling position for tag plays at the plate – the standard position is 6-10’ from the plate in foul territory, at a right angle to the path of the runner. A throw drawing the catcher up the 3B line creates the potential for a swipe tag. When this happens, move toward the baseline for a better view of the swipe tag.
- 10) Plate has all fair/foul and catch/no-catch decisions. *Exception* – if the base umpire chases a ball to the outfield, he/she has the initial play. When U1 chases, P has the BR all the way around the bases.
- 11) Infield ground balls, move out to the left side of the catcher. Trail the batter-runner down the 1B line, no more than 10-15’.
- 12) Help with interference/obstruction, swipe tags, and bobbled balls at 1B. See the batter-runner touch the base.

- 13) Ball to the outfield, clear to the catcher's left side. Move toward the circle on a base hit. Move toward the fielder on a fly ball. Help with int/obst as the batter-runner rounds 1B.
- 14) If the base umpire goes to foul territory for a play at 1B, move forward to the circle. Continue on to 2B, take the call if the runner advances.

BASE FUNDAMENTALS

- 1) Keep all elements of the play in front of you whenever possible – the ball, the fielder, and the runner.
- 2) Reaching your Primary requires anticipation and hustle.
- 3) Help P with checked swings, hit-by-pitch, and batter interference.
- 4) From the A position – take 1-2 steps forward during the pitcher's delivery. Have your weight on your left foot, be ready to move into fair territory as the pitch reaches the plate.
- 5) Have sufficient distance (15 to 18') on a force out in order to see the elements of the play – the runner's foot, the fielder's foot, the base, the ball and the catch.
- 6) Don't turn away from the ball too soon. See the fielder release the ball.
- 7) Force out – see the ball released, then turn your focus to the base. See the runner hit the base and listen for the ball hitting the glove.
- 8) Close to 6-10" on tag plays. If the ball comes loose, or the runner overslides the bag, step forward to look down on the play.
- 9) Take the BR to 3B in all situations.
- 10) Rule on all tag-ups at 1B and 2B.
- 11) Buttonhook on balls to the outfield to stay ahead of the runner and keep the play in front of you. Exception: Do not buttonhook if it will put you in a possible throwing lane. For instance, don't buttonhook on a base hit to LF.
- 12) Chase only with bases empty (2 man crew) and only on balls to the right half of the outfield. Observe fly balls to the left side, help as needed, but don't chase. When U1 chases, he/she has fair/foul and catch/no-catch. P has all call on the BR. U1 does not return to the infield until the play is complete, or a rundown develops.

NO RUNNERS ON BASE – INFIELD GROUND BALL

PLATE UMPIRE

- 1) Judge fair/foul, then come out from behind the plate.
- 2) Trail the BR down 10-15' down the line.
- 3) Watch for interference/obstruction, swipe tags, and bobbled balls at 1B. See the batter-runner touch the base.
- 4) If U1 is pushed into foul ground, move to the circle. Take the BR to 2B and 3B on an overthrow. U1 will cover the plate in this rotation.

BASE UMPIRE

- 1) Start in A position.
- 2) Step into fair territory if the ball is fielded by F1, F2, F3, F5, or F6. Go to your Primary calling position (90° from the throw).
- 3) Ball to F4, if the fielder is coming hard toward the line, move into foul territory for the call. Otherwise, take 1-2 steps into fair ground for the call.

NO RUNNERS ON BASE – BALL TO THE OUTFIELD

PLATE UMPIRE

- 1) Judge fair/foul. Come out from behind the plate.
- 2) If a base hit, move toward the circle. If a fly ball, move toward the fielder.
- 3) Watch for interference/obstruction at 1B. See the batter-runner touch the base.
- 4) If there is a play to 1B (force out), trail the BR down the line (same as above).
- 5) If the BR advances to 3B, move to a holding zone in foul ground near the plate (U1 has the BR to 3B).

BASE UMPIRE

- 1) If there is a throw to 1B (force out), go to your Primary in foul territory. P must cover 2B if BR advances.
- 2) Base hit (single) to CF/LF, stay outside the diamond. Move parallel to the base path. Stay ahead of the BR. Stay out of the throwing lanes. Adjust as needed for a throwback to 1B, or an advance to 2B.
- 3) Base hit to RF – okay to buttonhook (BH) inside the diamond. Stay ahead of the BR. Move parallel to the base path. Adjust as needed for a throwback to 1B, or an advance to 2B.
- 4) Double, triple, or HR – BH inside the diamond. Stay ahead of the BR. Take her all the way to 3B.

RUNNER ON 1ST BASE – INFIELD GROUND BALL

PLATE UMPIRE

- 1) Judge fair/foul. Come out from behind the plate and trail the BR.
- 2) Help with possible interference at 1B or 2B.
- 3) If R1 advances past 2B and breaks for 3B, move to Primary at 3B. Follow the runner home on an overthrow.
- 4) You have all plays at 3B and the plate.

BASE UMPIRE

- 1) Begin from the B position.
- 2) Move to a calling position for the most likely play.
- 3) On an attempted double play, take a step toward 2B for the play. Let the throw to 1B turn you for the play at 1B. Take a couple steps forward as this may be a close play.

RUNNER ON 1ST BASE – BALL TO OUTFIELD

PLATE UMPIRE

- 1) Judge fair/foul. On a base hit, move toward the circle. On a fly ball, move toward the fielder.
- 2) Help with possible interference at 1B or 2B.
- 3) If R1 advances past 2B, go to Primary at 3B. Follow the runner home on an overthrow.
- 4) You have all plays at 3B and the plate.

BASE UMPIRE

- 1) Begin from the B position.
- 2) You have all calls at 1B and 2B.
- 3) BH inside on a base hit.
- 4) Fly ball, BH on balls to CF and RF. Stay outside on a fly ball to LF.
- 5) BH inside on a double, triple, or home run.
- 6) Caught fly ball, you have the tag-up at 1B.

RUNNER ON 1ST AND 2ND, OR 2ND BASE ONLY – INFIELD GROUND BALL

PLATE UMPIRE

- 1) Judge fair/foul. Come out from behind the plate.
- 2) U1 has the initial play at all bases. Observe and help as needed.
- 3) Move to Primary for secondary plays at 3B. Follow the runner home as needed.

BASE UMPIRE

- 1) Begin from the C position.
- 2) You have the initial play at 3B and all plays at 1B & 2B.
- 3) Move to a calling position for the most likely play.
- 4) Play to 1B, move toward the circle to rule on the play. P will take R2 if she advances to 3B.

RUNNER ON 1ST AND 2ND, OR 2ND BASE ONLY – BALL TO OUTFIELD

PLATE UMPIRE

- 1) Judge fair/foul. If a base hit, move to a holding zone between home and 3B in foul ground.
- 2) Rule on all plays at 3B and the plate.
- 3) If a fly ball, move in front of the plate, but stay on the left side as you have 3B responsibility.
- 4) Take R2 to 3B if she advances on a hit, or caught fly ball.
- 5) Follow the runner home on an overthrow.

BASE UMPIRE

- 1) Begin from the C position.
- 2) BH inside the diamond on all balls to OF.
- 3) Move to a calling position for the most likely play.
- 4) You have all calls at 1B and 2B.
- 5) Base hit - if P has a play at the plate followed by a quick throw to 3B, you must help. Communicate with your partner. Take the call.
- 6) Caught fly ball, you have tag-up responsibilities at 1B and 2B.

BASES LOADED, R1 & R3, OR R3 ONLY – INFIELD GROUND BALL

PLATE UMPIRE

- 1) Judge fair/foul. Come out from behind the plate, but stay in foul ground.
- 2) U1 has the initial play on the bases. Observe and help as needed.
- 3) Rule on secondary plays at 3B and all plays at the plate.
- 4) On a force out at the plate, back away from the plate for proper distance.

BASE UMPIRE

- 1) Begin from the C position.
- 2) Move to a calling position for the most likely play.
- 3) You have the initial play at 3B and all plays at 1B & 2B.
- 4) Play to 1B, move toward the circle to rule on the play.
- 5) If P has a play at the plate followed by a quick throw to 3B, you must help. Communicate with your partner. Take the call.

BASES LOADED, R1 & R3, OR R3 ONLY – BALL TO OUTFIELD

PLATE UMPIRE

- 1) Judge fair/foul. Move to a holding zone between home and 3B in foul ground.
- 2) On fly balls to CF/LF, move well off the line to rule on the tag-up – see R3 and see the catch.
- 3) Rule on all calls at 3B and the plate.
- 4) You have all tag-ups at 3B.

BASE UMPIRE

- 1) Begin from the **C** position.
- 2) **BH** inside the diamond on all balls to the **OF**.
- 3) Move to a calling position for the most likely play.
- 4) You have all calls at **1B** and **2B**.
- 5) If **P** has a play at the plate followed by a quick throw to **3B**, you must help. Communicate with your partner. Take the call.
- 6) Caught fly ball, you have tag-up responsibilities at **1B** and **2B**.

SECTION VI

THE THREE UMPIRE SYSTEM

The three-umpire system affords umpires many luxuries over the two-umpire system. Umpires can work in foul territory, work 'outside' or take shortcuts if there is 'help ahead'. Be careful about over hustling in the three-umpire system. Often only a step or two is needed to get the best possible position – do not overrun your position. But, do hustle even if it is only three steps.

Generally, an umpire is responsible for the interference or obstruction call on the runner coming at him/her. Make eye contact with your partner before making this call if it is not in your calling area.

CHECKLIST FOR THE THREE-UMPIRE SYSTEM

The rules for coverage are:

- 1) Once the umpire's starting position is from a counter rotated position* there will be no rotation.
- 2) Umpires should chase any fly ball that is close to the fence, when there might be a diving or shoestring catch, when more than one fielder is converging on the ball, and any time the ball looks like trouble. When a field umpire goes to the outfield, revert to the two-umpire system.
- 3) When a field umpire turns their back to the infield to go out to the outfield on a play, they should remain outside until the play is completed.
- 4) Always rotate in a clockwise direction. Rotations are used only when no umpire chases. A base umpire will never be part of a rotation if his/her starting position is not on the line.
*EXPLANATION – the counter rotated position shall be the position the umpire takes prior to any pitch; the third base umpire (3BU) shall be positioned down the line at 3rd base and the first base umpire (1BU) shall be positioned behind the second baseman (2B).
- 5) Vocal communication and eye contact are the most important elements for covering all plays.
- 6) Vocal communication is a must with your partners so they can confirm that a base is covered.
- 7) Glance at a forward base, if there is no vocal communication heard it would lead to mix-ups in covering the bases.
- 8) Assure complete coverage on everything that can develop on the ball field.
- 9) 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 Major and AA divisions, the 1st and 3rd 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).
- 10) The plate umpire has the responsibility to make decisions on bounding balls hit over first and 3rd base.
- 11) 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 refrains from returning to the infield to make a call.
- 12) When at 1st base, go with the 1B and 2B and the right fielder on fly balls in foul territory to observe the legal catch.
- 13) The base umpires must be careful not to interfere with a quick throw to any base by the outfielders.
- 14) Do not cross in front of the fielder covering 1st 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.
- 15) On run-downs between 1st or 3rd base and home plate, the base umpire should position himself on the infield side of the base and make the call if the runner is returning to their base. Watch for obstruction.
- 16) Base umpires shall always give a signal to the plate umpire (PU) after any batter has three strikes. Closed fist signifies the batter is out and can no longer attain 1st base. Pointing towards the ground signifies the batter is not officially out yet, and is in jeopardy of being tagged out or thrown out at 1st base.
- 17) IMPORTANT REMINDER – Should you ever deviate from these procedures, communicate with your partners.

