



**2020 Baseball  
Officials Handbook**

## Table of Contents

### Contents

Welcome from the UIC .....	2
Introduction .....	3
Officiating Program Mission.....	3
Officiating Program Goals .....	3
Statement of Beliefs .....	3
Officiating Code of Ethics/Conduct .....	3
Procedures for Obtaining an AAD/USSSA Officiating Certification .....	4
Officiating Requirements.....	4
General Provisions .....	4
General Policies .....	5
Rules and Rules Knowledge / Enforcement .....	5
Tardiness and Absenteeism .....	5
Officials Compensation / Payment Schedule .....	5
Game Forfeits / Cancellations / Suspensions .....	5
Uniform (Dress Code).....	6
Preparing for The Contest .....	6
Prior to the Contest.....	6
Arrival at the Site .....	6
Site Headquarters .....	6
During the Contest .....	6
After the Contest .....	7
Breach of Regulations / Agreements / Ethics.....	7
Failure to Fulfill Rules Meeting Requirements.....	7
Failure to Fulfill Game Assignments .....	7
Unsatisfactory Officiating .....	7
Criminal Convictions .....	7
Unethical Conduct.....	8
Appeals – .....	8
Appeals exist for officials who have been affected adversely by rulings.....	8
Tournament Officials .....	8
USSSA Association Membership.....	8
Roles & Responsibilities .....	8
AAD/USSSA Director .....	8
AAD/ USSSA UIC.....	8
AAD/USSSA Head Assistant UIC.....	8
AAD/USSSA Official Evaluator / Site Supervisor.....	9
Insurance Benefits for AAD/USSSA Registered Officials .....	9
Positioning Basics.....	9
The Plate Umpire .....	9
Officials Communication .....	10
Key Rules and Mechanics —Review and Clarification .....	14
Helpful Hints to Become A Superior Official.....	16
Proper Mental Attitude and Mental Focus.....	17
Timing .....	18
Between Innings .....	18
Asking for help and changing calls .....	18
Plays that you might need to ask for help, in order to get more information:.....	18
Four calls that can be legally and properly changed.....	18
Code of Conduct and Officials Enforcement Authority .....	19
USSSA SPECIFIC RULES .....	22

<b>RULE 7.00 – RULES OF PLAY</b> .....	22
<b>RULE 13.00 – SAFETY RULES</b> .....	24
<b>RULE 15.00 – UMPIRES</b> .....	24
<b>RULE 16.00 – PROTESTS</b> .....	24
<b>RULE 18.00 – TOBACCO &amp; TOBACCO RELATED PRODUCTS</b> .....	24
<b>MLB OFFICIAL BASEBALL RULES</b> .....	25

Go to [www.abqusssa.com](http://www.abqusssa.com) and click on “Officiating” to view additional information and other useful resources.

### Welcome from the UIC

Hello and welcome to another year of AAD/USSSA baseball. My name is Hector Martinez and I’m your AAD/USSSA Umpire in Chief, I personally look forward to working with all of the AAD/USSSA contracted umpires So, whether you are a new umpire or a returning umpire, I hope you join us for the 2020 Baseball Season.

For those of you who don’t know me, and for some of you who do, here is my background in umpiring. I am currently entering into my 6th year as a New Mexico Activities Association Central Region High School Umpire, my 4th year as an NJCAA Western Junior College Athletic Association Region 5 Umpire, my 3<sup>rd</sup> year as an NCAA Division 2 Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference Umpire, and my 2<sup>nd</sup> year as a New Mexico Baseball Umpire Association Summer Baseball Assignor.

This year, I am looking forward creating a training program for incoming umpires, as well as a career progression program for umpires interested in taking their careers to the next level. One of my core beliefs in helping you all succeed is providing assistance and mentoring throughout the season. Utilizing our Senior AAD/USSSA members alongside you at games provides upcoming umpires, a hands-on approach to cultivating your skills and passing down valuable knowledge for further progression in the sport. The final component of our training program involves an evaluation aspect that helps you understand and learn new ways to improve you umpiring skills. We have numerous committed umpires who have extensive experience as baseball umpires. They are looking forward to sharing their experiences with all of you.

I am excited to embark on a new challenge with the opportunity to build the staff to help you on your journey. You will learn new skills and IMPROVE the skills you already have. I look forward to providing the AAD/USSSA with the most prepared and professional officials in the State of New Mexico and also providing every member with the resources to make you the best umpire you can be.

If more information is required, or if you have any questions or comments, feel free to call/text me at; (505) 463-2942 or e-mail me at [assigner.nmbua@gmail.com](mailto:assigner.nmbua@gmail.com)

Regards, and I look forward to meeting /working with you guys in the upcoming season.

*Hector Martinez*

Hector Martinez  
 AAD/USSSA  
 Umpire-in –Chief

2020 Officials Schedule – subject to change

January 1<sup>st</sup> - Applications Being Taken for all new officials.  
February 21<sup>st</sup> - Umpire Orientation/Registration Meeting – 7pm Ramada Hotel  
Feb 22-23<sup>rd</sup> - USSSA Official Clinic – 9am-5pm – Rio Rancho Sports Complex  
March 14-15<sup>th</sup> - St. Patrick's Day Weekend Tournament  
March 23<sup>rd</sup> - Opening Day USSSA Spring Baseball Season  
May 2-3<sup>rd</sup> - Cinco de Mayo Tournament  
June 12-13-14<sup>th</sup> - USSSA State Tournament  
July 17-18-19<sup>th</sup> – Dog Days Invitational Tournament  
August 16<sup>th</sup> - Opening Day USSSA Fall Baseball Season  
Sept 5-6-7<sup>th</sup> - Labor Day Tournament  
October 10-11<sup>th</sup> – Balloon Fiesta Tournament  
November 7-8<sup>th</sup> - Veteran's Day Weekend Tournament

## Introduction

Sports officiating can be a fulfilling and challenging avocation. This activity provides individuals with opportunities for physical fitness, earning extra income, meeting people, goal setting, continuing education, and public service. Most importantly, officiating youth sports provides officials with the privilege to play a vital role in the education of student-athletes.

An official is an important contributor to the development of program participants. Because of this role, every official is expected to be a person of good character, integrity and free of racial, religious and personal bias. The sports official represents the very integrity of the game.

AAD/USSSA sports officials are required to register with the national sanctioning body of USSSA. The oversight of the AAD/USSSA officiating program is the responsibility of the AAD/USSSA Directors office with assistance from the UIC, Site Supervisors and Evaluators.

Officiating is a privilege, not a right. Officials that are unfair or biased, exhibit a lack of physical or mental fitness or fail to comply with AAD/USSSA administrative requirements or exhibit questionable conduct on or off the playing surface can be penalized up to and including the termination of the Work for Hire Agreement

## Officiating Program Mission

Creating a competent community of sports officials who play a key role in developing AAD/USSSA student-athletes into good citizens of tomorrow.

## Officiating Program Goals

- Recruit men and women of diversity into baseball officiating
- Train prospective officials in order that they will have the entry level skills needed to enjoy officiating and competently manage contests.
- Support officials and their activities
- Reward officials through advancement opportunities, tournament assignments and competitive compensation
- Recognize officials and their achievements
- Develop leadership of local officials, assigners, instructors and others

## Statement of Beliefs

- WE believe that the recruitment of officials is most successful by individuals through local associations.
- WE believe that training leads to enjoyment in officiating and in turn leads to retention of officials.
- WE believe that continuing education leads to talented and competent officials.
- WE believe that AAD/USSSA must support officials through training, education and action.
- WE believe that reward and recognition of officials creates enthusiastic officials.
- WE believe that strong leadership must be present in all officials' activities.
- WE believe that a strong officiating program and competent officials create a positive experience for our program participants.

## Officiating Code of Ethics/Conduct

Our customers (Managers, Coaches, Participants, Parents, Field Owners and Sponsors) have entrusted the AAD/USSSA and our sports officials to assist them in the education and development of their youth through baseball. The proper operation of such a process requires that officials be independent, impartial and responsible to people they serve. In recognition of these expectations there is hereby established a Code of Ethics for all officials. The purpose of the code is to establish guidelines for ethical standards of conduct for all officials.

- **An Official** must devote time, thought and study to the rules of the game and the mechanics necessary to carry out these rules so that one may render effective and creditable service in a fair and unbiased manner.
- **An Official** must work with fellow officials and the state and national association in a spirit of harmony and cooperation in spite of differences of opinion that may arise during debate of issues.
- **An Official** must resist every temptation and outside pressure to use one's position as an official to benefit oneself. Under all circumstances, officials must avoid promoting the special interest of any person or group of persons other than the customers we serve.
- **An Official** must constantly uphold the honor and dignity of the officiating industry in all personal conduct and relations with participants, coaches, managers, parents, field owner's and the public, to be a worthy example to the athletes under one's jurisdiction.
- **An Official** will be prepared both physically and mentally, dress per expectations of sport standards, and maintain a proper appearance that is befitting the importance of the game.
- **An Official** shall avoid the use of tobacco and tobacco products at the contest site.
- **An Official** shall not consume alcohol (or any illegal/illicit drug or controlled substance) prior to or during the contest.
- **An Official** must remember and recognize that it is important to honor contracts regardless of possible inconvenience or financial loss. Every member of the officiating profession carries a responsibility to act in a manner becoming a professional person. The conduct of any official influences the attitude of the public toward the profession in general as well as toward the official in particular.

## Procedures for Obtaining an AAD/USSSA Officiating Certification

### Becoming an AAD/USSSA Official

Any person who is 16 years of age (or 15 with a parent), at the time of contracting, and has a knowledge of baseball is eligible to apply. Contact the UIC for specifics and to start the process.

**Step 1: Attend, annually, a minimum of one AAD/USSSA Officiating Clinic – Training-** The USSSA Official Group has two official training days per year. These clinics are held prior to the start of the Spring Season and prior to the start of the Fall Season. The purpose of these clinics is to instill in the Official, the proper training to make you the best official you can possibly be. While we cannot hold your hand, and make the calls for you, we can provide for you the proper training to make the right call. Attendance at clinics is Mandatory. The Umpire-in-Chief and trainers will coordinate the clinics. While there are no mandatory fees beyond the annual USSSA registration fee to call league games, there may be fees associated with clinics offered that will qualify you for tournament assignments. Clinic fees will vary and include the instructor's fee, application fee and testing. Clinic fees are separate from the required USSSA Officials registration process and are administrated by the Umpire-in-Chief.

**Step 2: Take Officiating Exam -** The clinics conclude with the officiating exam. Applicants must receive a passing score of 85% on the mechanics and rules exams and pass the proficiency portion in order to be sanctioned as an AAD/USSSA official.

**Step 3: Complete Concussion Training -** Applicants must complete a course on concussion training, prior to officiating. You can get to the link by going to this address on the CDC website: [www.cdc.gov/concussion/headsup/online\\_training.html](http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/headsup/online_training.html)

**Step 4: Receive Officiating Sanctioning -** Applicants with a passing score will be granted sanctioning. If you do not receive your notification of sanctioning within two weeks, contact the AAD/USSSA Umpire-in-Chief, Hector Martinez at 505-463-2942 or [hector.martinez7@gmail.com](mailto:hector.martinez7@gmail.com) **Note:** Applicants receiving a grade of 75% to 84% on the mechanics or rules exam may request a retest from the Umpire-in-Chief. Applicants who do not pass the subsequent officiating exam must wait one year to re-enroll in the officiating class and start the application process over.

**Step 5: Complete the USSSA National Officials Registration Process –**AAD/USSSA will process each Official's 2020 Umpire registrations per the 2020 Work for Hire Agreement. As a benefit of registering as a USSSA sports official each official is provided medical and liability insurance. Be sure to review the policy limits and deductibles to determine if you require additional coverage.

