

## 2023 BAJA TWO MAN UMPIRES MECHANICS MANUAL

One of the most important aspects of good umpiring is being in the correct position to get the best view of the play. This manual is designed to help all of us to do just that. The two umpires should meet with each other before the game to:

- A. Discuss infield fly rules and signal-signal each other with a hand on the chest that you are in an infield fly situation. Plate umpire has the primary responsibility to make this call, but the base umpire can make it if necessary. YELL: INFIELD FLY, BATTER IS OUT!! (Add, IF FAIR if ball is near a baseline. **Addendum for INFIELD FLYS** – The infield fly rule takes precedence over our “Green Grass” rule. If an infield fly is called and the infielder standing on the grass drops the ball, and it hits the grass, the batter is still out and runners run at their own risk. **Reminder:** An infield fly is a fair fly ball (not including a line drive or a bunt) which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort, when first and second, or first, second, and third bases are occupied before two are out (ie with zero or one out).
- B. Plate umpire calls ALL foul balls with verbal signal and pointing to foul territory. He also calls all fair balls, but ONLY by pointing to fair territory-NO verbal signal.
- C. Who covers third base? Usually, the base umpire takes batter-runner all the way to third, making sure he/she touches all bases. If, for some reason, base umpire cannot do this, then the plate umpire will cover third, but the plate umpire must be prepared to hustle back to home if runner continues past third and heads there.
- D. Who watches for tag ups on fly balls? Normally, the plate umpire will watch the tag up at third base while the base umpire watches first and second. If both first and second are occupied, second base becomes the first priority. These are appeal plays, so no call is made unless the defense appeals.
- E. Who is going to call "OUT" or "CATCH" on fly balls? Normally, the plate umpire will assume this duty, but if he/she has difficulty seeing deep balls to the outfield, the base umpire can assume this duty.
- F. Discuss any rules about which you may be hazy.
- G. **Appeal procedure: The Manager MUST go to the umpire who made the call.** If that umpire feels he may need help, he should then meet with the other umpire to discuss the play. Do this as privately as possible.
- H. We encourage **managers to be the ONLY one questioning calls.** The non-calling umpire can help here by reminding players of this fact and encouraging them to “back off” and let the manager handle the situation.
- I. On plays at first, the plate umpire should step out in front of the plate and watch the first baseman’s foot, to be sure he/she does not come off the base too soon. Only rule on this if an appeal is made through the base umpire. **Also look to see that the runner goes to the correct base;** immediately call the runner out if he/she goes to the wrong base IF there is a play being made there, even if the throw is from the outfield. (Use judgement if there is no chance of outfield throwing the runner out, but throws to first anyway.)

### POSITIONING

- A. The plate umpire should be between the catcher and the batter but behind both. This is the preferred and safer position, but if you feel more comfortable on the other side of the catcher, that is ok.
- B. On ALL balls hit, get out in front of the plate, so you can watch the first baseman's foot on close plays there. Watch to see that runner goes to the correct base. Be prepared to rule on appeals at any base, and be prepared to make calls at third when you are supposed to.
- C. If there is a play at home, you need to position yourself between the backstop and the plate, looking directly down the first base line so you can see the ball, the runner, and the

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plate without interfering with the throw to the plate.

- D. Practice how high 12 feet is, so we can have more consistency on calling high/illegal pitches. Call “ILLEGAL” as loudly and as soon as you possibly can so the batter knows the pitch will not be called a strike.

**BASE UMPIRE:** Begin the game by positioning yourself near the outfield grass, between the first and second basemen. If you make a call at first, move to a spot at a 45-degree angle from first and stay 15-20 feet away from the base. You should keep your eye on the ball and let the ball take your eyes to the play at first. That way, the base, the ball, the offense, and the defense are all in front of you. Be alert for the foot being pulled too early, and the runner going to the wrong base or missing the base entirely.

- A. With the runner on first, or first and second, position yourself between the second baseman and second base. Stay 10-15 feet from the base to make the call there. Be prepared to then turn and make the call at first, while ALSO watching for interference by the runner going into second.
- B. General rule: If the ball stays inside the infielders, you stay outside; if the ball goes outside the infielders, you move inside, to a position behind the pitcher, where you can watch runners to be certain they touch the bases, and proceed to wherever the call needs to be made.
- C. Tag ups: Try – we said try! – to get the runner tagging up between you and the catcher for the best view of the play. Your primary responsibility is the runner on second, unless there is no runner there, in which case you would watch the runner at first. No way you can keep this runner between you and the catcher! Tagging up is an appeal play so no call is made unless an appeal is made.
- D. If no one is on base and the batter hits a triple or home run, you move inside the diamond, and trail the runner all the way to third, making sure all bases are touched. Missing a base is an appeal play, so no call is made unless the defense appeals.
- E. You have 100% responsibility to see that runners touch first and second on ALL plays, and third base if a triple or home run is hit.
- F. If run-downs, keep the play between you and the other umpire. Watch for obstruction by the defense and running out of the base line by the offense.

### NEW RULES/REMINDERS:

- A. There is no overrunning second or third base. The runner and the defensive player must do their best to avoid a collision. Any intentional collisions are grounds for ejection from the game. If a runner fails to avoid collision or interferes with a fielder making a play, that runner shall be called out. If the collision or interference has disrupted a double play, that runner shall be out and the umpire MAY award a second out if in his judgement the double play would have occurred.
- B. Players should NOT be calling a time out to allow them time to get to a base coaching position (nor any other position). The base coach should go behind the home plate/catcher/umpire and may proceed during the game. The game should not be delayed for a base coach. The umpire can give this player a warning the first time, but may be ejected for subsequent interruptions.
- C. Non-Players, or batters waiting their turn to bat, should not be delaying a game by crossing through the outfield to get to the restroom.
- D. Fielders should be ready to get to their positions when it is their turn to go out to the field. Umpires may call an automatic out on the next at bat (even if in a different inning) if a defensive player is in “wardrobe” or excessively dawdling unnecessarily. If a batter is dawdling unnecessarily, the batter can be called out.
- E. Pitchers MUST wear a protective mask while pitching.