STARTING POSITIONS

There are only three positions umpires will take at the start of the pitch. Plate umpire (PU) will always be behind the plate working the slot position depending on whether the batter is batting left or right.

- 1) Standard 1 (No runners on base). 1BU and 3BU are 18-20 feet down and close to the line, completely in foul territory in an upright, standing position. As the pitch is delivered, 1st and 3rd take no more than two steps forward, ending in a ready-set position or on the proper push foot.
- 2) Standard 2 (Runner on third base only). 1BU will be 18-20 feet down and close to the line completely in foul territory in an upright standing position. As the pitch is delivered, take no more than two steps forward, ending in a ready-set position or on the proper push foot. 3BU will be in a set position 6-10 feet down the line, completely in foul territory. 3BU is squared to the plate and may be a step or so off the line.
- 3) Rotated (Runner on 1st base only). 1BU will be in a set position 6-10 feet down and on the line, completely in foul territory, squared to the plate. 3BU will be squared to the plate in a set position 10-12 feet beyond 2nd base on an imaginary line extending straight out towards right-center field from 2nd base.
- 4) Counter-Rotated (Runners on 1st and 2nd, 1st and 3rd, or 1st, 2nd and 3rd). 1BU will be in a set position between 15 feet from 1st base to 15 feet from 2nd base, usually behind F4-optimally, no more than 15 feet from the baseline and squared to the plate. 3BU will be squared to the plate in a set position 6-12 feet (depending on where the runners are) down and on the line from 3rd base. With a runner on 3rd base, 3BU may be a few steps off the line.

NO RUNNER ON BASE

PLATE UMPIRE

- 1) Starting position is behind the plate in the slot position. On balls that are hit come out left of the catcher unless there is a short pop up in foul territory near the 1st base line. On any possibly trapped ball in foul territory near the 1st base line move to the right of the catcher for a better view.
- 2) On a batted ball to the infield move to the foul line in fair territory and trail BR no more than 15 feet up the line stopping in a ready-set position.
- 3) On a batted ball to the outfield and no umpire chases move to a holding position at the front of the circle.
- 4) On a batted ball to the outfield for extra bases and no umpire chases move out to in front of the pitching circle and as the runner approaches 2nd base, move to a primary position 6-10 feet from 3rd base.
- 5) On a batted ball to the outfield that is caught and 1BU chases move to a primary position 15-18 feet from 1st base and watch the runner touch first. Take any play at 1st base.
- 6) On a batted ball to the outfield that is not caught and 1BU chases move to a primary position 15-18 feet from 1st base. Watch BR touch 1st base. Take any play on BR at 1st base. As BR rounds 2nd base, move to a point-of-the-plate holding position at home.
- 7) On a batted ball to the outfield that is caught and 3BU chases move to a holding position at the front of the circle.
- 8) On a batted ball to the outfield that is not caught and 3BU chases move to a holding position at the front of the circle. Be ready to help in a rundown. As BR rounds 2nd base, move to the point-of-the-plate holding position at home.

1ST BASE UMPIRE

- 1) Starting position is 18-20 feet down and close to the line, completely in foul territory in an upright, standing position.
- 2) On a batted ball to the infield and no umpire chases move into fair territory no more than 45 degrees off the line, 15-18 feet from 1st base.
- 3) On a batted ball to the outfield and no umpire chases pivot inside the diamond 10 feet beyond the baseline and about 10 feet away from the foul line. Pick up the ball and watch BR touch 1st base. Take any play at 1st base.
- 4) On a batted ball to the outfield for extra bases and no umpire chases pivot inside the diamond 10 feet beyond the baseline and about 10 feet away from the foul line. Watch BR touch 1st base. When BR advances beyond 2nd base move to a point-of-the-plate holding position at home.
- 5) On a batted ball to the outfield that is caught and 3BU chases pivot inside the diamond 10 feet beyond the baseline and about 10 feet away from the foul line. It is acceptable on balls hit to left field for 1BU to stay outside. Move about 10 feet off the foul line about 10 feet from the baseline. Watch BR touch 1st base. Take any play at 1st base.
- 6) On a batted ball to the outfield that is not caught or there are two outs and 3BU chases pivot inside the diamond 10 feet beyond the baseline and about 10 feet away from the foul line. Take BR to 2nd or 3rd base. It is acceptable on balls hit to left field for 1BU to stay outside. Move about 10 feet off the line about 10 feet from the baseline. As BR continues to 2nd base move into the infield behind BR and take her to 2nd or 3rd base. Watch BR touch 1st, 2nd or 3rd base. Take any play at 1st, 2nd or 3rd base.

3RD BASE UMPIRE

- 1) Starting position is 18-20 feet down and close to the line, completely in foul territory in an upright, standing position.
- 2) On a batted ball to the infield and no umpire chases move straight into the diamond to a primary position 6-10 feet from 2nd base.
- 3) On a batted ball to the outfield and no umpire chases move straight into the diamond to a primary position 6-10 feet from 2nd base.
- 4) On a batted ball to the outfield for extra bases and no umpire chases move straight into the diamond to a primary position 6-10 feet from 2nd base. When 1BU rotates to the plate, 3BU is responsible for all plays at 1st or 2nd base.
- 5) On a batted ball to the outfield that is caught and 1BU chases move straight into the diamond to a primary position 6-10 feet from 2nd base.
- 6) On a batted ball to the outfield that is not caught or there are two outs move straight into the diamond to a primary position 6-10 feet from 2nd base. Watch BR touch 2nd base. Take any play at 2nd base. Watch BR touch 3rd base. Take any play at 3rd base.

RUNNER ON 1ST BASE

PLATE UMPIRE

- 1) Starting position is behind the plate in the slot. On balls that are hit come out left of the catcher unless there is a short pop up in foul territory near the 1st base line. On any possibly trapped ball in foul territory near the 1st base line move to the right of the catcher for a better view.
- 2) On a batted ball to the infield and no umpire chases move to the foul line in fair territory and trail BR no more than 15 feet up the line stopping in a ready-set position.
- 3) On a batted ball to the outfield and no umpire chases pivot to a holding position at the front of the circle.
- 4) On a batted ball to the outfield for extra bases and no umpire chases move out to in front of the pitching circle and as R1 approaches 2nd base, move to a primary position 6-10 feet from 3rd base.
- 5) On a batted ball to the outfield that is caught and 1BU or 3BU chases move out towards the pitching circle.
- 6) On a batted ball to the outfield that is not caught or there are two outs and 1BU or 3BU chases move out towards the pitching circle. As R1 approaches 2nd base, move to a primary position at 3rd base. Take all plays on the R1 at 3rd base or home.
- 7) PU has no 'tag up' responsibilities.
- 8) PU has no 'leaving early' responsibilities.

1ST BASE UMPIRE

- 1) Starting position is in a set position 6-10 feet down and on the line, completely in foul territory, squared to the plate.
- 2) On a batted ball to the infield and no umpire chases move into fair territory no more than 45 degrees off the line, 15-18 feet from 1st base.
- 3) On a batted ball to the outfield and no umpire chases pivot inside the diamond 10 feet beyond the baseline and about 10 feet away from the foul line. Watch BR touch 1st base and take any plays at 1st base.
- 4) On a batted ball to the outfield for extra bases and no umpire chases pivot inside the diamond 10 feet beyond the baseline and about 10 feet away from the foul line. Watch BR touch 1st base. When R1 advances beyond 2nd base, move to the point-of-the-plate holding position at home.
- 5) On a batted ball to the outfield that is caught and 3BU chases pivot inside the diamond ahead of R1. Take the tag-up on R1 at 1st base. Move back toward 1st or 2nd base with R1.
- 6) On a batted ball to the outfield that is not caught and 3BU chases pivot inside the diamond ahead of R1. Take any play on R1 at 2nd and plays on BR at 1st, 2nd or 3rd base.
- 7) On a batted ball to the outfield with two outs and 3BU chases move straight to 2nd base either inside or outside (depending on the play). Take all plays at 2nd base on R1 and all plays at 1st, 2nd or 3rd base on BR.
- 8) 1BU is responsible for the double play tag off a line drive.
- 9) 1BU has 'tag up' responsibilities, especially if 3BU chases the play to the outfield.
- 10) 1BU has 'leaving early' responsibility for the runner at 1st base.

3RD BASE UMPIRE

- 1) Starting position is in a set position 10-12 feet beyond 2nd base on an imaginary line extending straight out towards right-center field from 2nd base.
- 2) On a batted ball to the infield and no umpire chases maintain starting position and be prepared to adjust to a calling position. If no initial play at 2nd base move to a secondary position on the other side of 2nd base.
- 3) On a batted ball to the outfield pivot inside the diamond to a primary position 6-10 feet from 2nd base. Take any play at 2nd base.
- 4) On a batted ball to the outfield for extra bases and no umpire chases move straight into the diamond to a primary position 6-10 feet from 2nd base. When 1BU rotates to the plate, 3BU is responsible for all plays at 1st or 2nd base.
- 5) On a batted ball to the outfield that is caught and 1BU chases pivot inside the diamond to see the tag-up at 1st base. Take all calls at 1st and 2nd base.
- 6) On a batted ball to the outfield with two outs and 1BU chases pivot inside the diamond and take the initial play at 1st or 2nd base. Take any subsequent plays at 1st or 2nd base.
- 7) 3BU has no 'tag up' responsibilities unless 1BU chases the play to the outfield.
- 8) 3BU has no 'leaving early' responsibilities.