**Step 6: Submit the required registration paperwork to AAD/USSSA, through the UIC -** The registration paperwork consists of:

- 1) A completed Work-for-Hire Agreement
- 2) Submit the completed concussion training certification
- 3) Photo copy of a driver's license or photo ID with birthdate
- 4) A completed IRS form W-9

**Step 7: Attend Required Rules Meetings for each event –** The UIC will inform you of the specific event meetings.

## Officiating Requirements

### General Provisions

- 1) This Work for Hire Agreement/Contract (here after referred to as the Agreement) is entered into by the official, an independent contractor (here after referred to as the Official), and Dana Gilmer (AAD / USSSA Director) here after referred to as the Director. This agreement is for the current baseball season of Jan 1 - Dec 31. By signing this agreement, the Official agrees to meet all of the requirements set forth in this document and abide by the decisions and directions of the Director. This Agreement/Contract shall automatically terminate on December 31 of the current season or may be terminated by either party upon 3 days written notice of the other party.
- 2) AAD/USSSA Baseball has two distinct league seasons. The Spring Season traditionally commences the Sunday after the St. Patrick's Day Weekend Tournament. The Fall Season traditionally starts two weeks prior to the Labor Day Weekend Tournament or the third weekend of August.
- 3) Tournaments- AAD/USSSA Baseball will hold 8 tournaments in 2020. The tournaments are: Umpires Training, St. Patrick's Day Weekend, Cinco de Mayo, the USSSA STATE TOURNAMENT, Dog Days Tournament, Labor Day Weekend Tournament, Balloon Fiesta Tournament and Veteran's Day Weekend Tournament. In addition, the AAD/USSSA Baseball Officials Association has an open invitation to officiate numerous USSSA sanctioned events in the region.
- 4) It is understood that the official will not at any time or in any manner, whether directly or indirectly, divulge, disclose, or communicate any information that is proprietary to AAD or USSSA. Furthermore, the Official shall protect such information and treat it as strictly confidential. This provision shall continue to be effective after the termination of the Agreement.
- 5) If any provision of this Agreement/Contract is found to be invalid or unenforceable for any reason, the remaining provisions shall continue to be valid and enforceable.
- 6) While contracted as an official (for a specific league season or tournament event) you are not allowed to manage or coach a team, in this program, within the same age division of your team.
- 7) As an Official, you will in no way be referred to or represented as an employee of AAD or USSSA and as such forfeit all claims and privileges associated with same. In fact, you stipulate that you are an independent contractor with the rights and obligations associated with being an independent contractor.
- 8) As an independent contractor, you will submit a current W-9 with this agreement and you acknowledge that based on the current NM Gross Receipts statutes you are responsible for claiming and reporting your own Gross Receipts taxes associated with all monies earned under this contract. You further acknowledge that based on the current state and federal income tax statutes, you are responsible for claiming and reporting your own self-employment and income taxes associated with all monies earned under this contract.
- 9) As an Official, you further agree to register as a sports official with the United States Specialty Sports Association (USSSA). Under no circumstances shall an Official be paid until the USSSA registration is complete. It is the responsibility of the Official to process the USSSA registration and the Official is

responsible for understanding the benefits and limitations of the registration and insurance provided through USSSA. Registration will be done online at [www.ussa.com](http://www.ussa.com).

- 10) As an AAD/USSSA official you understand and agree to make AAD/USSSA events and programs your highest officiating priority. Failure to support an AAD/USSSA event or program in lieu of another baseball program could affect scheduling under this work for hire agreement.
- 11) The Official stipulates that he/she has or will obtain, prior to officiating, all the necessary physical conditioning, expertise, communication skills and problem-solving skills necessary to perform as a baseball official in the AAD/USSSA programs and is solely responsible for executing this Work for Hire Agreement.
- 12) The youngest age an Official can be contracted is 16 years of age, at the time of contracting, (photocopy of Driver's License or photo ID with birthdate required). Officials under the age of 18 (at the time of contracting) will be required to secure their parent or legal guardian's acceptance and signature of this Work for Hire Agreement.
- 13) Officials must have completed the CDC online Concussion Certification (good for 3 years) and submit the certificate with this agreement. Concussion Training must be completed once every three (3) years before an Official is eligible to officiate. You can find the link to the online courses on the AAD/USSSA website at [Free Concussion Training](#)
- 14) Rules Interpretation Meeting Attendance Requirements
  - a) Local Rules Meetings - An AAD/USSSA Class 1 or 2 official must attend the event specific rules meetings conducted by a UIC. The AAD/USSSA UIC may allow meeting attendance credit for special circumstances.

## General Policies

### Rules and Rules Knowledge / Enforcement

The USSSA Rules are the foundation of the AAD/USSSA program. The USSSA Baseball Rules can be found on the USSSA web site – [www.ussa.com](http://www.ussa.com). If a rule is not covered in the USSSA Rule Book, then refer to the MLB Rule Book. It is the responsibility of ALL Officials to know and understand the Rules. Each Official will read the rulebooks applicable to the games being called and will familiarize and adhere him/herself to the rules of the game and to the specific programs Code of Conduct. Each Official will adhere to the adaptations to the rules of the game as determined by AAD/USSSA for play in its program. For league play, and some tournament play it is understood that all rules addressed by the Director will take precedence over the foundation of rules. Official are authorized and required to enforce every section of these rules. Keeping in mind that every person, whether a player or a spectator, is a customer and as such must be treated professionally at all times. The Official shall read, understand and apply the provisions of this AAD/USSSA Officials Handbook.

### Tardiness and Absenteeism

All Officials should arrive ready to work, in uniform, competent of mind, and prepared to officiate. All Officials are responsible for arriving 20 minutes prior to the scheduled game time. In the event an official is going to be late in arriving to, or miss completely, his/her assigned games, the official is responsible for contacting the UIC at least six (6) hours prior to game time of the first game they are scheduled to email at [aadofficials@gmail.com](mailto:aadofficials@gmail.com) at least 72 hours prior to game time of the first game they are scheduled to call. In the event an official cannot fulfill his / her assigned games due to an emergency, it is the Officials obligation to fill his / her games with an approved Official. In the event said Official does not contact the above noted individual within the allotted time and does not officiate the schedule game, he/she is subject to a fine in the amount of one game pay for each violation and / or forfeiture of future games. The fine for the first tardy infraction will be \$20.00 and each subsequent infraction will be fined at \$40.00.

### Officials Compensation / Payment Schedule

The official pay scale will be based on a rate of \$28.00 per hour for a two-man system, and \$40.00 per hour for a one-man system. All games will be paid on a per game basis, calculating the per game rate based on the no new inning time limit of each contest.

- 1) Payment for services performed shall be on the 10th and the 25th of each month, after 6:00pm by picking up your paycheck at the MAC in Rio Rancho or Dana Gilmer to arrange delivery ([abqussa@aol.com](mailto:abqussa@aol.com) at 505-417-1810). If the official chooses to have payments mailed to them and the payment is lost the official will be responsible for any stop payment fees, on that payment, issued by the bank. It is recommended that officials supply certified mail self-addressed stamped envelopes to the Director for delivery of paychecks. Services performed between the 1st and the 15th of each month shall be paid on the 25<sup>th</sup> of the same month, and services performed between the 16th and the last day of each month shall be paid on the 10th of the next month. Arrangements must be made (either self-addressed stamped envelope or in person) to receive all paychecks within seven (7) days of the payday. If official who is to receive the paycheck fails to make arrangements within seven (7) days, then if check is lost or stolen, it is the responsibility of the payee to pay the \$35.00 stop payment fee.

### Game Forfeits / Cancellations / Suspensions

- 1) If play has started (pregame meeting concluded) and is suspended or forfeited (by the Official) the officials will be paid the game rate divided by the percentage of the innings completed compared the number of innings scheduled.
- 2) In a seven-inning game - any game having reached the 4th inning or having reached 3 ½ innings with the home team leading.
- 3) In a six-inning game – any game having reached the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning or having reached 2 ½ innings with the home team leading.
- 4) The game status (at the time of suspension or forfeit) must be reported to the league per the SOP for officials as posted on the local web site.
- 5) If a game is forfeited because of a no-show team and the official works another game during the same time slot he will be paid normally.
- 6) If he chooses to take the game off, he will not be paid for that game.
- 7) If there is lightening within 5 miles of the field the official is to suspend play until no lightning strikes have occurred, within 5 miles, for 30 minutes.

### WEATHER SOP FOR OFFICIALS

- 1) As the official for your assigned field you have the ultimate responsibility in determining if the weather conditions warrant a stoppage in play or a cancellation of a game. If at any time you feel that either the field is no longer playable or lightening is too close to the fields you are required to stop play. If a delay is your decision, when the conditions improve, you and you alone decide when to resume the game.

As it is impossible for the league to be at every field at the same time to assist with the determination of when a field is playable it is the official's responsibility to assess and make the determination. If lightening is a concern the officials are encouraged to utilize the Little League "Weather Bug" application (free download) to assist in the determination BUT if there is ANY question play is to be halted until deemed safe.

If you feel it is necessary to halt play you must notify, (via text or call) both the Site Director at your location and Dana Gilmer (505) 417-1810, of your specific field situation. After you get home you must notify the league email ([abqussa@aol.com](mailto:abqussa@aol.com)) within 24 hours of the specific game situation to include the following:

Date:  
Scheduled game time:  
Field:  
Start time:  
Time play was suspended:  
Home team name and score:

Visiting team name and score:  
Inning play was suspended:  
Top or bottom half of the inning:  
Number of outs in the inning:  
Plate official name:  
Base official name:

## Uniform (Dress Code)

- 1) The approved Uniform consists of:
  - a) Non-logo OR USSSA officials Cap. **MUST BE WORN AT ALL TIMES**
  - b) USSSA umpire's shirt or applicable umpires' shirt, MLB Black, MLB Sky Blue, and Pink (with Black trim). Under shirts must be white. No sleeves protruding from the shirt unless covered, at all times, by an official umpire's jacket.
  - c) Jerry Davis Charcoal Grey pants with a black leather belt with plain buckle.
  - d) Polished all black shoes on plate – Polished all black shoes on bases.
  - e) If an umpire chooses to wear an outer garment it must be an official umpire's jacket.
  - f) Each umpire must have a ball bag, ball/strike indicator, brush, writing pen, and timepiece. A cellphone is not to be used as a timepiece.
  - g) AAD/USSSA Rules Reminders as adopted by the league / tournament programs.
  - h) Cell phone, with the free Little League Weather Bug app loaded to track lightening and to communicate with the Director.
- Any deviation from this dress code will cause the umpire in question to be considered out of uniform, and can result in a \$10.00 fine per infraction. This is not intended to place a hardship on any individual; it is however intended to present the umpiring crew as an organized, efficient, and professional team.
- 2) Officials are urged to wear any and all protective equipment that they deem necessary. No Official will be restricted from wearing any protective equipment that he/she wishes to wear.
- 3) Any deviation from this dress code will cause the official in question to be considered out of uniform, and can result in a \$10.00 fine per infraction. This is not intended to place a hardship on any individual; it is however intended to present the umpiring crew as an organized, efficient, and professional team.
  - a) No other logos, patches, emblems or numbers are permitted on the officiating uniform. If, for a special occasion, a commemorative or memorial patch is worn on the shirt, it must be approved by AAD/USSSA.
    - i) **Exception:** An American Flag patch/emblem is optional and, if worn, shall be on the left sleeve approximately two inches below the shoulder with the star field facing to the front.
  - b) Jewelry shall not be worn except for a wedding band and/or a medical alert necklace or bracelet. A religious medallion which is not visible is permitted. A watch is permitted only when an official has a duty for timing during the contest.
- 4) All Officials on a crew must be dressed alike.
- 5) The plate official shall wear all protective equipment as specified by rule.

## Preparing for The Contest

Sport officials play an important and integral role in the fulfillment of contests providing educational value to young men and women. Our conduct and handling of situations provides an important contribution to the development of participants and high school spectators. You represent the very integrity of the game. Your conduct before, during, and after the contest will reflect and ultimately shape attitudes towards authority figures and sports officials in general. As a contest official, you represent not only yourself, but all officials and AAD/USSSA.