RUNNER ON 2ND BASE

PLATE UMPIRE

- 1) Starting position is behind the plate in the slot position. On batted balls move out to the left of the catcher.
- 2) On a batted ball to the infield and no umpire chases drop back to a 1st base extended position in foul territory. Watch the play at 1st base and be ready for a possible play at the plate.
- 3) On a batted ball to the outfield and no umpire chases remain in foul territory. Take a few steps out to get a read on the play. Move to the point-of-the-plate holding position at home to prepare for a possible play at the plate.
- 4) On a batted ball to the outfield for extra bases and no umpire chases remain in foul territory. Take a few steps out to get a read on the play. Move to the point-of-the-plate holding position at home to prepare for a possible call at the plate.
- 5) On a batted ball to the outfield that is caught and 1BU chases move to a holding position in foul territory between home and 3rd base. If R2 advances, move to a primary position at 3rd base. Take any play on R2 at 3rd or home.
- 6) On a batted ball to the outfield that is not caught and 1BU chases move to a holding position in foul territory between home and 3rd base. When R2 advances move to a primary position at 3rd base or to the plate for any play on R2. Take any play on R2 at 3rd base or home.
- 7) On a batted ball to the outfield with two outs and 1BU chases move to a holding position in foul territory between home and 3rd base. Be prepared to take any play on R2 at 3rd base or home.
- 8) On a batted ball to the outfield that is caught and 3BU chases move to a holding position in foul territory between home and 3rd base. If R2 advances move to a primary position at 3rd base. Take any play on R2 at 3rd base or home.
- 9) On a batted ball to the outfield that is not caught and 3BU chases move to a holding position in foul territory between home and 3rd base. When R2 advances move to a primary position at 3rd base and/or to the plate for any play on R2. Take any play on R2 at 3rd base or home.
- 10) On a batted ball to the outfield with two outs and 3BU chases move to a holding position in foul territory between home and 3rd base. Be prepared to take any play on R2 at 3rd base or home.
- 11) On balls hit close to the foul line, stay at home plate ready to make the call.
- 12) PU has no 'leaving early' responsibilities.
- 13) PU has no 'tag up' responsibilities.

1ST BASE UMPIRE

- 1) Starting position is in a set position between 15 feet from 1st base to 15 feet from 2nd base, usually behind F4 no more than 15 feet from the baseline and squared to the plate.
- 2) On a batted ball to the infield and no umpire chases move to establish an angle with the throw at that base. Try to get 18 feet from the base. This may require moving slightly deeper toward right field. If the initial play is behind the runner at 2nd base, move straight into the baseline.

- 3) On a batted ball to the outfield and no umpire chases pivot inside to a primary position at 1st base. Pick up the ball and watch the runner touch 1st base. You now have throw back responsibilities at 1st base on the batter-runner. Take the batter-runner to 2nd base if needed.
- 4) On a batted ball to the outfield for extra bases and no umpire chases pivot inside to a primary position at 1st base. Take BR to 2nd base if needed.
- 5) On a batted ball to the outfield that is caught and 3BU chases pivot inside the diamond to see the tag of R2. Take any play on R2 at 2nd base.
- 6) On a batted ball to the outfield that is not caught and 3BU chases pivot inside the diamond for a tag of R2. When R2 advances to 3rd base, pick up BR at 1st base and take to 2nd base if necessary. Take all plays on R2 at 2nd base and all plays on BR at 1st, 2nd and 3rd base.
- 7) On a batted ball to the outfield with two outs and 3BU chases pivot inside the diamond to a primary position at 1st base. Take all plays on BR at 1st, 2nd and 3rd base.
- 8) 1BU has 'leaving early' responsibilities for runner at 2nd base.
- 9) 1BU has 'tag up' responsibilities unless he chases the play to the outfield.

3RD BASE UMPIRE

- 1) Starting position is squared to the plate in a set position 6-12 feet down and on the line from 3rd base.
- 2) On a batted ball to the infield and no umpire chases take a couple of steps off the line into fair territory. Be prepared to adjust as the play dictates.
- 3) On a batted ball to the outfield and no umpire chases pivot inside, using foul territory, to a primary position at 3rd base for R2 coming to 3rd base. Adjust position for any play on R2 after reaching 3rd base.
- 4) On a batted ball to the outfield for extra bases and no umpire chases pivot inside using foul territory to a primary position at 3rd base for R2 coming to 3rd base. Adjust position for any play on R2 after reaching 3rd base.
- 5) On a batted ball to the outfield that is caught and 1BU chases run straight into a position to see the tag of R2 at 2nd base. Take any play on R2 at 2nd base.
- 6) On a batted ball to the outfield that is not caught and 1BU chases run straight into a position to see the tag of R2 at 2nd base. When R2 advances to 3rd base pick up the BR at 1st base and take them to 2nd base if needed. Take all plays at 1st and 2nd base.
- 7) On a batted ball to the outfield with two outs and 1BU chases move straight across the field to 1st base. Take any play on BR at 1st, 2nd or 3rd base.
- 8) Prepare yourself, for the throw back to 3rd base on a line drive to the infield.
- 9) 3BU has no 'leaving early' responsibilities.
- 10) 3BU has 'tag up' responsibilities if 1BU chases the play to the outfield.

RUNNER ON 3RD BASE

PLATE UMPIRE

- 1) Starting position is behind the plate in the slot position. On batted balls move out to the left of the catcher.
- 2) On a batted ball to the infield and no umpire chases move back to a 1st base line extended position in foul territory and watch the play at 1st base. Be prepared for a play at home.
- 3) On a batted ball to the outfield and no umpire chases watch R3 touch home, then move to a holding position in front of the circle. As BR approaches 2nd base move to a primary position at 3rd base.
- 4) On a batted ball to the outfield that is caught and 1BU chases move to a holding position in foul territory between home and 3rd base. Take the tag on R3 and any play at 3rd base or home.
- 5) On a batted ball to the outfield that is not caught and 1BU chases move to a holding position in foul territory between home and 3rd base. Take the tag on R3 and any play on R3 at 3rd base or home. When BR rounds 2nd base, move to a holding position at the point-of-the-plate.
- 6) On a batted ball to the outfield and there are two outs watch R3 touch home. Move to a holding position in front of the circle to help in case of a rundown. As BR rounds 2nd base, move to a point-of-the-plate holding position at home and prepare for a possible play at the plate.
- 7) On a batted ball to the outfield and 3BU chases move to a holding position in foul territory between home and 3rd base. Take the tag on R3 and any play on R3 at 3rd base or home.
- 8) On a batted ball to the outfield and 3BU chases with two outs watch R3 touch home, then move to a holding position in front of the circle to help in case of a rundown. As BR rounds 2nd base move to a holding position at the point-of-the-plate.
- 9) PU has no 'leaving early' responsibilities.
- 10) PU has 'tag up' responsibilities for runner on 3rd base when 3BU chases.

1ST BASE UMPIRE

- 1) Starting position is 18-20 feet down and close to the line completely in foul territory in an upright standing position. As the pitch is delivered, take no more than two steps forward, ending in a ready-set position or on the proper push foot.
- 2) On a batted ball to the infield and no umpire chases move into fair territory no more than 45 degrees off the line, 15-18 feet from 1st base.
- 3) On a batted ball to the outfield and no umpire chases pivot inside the diamond to a primary position at 1st base. Take all plays on BR at 2nd base. Watch for the quick throw back to first base. When BR rounds 2nd base move to a point-of-the-plate holding position at home.
- 4) On a batted ball to the outfield that is caught and 3BU chases either pivot inside the diamond to a primary position at 1st base or move to a primary position at 1st base outside the diamond. Watch BR touch 1st base.

- 5) On a batted ball to the outfield that is not caught and 3BU chases either pivot inside the diamond to a primary position at 1st base or move to a primary position at 1st base outside the diamond. Watch BR touch 1st base and take all plays on BR at 1st, 2nd or 3rd base.
- 6) 1BU has no 'leaving early' responsibilities.
- 7) 1BU has no 'tag up' responsibilities.

3RD BASE UMPIRE

- 1) Starting position is in a set position 6-10 feet down and on the line, completely in foul territory, squared to the plate.
- 2) On a batted ball to the infield and no umpire chases stay in foul territory and move up the line for a possible play on R3 back into 3rd base.
- 3) On a batted ball to the outfield and no umpire chases move straight into the diamond to a primary position at 2nd base. Take all plays on BR at 2nd base.
- 4) On a batted ball to the outfield for extra bases move straight into the diamond to a primary position at 2nd base.
- 5) On a batted ball to the outfield that is caught and the 1BU chases, move straight into the diamond to a primary position at 1st base.
- 6) On a batted ball to the outfield that is not caught and the 1BU chases, move straight into the diamond to a primary position at 1st base. Take all plays on BR at 1st, 2nd or 3rd base.
- 7) 3BU has 'leaving early' responsibility.
- 8) Prepare yourself, for the throw back to third base on a line drive to the infield.
- 9) 3BU has 'leaving early' responsibilities for runner on 3rd base.
- 10) 3BU has no 'tag up' responsibilities.

RUNNERS ON 1ST AND 2ND BASES

PLATE UMPIRE

- 1) Starting position is behind the plate in the slot position. On batted balls move out to the left of the catcher.
- 2) On a batted ball to the infield and no umpire chases move back to a 1st base line extended position in foul territory and watch the play at 1st base.
- 3) On a batted ball to the outfield and no umpire chases stay at home at a point-of-the-plate holding position. Adjust to all plays at home.
- 4) On a batted ball to the outfield that is caught and 1BU or 3BU chases move to a holding position in foul territory between home and 3rd base. Move to a primary position at 3rd base if R2 attempts to advance.
- 5) On a batted ball to the outfield that is not caught and 1BU or 3BU chases move to a holding position in foul territory between home and 3rd base. Take any play on R2 at 3rd base or home. After R2 scores, take any play on R1 at 3rd base and home.
- 6) The plate umpire has responsibility on line drives to the infield or outfield on the throw back to complete the double play.
- 7) PU has no 'leaving early' responsibilities.
- 8) PU has no 'tag up' responsibilities.

1ST BASE UMPIRE

- 1) Starting position is a set position between 15 feet from 1st base to 15 feet from 2nd base, usually behind F4 – optimally, no more than 15 feet from the baseline and squared to the plate.
- 2) On a batted ball to the infield and no umpire chases the play dictates your move. If a double play, take one step at 2nd base, then while rendering your decision move to a primary position for the call at 1st base. If the play at 2nd base will be the only play, commit to 2nd base. If the play just goes to 1st base, commit to 1st base.
- 3) On a batted ball to the outfield and no umpire chases pivot inside the diamond and move to the play at 2nd base or 1st base as necessary.
- 4) On a batted ball to the outfield that is for extra bases and no umpire chases pivot inside the diamond to a primary position at 2nd base. Watch BR touch 1st base. Take all plays at 2nd base or 1st base.
- 5) On a batted ball that is caught and 3BU chases stay outside the diamond and watch the tag on both R2 and R1. Move inside the diamond for any play or appeal play on R2 at 2nd base. Take any play or appeal on R1 at 1st or 2nd base.
- 6) On a batted ball that is not caught and 3BU chases move inside the diamond at 2nd base. Take all plays at 1st or 2nd base. Take any play on R1 at 3rd base if necessary. Take any play on BR at 3rd base.
- 7) 1BU has 'leaving early' responsibilities for R2.
- 8) 1BU has 'tag up' responsibilities for both runners on 1st and 2nd base when no umpire chases.

3RD BASE UMPIRE

- 1) Starting position is squared to the plate in a set position 6-12 feet (depending on where the runners are) down and on the line from 3rd base. With a runner on 3rd base you may be a few steps off the line.
- 2) On a batted ball to the infield and no umpire chases move into the diamond and establish an angle with the throw for the force at 3rd base.
- 3) On a batted ball to the outfield and no umpire chases move up the line in foul territory. Take all plays on R2 at 3rd base.
- 4) On a batted ball to the outfield that is for extra bases and no umpire chases move up the line in foul territory. Move to a primary position at 3rd base as the play dictates. Take all plays on any runners at 3rd base.
- 5) On a batted ball to the outfield that is caught and 1BU chases move straight into the diamond to 2nd base. Take the tag on both R2 and R1. Take any appeal plays at 1st or 2nd base.
- 6) On a batted ball to the outfield that is not caught and 1BU chases move into the diamond to 2nd base. Take all plays on R1 at 1st, 2nd and possibly 3rd base. If R2 has scored, PU will take R1 at 3rd base. Take all plays on BR at 1st, 2nd, and 3rd base.
- 7) 3BU has 'leaving early' responsibilities for R1.

- 8) 3BU has 'tag up' responsibilities for both runners on 1st and 2nd base when 1BU chases.

RUNNERS ON 1ST AND 3RD BASES

PLATE UMPIRE

- 1) Starting position is behind the plate in the lost position. On a batted ball move out to the left of the catcher.
- 2) On a batted ball to the infield and no umpire chases move back to a 1st base line extended position in foul territory and watch the play at 1st base. Be prepared for a play at home.
- 3) On a batted ball to the outfield and no umpire chases watch R3 touch home. Stay at home and read the action.
- 4) On a batted ball to the outfield for extra bases and no umpire chases watch R3 touch home. Move to a point-of-the-plate holding position at home and read the action.
- 5) On a batted ball to the outfield that is caught and 1BU chases move to a holding position in foul territory between home and 3rd base. Take the tag on R3. Take any play on R3 at 3rd base or home.
- 6) On a batted ball to the outfield that is not caught and 1BU chases move to a holding position in foul territory between home and 3rd base. Watch R3 touch home and move to a primary position at 3rd base for any play on R1.
- 7) On a batted ball to the outfield that is caught and 3BU chases move to a holding position in foul territory between home and 3rd base. Take the tag on R3. Take any play on R3 at home or 3rd base.
- 8) On a batted ball to the outfield that is not caught and 3BU chases move to a holding position in foul territory between home and 3rd base. Watch R3 touch home. Move to a primary position at 3rd base. Take any play on R1 at 3rd base or home.
- 9) PU has no 'leaving early' responsibilities.
- 10) PU has 'tag up' responsibilities for 3rd base if 1BU or 3BU chases.

1ST BASE UMPIRE

- 1) Starting position is a set position between 15 feet from 1st base to 15 feet from 2nd base, usually behind F4 – optimally, no more than 15 feet from the baseline and squared to the plate.
- 2) On a batted ball to the infield and no umpire chases the play dictates your move. If a double play, take one step at 2nd base then, while rendering your decision, move to a primary position for the call at 1st base. If the play at 2nd base will be the only play, commit to 2nd base. If the play just goes to 1st base, commit to 1st base.
- 3) On a batted ball to the outfield and no umpire chases pivot inside the diamond at 2nd base. Take any play on R1 at 2nd base and any play on BR at 1st or 2nd base.
- 4) On a batted ball to the outfield for extra bases and no umpire chases pivot inside the diamond at 2nd base. Watch R1 touch 2nd base and take the play on R1 at 2nd base. When R1 advances to 3rd base, pickup up BR at 1st base. Take all plays on BR at 1st or 2nd base.
- 5) On a batted ball to the outfield that is caught and 3BU chases stay outside the diamond and move to 1st base. Take the tag on R1. Take any play on R1 at 1st or 2nd base.
- 6) On a batted ball to the outfield that is not caught and 3BU chases stay outside the diamond and move to 1st base. Take R1 to 2nd base, either on the outside or by moving inside behind R1. Take any play at 2nd base on R1. Take any play on BR at 1st or 2nd base.
- 7) On a batted ball to the outfield when there are two outs and 3BU chases move straight inside the diamond to 2nd base. Take any play on R1 at 2nd base. When R1 advances to 3rd base, pick up BR and take any play on BR at 1st, 2nd or 3rd base.
- 8) On a line drive to the infield, the 1st base umpire is responsible for the throw back to first base.
- 9) 1BU has 'leaving early' responsibilities for both runners at 1st and 3rd base.
- 10) 1BU has 'tag up' responsibilities at 1st base.

3RD BASE UMPIRE

- 1) Starting position is squared to the plate in a set position 6-12 feet (depending on where the runners are) down and on the line from 3rd base. With a runner on 3rd base you may be a few steps off the line.
- 2) On a batted ball to the infield and no umpire chases move up the line in foul territory. Take any play on R3 at 3rd base.
- 3) On a batted ball to the outfield and no umpire chases move straight inside the diamond to a primary position at 3rd base. Take any play on R1 at 3rd base.
- 4) On a batted ball to the outfield for extra bases and no umpire chases move straight inside the diamond to a primary position at 3rd base. Adjust as necessary for any play on R1 or BR at 3rd base.
- 5) On a batted ball to the outfield that is caught and 1BU chases hustle straight into the diamond to a primary position at 1st base. Take the tag on R1. Take any play on R1 at 1st or 2nd base.
- 6) On a batted ball to the outfield that is not caught and 1BU chases hustle straight into the diamond to a primary position at 1st base. Take R1 to 2nd base. Take any play on R1 at 2nd base and any play on BR at 1st or 2nd base.
- 7) 3BU has 'leaving early' responsibilities for the runner at 3rd base.
- 8) 3BU has 'tag up' responsibilities at 1st base when 1BU chases. 3BU has 'tag up' responsibilities at 3rd base when no umpires chase.

RUNNERS ON 2ND AND 3RD BASES

PLATE UMPIRE

- 1) Starting position is behind the plate in the slot position. On a batted ball move out to the left of the catcher. Take all plays at home plate.
- 2) On a batted ball to the infield and no umpire chases move back to a 1st base line extended position in foul territory and watch the play at 1st base. Be prepared for a play at home.

- 3) On a batted ball to the outfield and no umpire chases watch R3 touch home. Stay at home and read the action from a point-of-the-plate holding position at home.
- 4) On a batted ball to the outfield for extra bases and no umpire chases watch R3 touch home. Move to a point-of-the-plate holding position at home and adjust to any play on R2 at home.
- 5) On a batted ball to the outfield that is caught and 1BU chases move to a holding position in foul territory between home and 3rd base. Take the tag on R3. Take any play on R3 at 3rd base or home.
- 6) On a batted ball to the outfield that is not caught and 1BU chases move to a holding position in foul territory between home and 3rd base. Take any play on R3 at home. If no play on R3 at home, watch R3 touch home and take any play on R2 at 3rd base or home.
- 7) On a batted ball to the outfield with two outs watch R3 touch home. Move to a holding position in foul territory between home and 3rd base. Take any play on R2 at 3rd base or home.
- 8) On a batted ball to the outfield that is caught and 3BU chases move to a holding position in foul territory between home and 3rd base. Take the tag on R3. Take any play on R3 at 3rd base or home.
- 9) On a batted ball to the outfield that is not caught and 3BU chases move to a holding position in foul territory between home and 3rd base. Watch R3 touch home. Move to a primary position at 3rd base. Take any play on R2 at 3rd base or home.
- 10) On a batted ball to the outfield when there are two outs and 3BU chases watch R3 touch home. Move to a holding position in foul territory between home and 3rd base. Take any play on R2 at 3rd base or home.
- 11) PU has no 'leaving early' responsibilities.
- 12) PU has 'tag up' responsibilities at 3rd base when 1BU or 3BU chases.

1ST BASE UMPIRE

- 1) Starting position is a set position between 15 feet from 1st base to 15 feet from 2nd base, usually behind F4 – optimally, no more than 15 feet from the baseline and squared to the plate.
- 2) On a batted ball to the infield and no umpire chases the play dictates your move. If a play is made at 2nd base behind R2, move into the baseline to see the play. Be alert for a possible subsequent throw to 1st base. If a throw does go to 1st base, move outside and toward 1st base as much as you can. If the initial play is at 1st base, move to a primary position for the call at 1st base. Be prepared to move straight forward into the baseline for a subsequent play behind R2 at 2nd base.
- 3) On a batted ball to the outfield and no umpire chases pivot inside the diamond to a primary position at 1st base. Take any play on BR at 1st or 2nd base.
- 4) On a batted ball to the outfield that is for extra bases and no umpire chases pivot inside the diamond to a primary position at 1st base. Take BR to 2nd base. Take any play on BR at 1st or 2nd base.
- 5) On a batted ball to the outfield that is caught and 3BU chases move inside the diamond to 2nd base. Take the tag on R2. Take any play on R2 at 2nd or 3rd base.
- 6) On a batted ball to the outfield that is not caught and 3BU chases move inside the diamond to 2nd base. Take any play on R2 at 2nd base. When R2 advances to 3rd base, pickup BR at 1st base and take any play on BR at 1st, 2nd or 3rd base.
- 7) On a batted ball to the outfield with two outs and 3BU chases pivot inside the diamond to a primary position at 1st base. Take any play on BR at 1st, 2nd or 3rd base.
- 8) 1BU has 'leaving early' responsibilities on R2.
- 9) 1BU has 'tag up' responsibilities on R2.