### Prior to the Contest

- 1) Respond promptly to an assignment you are offered to officiate.
- 2) If the assigner attempts to contact you to confirm an assignment, inform you of changes or important details such as change of venue, opponent, time, respond promptly. Return all calls and emails timely and professionally.
- 3) Email/call the UIC with in the required timeframe should complications arise.
- 4) Get directions so you know where the contest is held.

### Arrival at the Site

- 1) Arrive 15 minutes ahead of scheduled start time.
- 2) Park intelligently. Avoid areas where fans/participants may be congregating. Be discreet and as invisible as possible.
- 3) Dress in a manner that reflects well upon yourself, other officials, and the AAD/USSSA. Be mindful of team colors in your dress. Dressing in a bright red shirt as you officiate the "Big Red" may cause some speculation from an opponent.
- 4) Enter together, as a team. Leave together, as a team, through the winning team's dugout.
- 5) Be courteous to all you meet. The memory of your conduct will last long after the game.
- 6) Let the Site Director know you are at the site.

### Site Headquarters

- 1) Check to see if there are changes to the event schedule.
- 2) Take care of any requested paperwork or vouchers.
- 3) Don't leave bottles or trash strewn about. Gather and secure all trash in appropriate containers as you leave. Leave the area in better condition than how you found it.
- 4) Realize that not all sites will be able to provide food or drink and plan ahead.
  - a) Don't expect or ask for any special favors or entitlements.

Most sites have a no tobacco policy for their premises. Respect their policy and abide by it. Do not use tobacco while on school grounds or fields.

### During the Contest

- 1) Set high expectations with the managers in regard to their sportsmanship and behavior and insist they do the same with their players and spectators.
- 2) Ignore the fans unless they are inciting players on the opposing team, using insulting/offensive/abusive language. Do not tolerate gestures or behavior that prevents you from performing your role.
- 3) Smile occasionally and under the correct circumstances. Let your body language reflect that you are glad to be at the game.
- 4) Read, understand and enforce the AAD/USSSA Code of Conduct – see last page of this handbook.
- 5) Conduct a thorough Pre-Game Meeting to include:
  - a) Introductions – Shake hands
  - b) Collect 2 new game balls from each coach
  - c) Collect lineup sheets – teams must use the AAD/USSSA provided line up sheets
    - i) Make sure first and last names are clearly legible on the line up sheets and all adults in the dugout/on the field are listed with their roles.
  - d) Run rules
  - e) Balk rules
  - f) Time Limits
  - g) Blood Pathogen / Jewelry / Equipment Restrictions

- h) Protest rule
  - i) Overview of field conditions/dead ball area
    - i) Remind the manager of synthetic turf mound restrictions if applicable
    - ii) Remind the manager of seed restrictions near synthetic turf fields if applicable
  - j) Coin toss for H/V designation during league play or pool play in tournaments.
  - k) Note game time – You, as the game official, will keep the official game time but start times must be announced to both teams.
- 6) Stay off your cell phone, during the contest, unless you need to contact a site supervisor, the UIC or Director or are using the Weather Bug app.
  - 7) Handle any issues that might directly affect your ability to work the game.
  - 8) If the removal (ejection or restriction to the dugout) of anyone is required be sure to call time, call the manager of the team over and inform him of the sanction and instruct him to handle it. If he refuses, he can be sanctioned, by you, in accordance with the Code of Conduct – See last page of this handbook for the current COC.

### After the Contest

- 1) Each Official is required to stay on his field until his replacement arrives. If your replacement does not show up, you will be required to officiate the remaining game(s) until a suitable replacement can be found.
- 2) Exit the winning team's dugout - with no exceptions.
- 3) Be gracious even if you were not treated as you deserved.
- 4) Don't leave any trash/bottles/etc. on the field or in the parking lot as you leave.
- 5) Keep the team supplied line-up card, for every contest, for a period of one week. After one week has passed you can discard the line-up cards.
- 6) Keep a log of the games that you worked to cross check it against the payroll that is produced.
- 7) Report scores by giving game card to Site Director (if staffed) or take pictures of the front and back of the card and text them directly to Dana Gilmer at 505-417-1810. Failure to accurately and timely report scores may result in a \$20.00 fine per occurrence.
- 8) Email ([aadofficials@gmail.com](mailto:aadofficials@gmail.com)) your next two weeks availability if it has changed from the availability survey you completed
- 9) Submit any incident reports to the UIC and Director within 24 hours of the incident.
- 10) Ejection Reporting
  - a) Officials shall file a report (on the correct Incident Report Form) with the UIC and AAD/USSSA office whenever a manager, coach, spectator or player is ejected from an athletic contest **within 24 hours of the ejection.**
  - b) The Incident Report Form may also be used to report good or poor sportsmanship, severe injuries, facility problems, or equipment problems.
    - i) Response email notifications will be sent once the protocol has been completed.
  - c) An official failing to follow the ejection protocol and/or failing to file the Officials Report may result in a maximum fine of \$40 to the official per occurrence.

## Breach of Regulations / Agreements / Ethics

### AAD/USSSA Action

The AAD/USSSA possess the authority and responsibility to uphold the AAD/USSSA constitution, bylaws, Code of Conduct and regulations. When officials' behavior's or officiating conduct requires AAD/USSSA attention, the appropriate staff member may immediately rule/act on the situation. When appropriate, an investigation may be conducted prior to any ruling or action.

### Failure to Fulfill Rules Meeting Requirements

- 1) The official who does not meet minimum meeting attendance requirements, may be suspended or not assigned games.
- 2) The official will be emailed a Notice of Corrective Action or Suspension and how he/she may appeal.
- 3) Failure of the official to file an appeal by the date stated in the suspension notice will result in the forfeiture of the right of an official to appeal.
- 4) Failure to meet the minimum requirements may cause the official to be ineligible for tournament assignments in the current season.

### Failure to Fulfill Game Assignments

- 1) Regular League Assignment
  - a) When an official fails to fulfill a regular season game assignment, the official may be required to pay the contract amount of the game missed, as a fine or a fee to have the games reassigned per the current WFH Agreement.
  - b) If the official does not comply with the directions of the Director or UIC, the AAD/USSSA shall be notified where upon the official's Work for Hire Agreement, may be suspended.
  - c) An official suspended for failure to comply with the above directions will not be reinstated until the fee is paid.
  - d) A game assignment is not assignable to any other party without the express consent of both parties (official and scheduling UIC).
  - e) The AAD/USSSA may impose an additional penalty not to exceed one games pay per occurrence.
- 2) Tournaments Assignment
  - i) All of the above conditions apply and
  - ii) The AAD/USSSA Director may void tournament assignment, at any level of an AAD/USSSA tournament event, when it is considered in the best interest of the AAD/USSSA.
- 3) Contracts voided through mutual consent are not "actionable."

### Unsatisfactory Officiating

- 1) The AAD/USSSA will investigate reports of unsatisfactory officiating when such reports are submitted by a team manager, AAD/USSSA Officials Evaluator or staff. The AAD/USSSA Director may request information from such parties deemed appropriate. The AAD/USSSA Director may direct the UIC or certified assigner who assigned the official in question to respond to the complaint and the AAD/USSSA. A trained observer/evaluator may be assigned to report on the official's performance.
- 2) When an official is found to have officiating deficiencies, the Director or UIC may request a local association to provide remedial work, change the official's classification or the Director may suspend the official's Work for Hire Agreement.

### Criminal Convictions

- 1) An officiating permit will not be issued or reinstated for anyone:
  - a) That has not passed the USSSA mandated Safe Sport background investigation.
  - b) When a current AAD/USSSA official is indicted or charged with any felony offense or charged with a violation of any statute pertaining to minors, a crime of violence, drugs or a controlled substance, such permit will automatically be suspended, pending resolution of the indictment or charge. Conviction or adjudication of fault, guilt or a violation under any such indictment or charge shall result in immediate and automatic forfeiture of the officiating Work for Hire Agreement.
- 2) Current AAD/USSSA sports officials must inform the AAD/USSSA of any such indictment of charge immediately upon receipt of or upon having knowledge of such indictment or charge. Failure to notify the AAD/USSSA shall itself be a basis for immediate and automatic forfeiture of the officiating Work for Hire Agreement.



## Unethical Conduct

- 1) Unethical conduct covers a multitude of indiscretions: Failure to accurately complete an Officials Incident Report and submit it in a timely manner; failure to wear the approved uniform; chronic tardiness to games; disruptive behavior during meetings; officiating a contest where there is a conflict of interest; inappropriate dress arriving at or departing from a contest site; use of tobacco at a game site; consuming alcohol on game day prior to a game; disrespectfully addressing fans, players, managers, coaches, site directors, fellow officials and/or UIC or Director; failure to cooperate with AAD/USSSA personnel; gambling on AAD/USSSA events; and lack of preparation are some examples of unethical conduct. Certainly, this listing is not intended to be all-inclusive.
  - a) Conflict of Interest is any situation which would cause a reasonable person to question the integrity or fairness of an official.
- 2) Conduct determined to be unethical may be penalized. Penalties may include, but are not be limited to, verbal or written letters of reprimand, public censure, single or multiple contest suspensions, monetary fines up to \$50 per incident, suspension and/or termination of the Work for Hire Agreement, as an AAD/USSSA official.

## Appeals —

Appeals exist for officials who have been affected adversely by rulings.

- 1) Suspension for Failure to attend an event specific rules meeting
  - a) Official sends a written request for appeal, with any supporting documents, to the AAD/USSSA Director and UIC by the date specified in the Notice of Suspension.
  - b) The AAD/USSSA Director Review will review the appellant's information. Examples for consideration may include work schedule, personal or family illness or catastrophe, residential move and military duty.
  - c) The AAD/USSSA Director will render a timely decision and notify the official in writing.
  - d) The decision of the AAD/USSSA Director, pending an appeal to the AAD/USSSA Review Committee, is final.
- 2) Decision or Ruling by an AAD/USSSA Director – When an AAD/USSSA Director renders a decision or ruling an official may appeal as follows:
  - a) Official sends a written request for appeal to the AAD/USSSA Director **within 10 days** of notification of the Administrative Ruling.
  - b) Official sends a written request for appeal to the AAD/USSSA Officials Review Committee when the decision or ruling is by the Director. The AAD/USSSA Officials Review Committee consist of:
    - i) Director, UIC, Assistant UIC's and Scheduler
  - c) The ruling by the Review Committee is final.

## Tournament Officials

- 1) Officials selected to officiate AAD/USSSA tournament contests are expected to be a “cut above.” When an official accepts a tournament assignment he/she agrees to:
  - a) Be eligible in all respects.
  - b) Endorsed by the Director, Scheduler and/or UIC for tournament level competition.
  - c) Officials may request a waiver of the required minimum number of league games due to illness or injury or active military service. The waiver may be requested for the previous league season game requirement or the current league season game requirement, as it applies to the current tournaments. Send your written waiver request and supporting documents to the AAD/USSSA UIC.
  - d) NOT officiate another contest on the same day as the tournament assignment without the express consent of the AAD/USSSA Director, Scheduler or the UIC.

## USSSA Association Membership

Every AAD/USSSA official required to be enrolled as a USSSA official for the current calendar year and pass the USSSA mandated Safe Sport background investigation. Under no circumstances shall an Official be scheduled until the USSSA registration is complete. It is the responsibility of the Official to understand the benefits and limitations of the registration and insurance provided through USSSA. Registration is the responsibility of the official and will be done online at [www.ussa.com](http://www.ussa.com).

## Roles & Responsibilities

### AAD/USSSA Director

The role of the Director is twofold. The Director is the President of Amateur Athletic Development, AAD (a NM Registered 501-c-Non-Profit Organization) and he is the Area Director with the United States Specialty Sports Association, USSSA, responsible for northern NM USSSA baseball programs.