3RD BASE UMPIRE

- 1) Starting position is squared to the plate in a set position 6-12 feet (depending on where the runners are) down and on the line from 3rd base. With a runner on 3rd base you may be a few steps off the line.
- 2) On a batted ball to the infield and no umpire chases move up the line in foul territory for a possible play behind R3 at 3rd base. Adjust to any subsequent play on R2 at 3rd base.
- 3) On a batted ball to the outfield and no umpire chases move straight inside the diamond to a primary position at 3rd base. Take any play on R2 at 3rd base.
- 4) On a batted ball to the outfield that is caught and 1BU chases move straight into the diamond to 2nd base. Take the tag on R2. Take any play on R2 at 2nd or 3rd base.
- 5) On a batted ball to the outfield that is not caught and 1BU chases move straight into the diamond to 2nd base. Take any play on R2 at 2nd base. Take the play on R2 at 3rd base if PU is not there. If PU has 3rd base, pickup BR at 1st base and take any play on BR at 1st or 2nd base.
- 6) On a batted ball to the outfield with two outs and 1BU chases move inside the diamond just past 3rd base. Take the initial play from the outfield on R2 at 3rd base if PU has not called for it. If PU has the play on R2 at 3rd base, continue across the diamond and pickup BR at 1st base. Take any play on BR at 1st, 2nd or 3rd base.
- 7) 3BU has 'leaving early' responsibilities on R3.
- 8) 3BU has 'tag up' responsibilities at 2nd base when 1BU chases. 3BU has 'tag up' responsibilities at 3rd base when no umpire chases.

BASES LOADED

PLATE UMPIRE

- 1) Starting position is behind the plate in the slot position. On a batted ball move out to the left of the catcher unless there is a pop up in foul territory near the 1st base line. Take all plays at home plate when the ball remains in the infield.
- 2) On a batted ball to the infield and no umpire chases, if the initial play comes to home, move back and try to get an angle with the throw for the force. Watch any play on BR at 1st base from a 1st base line extended position in foul territory. Be prepared for a play at home.
- 3) On a batted ball to the outfield and no umpire chases watch R3 touch home. Stay at home and be prepared for a play on R2 at home.

- 4) On a batted ball to the outfield for extra bases and no umpire chases watch R3 touch home. Move to a point-of-the-plate holding position at home and adjust to any plays at the plate.
- 5) On a batted ball to the outfield that is caught and 1BU chases move to a holding position in foul territory between home and 3rd base. Take the tag on R3. Take any play on R3 at 3rd base or home.
- 6) On a batted ball to the outfield that is not caught and 1BU chases move to a holding position in foul territory between home and 3rd base. Read the play. Watch R3 touch home or take the play on R3 at home. If R3 has scored, take any play on R2 at 3rd base or home. If R2 has scored, take any play on R1 at 3rd base or home.
- 7) On a batted ball to the outfield with two outs and 1BU chases move to a holding position in foul territory between home and 3rd base. Read the play. Watch R3 touch home or take the play on R3 at home. If R3 has scored, take any play on R2 at 3rd base or home. If R2 has scored, take any play on R1 at 3rd base or home.
- 8) On a batted ball to the outfield that is caught and 3BU chases move to a holding position in foul territory between home and 3rd base. Take the tag on R3. Take any play on R3 at 3rd base or home.
- 9) On a batted ball to the outfield that is not caught and 3BU chases move to a holding position in foul territory between home and 3rd base. Read the play. Watch R3 touch home or take the play on R3 at home. If R3 has scored, take any play on R2 at 3rd base or home. If R2 has scored, take any play on R1 at 3rd base or home.
- 10) On a batted ball to the outfield with two outs and 3BU chases move to a holding position in foul territory between home and 3rd base. Read the play. Watch R3 touch home or take the play on R3 at home. If R3 has scored, take any play on R2 at 3rd base or home. If R2 has scored, take any play on R1 at 3rd base or home.
- 11) 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.
- 12) PU has no 'leaving early' responsibilities.
- 13) PU has the tag at 3rd base when 1BU or 3BU chases.

1ST BASE UMPIRE

- 1) Starting position is in a set position between 15 feet from 1st base to 15 feet from 2nd base, usually behind F4 – optimally, no more than 15 feet from the baseline and squared to the plate.
- 2) On a batted ball to the infield and no umpire chases the play dictates your move. If a double play, take one step at 2nd base then, while rendering your decision, be moving to a primary position for a call at 1st base. If the play at 2nd base will be the only play, commit to 2nd base. If the play just goes to 1st base, commit to 1st base.
- 3) On a batted ball to the outfield and no umpire chases depending on where the ball was hit, pivot inside the diamond either to 2nd or 1st base or a holding position between the bases. Move to the play as the action dictates. Take all plays at 1st and 2nd base.
- 4) On a batted ball to the outfield for extra bases and no umpire chases pivot inside the diamond to a primary position at 2nd base. Take all plays at 1st and 2nd base.
- 5) On a batted ball to the outfield that is caught and 3BU chases stay outside the diamond to see the tag on R2 and R1. Then move inside the diamond to 2nd base. Take any play at 2nd or 3rd base on R2. Take any play at 1st or 2nd base on R1.
- 6) On a batted ball to the outfield that is not caught and 3BU chases move inside the diamond to 2nd base. Take all plays at 1st or 2nd base. Take any plays on R2 or R1 at 3rd base if PU is not there. Take all plays on BR at 3rd base.
- 7) On a batted ball to the outfield with two outs and 3BU chases move inside the diamond to 2nd base. Take all plays at 1st or 2nd base. Take any plays on R2 or R1 at 3rd base if PU is not there. Take all plays on BR at 3rd base.
- 8) 1BU has 'leaving early' responsibilities on the runner on 2nd base.
- 9) 1BU has 'tag up' responsibilities for runners on 1st base and 2nd base.

3RD BASE UMPIRE

- 1) Starting position is squared to the plate in a set position 6-12 feet down and on the line from 3rd base in foul territory. With a runner on 3rd base, you may be a few steps off the line.
- 2) On a batted ball to the infield and no umpire chases if the initial force play is on R2 at 3rd base, move into fair territory on the outside of the diamond and try to get an angle with the throw. If a subsequent play behind R2 comes to 3rd base, move up the line in foul territory. Take any play on R3 or R2 at 3rd base. Adjust to any subsequent play on R2 at 3rd base.
- 3) On a batted ball to the outfield and no umpire chases move straight inside the diamond to a primary position at 3rd base. Adjust as needed for subsequent action. Take all plays at 3rd base.
- 4) On a batted ball to the outfield for extra bases and no umpire chases move straight inside the diamond to a primary position at 3rd base. Adjust as needed for subsequent action. Take all plays at 3rd base.
- 5) On a batted ball to the outfield that is caught and 1BU chases move straight into the diamond to 2nd base. Take the tag on R2 and R1. Take any play at 2nd or 3rd on R2. Take any play at 1st or 2nd on R1.
- 6) On a batted ball to the outfield that is not caught and 1BU chases move straight into the diamond to 2nd base. Take all plays at 1st or 2nd base. Take any plays on R2 or R1 at 3rd base if PU is not there. Take all plays on BR at 3rd base.
- 7) 3BU has 'leaving early' responsibilities on the runners on 1st and 3rd base.
- 8) 3BU has 'tag up' responsibilities on the runner at 3rd base. If 1BU chases, 3BU has 'tag up' responsibilities at 1st and 2nd bases.

BETWEEN INNING POSITIONING

PLATE UMPIRE

- 1) Position yourself facing the team that is coming to bat about 8-10 feet from the line on a perpendicular line from where the foul line meets the plate.

1ST BASE UMPIRE

- 1) Position yourself facing the plate no more than 15 feet off the foul line at approximately where the grass starts behind the second baseman or where the second baseman would normally field his/her position.
- 2) Clean the pitching rubber if you are the umpire who ends the inning in the middle of the diamond. Do any other needed sweeping at this time, after sweeping the pitcher's plate.
- 3) If teams are warming up in the area of your position, move into the diamond no more than 15 feet from first base. Face the infield. You may be off the line slightly. Do not go deeper into the outfield or behind the players.

3RD BASE UMPIRE

- 1) Clean the pitching rubber if both umpires end the inning on the lines. Otherwise, the umpire who ends the inning in the middle of the diamond cleans the pitching rubber. Do any other needed sweeping at this time also.
- 2) Position yourself facing the plate no more than 15 feet off the foul line at approximately where the grass starts on the edge of the outfield grass behind the shortstop or where the shortstop would normally field his/her position.
- 3) If teams are warming up in the area of your position, move into the diamond no more than 15 feet from 3rd base. Face the infield. You may be off the line slightly. Do not go deeper into the outfield or behind the players.

SECTION VII

FOUR 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 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.*

(BR refers to batter runner; R1 is lead runner, R2 second runner, R3 third runner, etc., **not** the base they may have occupied at time of pitch. For instance, with runners on 1B & 3B, the runner on 3B would be R1, and the runner on 1B would be R2.)

The four umpire system provides an umpire at every base allowing for the best possible coverage for force or tag plays at each base, and to observe fly balls hit to the outfield.

In the four umpire system, one of the three base umpires will go to the outfield on each fly ball hit:

- 1) The first base umpire is responsible for all fly balls hit between the right fielder and the out of play line or fence on the right field side.
- 2) The second base umpire is responsible for all fly balls that are hit into the outfield between the left and right fielders.
NOTE: The second base umpire may spend more time in the outfield observing possible trapped balls, balls hit near the fence, balls that either bounce over or go under the fence or go completely over the fence the fly, than he will making calls at second base.
- 3) The third base umpire is responsible for all fly balls hit between the left fielder and the out of play line or fence on the left field side.

***REMEMBER** – Any time an umpire goes out to the outfield, that umpire stays out until all play has ceased.

STARTING POSITIONS

PU will take his/her position behind the catcher in the slot.

U1 will take a position 15-18 feet down the line past 1B in foul territory.

U2 will take a position 15-18 feet from 2B towards the outfield. With no one on base, or runner at 1B, or runners 1B and 3B, with a left handed batter (s)he should be on RF side of 2B so that (s)he has an unobstructed view of the pitcher and batter. With right handed batter, or any time there is a runner on 2B, (s)he should be on LF side of 2B so that (s)he has an unobstructed view of the pitcher, batter, and runner (if there is one). **Note:** These positions may have to be adjusted if center fielder’s view is obstructed.

U3 will take a position 15-18 feet down the line past 3B in foul territory.

PLATE UMPIRE

- 1) The PU has responsibility for calling all ground balls near the line fair or foul up to and over 1B or 3B.
- 2) PU has responsibility for calling all fly balls in infield area.

TAG UPS

- 1) The PU has tag up responsibility at 1B when, with a runner on 1B, U1 goes to the outfield on a fly ball. PU will have tag up responsibility at 3B any time U2 or U3 go out on fly ball.
- 2) Base Umpires have tag up responsibilities at their base only, except when one goes to the outfield:
 - a) If U1 goes out, U2 will have tag ups at 2B, and U3 will have 3B.
 - b) If U2 goes out, U1 will have tag ups at 1B, and U3 will have 2B.
 - c) If U3 goes out, U1 will have tag ups at 1B, and U2 will have 2B.

ROTATION WHEN UMPIRE GOES TO OUTFIELD FOR FLY BALL

Anytime a base umpire goes to the outfield for a fly ball, rotation will be to your left (clockwise), except when U1 goes out. When U1 goes to outfield, U2 will fishhook inside diamond and take all plays that might develop at both 1B and 2B, except tag ups at 1B, which PU will watch. All other umpires will remain, and make any calls, at their base.

Vocal communication & eye contact with your partners are a must to ensure proper coverage on any plays where umpires must rotate.

NO RUNNER ON BASE

PLATE UMPIRE

- 1) On ground balls hit to infield, come out to left of catcher and trail BR no more than 15 feet down 1B line, ready to help U1 on swipe tags, pulled foot, interference, obstruction, etc. Stay in this position until B/R holds at 1B, or reaches 2B. After BR reaches 2B, if they continue towards 3B, retreat to a holding area behind home, prepared to make a call there if BR advances, or assist U3 if a run-down develops between 3B and home.
- 2) On ground balls hit through the infield, come out to left of catcher moving to a holding area about half way between home plate and pitchers circle. After watching B/R touch 1B, move back to holding area behind home, prepared to make call at home in case of extra base hit or errors allowing runner to advance. Also be prepared to help U3 in case of run-down developing.
- 3) On fly balls to outfield go to a holding area approximately half way between home and 3B in foul territory, watching BR advance to 1B, and prepared to move in and make a call at 3B if BR advances that far.

1ST BASE UMPIRE

- 1) On ground balls hit to infield, move inside foul line to get 90 degree angle on throw, maintaining 15-18 feet distance from base. If ball is hit to 1B side of second baseman, it may be necessary to stay outside foul line so as not to interfere with fielder.
- 2) On ground balls hit through the infield, stay outside foul line, moving up line towards home to a position where you can get a view of ball, 1B, outfielder and batter/runner, about 8-10 feet from 1B. Do not let 1B coach get between you and the ball.
- 3) On fly balls to outfield that are not your responsibility, stay in foul territory and swing out 1-2 steps to left and 1-2 steps towards home, watching BR touch 1B, and watching for interference/obstruction, or any play that might develop at 1B. When runner reaches 2B, be prepared to move to a position behind home plate to make a call there if necessary.

2ND BASE UMPIRE

- 1) On ground balls hit to infield, watch play develop and work for position and angle for any play that might develop at 2B.
- 2) On ground balls hit through the infield (base hit) to LF, stay outside diamond and work for angle on any play that might develop. On ground balls to CF or RF, move inside the diamond, trying to get to a position where the ball, infielder at 2B, and runner advancing toward 2B are all in your view, about 8-10 feet from 2B.
- 3) On fly balls to outfield that are not your responsibility, if U1 goes out move inside diamond to a position about halfway between 1B and 2B, 8-10 feet inside base path. If no catch, watch BR touch 1B, and go with her to 2B if necessary.

3RD BASE UMPIRE

- 1) On ground balls hit to infield stay in foul territory observing play develop. If necessary get into position to make a call at 3B if BR advances that far.
- 2) On ground balls hit through the infield, stay outside foul line, moving up line towards home to a position where you can get a view of ball and 3B. As play develops, if runner advances toward 3B get into position to make call, depending on where throw is coming from. Do not let 3B coach get between you and the ball.
- 3) On fly balls to outfield that are not your responsibility, if U2 goes out, move to a position about half way between pitchers circle and 2B, prepared to move in and make all calls at 2B and, if U1 shifts to home, at 1B also.

If U1 goes out, hold your position around 3B, reading play and prepared to move to best position for making call if BR advances toward 3B.

RUNNER ON 1ST BASE

PLATE UMPIRE

- 1) On ground balls hit to infield, come out on left side of catcher and trail BR no more than 15 feet down 1st base line. After BR reaches 1B, if R1 advances toward 3B, retreat to a 1st base line extended position in foul territory 8-10 feet from home plate.
- 2) On ground balls hit through infield come out on left of catcher to a position in front of home plate and hold, watching play develop, and prepare to help U3 if necessary, or retreat to a 1st base line extended position in foul territory 8-10 feet behind plate to make call at home if R1 advances that far.
- 3) On fly balls to outfield come out to left of catcher and trail BR no more than 15 feet down 1B line. If U1 goes out, watch R1 tag up, then if R1 advances toward 3B retreat to a 1B line extended position 8-10 in foul territory behind plate. If U2 or U3 go out, after catch/no catch move to a position about half way between 3B and home, 8-10 feet off line in foul territory, prepared to move in and make call at 3B if R1 advances that far.

1ST BASE UMPIRE

- 1) On ground balls hit to infield, move inside foul line to get 90 degree angle on throw, maintaining 15-18 feet distance from base. If ball is hit to 1B side of second baseman, it may be necessary to stay outside foul line so as not to interfere with fielder.
- 2) On ground balls hit through the infield, stay outside foul line, moving up line towards home to a position where you can get a view of ball, 1B, outfielder and BR, about 8-10 feet from 1B. Do not let 1B coach get between you and the ball.
- 3) On fly balls to outfield that are not your responsibility, stay outside foul line and get to a position where you have ball and R1 in view, watching catch and R1 tag up. When R1 reaches 2B, be prepared to move to holding position behind home in case of play there.

2ND BASE UMPIRE

- 1) On ground ball to infield, maintain distance from 2B, read play and try to get best angle for calling any play at 2B, depending on where throw is coming from. If initial play is not at 2nd base be prepared to close distance and move for best angle on second play there.
- 2) On ground balls hit through the infield to LF stay outside diamond watching any play develop and working to get best position if any play is made at 2B. On ground balls hit through the infield to CF or RF, move inside diamond about 8-10 feet from 2B, glancing over shoulder to locate ball as you go. Be sure not to step in front of R1 advancing to 2B. Read play as it develops, and move into best position for call.
- 3) On fly balls to outfield that are not your responsibility, if U1 goes out, move inside diamond to a position about half way between 1B and 2B, 8-10 feet inside base path, and watching for tag up by R1. If ball is not caught watch BR touch 1B, and R1 advance to 2B, prepared to move into position for a call at either base. If U3 goes out, move forward to within 8-10 feet of 2B, prepared to move into position for best angle if play develops there. If R1 advances past 2B, and U1 rotates home, be prepared to call any plays at 1B or 2B.

3RD BASE UMPIRE

- 1) On ground balls hit to infield stay in foul territory while observing play develop. If R1 advances toward 3B read play and get in position to make call if play is made on R1.
- 2) On ground balls hit through the infield stay outside foul line, moving up line towards home to a position where you can get a view of ball, 3B, and R1 if she is advancing toward 3B, about 8-10 feet from 3B. Do not let 3B coach get between you and the ball. Read play as it develops, and move into best position for call.
- 3) On fly balls to outfield that are not your responsibility, and U2 goes out, move inside diamond to a position between pitcher's circle and 2B, 15-18 feet from 2B. Be prepared to move in and make all calls at 2B and, if U1 shifts to home, at 1B also.

If U1 goes out, hold your position around 3B, reading play as it develops and prepare to move to best position for making call if BR advances toward 3B.

RUNNER ON 2ND BASE

PLATE UMPIRE

- 1) On ground balls hit to infield, come out on left side of catcher one step in front of plate, watching BR advance to 1B. After BR reaches 1B, retreat to a 1st base line extended position in foul territory 8-10 feet from home plate for possible play on R1 if (s)he is advancing toward home.
- 2) On ground balls hit through the infield come out on left side of catcher one step in front of plate, watching BR advance to 1B. After BR reaches 1B, retreat to a 1st base line extended position in foul territory 8-10 feet from home plate for possible play on R1 if (s)he is advancing toward home.
- 3) On fly balls to outfield go to a holding area about halfway between home and 3B, 8-10 feet off base line in foul territory, prepared to move in and make a call at 3B.

1ST BASE UMPIRE

- 1) On ground balls hit to infield, move inside foul line to get 90 degree angle on throw, maintaining 15-18 feet distance from base. If ball is hit to 1B side of second baseman, it may be necessary to stay outside foul line so as not to interfere with fielder.
- 2) On ground balls hit through the infield, stay outside foul line, moving up line towards home to a position where you can get a view of ball, 1B, outfielder and BR, about 8-10 feet from 1B. Do not let 1B coach get between you and the ball.
- 3) On fly balls to outfield that are not your responsibility, stay in foul territory and move up line towards home about 8-10 feet, watching BR touch 1B, and watching for interference/obstruction, or any play that might develop at 1B. Be prepared to move to a position behind home plate to make a call there if necessary on R1.

2ND BASE UMPIRE

- 1) On ground balls to the infield, maintain distance from 2B, watching play develop. Be prepared to move to a position for best angle on any play that might develop at 2B.
- 2) On ground balls hit through the infield to LF move to right side of 2B to get view of ball and 2B. On ground balls hit through the infield to CF or RF move inside diamond about 8-10 feet from 2B, glancing over shoulder as you go to locate ball. Be sure not to step in front of R1 advancing to 3B. Read play as it develops, and move into best position for any call at 2B.
- 3) On fly balls to outfield that are not your responsibility, if U1 goes out move inside diamond to a position about half way between 1B and 2B, approximately 8-10 feet inside base path, glancing over shoulder to locate ball as you go. If U3 goes out, move to a position about halfway between 1B and 2B, outside diamond 8-10 feet. In either case, if ball is caught watch R1 tag up. If ball is not caught watch BR touch 1B. Read play and be prepared to make all calls at both 1B and 2B.

3RD BASE UMPIRE

- 1) On ground balls to the infield, step inside foul line, working to get angle and moving in to 8-10 feet from 3B, prepared to make call if R1 advances. If ball is hit down 3B line be prepared to stay outside foul line, reading play as it develops and working to get position. Do not let 3B coach get between you and the base.
- 2) On ground balls hit through the infield stay outside foul line, moving up line towards home to a position where you can get a view of ball, 3B, and R1 if she is advancing toward 3B, about 8-10 feet from 3B. Do not let 3B coach get between you and the ball. Read play as it develops, and move into best position for call.
- 3) On fly balls to outfield that are not your responsibility, if U2 goes out, move inside diamond to a position about half way between pitchers circle and 2B, watching R1 tag up, prepared to move in and make all calls at 2B and, if U1 shifts to home, at 1B also.

If U1 goes out, hold your position around 3B, reading play as it develops and prepare to move to best position for making call if BR advances toward 3B.