Dana Gilmer – [abqussa@aol.com](mailto:abqussa@aol.com) – 505-417-1810

### AAD/ USSSA UIC

- 1) The UIC (or his assignee) oversees the officials in compliance with all rules, regulations, policies and procedures established by AAD/USSSA to include:
  - a) Recruiting and Retention
  - b) Ensuring the Officials have completed the registration process
  - c) Training and monitoring the officials
  - d) If needed - Scheduling the officials
  - e) Submitting game assignments and game scores for the officials payroll
  - f) Interfaces with the Director as it relates to game, official, manager, coach and fan situations
  - g) The UIC provides entry level information to incoming officials consisting of rules & mechanics; AAD/USSSA regulations; local association information; assigning process; uniform purchases; etc.
  - h)

UIC – Hector Martinez – [hector.martinez7@gmail.com](mailto:hector.martinez7@gmail.com) – 505-463-2942

### AAD/USSSA Head Assistant UIC

Assists the UIC

Head AUIC – TBD

Officials Scheduler – Amanda Coe – [aadofficials@gmail.com](mailto:aadofficials@gmail.com) – 505-304-7015

## AAD/USSSA Official Evaluator / Site Supervisor

The Evaluator / Site Supervisor conducts the in-game evaluations of the officials as well as interfaces with the participants in the event of a concern, question or clarification during league and tournament events.

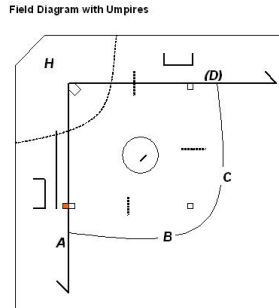
## Insurance Benefits for AAD/USSSA Registered Officials

Please refer to <http://www.ussa.com/docs/insurance/Officials.pdf> for the most up to date information on official's insurance coverage.

Claims & Questions - Report claims to Jenkins Insurance Group, 1765 Challenge Way, Suite 200, Sacramento CA 95815 – Phone (888) 880-3602 – Fax (925) 521-8504

## Positioning Basics

With the exception of the Major League and NCAA, two Officials is the norm for most levels of baseball. The following diagram is a basic guideline for positioning:



**Note:** All positions are *before each pitch*— move accordingly during each play.

**Note:** “D” position is ONLY used with 3-man official crews.

- “A” position with no runners on base
- “B” position with just a runner on 1<sup>st</sup> base
- “C” position—all other runner combinations

## The Plate Umpire

### Basic Responsibilities:

- Takes full charge of, and is responsible for, the proper conduct of the game.
- Calls balls and strikes.
- Responsible for making the call on plays at home plate.
- Makes all fair and foul ball calls, except those reserved for the base umpire.
- Makes all decisions on the batter.
- Makes all decisions, except those reserved for the field umpire.
- Decides when a game shall be forfeited.
- Handles the pre-game conference.
- Keeps track of all substitutes who enter the game.
- Makes call on infield fly balls.
- Calls balks, time and illegal pitches in conjunction with the base umpire.
- Makes decisions on fitness of balls to be used in the game.
- Decides when play shall be suspended during a game because of inclement weather conditions or unfit conditions of the playing field. Also determines when a game shall be resumed or terminated after such suspension.

### Home Plate Official Positioning

The Slot: You work closer to the catcher, usually over his shoulder, and closer to the batter. You are able to get closer to the strike zone, which allows a taller strike zone. Positions your eyes centered down the inside of the plate that the batter is standing on. Positions official farther away from the outside corner, which requires you to learn where the outside corners are in order to call them correctly (a skill that must be practiced regularly).

- Prior to assuming the set position, the official should assume a ready position by properly placing the feet while waiting in a relaxed full upright stance. The proper time to drop the “set” position is immediately after the pitcher has taken the sign and has started the wind-up, but prior to the release of the ball. The official should never be moving to the set position while the ball is in flight toward the plate. It’s important to know one can set too early, as well as too late.
- To assume the “set” position, bend your knees while keeping your back as straight as possible. Shoulders should be square with the pitch. Your eyes should be lined up at the top of the strike zone. By lining up slightly inside the inside corner and at the top of the strike zone, the official has eliminated two difficult pitches to judge. Always be able to see the plate and the batter’s feet and hands.
- The eyes are usually at the batter’s arm pits in a definite crouched position looking from slightly outside the strike zone, through the entire strike zone.
- In calling balls and strikes, it is generally most accepted to bring the pitch down or up into the strike zone and widen it out, making sure to give a good corner. The bench and spectators can see whether the pitch is too high or too low, however, they cannot tell whether it passed over the plate.
- Sometimes a catcher can be of help. If a pitched ball is around the knees, the catcher will tell you sometimes if it is low. In this case, the catcher might turn his glove upside down. So, the better a catcher catches the ball, the more strike calls he will get.
- Make sure that you can see the ball the entire way. From the release point all the way to the plate. If you cannot see the release point, the ball seems to explode if it crosses home plate and the strike zone. So, you deflect a moment your concentration and maybe you lose your strike zone.

### Plate Official Stances

There are several stances to choose from, the box, the kneeling, the scissors and the slot.

### **The Box Stance**

- This is similar to a wrestler preparing for their first standing round.
- One foot slightly forward, knees flexed, back slightly bent, completely balanced.
- To take this stance, move to your place (slot) behind the plate and catcher.
- Keep one foot, the foot on the side the batter stands on, slightly forward of the other foot.
- As the pitcher moves forward, drop smoothly in a crouch.
- Many Officials move their eyes down to a line at the top of the strike zone, some go slightly below that line, and some stay quite high.
- If you are working the center of the plate, you will normally remain quite high in the stance, which will result in being blinded by the catcher's helmet on many pitches in the last 20 feet or more. This tends to get worse as the game progresses and the official gets more and more tired.

### **The Scissors Stance**

- The umpire, instead of kneeling, extends his leg backwards.
- This stance has all the advantages of the kneeling stance without nearly as much leg strain and without requiring that extra second to come up from the ground.
- The disadvantages are that it must be carefully developed and implemented. It is the stance with the most leg movement and therefore the most likely to provide a small instability in the umpire.
- It is the best if a stance has a "lock-in" point. This is the most difficult aspect to achieve in the scissor's stance.
- There is an increased amount of neck strain due to the weight of the mask, and the potential of injury should a foul ball strike the mask could occur.

### **The Slot Stance**

- It is similar to the wrestler stance except the outside foot is one shoe length in front of the trailing foot, which is behind the center of the catcher.
  - The base of the stance is slightly wider and the stance has a comfortable feel to it, using and not abusing muscle groups.
  - The drop (A to B) is simple.
  - Your head should end up in the slot between the catcher and the batter.
  - The eye level can be positioned slightly higher than the catcher's head.
  - Back should have very little bend forward.
- Regardless of what stance you choose, pay close attention to your hands and their protection. The first lesson taught to a young catcher is to curl their fingers to avoid potential injury. The second lesson is to keep their hands out of the way as much as possible. Both of these lessons hold true to Officials as well. Also, remember to keep your elbows tucked into the body. Keeping the elbows close to the body and at an angle will reduce direct impact on the elbow.

### **Tips for Working the Plate**

- Assume a position so that you can see the entire strike zone.
- Follow the ball all the way to the catcher's mitt—stay stationary. Let the ball come to you.
- To be accurate on your calls, you must actually be able to follow the ball all the way to the catcher's mitt.
- Be relaxed and don't call your pitches too soon. Wait until the pitch hits the catcher's mitt to establish good timing. Remember, it is nothing until you call the pitch.
- Have a consistent strike zone—consistency is the secret of good umpiring.
- Don't call swinging strikes, just indicate strike by raising of right arm.
- Support all called strikes with a strong voice, especially on third strike—call strikes louder than balls.
- Never say "strike three, you're out", but be emphatic on called third strike.
- Yes, there is a correct way to brush the plate. The official should assume a position with his back to the pitcher's mound. The feet should be spread apart about the width of the shoulders. Bend at both knees and hips. Brush vigorously toward and away from the umpire. The plate belongs to you so you should brush at the start of the game, before each half inning and as needed during the play. It is a sign of a lazy official if you have a dirty plate.
- Between innings, get away from the plate, avoid problems and remove your mask. Hustle the teams between innings ensuring no more than 90 seconds (5 warm up pitches) between innings.

## **Officials Communication**

Communication on the field is vital. There's a standard set of signals used to convey each type of call. In order to be a good umpire, you need to know every single one. The signs and signals ensure that every official on the field is focused on the task at hand, that the count is consistent and everyone knows what might occur on the next play. Umpire's communication occurs in two forms: non-verbal communications whenever there is a change of base runners or outs and verbal communication and hand signals that occur when a fly ball is in flight or during plays.

The non-verbal communications are given in the form of hand signals and should be given whenever there is a change in base runners or the number of outs. When there are no runners on base (i.e. the base official is at the A position) no communications are used prior to the pitch. Hand signals are first used after a batter/runner is safely on base and prior to the next pitch. The home plate official should initiate the communications sequence. Following the end of the previous play as the base official assumes his new position, the Officials should make eye contact and the plate official should give the appropriate hand signal for the current number of outs and the anticipated movement when the ball is put into play by the batter. The base official should echo the hand signals given by the plate official unless signal given is inappropriate for the current situation.

When giving pre-pitch communications signals, keep the signals below your shoulders and only use enough movement to get the point across to your partner. Try not to draw the attention of anyone but your partner. Use only one hand to give pre-pitch signals. Do not use the Hawaiian good luck gesture (Texan "hook'em horns") to indicate a rotation play.

Using signals on the field is important because even if you can't be sure everyone will hear what you say, you can make sure everyone sees what you're calling. Memorize the signs and practice them in front of the mirror.

### **Listed below are the Basic Signals:**

#### **Strike**

Always signaled with the right hand, each official develops a personalized system for signaling a strike. Some do the tradition bang-the-door clenched fist, some indicate the strike out to the side with a pointed finger. Some Officials face forward, some turn. Some call strike, then signal and others do simultaneously. One essential element is not to turn away from the action. A strike may be indicated by using either the Hammer style or the Point style. With the Hammer, the upper arm should be parallel to the ground and the hammer motion (similar to rapping on a door with the edge of your fist) should be in the general direction of the mound. When using the Point, step or lean into the direction of the point. For call strike both of these signals must be accompanied by a voice call. For swinging strikes remain silent by give the hand signal.



### Ball

Calling a ball requires no physical signal. It's sort of the default call. If you don't do anything, people will assume you called a ball. To make it simple, just stand up out of your crouch and say "Ball" aloud.

### Out

An out is generally indicated by a Hammer Style signal with the first accompanied by a verbal "He's out". Usually the out signal is toned down for plays that are not close at all and the verbal portion may be dropped. As plays become closer, the signal should become stronger and voice call should have added emphasis. It is permissible to develop a Punch or similar move to give emphasis to very close plays. The official should bring the right hand out similar to the start of shaking another person's hand. Having the palm open and fingers together, bring the right hand up even to the face.

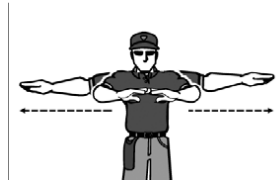
The motion is similar to "banging the door" with the bottom of the fist. The umpire's verbal mechanic should be at the same time the official is giving the out signal..." Out!" Most Officials use this technique for all out calls, regardless of how it may seem. For closer calls, most Officials will not modify the motion at all; rather they will simply make the motion swifter, harder and perhaps with an extended follow through.



### Safe

The umpire's fingers must be together and elbows locked as the arms come up parallel to the ground. The arms are not to go higher than the umpire's shoulders. Keeping the arms parallel to the ground, extend the arms outward. The official verbal mechanics should be at the same time the official is giving the safe signal..." Safe!" The key to the same mechanic should be: Crisp, Confident, Smooth and Visible.

As with the Out signal, when the runner is safe by a large margin it is not necessary to vocalize the safe, just give the hand signal. Plays that are closer should be indicated with both the Safe signal and a vocal "Safe". Do not say "He's safe", just use the word safe. If the play is very close, the signal an call can be doubled up. Give the signal with a loud safe and then step towards the play and repeat the signal and call.