RUNNER ON 3RD BASE

PLATE UMPIRE

- 1) On ground balls to the infield move back 8-10 feet from home plate to a 1st base line extended position in foul territory, watching BR advance to 1st base, and prepared for a play at home. If R1 advances, and no play is made, watch her touch home plate.
- 2) On ground balls through the infield move back 8-10 feet from home plate to a 1st base line extended position in foul territory and watch R1 touch home plate and BR advancing to 1B.
- 3) On fly balls to outfield move back 8-10 feet from home plate to a 1st base line extended position in foul territory. If U3 or U2 go to outfield watch R1 tag up on caught fly ball, and watch R1 touch home plate if (s)he advances. Also watch BR advancing to 1B. After R1 touches home, if BR advances past 1B, move to a holding position in foul territory about half way between 3B and home, prepared to move in and make call at 3B if BR advances.

1ST BASE UMPIRE

- 1) On ground balls hit to infield, move inside foul line to get 90 degree angle, maintaining 15-18 feet distance from base. If ball is hit to 1B side of second baseman, it may be necessary to stay outside foul line so as not to interfere with fielder.
- 2) On ground balls hit through the infield, stay outside foul line, moving up line towards home to a position where you can get a view of ball, 1B, outfielder and BR, not more than 10-12 feet from 1B. Do not let 1B coach get between you and the ball.
- 3) On fly balls to outfield that are not your responsibility, stay in foul territory and move up line towards home, about 8-10 feet from 1B, watching BR touch 1B, and watching for interference/obstruction, or any play that might develop at 1B. Be prepared to move to a position behind home plate to make a call there if necessary if BR advances that far.

2ND BASE UMPIRE

- 1) On ground balls to the infield, move in toward 2B a step or two, watching play develop. Be prepared to close distance and move to a position for best angle on any play that might develop at 2B.
- 2) On ground balls hit through the infield to LF, move a step or two toward 1B to get a view of ball, and watch play develop. On ground balls hit through the infield to CF or RF move inside diamond about 10-12 feet from 2B, glancing over shoulder to locate ball as you go. Watch play develop, and be prepared to assist U1 or make any calls on plays that might develop at 2B.
- 3) On fly balls to outfield that are not your responsibility, if U1 goes out, move inside diamond to a position about half way between 1B and 2B, 8-10 feet inside base path, glancing over shoulder to locate ball as you go. Watch BR touch 1B, and be prepared to call any plays that might develop at either 1B or 2B. If U3 goes out, stay outside diamond, closing distance to about 8-10 feet from 2B, watching play develop.

3RD BASE UMPIRE

- 1) On ground balls hit to infield stay in foul territory while observing play develop. Read play as it develops and get in best position to make call if any play is made at 3B.
- 2) On ground balls hit through the infield stay outside foul line, moving up line towards home to a position where you can get a view of ball, 3B, and BR if she advances toward 3B, no more than 10-12 feet from 3B. Do not let 3B coach get between you and the ball. Read play as it develops, and move into best position for call.
- 3) On fly balls to outfield that are not your responsibility, if U1 goes out, stay in foul territory moving to a position where you have a view of ball and 3B, watching R1 tag up.

If U2 goes out, move to a position about half way between pitchers circle and 2B, prepared to move in and make all calls at 2B and, if U1 rotates to home, at 1B also.

RUNNERS ON 1ST AND 2ND BASE

PLATE UMPIRE

- 1) On ground balls hit to infield, come out on left side of catcher to one step in front of plate, watching BR advance to 1B, and watching R1 for possible advancement to home and play there. After BR reaches 1B, retreat to a 1st base line extended position in foul territory 8-10 feet from home plate for possible play on R1 if (s)he is advancing toward home.
- 2) On ground balls hit through the infield come out on left side of catcher to one step in front of plate, watching BR advance to 1B. Watch play develop, ready to get into position behind the plate for a call at home.
- 3) On fly balls to outfield, if U1 goes out, move to a position just in front of the plate, observing catch/no catch and R2 tagging up. After that retreat to a 1B line extended position 8-10 feet from the plate, watching subsequent play develop, and prepare to make any calls at plate.

If U2 or U3 go out, go to a holding area about halfway between home and 3B, 8-10 feet off base line in foul territory. Be prepared to move in and make a call at 3B if R1 advances.

1ST BASE UMPIRE

- 1) On ground balls hit to infield, move inside foul line, read play, and get 90 degree angle on throw, maintaining 15-18 feet distance from base. If ball is hit to 1B side of second baseman, it may be necessary to stay outside foul line so as not to interfere with fielder.
- 2) On ground balls hit through the infield, stay outside foul line, moving up line towards home to a position where you can get a view of ball, 1B, outfielder and BR, not more than 10-12 feet from 1B. Do not let 1B coach get between you and the ball.
- 3) On fly balls to outfield that are not your responsibility, stay outside foul line and get to a position where you have ball and R1 in view, watching catch and R1 tag up. After catch/no catch, be prepared to move to holding position behind home in case of play there.

2ND BASE UMPIRE

- 1) On ground balls to the infield, maintain distance from 2B, watching play develop. Be prepared to move to a position for best angle on any play that might develop at 2B.
- 2) On ground balls hit through the infield on LF side move to right side of 2B to get view of ball and 2B. On ground balls hit through the infield to CF or RF move inside diamond about 10-12 feet from 2B, glancing over shoulder to locate ball. Be sure not to step in front of R1 advancing to 3B. Read play as it develops, and move into best position for call at 2B, if any.
- 3) On fly balls to outfield that are not your responsibility, if U1 goes out, move inside diamond to a position about half way between 1B and 2B, 10-12 feet inside base path. Glance over shoulder to locate ball, and watch for runner at 2B to tag up. If ball is not caught watch BR touch 1B. Be prepared to make all calls at both 1B and 2B.

If U3 goes out, move to your left to a position where you have a view of outfielder and 2B, watching R1 tag up. If U1 rotates to home, move to a position about halfway between 1B and 2B, 8-10 feet outside diamond, prepared to make all calls at both 1B and 2B.

3RD BASE UMPIRE

- 1) On ground balls to the infield, step inside foul line, working to get angle and maintaining 15-18 feet distance, prepared to make call if R1 advances. If ball is hit down 3B line be prepared to stay outside line, reading play as it develops and working to get position. Do not let 3B coach get between you and the base.
- 2) On ground balls hit through the infield stay outside foul line, moving up line towards home to a position where you can get a view of ball, 3B, and R1 if she is advancing toward 3B, no more than 10-12 feet from 3B. Do not let 3B coach get between you and the ball. Read play as it develops, and move into best position for call.
- 3) On fly balls to outfield that are not your responsibility, and U1 goes out, stay at 3B, moving to your right to get a view of ball, and closing distance to 3B to about 8-10 feet. Work to get best position for any play that develops there.

If U2 goes out, move inside diamond to a position about half way between pitchers circle and 2B, watching R1 tag up, prepared to move in and make all calls at 2B and, if U1 shifts to home, at 1B also.

RUNNERS ON 1ST AND 3RD BASE

PLATE UMPIRE

- 1) On ground balls to the infield move back to a 1st base line extended position in foul territory and watch the play at 1st base. Be prepared for a play at home.
- 2) On ground balls through the infield move back 8-10 feet from home plate to a 1st base line extended position in foul territory and watch R1 touch home plate if (s)he advances, and watch BR advancing to 1B.
- 3) On fly balls to outfield, if U1 goes out, move to a 1B line extended position in foul territory, 8-10 feet from the plate, observing BR advancing toward 1B and R2 tagging up. Watch R1 touch home if she advances. Watch subsequent play develop, and prepare to make any calls at plate.

If U2 or U3 go out, go to a holding area about halfway between home and 3B, 8-10 feet off base line in foul territory, watching R1 tag up. Be prepared to move in and make a call at 3B if R2 advances.

1ST BASE UMPIRE

- 1) On ground balls hit to infield, move inside foul line to get 90 degree angle on throw, maintaining 15-18 feet distance from base. If ball is hit to 1B side of second baseman, stay outside foul line so as not to interfere with fielder if necessary.
- 2) On ground balls hit through the infield, stay outside foul line, moving up line towards home to a position where you can get a view of ball, 1B, outfielder and batter/runner, not more than 10-12 feet from 1B. Do not let 1B coach get between you and the ball.
- 3) On fly balls to outfield that are not your responsibility, stay outside foul line and get to a position where you have ball and R2 in view, watching catch and R2 tag up. After catch/no catch, be prepared to move to a holding position behind home in case of play there. Watch R1 touch home.

2ND BASE UMPIRE

- 1) On ground ball to infield, read play and try to get best angle for calling any play at 2B. If initial play is not at 2nd base be prepared for second play there.
- 2) On ground balls hit through the infield to LF, stay outside diamond watching any play develop and working to get best position if any play is made at 2B. On ground balls hit through the infield to CF or RF, move inside diamond about 10-12 feet from 2B,

glancing over shoulder to locate ball. Be sure not to step in front of R2 advancing to 2B. Read play as it develops, and move into best position for any call at 2B.

- 3) On fly balls to outfield that are not your responsibility, if U1 goes out, move inside diamond to a position about half way between 1B and 2B, 8-10 feet inside base path. If ball is not caught watch BR touch 1B. Be prepared to make all calls at both 1B and 2B except for R2 tagging up at 1B.

If U3 goes out, stay outside diamond 8-10 feet watching play develop. If U1 rotates to Home move to a position about half way between 1B and 2B, 8-10 feet outside diamond, prepared to make all calls at both 1B and 2B.

3RD BASE UMPIRE

- 1) On ground balls hit to infield stay in foul territory while observing play develop. If R2 advances toward 3B read play and get in position to make call if play is made on R2.
- 2) On ground balls hit through the infield stay outside foul line, moving up line towards home to a position where you can get a view of ball, 3B, and runner if she is advancing toward 3B, no more than 10-12 feet from 3B. Do not let 3B coach get between you and the ball. Read play as it develops, and move into best position for call.
- 3) On fly balls to outfield that are not your responsibility, if U1 goes out, stay at 3B, moving to your right to get a view of ball, closing distance to 3B to about 8-10 feet, and watching R1 tag up. Work to get best position for any play that develops there.

If U2 goes out, move inside diamond to a position about half way between pitchers circle and 2B, prepared to move in and make all calls at 2B and, if U1 rotates to home, at 1B also.

RUNNERS ON 2ND AND 3RD BASE

PLATE UMPIRE

- 1) On ground balls to the infield move back 8-10 feet from home plate to a 1st base line extended position in foul territory, watching BR advance to 1st base, and prepared for a play at home. Watch R1 touch home if (s)he advances.
- 2) On ground balls through the infield move back 8-10 feet from home plate to a 1st base line extended position in foul territory and watch R1 touch home plate if (s)he advances, and watch BR advancing to 1B.
- 3) On fly balls to outfield, if U1 goes out, move back to a 1B line extended position in foul territory, about 8-10 feet from plate, observing catch and BR advancing toward 1B. Watch R1 touch home if she advances.