### Time

Time: Indicated by extending both arm above your head with fingers extended. This signal is used when:

- i) The ball becomes foul.
- ii) The ball becomes dead for any reason.
- iii) When a coach or player makes an appropriate request for time.
- iv) When there is offensive interference.

The signal for a timeout is similar to that of a foul ball. Simply raise both arms up in the air and shout, "Time!" It's also a good idea to move out from behind the plate while you make the call so the pitcher (and everyone else) can easily see that the ball is dead.



### Foul Ball

Use the same signal as "Time" but the call becomes "Foul". Some Officials add a point into foul territory with one hand after giving the signal.



#### Other Signals:

##### Play

The official points the ball back in play (pointing to the pitcher or the plate) with the right hand and calling "Play!" This call is essential for your partner, the pitcher, the catcher, defense and offense so they know exactly when a ball is back in play.



##### Foul Tip

Raise both hands up to shoulder height, touch your fingers together, and then brush or flick one hand over the other to signal a foul tip. You can follow this up with a "strike" sign to show that the foul tips count as a strike.



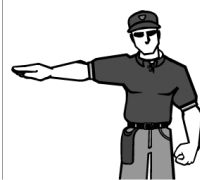
##### Giving the Count

To give the count to the pitcher (or coach when asked) use the left hand to indicate balls and the right hand to indicate strikes. A closed fist indicates zero and the appropriate number of balls and strikes are indicated by extending your fingers. Do not use your thumb. When giving the count do not flash it around the infield. Give the count directly towards the mound and hold it long enough for the pitcher to see it. If a coach asks for the count it is permissible to show the count towards him. Also give the count vocally with the hand signals occasionally during the at bat. Usually after the first three pitches and also when the count reaches 3 and 2. Give the count as 2 and 1, or 2 balls – 1 strike. Never use a whole number (i.e. 31) nor the word "full count."



##### Fair Ball

There is never a verbalization for a fair ball. The appropriate official simply points into fair territory with either his left or right arm to indicate that the ball is fair.



##### Strike Out

The official is to use the same sign as "Strike". However, **never say "Strike Three—You're Out!"** An official should only call "Strike Three." In play where the batter is not entitled to advance if the third strike is not legally caught, the plate official should follow the strike three call with "Batter is Out!"

##### Ball Four

"Ball Four" is announced clearly. You should NEVER point to first base even with the left hand. Just say "Ball Four". If the official points to first after the pitch and the defense thinks it's strike 3 and starts to leave the field, chaos will abound.

##### No Pitch

Right arm straight out with palm outward and fingers up. The call is "No Pitch" and the ball is dead. If you are the plate umpire, step away from the plate.



### **Infield Fly**

Prior to ball in play – Indicated by touching the bill of cap or the top of the mask. This signal indicates that the infield fly rule is in effect. It is given when there are runners on first and second with less than two outs or the bases are full with less than two outs.

With the infield fly in affect two additional signals are used for certain situations. Plate Official Covering plays at third: Indicated by tapping one fist into the other palm. This indicates that on a deep fly ball in the base umpire's area of the outfield on which the runner from second may tag and advance to third, the plate official will rotate to third to cover any possible play there. The base official is still responsible for the catch and tag up at second base. If the fly is down the left field line the plate official can still cover the play at third but if the fly is down the first base line the base official is responsible for both the tag up at second and the play at third. If the bases are full, the plate official will use the Staying home signal to indicate that he shall only cover any possible play at the plate and the base official is responsible for any plays at second and third. Either of these signals is given following the Infield Fly signal as appropriate. NOTE: For tag ups, the plate official is always responsible for the tag up at third and the base official is always responsible for tag ups at both first and second.

Ball in play - All Officials point into the air with their right hand. On some crews every official on the field echoes the infield fly call, on others the gesture is echoed. This should be dealt with in the pregame conference. This signal is used after the ball has reached its apex and either official determines that it is an infield fly (see definition in USSSA or MLB rule book). While pointing up, call loudly "Infield fly, if fair". The other official should echo this call in a loud voice.



### **Time Play**

Place two fingers of the right hand on the left wrist, as if on top of a watch. This signal will only be used in two-out situations where a time play involving a potential run is likely. . This is a reminder to the plate official that should the third out not occur as a force at first or a fly ball, it will be necessary to judge whether the runner touches home before the third out is recorded



### **Check-Swing or Appealed Strike**

The plate official does not have to be asked for help, he can simply request it themselves. Step away from the plate, and with your left arm, gesture clearly to the base official and ask "Did he swing? Or Did he go?" If the answer is yes, the base official signals strike while saying "yes, he went!" If the answer is no—a safe sign with "no he did not go!"

### **Balk**

A pitcher's balk is a delayed dead ball situation in USSSA. The base official simply holds his right arm out extended in line with his right shoulder with a clinched fist. No verbal indication is given while the ball is live.

### **Interference/Obstruction**

The base official will always point at the situation and call, "That's Interference!" or "That's Obstruction!" as the case may be. On a delayed dead ball situation, it lets everyone know that you saw an incident occur although penalization may not take place until a later time. Depending on the circumstances, the point and call may be preceded by or followed by the Time signal and call.

### **Ground Rule Double**

The signal is the right arm with first two fingers extended overhead. Keep in mind that the ball has left the field and is dead, even if it should bound back onto the playing area.

### **Home Run**

The signal is the right arm with index finger extended overhead in a circular motion. There is no voice call associated with the home run signal. The official then watches the bases to ensure that runners legally touch the bases. Unlike the ground rule double, it is not necessary to indicate that the ball is dead.



### **Catch/No Catch**

Out mechanic with verbal “That’s a catch” or Safe mechanic with verbal “No catch—No catch.”

### **Run Scores**

Used for a time play when there is a question as to whether or not the run counts. Point to the plate and then the press box or scorer and state “The run scores, score that run” as you do so.

### **Run Does Not Score**

Also used for a time play when there is a question as to whether or not the run counts. Point to the press box or scorer and state “No run scores, no run scores” while raising your arms above your head in a sweeping “X” motion.

### **Base Awards**

The appropriate official points at the runner to be awarded and states, “You—2nd base”, or “You-score” while continuing his gesture toward the base being awarded. When multiple runners are to be given awards, the official should begin with the runner closest to home plate and work back from there.

### **Off the Bag**

This signal is an explanatory one used on plays in which the ball beat the runner but the fielder came off the bag to make the catch.

It is used after the Safe signal and call has been made to indicate the umpire’s reason. It is vocalized as, “He’s off the bag!” The sweeping motion should be made in the direction the fielder moved and pulled himself/herself off the base.

### **Plate Official Staying Home**

Indicated by the plate official by pointing down towards home plate. This signal is used when there is a runner on second base, runners on second and third or bases loaded.

### **Base Official Going Out**

With the base official on the first base line (A position) and a fly is hit down the right field line or is a trouble ball to right field the Going Out signal is used. This action is indicated by extending your left arm up and over your head as you start moving down the foul line. At the same time as you signal and before you turn your back to the plate umpire, communicate verbally by saying “Joe, I’m going out”. The plate official should respond with OKAY.

### **Enforcement/Ejection**

The Enforcement signal always follows a Time signal/call, then the pointing signal. It is the act of awarding a runner additional bases predicated upon a violation by the defensive team.

The call is made as follows: Point at the runner and call, “You!” Then make the Enforcement signal towards the base you’re awarding and call, “Third Base!” (or whichever base you’re awarding to the runner.



The **Ejection** signal is NEVER used in conjunction with the Pointing signal. Make sure you do not contact anyone or come exceptionally close to anyone with your gesture. Be positive, strong and aggressive but DO NOT showboat. Keep your words simple as the call is merely, “You’re gone!” Maintain your composure and professionalism. Remember, the most vicious arguments can occur after the ejection.

## **Key Rules and Mechanics —Review and Clarification**

### **Balk**

A balk is an illegal act by the pitcher with a runner or runners on base, entitling all runners to advance one base.

### **Fair/Foul**

When the ball is hit calling it fair or foul is the first priority. Always judge fair and foul by the position of the ball, not the player. If a player stands in fair territory and touches a ball in foul territory, the ball is foul.

When a ball is foul, throw both of your hands up and out and call “Foul ball!” If the ball is fair, say nothing because anything you say may be misinterpreted by a player. Just point to fair territory.

### **Foul Tips**

In the event of a foul tip (the ball hits off the bat and goes sharp and direct into the catcher’s mitt), the ball is live and it is always a strike. If the ball hits off the bat and the catcher misses it, it is a foul, NOT a foul tip. A foul tip must hit the catcher’s mitt first, and be caught before touching the group. If it falls inside the catcher’s chest protector, it is a foul ball. Any batted ball that bounces off of the home plate official is a foul ball.

Signal foul tip by running your right hand over the back of your left, and then signal the strike. Never say “Foul tip.”

### **Batting Order**

Once you have accepted the original batting orders for each team, it is the responsibility of the plate official to keep them accurately revised as the game progresses. When changes are made during the game, take the time to properly write them in. Never trust your memory. When two or more changes are made by the defensive

ball club, make sure you get the batting positions of the new players entering the game. The manager of the defensive team has the right to insert a new player at any position in the batting order left vacant by players being replaced. You must disregard the fielding positions and pay attention only to the batting positions. Remember, the pitcher named in the original batting order must pitch to the first batter until he has been retired or reached first base, unless the pitcher becomes ill or incapacitated. It is the umpire-in-chief's responsibility to determine whether the pitcher is able to continue in the game.

### **Batting Out of Order**

Simply stated:

- You do not need to deal with players batting out of order unless the defensive team appeals to you that the offensive team has batted out of order.
- As soon as a single pitch is made to a batter, the preceding batter becomes legal. All you need to be concerned with is the batter immediately before the current batter. Remember the number of the past batter until the next batter comes to bat.
- If the defensive team appeals that a batter is out of order while that batter is still at bat, the proper batter comes in to bat and assumes the existing ball-strike count.
- Any actions by base runners are not affected by the batter's incorrect appearance at the plate. There is no effect on a runner who advances because of a stolen base, a wild pitch or passed ball, or who is caught stealing while the incorrect batter was at the plate.
- If the defensive team appeals that an improper batter has just concluded a time at bat (and the appeal is made before the first pitch to the next batter), then the proper batter is called out and the improper batter is removed from base. Any base runners return to the base they last occupied at the time of the last pitch to the illegal batter. The next legal batter in the order comes to bat.
- If the batting orders gets very confusing that the next legal batter is on base, that batter is skipped without penalty.

### **Infield Fly**

An infield fly is a fair fly ball (not including a line drive nor an attempted 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. The pitcher, catcher and any outfielder who stations themselves in the infield on the play shall be considered infielders for the purpose of this rule. When it seems apparent that a batted ball will be an Infield Fly, the plate official should make the call stepping out in front of the plate where he can be easily seen by everyone. The base official should also immediately make the same call. This does not mean the base official has no right to call the infield fly, however, he should allow the plate official a reasonable length of time to make the call. All such calls should be made with this protective qualification, "Infield fly if fair." On the infield fly, the official is to rule some arbitrary limitation such as the grass or base lines. The official must also rule that a ball is an infield fly even if handled by an outfielder, if in his judgment, the ball could have been as easily handled by an infielder. With an Infield Fly the ball is alive and runners may advance at the risk of being caught, or retouch and advance after the ball it touched, the same as any fly ball. If the hit becomes a foul ball, it is treated the same as any foul. If a declared Infield Fly is allowed to fall untouched to the ground and bounces before passing first or third base, it is a foul ball. If a declared Infield Fly falls untouched to the ground outside the baseline, and bounces fair before passing first or third base, it is an Infield Fly.

### **Obstruction**

Obstruction is the act of a fielder who, while not in possession of the ball and not in the act of fielding the ball, impedes the progress of any runner. No one is allowed to obstruct a base runner by getting in his way or by tripping or otherwise blocking him, unless the fielder involved is in the act of making a play. Unless he is in the base runner's path to make a play, the fielder must at all times be out of the runner's way.

### **Interference**

- Offensive interference is an act by the team at bat which interferes with, obstructs, impedes, hinders or confuses any fielder attempting to make a play. If the official declares the batter, batter-runner or a runner out for interference, all other runners shall return to the last base that was in the judgment of the umpire, legally touched at the time of the interference, unless otherwise provided by the rules. (In the event the batter-runner has not reached first base, all runners shall return to the base last occupied at the time of the pitch.)
- Defensive interference is an act by a fielder which hinders or prevents a batter from hitting a pitch.
- Umpire's interference occurs (1) When an official hinders, impedes or prevents a catcher's throw attempting to prevent a stolen base, or (2) When a fair ball touches an official on fair territory before passing a fielder.
- Spectator interference occurs when a spectator reaches out of the stands, or goes on the playing field, and touches a live ball.
- On any interference, the ball is dead.

### **Overthrows**

On all overthrows to bases or plate and on wild pitches or passed balls, attempt to keep the ball in play—do not make unnecessary ground rules. Unless it passes from the playing field into a dead area, the ball shall remain in play, and the runners will advance at their own risk. If a **pitched** ball sticks in the screen or goes in the stands or dugout, the official shall permit the base runners to advance one base only and declare the ball dead. When a **thrown** ball sticks into the screen, the base runners shall be entitled to advance two bases and the ball is dead. If a pitcher throws a ball from a pitching position to a base runner on a pick-off attempt and it gets away going into a dead area, all runners shall be entitled to advance one base, and the ball is dead. If the pitcher makes such a wild throw while off the rubber and it gets away in the same manner, all runners shall be entitled to advance two bases as the pitcher is now considered an infielder.

### **Pitching**

There are two legal pitching positions, the Windup Position and the Set Position, and either position may be used at any time. When the bases are unoccupied, the pitcher shall deliver the ball to the batter within 20 seconds from receiving it. If the pitcher delays the game by violating this rule, the official shall call a ball. Intent of this rule is to speed up the game by preventing unnecessary delays. Good umpiring takes place when the official insists the catcher return the ball promptly and the pitcher take his position on the rubber without delay. When the pitcher on the rubber comes to a set position, the batter is not allowed to step out of the box for any reason. If he does, it is at his own risk, and the official shall call either ball or strike in accordance to where the ball was pitched relative to the batter's strike zone.

### **Illegal Pitches and Illegal Acts**

An illegal pitch is (1) a pitch delivered to the batter when the pitcher does not have his pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate; (2) A quick return pitch. An illegal pitch when runners are on base is a balk.

*(Comment—In a Windup Position, a pitcher is permitted to have his "free" foot on the rubber, in front of the rubber, behind the rubber or off the side of the rubber.)*

*(Comment— with no runners on base, the pitcher is not required to come to a complete stop when using the Set Position. If, however, in the umpire's judgment, a pitcher delivers the ball in a deliberate effort to catch the batter off guard, this delivery shall be deemed a quick pitch, for which the penalty is a ball.)*

The pitcher cannot bring his pitching hand in contact with his mouth or lips while standing inside the circle surrounding the pitching rubber. *(Exception: Provided it is agreed to by both managers, the official prior to the start of a game played in cold weather, may permit the pitcher to blow on his hand.)*

The pitcher cannot expectorate on the ball, either hand or his glove; cannot rub the ball on his glove, person or clothing; cannot apply a foreign substance of any kind to the ball; cannot deface the ball in any manner; or cannot deliver a ball altered in a manner as prescribed in this paragraph or what is called the "shine" ball, "spit" ball, "mud" ball or "emery" ball. The pitcher **is allowed to** rub the ball between his bare hands.

The Umpire-in-Chief shall make decisions relative to the conduct of a pitcher. This does not mean that the base official has no authority to call pitching infractions, however, again, the plate official should be the first one to detect these infractions as the pitcher belongs to him. If the pitcher is doing something wrong on the mound, never suggest to the catcher that he correct it. You must order him directly to cease and desist or impose the proper penalties.



### **Calling Balls and Strikes**

Get as close to the catcher as you can without touching him. Do not work too low or get into the habit of weaving and dropping with the pitch as it approaches. To be accurate on your calls, you must actually be able to follow the ball into the catcher's mitt. Do not get into the habit of dropping down behind the catcher, thus, blocking your own vision. Be relaxed, not rigid, and don't be moving when the ball approaches the plate. Remember, the pitch is nothing until you call it, therefore, do not call your pitches too soon.

### **Tag Plays**

A tag is the action of a fielder in touching a base with his body while holding the ball securely and firmly in his hand or glove; or touching a runner with the ball, or with his hand or glove holding the ball, while holding the ball securely and firmly in his hand or glove. Get as close to a tag play as you can without interfering. You must bet the angle where you can see between the base runner's foot or hand and the bag. Do not call the play too soon. Wait until it is completed before you make your call. A base runner is out only if the fielder firmly holds on to the ball when making the tag.

### **Arguments and Ejections**

Arguments are inherent to the game of baseball. The "easy way out" for an official is to eject the player or coach. Ejections should always be the last resort. The proper way to handle arguments is to listen to their side of the story, give a courteous reply and then walk away. If the coach or player continues to persist, then a warning should be issued. Continued arguing can only lead to their ejection. Once a warning is issued you must enforce it or you will not gain respect and this could lead to you losing control of the game. If a participant directs a personal insult at you, pushes or touches you or kicks dirt, etc., he should automatically be ejected. There's no place in the game for this type of behavior. Remember, an official must earn respect, it doesn't just come because you're an umpire.

### **Protested Games**

Whenever a manager protests a game because of alleged misapplications of the rules, the protest will not be recognized unless the Umpire-in-Chief is notified at the time the play under protest occurs and before the next pitch is made or a runner is retired. When an official receives a protest from one team, he must notify the manager of the other team before proceeding with play. Anytime a game is protested, the Officials should get together and make sure they have made the right decision or interpretation of the rules. If a wrong decision has been made, the official should definitely correct the decision with the proper call to avoid the protest. A written report following the game should be made by the Umpire-in-Chief with the League Director. The official must always accept a protest, whether he feels there are any legal grounds for it or not. He should also announce to the fans himself or through the public address announcer that the game is being played under protest.

### **Calling Time**

Either official may call time. Remember, a player has the right to request time, however, time is not out until the official grants it. Time should be called only when necessary as it definitely slows up a game if granted after every play. Make sure no further play is possible before you grant time. When you must call time, do it loudly so everyone hears. Remember, your partner must know instantly the moment you grant time.

### **Strike**

A strike is a legal pitch when so called by the official which:

- Is struck at, by the batter, and is missed.
- Is not struck at, if any part of the ball passes through any part of the strike zone.
- Is fouled by the batter when he has less than two strikes.
- Is bunted foul.
- Touches the batter in flight in the strike zone.
- Becomes a foul tip.

The Strike Zone is that area over home plate the upper limit of which is a horizontal line at the midpoint between the top of the shoulders and the top of the uniform pants, and the lower level is a line at the hollow beneath the kneecap. The Strike Zone shall be determined from the batter's stance as the batter is prepared to swing at a pitched ball.

### **Contact Rule Clarification**

If a runner attempting to reach any base or home plate intentionally and maliciously runs into a defensive player in the area of the base or home plate, he will be called out on the play and ejected from the game. The objective of this rule is to penalize the offensive team for deliberate, unwarranted, unsportsmanlike action by the runner for the obvious purpose of crashing the defensive player, rather than trying to reach home plate. Obviously, this is an umpire's judgment call. Although AAD/USSSA does not have a "must slide rule" if contact does occur it should be as a result of a slide by the baserunner.

## **Helpful Hints to Become A Superior Official**

Officials must be:

- Neatly dressed
  - Prompt and on time
  - Approachable
  - Well educated in the rules (knowledge of the rules is important, but more important, is the understanding of their purpose, and the ability to interpret and enforce these principles)
  - Clear in making calls
  - Poised, in control and in charge on the diamond
  - Consistent
  - Able to display good judgment and make accurate calls
  - Able to explain and clarify the rules and rule interpretations
  - Confident
  - Prepared
  - Flexible
  - Hustling all the time
  - Decisive
  - Able to display rapport
  - Unbiased and objective
  - Able to make the tough call
  - Enforce the rules in an unbiased fashion
  - Respectful to the sport and its participants
- 
- Your uniform speaks volumes about you. If your shoes are shined, your shirt is crisp, you have your belt, and you are well groomed, you will immediately be accepted as a professional. The managers, coaches, players and fans will respect you from the time you step on to the field. If your shoes are scuffed and worn, your shirt is faded and wrinkled, you didn't bother with a belt or a shave, you could be the most knowledgeable official in the sport of baseball, but no

one will believe it. Every close call will be questioned. It will be assumed that your mechanics, like your uniform, are sloppy. Make sure the way you dress when you step onto that field says that you are a professional official and that your game that day will be professional too.

- Learn from your peers – good and bad. The things you learn from your peers you will never find in a rulebook. One aspect of the game that veterans can teach you best is game management. Game management is simply the skill of keeping the game moving, anticipating problems, and handling those problems as they arise. It is often helpful to ask your peers for a critique after the game. It may sting a little, but it will benefit you in the long run. On the other hand, some things you learn from others aren't always the things that you want to repeat, such as sloppy mechanics, poor attitude and lousy appearance.
- Don't let this get to you. All you can do in this instance is support your partner and do the best job you can with what you have. For everything you learn from a fellow umpire, you will probably learn one thing that you should not do.
- When we talk about professionalism, we take about a confidence and knowledge that should be carried by all Officials. This confidence isn't arrogance; it is a confidence in knowing that when you walk onto that field, you are there to do a job as defined by your rulebook and to enforce your rules as defined by common sense and the interpretation of those rules. As an umpire, you have one of the least forgiving, least understood and most underappreciated jobs in the world. You must be prepared before you walk onto that field for anything to happen, and expect that anything to happen on every pitch.
- You should be physically fit at the start of the season and keep yourself in condition.
- There are no excuses when you miss a play due to lack of hustle. If you and your partner both hustle, the players will do likewise and the game will be administered in a professional manner.
- It is a must for you to be decisive on close calls—be patient—let the play happen before you make the call. This will help your judgment, and good judgment is a must in order to be a respected umpire.
- One of the quickest ways to get into trouble is to be an inconsistent umpire. True, different Officials vary in their strike zones, and different Officials have a tendency to call more balks or see obstruction and interference plays differently. It is important once you start working, especially behind the plate, that you treat each pitch as if it was the deciding pitch of the game. Establish consistency of the strike zone so both the batter and pitcher know what to expect. If you miss a pitch or a play—forget it—know why you missed it and put it out of your mind. This is a must so it doesn't affect your next call. Remember, you can never even up a missed pitch or call or you will have two mistakes, plus quickly lose respect.
- Correct positioning is in the simplest terms, angle and distance. Understand that having a proper angle is more important than being five feet from the play. Most Officials use two-man mechanics and it isn't always possible to be standing directly behind the bag to make every call. Know where you need to be, get a good angle, see the play, and make the call.
- Proper mechanics allow you as an official to correctly communicate with your partner, and to allow yourself as an official to be in the best possible position to see the play.
- Always stay focused on the game. If you want to count the spectators or admire the scenery, do it between innings. Your lack of focus is noticed, and sooner or later you will get a late start or miss a play.
- Officials are an important part of the game, but not bigger than the game. No one comes to the game to see the Officials. Never embarrass or humiliate a player, coach, manager or spectator. The best compliment an official can receive is that no one even knew you were there. You don't need to be told when you've done a good job. You will know it.
- All of the fundamentals of umpiring cannot be discussed and understood in a short time, but they can be mastered if you stay with them until they are firmly set in your mind.
- Adopt a style of umpiring that suits your personality. Develop techniques that are decisive, appealing and efficient.
- Officiate as many games as you possibly can. Don't be afraid or too proud to work practice games. Above all, make each umpiring situation a learning experience.
- Be honest. We all miss them once in a while.
- Work hard every pitch of the game. It means something to somebody.
- Cooperate with your peers, don't compete.
- Strive to get better. We still have not called the perfect game.
- Officiate because it's fun and because you love the game.
- Post-Game Critique - in some cases you will not have a Site Supervisor watching you work your games; it is important you and your partner have a post-game critique to help each other improve your umpiring skills. Always be honest with your partner and make sure he knows you want the truth from him. Learn from each other.