If U2 or U3 goes to outfield, move to a position about halfway between home and 3B, 8-10 outside diamond. Watch R1 tag up, and be prepared to move in and call any plays that might develop at 3B.

1ST BASE UMPIRE

- 1) On ground balls hit to infield, move inside foul line to get 90 degree angle on throw, maintaining 15-18 feet distance from base. If ball is hit to 1B side of second baseman, stay outside foul line so as not to interfere with fielder if necessary.
- 2) On ground balls hit through the infield, stay outside foul line, moving up line towards home to a position where you can get a view of ball, 1B, outfielder and batter/runner, not more than 10-12 feet from 1B. Do not let 1B coach get between you and the ball.
- 3) On fly balls to outfield that are not your responsibility, stay in foul territory and move up line towards home about 10-12 feet, watching BR touch 1B if no catch. After BR reaches 1B be prepared to move to a position behind home plate to make a call there if necessary.

2ND BASE UMPIRE

- 1) On ground balls to the infield, read play and be prepared to move into a position for best angle on any play that might develop at 2B, closing distance to 8-10 feet.
- 2) On ground balls hit through the infield to LF move to right side of 2B to get view of ball and 2B. On ground balls hit through the infield to CF or RF move inside diamond about 10-12 feet from 2B, glancing over shoulder to locate ball. Be sure not to step in front of R2 advancing to 3B. Read play as it develops, and move into best position for any call at 2B.
- 3) On fly balls to outfield that are not your responsibility, if U1 goes out, move inside diamond to a position about half way between 1B and 2B, 8-10 feet inside base path, glancing over shoulder to locate ball as you go. Watch R2 tag up. If ball is not caught watch BR touch 1B.

If U3 goes out, stay outside diamond, watching R2 tag up if ball is caught. If U1 rotates home, move to a position about halfway between 1B and 2B, 8-10 feet outside diamond, prepared to make all calls at both 1B and 2B.

3RD BASE UMPIRE

- 1) On ground balls to right side of infield, step inside foul line, working to get angle and distance from 3B to about 10-12 feet, prepared to make call if R2 advances. If ball is hit to left side of infield be prepared to stay outside foul line, reading play as it develops and working to get position for any play on R1 or R2 at 3B. Do not let 3B coach get between you and the base.
- 2) On ground balls hit through the infield stay outside foul line, moving up line towards home to a position where you can get a view of ball, 3B, and R2 if she is advancing, no more than 10-12 feet from 3B. Do not let 3B coach get between you and the ball. Read play as it develops, and move into best position for call.
- 3) On fly balls to outfield that are not your responsibility, if U1 goes out, stay at 3B, moving to your right to get a view of ball, closing distance to 3B to about 8-10 feet, and watching R1 tag up. Work to get best position/angle for any play that develops there.

If U2 goes out, move inside diamond to a position about half way between pitchers circle and 2B, watching R2 tag up. Be prepared to move in and make all calls at 2B and, if U1 rotates to home, at 1B also.

BASES LOADED

PLATE UMPIRE

- 1) On ground balls to the infield move back 12-15 feet from home plate to a 1st base line extended position in foul territory, watching BR advance to 1st base, and prepared for a play at home.
- 2) On ground balls through the infield move back 8-10 feet from home plate to a 1st base line extended position in foul territory and watch R1 touch home plate, and watch BR advance to 1B.
- 3) On fly balls to outfield, if U1 goes out, move back to a 1B line extended position in foul territory, about 8-10 feet from plate, observing BR advancing toward 1B and R3 tagging up on catch. Watch R1 touch home if she advances, and be prepared for any other play that might develop at home.

If U2 or U3 goes to outfield, move to a position about halfway between home and 3B, 8-10 outside diamond. Watch BR advance toward 1B, and watch R1 tag up. If R1 advances watch her touch home. Be prepared to move in and call any plays that might develop at 3B.

1ST BASE UMPIRE

- 1) On ground balls hit to infield, move inside foul line to get 90 degree angle on throw, maintaining 15-18 feet distance from base. If ball is hit to 1B side of second baseman, stay outside foul line so as not to interfere with fielder if necessary.
- 2) On ground balls hit through the infield, stay outside foul line, moving up line towards home to a position where you can get a view of ball, 1B, outfielder and batter/runner, not more than 10-12 feet from 1B. Do not let 1B coach get between you and the ball.
- 3) On fly balls to outfield that are not your responsibility, stay outside foul line and get to a position where you have ball and R3 in view, watching catch and R3 tag up. After catch/no catch, move to a holding position behind home in case of play there, watching R1 touch home if she advances.

2ND BASE UMPIRE

- 1) On ground balls to the infield, maintain distance, watching play develop. Be prepared to move to a position for best angle on any play that might develop at 2B.
- 2) On ground balls hit through the infield to left field, stay outside diamond watching any play develop and working to get best position if any play is made at 2B. On ground balls hit through the infield to CF or RF, move inside diamond about 10-12 feet from 2B, glancing over shoulder to locate ball. Be sure not to step in front of R2 advancing to 3B, or R1 advancing to 2B. Read play as it develops, and work to get best angle/position for any call.
- 3) On fly balls to outfield that are not your responsibility, if U1 goes out, move inside diamond to a position about half way between 1B and 2B, 8-10 feet inside base path, glancing over shoulder to locate ball as you go. If ball is caught watch R2 tag up. If ball is not caught watch BR touch 1B. Be prepared to make all calls at 1B and 2B except for tag up at 1B.

If U3 goes out, move to a position outside diamond 8-10 feet from 2B, where you have ball and 2B in view. Watch R3 tag up if ball is caught. Be prepared to make all calls at both 1B and 2B if U1 rotates home.

3RD BASE UMPIRE

- 1) On ground balls to the infield, maintain distance and read play, working for angle if first throw is to 3B. If initial play is not at 3B be prepared for next play to be there, and work to get best angle/position for making any call if necessary.
- 2) On ground balls hit through the infield to either side, stay outside foul line, moving up line towards home to a position where you can get a view of ball, 3B, and R2 as she advances, no more than 15-18 feet from 3B. Do not let 3B coach get between you and the ball. Read play as it develops, and move into best position for any call necessary.
- 3) On fly balls to outfield that are not your responsibility, if U1 goes out, stay at 3B, moving to your right to get a view of ball, closing distance to 3B to about 8-10 feet, and watching R1 tag up. Work to get best position/angle for any play that develops there.

If U2 goes out, move inside diamond to a position about half way between pitchers circle and 2B, watching R2 tag up. Be prepared to move in and make all calls at 2B and, if U1 rotates to home, at 1B also.

BETWEEN INNING POSITIONING

PLATE UMPIRE

- 1) Position yourself about 8-10 feet from home plate and a step back from the foul line, facing the team coming to bat.

1ST BASE UMPIRE

- 1) Position yourself facing the plate in fair territory no more than 15 feet off the foul line at approximately where the grass starts.
- 2) Clean the pitching rubber if you are the umpire who ends the inning in the middle of the diamond. Do any other needed sweeping at this time, after sweeping the pitcher's plate.
- 3) If teams are warming up in the area of your position, move into the diamond, in foul territory, no more than 15 feet from first base. Face the infield. You may be off the line slightly. Do not go deeper into the outfield or behind the players.

2ND BASE UMPIRE

- 1) Clean second base if needed.
- 2) Position yourself approximately at edge of outfield grass in direct line from home through second base.

3RD BASE UMPIRE

- 1) Clean the pitching rubber if both umpires end the inning on the lines. Otherwise, the umpire who ends the inning in the middle of the diamond cleans the pitching rubber. Do any other needed sweeping at this time also.
- 2) Position yourself facing the plate in fair territory no more than 15 feet off the foul line at approximately where the grass starts
- 3) If teams are warming up in the area of your position, move into the diamond, in foul territory, no more than 15 feet from third base. Face the infield. You may be off the line slightly. Do not go deeper into the outfield or behind the players.

SECTION VIII

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 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 offense 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.
- May be used for any player in the line-up.
 - Must be made known prior to the start of the game with name and number listed on the line-up card or sheet.
 - Must remain in the same position in the batting order for the entire game.
 - 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.
 - 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)
- Can play defense.
 - EP's are optional. Coaches can use two EP's.
 - 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.
 - Must be used the entire game.
 - Must remain in the same position in the batting order for the entire game.
 - 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.
 - 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
- Any of the starting players may be withdrawn from the game and re-entered once.
 - Includes the starting EP(s) and/or the DH must occupy the same position in the batting order whenever they are in the game.
 - Violation of the re-entry rule results in the use of an illegal player.
 - 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 catcher.
- Player can only be used once per inning.
 - 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.
 - 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.
 - 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:
 - A player not in the game.
 - The pitcher/catcher (who made the last out)
 - Go back to the previous out.
 - 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 player.
- 20) PITCHING REGULATIONS:
- 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.
 - Pitcher shall take or simulate taking a signal from the catcher from this position.
 - Pitcher shall bring the hands together to touch them together for no more than ten (10) seconds.
 - Pitcher shall not be considered in the pitching position unless the catcher is in position to receive the pitch.
 - Pitch starts when the hands are separated or when the pitcher makes any motion that is part of her windup.
 - Hands may only be separated one time per pitch.
 - 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.
 - Women and girls may not step backward with the non-pivot foot.
 - 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.
 - A legal delivery is one which the ball is delivered with an underhand motion.
 - The hand must be below the hip and the wrist not farther from the body than the elbow.
 - 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.
- 21) 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.*
- 21) 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.
- 22) 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.
- 23) 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.
- 24) 90 DEGREE ANGLE TAG
- a) The concept determines the umpire's location on tag plays.
 - b) The path of the runner into a base or the application of the tag on a play not involving a base, together with the umpire's line of vision from a location 6- 10' away, form a 90 degree angle.
- 25) 90 DEGREE ANGLE THROW
- a) The concept determines the umpire's location on force plays.
 - b) The path of the thrown ball to a base together with the umpire's line of vision from a location 15 – 18' from the base, form a 90 degree angle.
- 26) EFFICIENCY OF MOVEMENT: Starting and ending all movement in a good "base" – feet parallel to one another and more than shoulder width apart, with weight evenly distributed.
- 27) ELEMENTS OF PLAYS
- a) One Element Play – A tag play that involves seeing a tag applied but does not involve a base.
 - b) Two Element Play – A tag play that involves seeing a runner touch a base and being a tag applied.
 - c) Three Element Play – A force play that involves seeing a fielder's foot on a base, a runner touch a base, and the ball into the fielder's glove.

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. Footies/no show socks are not acceptable as part of the NSA OFFICIAL UNIFORM.*
- 5) Black Belt.
- 6) Black socks with trousers and white crew socks or white or black socks that cover the ankle with black shorts. Partners sock color MUST match if shorts are worn.
- 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*
- 14) 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.