## Proper Mental Attitude and Mental Focus

To have the proper mental attitude in the umpiring profession, you must know every rule and every interpretation. You must keep yourself updated on the latest, revised rules, and, most important, know how to apply the rules on the field of play. Beyond knowledge of the rules, you must realize the importance of your position. You are the representative of your official association, as well as the Director for whom you have contracted with.

Even though you must hustle at all times, you must be careful not to over-react. Patience is also a most vital characteristic to be a good umpire. You can handle tense situations with minimum friction if you keep an even temperament. Be courteous at all times and keep personalities out of your work. To be a top-notch umpire, you cannot be argumentative, nor sarcastic. You must be able to forgive and to forget as every day is a new day.

Tough situations on the field don't happen that often, but when they do, the manner in which you handle them is remembered by all involved for years after the incident. In tough situations, don't be too tense as this causes hasty and wrong decisions as it is important to get the call right. Don't pay too much attention to needing from spectators or coaches (however, when it becomes personal, abusive, or obscene, you must stop it.). If a manager (and only the manager) asks a reasonable question, answer it, provided the question is asked in the proper manner. No matter what your opinion is of another umpire, whether it be on or off the field, never make any adverse comments. Don't downgrade your game or the persons associated with it. A good official review his work and recognizes his mistakes, and, **most important**, what caused them.

Situations in baseball provide ultimate "teachable moments"; the problem is they can't be anticipated or staged; they just happen. By having the proper mental frame of mind, your actions are predetermined to an extent in either a positive or negative fashion. It's an attitude of how you approach things. Officials with negative thoughts in their head are not likely to act in a way that exemplifies the principles of sportsmanship when handling a young boy or girl who is under stress demonstrating immature behavior on the ball field. Officials with positive thoughts will take control of the situation and ask "in what way can I act to support and demonstrate proper behavior that reinforces sportsmanship."

The high road is always the most difficult, and the official is the one person on the field that can least afford to digress from the principles of good sportsmanship. The Rules and Code of Conduct bestow on the Umpire/Official, the responsibility of being the only official representative of AAD/USSSA baseball on the field. It is a tall order to fill but nothing good ever comes easy. It is hoped that the youth of America will internalize these principles and pass them on to their children. With the task of representing AAD/USSSA baseball on the field assigned to the Officials, a profound legacy can be bestowed upon the youth of America by the Officials who exemplify sportsmanship's principles in action and in word.

Umpiring is an activity that is 25% physical and 75% mental. The task that demands that you occupy the proper head space in order to attain the best results. Focus is the ability to concentrate on relevant cues and to maintain that attention for the entire game. Relevant cues are often learned through game experience. Distracting cues, such as noises from the fans, must be blocked out. This way, you can attend to the key cues of the game. Focus must be maintained from the beginning to the end of the game. This means that all external factors, such as interruptions, delays, weather conditions, altercations, length of the game or physical fatigue must be overcome to maintain focus.

Needless to say, it is a challenge to maintain proper mental attitude and focus from the beginning to the end of the game. These skills distinguish the excellent official from the good official.

## Timing

Officials have little control over how well teams will play from day to day. However, an official can certainly control his development of sound fundamentals. Understanding and always repeating the proper fundamentals becomes the foundation of a successful umpire. Fundamentals will be the foundation on which every call you make will be based. After many years, your fundamentals will be automatic. You won't even think about them when you are making calls. If your fundamentals are sound, your chances of calling pitches and plays correctly will be greatly enhanced.

Timing is recognized as a critical skill which all proficient Officials must develop. It is not only important to know the proper positioning, but it is equally important to develop a definite rhythm in making ALL calls and that rhythm should not vary. Only the emphasis of various calls will change. Missing pitches or plays often is a result of calling the pitch or play too quickly. If you call a play too soon, you are more than likely to guess ahead of time what is going to happen. Anticipating a call is one of the umpire's worst mistakes. Hesitation is just as bad as calling the play too soon. If you wait too long, people will think either you can't make up your mind or you are guessing.

When umpiring the game, you must envision yourself getting every pitch and every play correct. For example, the ball must be seen all the way into the catcher's mitt and then your eyes locked on to it for about one second before you make a decision—ball or strike. Practice your timing. There is probably no one thing that you can do which will immediately improve your performance as quickly as adopting good timing.

## Between Innings

Officials should not stand in a position between innings which prompts conversation with players, managers or coaches. The proper position for the plate official between innings is on the first or third base foul line, one-fourth to one-half the way up the line from home plate. The idea in each of these positions is for the official to be in a neutral position between innings, one which does not prompt conversations and confrontations with players, coaches or managers. If the plate official is having trouble during a particular inning, he is to go to the opposite foul line from that team's dugout between innings. Between innings, the plate official should also attend to such duties as keeping track of the 90 second between inning time, counting warm up pitches, replenishing his ball supply, inspecting balls in his ball bag and seeing that no equipment is left on the playing field or on top of the dugout.

The base official should position himself/herself between 1st and 2nd base about 10-15 feet in the outfield grass and relax.

Between innings, never leave the field, unless it is an emergency.

## Asking for help and changing calls

Too many times I see Officials make a call on a close play and the coach will come running out insisting on the Officials go get help from their partner. "Come on Blue, you need help on that, just ask your partner he had a better angle, he can help". Trying to be a nice guy, or perhaps being a little intimidated, you go to your partner for help.

**MISTAKE!**

First of all – In the AAD/USSSA programs ONLY the manager, who attended the pregame meeting, is allowed any contact with the officials and ONLY after he has asked for and been granted time.

Secondly, if you make a call, you are telling everyone that you saw the play, you've processed the information from the play and you made your decision. If you weren't sure about something on the play and you don't have all the information you need to make your decision, you ask for help before you make your decision, remember it's still your call, you're only asking for help to get more information in order to make a decision. Don't throw your responsibilities on your partner. But . . . if there is the slightest chance that you did not have all the information necessary to process the decision then you are obligated to ask for help.

That having been said, if you ask for help just because the coach wants you to, you will be asked to go for help on every close play, by both coaches, all game long. If you constantly ask for help, you might as well leave the field, because your partner doesn't need you if he has to do your job also. Don't let the manager push you around, tell him or her that "I saw the play, I don't need any help, this is my call and the call stands"

Whether your decision was right or wrong, (presuming you have processed all the information necessary to come to an informed and thorough decision), stick with it. If you change one call, the coaches will want you to change every call that they don't like. Also, when you change a call you have to deal with the other coach who now also has an argument with you.

Remember, you can change your own call in certain situations, but you must do it immediately. For example, if you make an out call, and your timing was too quick after the call you see the ball loose on the ground - change your own call immediately, get the play right. This is never going to look good, but you'll get the call right. Never, never make a call, think about for a while and then change it, you will lose all your credibility.

## Plays that you might need to ask for help, in order to get more information:

### Swipe Tags

If in doubt - ask first - before you make any call. If you make a call ~ any call -DON'T ASK!

On swipe calls you ask "did he tag him?" Your partner should answer "yes he did" or "no he didn't" and then you make your call.

If you ask for help and can't get it - the runner is SAFE!! You will only be asking if you didn't see, or if you weren't sure of the tag you can't penalize the runner for something you didn't see. NOTE: on swipe tags-up to the 3 foot lane~ it is the plate Officials call.

### Pulled Foot

On a **pulled foot** you ask "did he pull his foot?"

If you ask for help and can't get it - the runner is OUT!! You will only be asking if the ball beats the runner to the bag. You have to assume the fielder's foot is on the bag until you know for sure that it wasn't

### Batter hit by batted ball

Hit batter in the box (by batted ball) - immediate help should be given by partner by calling "DEAD BALL".

Plate Official - never ask for help in this situation. Base official should be yelling immediately if he saw batter get hit with a batted ball.

Coaches love to come out and want you to get help on this - DON'T! Tell the coach "if my partner saw anything, he would have said something immediately."

### Batter hit by pitched ball

Don't ask for help concerning batter being hit by a pitch, you (plate ump) are 18" from batter, your partner is 90' away.

### Four considerations for giving or asking for help.....

1. Never offer help unless it is asked for.
2. Only ask for help when you absolutely, positively need it.
3. If you kick the call - DON'T get your partner involved to try to fix it
4. If your call needs to be changed, YOU change YOUR call – you never change your partners call.

## Four calls that can be legally and properly changed

1. Calling a ball on a half-swing (check swing). On appeal or if you're not sure of the call yourself - ask for help - change if necessary. Don't be afraid to ask for help, good idea to do so, takes pressure off catcher from coach.

NEVER ask for help on a called strike (You point at batter & say "Yes he went")

Strikes, outs and foul balls are forever and cannot be reversed. You never ask for help for them once they are called. If you are going to ask step out from behind the catcher, yell to your partner loud and clear "Did he go?"

Note: check swings have nothing to do with the wrists, only concerns are with the barrel of the bat.

2. Improper rules application. Example: if partner awards wrong amount of bases - step in, confer with partner and change the call

3. On tag plays only - loose ball situation your partner sees the ball on ground while you're calling "OUT" (result of poor timing) move into the area quickly and straighten out the call.

4. Two Officials making simultaneous opposite calls. One call has to be changed immediately

A good pregame conference, good communication and signals can eliminate almost all of these problem areas.

Bottom Line - Get the call right!!

## Code of Conduct and Officials Enforcement Authority

We have all become painfully aware of the alarming number of cases of violence in youth sports. Fortunately, our baseball Officials have never had an occurrence to the severity of the local and national stories that have been reported recently.

However, we have become aware of an alarming number of instances in the past year or two of behavior on the part of parents, players, managers/coaches and spectators that we consider completely inappropriate. Most of this inappropriate behavior centers on the verbal abuse of players, managers/coaches and officials.

This abuse comes in many forms. It's a parent or coach's verbal abuse of the opposing team, coach or Official, or a player's verbal assault of an official or opponent, or in some cases, even arguing amongst players, coaches and parents on the same team. In any form, this behavior is totally unacceptable, an embarrassment to the game of baseball and will not be tolerated in AAD/USSSA programs.

Together, we will work to completely eliminate this type of abuse by enforcing a zero tolerance policy. Simply stated, there will be zero tolerance for this type of behavior. If exhibited, there will be zero opportunity for apology and zero opportunity for a second chance. Violation of our zero tolerance policy will result in the person(s) being sanctioned in accordance with the Code of Conduct. This applies to officials as well as managers/coaches, participants and spectators.

Our goal is not to remove the competitive nature of the sport. A major part of sports is to teach kids about winning, losing, sportsmanship, teamwork and commitment. The thrill of looking forward to the 'big game' and the occasional butterflies and upset stomachs that sometimes accompany that game are all part of playing sports competitively. So is winning, losing, errors, missed opportunities, bad calls and coaching mistakes. It's all part of the process of learning to play competitive team sports - All lessons that have value later in life.

Let us all keep in mind that the competition occurs on the field, between the players, under the strict supervision of the knowledgeable coaches and officials, following a very specific set of rules for participation and an equally important set of rules for acceptable behavior. Parents, friends and relatives are there to observe and support, not be part of, the competition. For 99% of the participants and parents, this approach should be nothing more than business as usual and exactly what they would expect from an AAD/USSSA contest. It's the 1% that may have a slightly different agenda that will have the most difficult time adjusting.

Currently, the Code of Conduct (next page) covers the conduct of players, managers, coaches, spectators and parents the moment they arrive at a game site until they leave the game site but in the event of post-game behavior that would result in an ejection during a game, the manager of the offending individual will be informed by the Officials that the behavior will be reported to the Director as an ejection. The guilty party would then be subject to the sanctions outlined in the Code of Conduct as determined by the Director. This policy is in effect until the Officials leave the contest facility.

Enforce the Code of Conduct but don't look for controversy and never interact with the fans. Just as the Manager is the only person to interact with the officials, the officials are only supposed to interact (initiating contact) with the Manager. The officials need to find a balance between having "rabbit ears" and ignoring violations of the Code of Conduct. If a manager, coach, fan or participant exhibits behavior that negatively impacts the play of the game handle it through the Manager of the team - if it doesn't impact the play of the game, ignore it (during the game and report it to the UIC and Director, via email, after the game).

## AAD/USSSA CODE OF CONDUCT SPRING 2020

As a condition of participation in the AAD / USSSA programs, it is understood and agreed that the following Code of Conduct shall be adhered to. These rules of conduct will be strictly enforced. It is the manager's responsibility to ensure all his / her players and spectators know and adhere to these conditions of participation. Every Player, Manager, Coach, Parent, and Spectator who attends these programs events are bound by this Code of Conduct, regardless of their individual acceptance.

1. NO PLAYER / COACH / MANAGER / SPECTATOR / PARENT SHALL: Be guilty of physical attack or verbal abuse as an aggressor upon any player, official, director, parent, manager, coach, or spectator. This includes negative and / or unsportsmanlike comments and gestures, in general or directed at the opposing team, same team or game officials/directors. Officials or Directors may suspend offender from further play and are required to report such offender to the League Office. The offender will remain suspended until his / her case has been considered. Team managers are responsible for the conduct of their players, parents, coaches and spectators. Failure to attempt to control disruptive individuals may result in forfeiture of the game and additional sanctions. Anyone who enters the field of play or any game participant that leaves their offensive position, defensive position, dugout or the field of play to engage other participants or spectators are immediately suspended. Managers are to verbally control their players, coaches and spectators. New Mexico statute 30-3-9.1 makes violation of this provision a possible 3<sup>rd</sup> degree felony if directed at a sport official or director.  
MINIMUM PENALTY: Immediate ejection and/or probation for the balance of the season/event.  
MAXIMUM PENALTY: Suspension for life and / or clearing the stands for games and / or hiring security (at the team's expense) to monitor enforce the COC.
2. NO PLAYER / COACH / MANAGER / SPECTATOR / PARENT SHALL: Refuse to abide by league policies/procedures or officials or director's decisions. This includes adhering to park policies including, but not limited to, prohibiting seed shells at any applicable facility or field. This also includes adhering to the national Safe Sport Act of 2017 where by any AAD/USSSA Youth Program Manager, Coach, Volunteer or Parent who has reason to suspect an incident of child abuse - sex abuse, physical or mental injury and negligent treatment - are required, as soon as possible (within a 24-hour period), to report such incident to the appropriate law enforcement agencies, as determined by state or federal law. Reasonable, moderate and non-cruel discipline administered by a parent or legal guardian to their child does not have to be reported. Failing to make a required report may subject one to criminal penalties. A person will not be held liable if they make a report in good faith, including in situations where the reported incident is determined not to be child abuse. Participants also agree to not promote, organize or facilitate, now or in the future, a competing league or tournament program, per the USSSA Constitution XVII.7.e, within the Albuquerque MSA. Such offender shall remain suspended until his / her case has been considered.  
MINIMUM PENALTY: Warning by officials  
MAXIMUM PENALTY: Suspension and / or removal from the league program.

3. NO PLAYER / COACH / MANAGER / SPECTATOR / PARENT SHALL: Be guilty of objectionable demonstration or dissent at a game official's decision. Only the team manager (singular), who must be designated at pre-game, shall be allowed to have any interaction or verbal contact with the officials.  
MINIMUM PENALTY: Warning by officials  
MAXIMUM PENALTY: \$100.00 fine and / or Removal from the game. Any offender, who has been disqualified from two games during the course of a season, may be suspended from the next 4 games (suspension can be carried over to the next season).
4. NO PLAYER / COACH / MANAGER / SPECTATOR / PARENT SHALL: Be guilty of using or encouraging unnecessarily rough or dangerous tactics (in the play of game) against the body or person of an opposing player. Officials are required to immediately suspend offender from further play and report such player to the League / Tournament director.  
MINIMUM PENALTY: Immediate ejection and probation for the balance of the season/event.  
MAXIMUM PENALTY: \$100.00 fine and / or Suspension, and place on probation for the remainder of the season.
5. Coaches/Managers/Parents/Spectators/Participants are prohibited from the use of alcoholic beverages at the complex, at any time prior to or during the play of their team's game. Those, who in the opinion of the official or League / Tournament director appear intoxicated, shall be sanctioned. Coaches/Managers are also prohibited from using any tobacco products in the dugout or on the field during their team's games.  
MINIMUM PENALTY: Ejection from the game.  
MAXIMUM PENALTY: \$100.00 fine and / or Suspension from the program
6. Coaches/Managers/Parents/Participants agree to only use equipment that is approved by the national sanctioning body adopted for league play AND as approved by the local league as well as adhering to the playing rules and policies adopted by this program and the USSSA.  
MINIMUM PENALTY: Warning by the officials and / or ejection from the game.  
MAXIMUM PENALTY: \$100.00 fine and / or Suspension from the program
7. Any PLAYER / MANAGER / COACH / SPECTATOR removed from a game must leave the playing field and dugout area immediately – out of sight and out of sound unless the officials specifically stipulate a different location. Failure to do so may result in the forfeiture of the game and suspension for a minimum of the three subsequent games.
8. Managers/Coaches agree to roster (on both local and national web site) and field a team of players that are eligible to participate in the age division the team is registered and agree not to recruit other teams existing players until the conclusion of the specific league season being played. "Recruit" is defined as any form of communication with player or parent and excludes general posting of flyers or notices on the local web site. Excluded from this recruiting policy are guest player invitations for tournaments.
9. Managers agree to accurately complete and submit, by the published deadline, each form required by the league program and utilize the AAD line-up form during league and tournament play. Managers agree that they have read and agree to the provisions in the Player/Parent/Manager Handbook posted on the local web site. Managers agree that EVERY individual associated with the coaching will have passed the required background check, concussion training, secure and wear the AAD/USSSA Identification Badge AND be listed as a coach on this Code of Conduct and Lineup Card prior to participating in any game.  
MINIMUM PENALTY: Warning issued by the league to the Manager and offending Coach.  
MAXIMUM PENALTY: Duplicate sanctions, for the manager of the team, as those imposed on the non-listed assistant coach when violations occur up to and including removal from the program.
10. Managers are responsible for ensuring their team adheres to each parks policy/restrictions on seeds and cleats and for cleaning up their dugout and stands after each game.  
**Any person/team, found in violation of the Code of Conduct, can result in the removal from the program and forfeiture of all fees paid. Violations from previous seasons (repeat offenders) can be factored into sanctions issued.**



# 2020 AAD/USSSA BASEBALL

## PLAYING RULES FOR OFFICIALS

Condensed USSSA (with AAD/USSSA Addendums) and MLB

This rule book is produced as a condensed reference guide for the officials and is NOT all inclusive. Officials should reference the national USSSA rule book posted on the national USSSA web sites – [www.usssa.com](http://www.usssa.com) and the MLB rule book posted on the MLB web site.

### Contents

USSSA SPECIFIC RULES.....	22
RULE 7.00 – RULES OF PLAY .....	22
7.01.F Uniforms .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
7.02 Game Preliminaries – .....	22
7.03 Starting and Ending a Game –.....	23
7.04 The Batter, Batter Runner & Runner –.....	23
7.05 The Pitcher – .....	23
RULE 8.00 – COACH PITCH SPECIFIC RULES .....	23
RULE 13.00 – SAFETY RULES.....	24
RULE 15.00 – UMPIRES.....	244
RULE 16.00 – PROTESTS .....	244
RULE 18.00 – TOBACCO & TOBACCO RELATED PRODUCTS .....	244
MLB OFFICIAL BASEBALL RULES .....	255



# OFFICIAL BASEBALL NATIONAL BY-LAWS & RULES

In the event of any conflict in language between any past, present or future printed version of these Official Baseball National Bylaws & Rules and the [USSSABASEBALL.ORG](http://USSSABASEBALL.ORG) online version, the [USSSABASEBALL.ORG](http://USSSABASEBALL.ORG) online version shall have priority.

## FOREWORD

The USSSA Baseball National Committee has condensed the Official Baseball National By-laws & Rules to give quicker access to any written language pertaining to rules specific to the United States Specialty Sports Association Baseball Program. Playing rules not specifically covered herein, shall be governed by The Official Rules of Baseball – National League, as published by Major League Baseball on the [MLB.com](http://MLB.com) web site. In the event of any conflict in rule between these Official Baseball National By-laws & Rules and The Official Rules of Baseball – National League, as published by Major League Baseball on the [MLB.com](http://MLB.com) web site, these Official Baseball National By-laws & Rules shall govern.

## USSSA SPECIFIC RULES

### RULE 7.00 – RULES OF PLAY

#### 7.01 Playing Field & Equipment –

**7.01.A** The playing field shall be laid out according to the recommended dimensions contained within these rules.

*AAD/USSSA Addendum – No seeds are allowed on or near synthetic turf fields. Officials are to remove any of their trash when they leave the field.*

**7.01.B** For details on field layout including recommended direction of play, fair and foul territory requirements, infield and outfield grades, pitcher's mound height and slope, batter's and catcher's box dimensions, and base and home plate size and construction should be referred to the Official Rules of Baseball as published by Major League Baseball on [MLB.com](http://MLB.com).

**7.01.C** All bats for age divisions 14U and younger must be permanently stamped with the new USSSA 1.15 BPF Mark (Chart 7.01.C), or BBCOR.50 Certified Mark or made of wood and manufactured by a licensed USSSA manufacturer.

**7.01.C.1** Effective January 1st, 2020, all 13U players must use a maximum drop 8 (-8) bat with the official USSSA 1.15 BPF Mark permanently stamped.

**7.01.C.2** All 14u players must use a maximum drop 5 (-5) bat with the official USSSA 1.15 BPF Mark Permanently stamped. 7.01.C.2.(a) In all Super NIT Events, 14 Majors must Use BBCOR or wood bats only.

**7.01.C.3** All bats for scholastic divisions (High School Events) must conform to the National Federation of High School Associations (NFHS) bat standards including a length to weight ratio no greater than negative three (-3) ounces. These bats must be permanently stamped with the BBCOR.50 Certified Mark or made of wood and manufactured by a licensed USSSA manufacturer.

**Rule 7.01.C Penalty:** (First Offense) – If the Umpire discovers that a bat does not conform to USSSA Rule 7.01.C until a time during or after which the bat has been used in play, it shall not be grounds for declaring the batter out and/or ejection from the game. If the Umpire discovers that a bat has been used to put a ball in play and before the next legal pitch, the defensive team shall have the choice of the result of play or the batter being called out and all runners returning to the base occupied at the time of the pitch. (Second Offense)–If a team is found in violation of this rule a second time, then the manager shall be ejected in addition to the First Offense penalty.

**7.01.D** Any bat permanently stamped with the official USA Baseball logo is legal to use in any USSSA baseball event, except were BBCOR is required. Starting January 1st, 2020, in all 13U Events all Players and all Teams must use a max drop of 8 (-8). In all 14U Events all Players and all Teams must use a max drop 5 (-5) bat.

**7.01.E** Protests on uniforms shall not be allowed. It shall be the League / Tournament Director's responsibility regarding uniform legality. Violation of the uniform rules shall result in the violator being allowed to immediately conform or be removed from the game. Managers and coaches may wear athletic type gear.

**7.01.F** In age divisions 4U – 12U, non-metal cleats shall be worn. In age divisions 13U and older, traditional metal baseball spikes shall be permitted. 7.01.G The catcher shall wear all appropriate protective gear including a catcher's helmet with facemask and either a built-in extended throat guard or a separately attached throat guard, chest protector, shin and / or leg guards, and protective cup.

**Rule 7.01.G Comment:** In age divisions 4U – 12U, the catcher's helmet shall fully cover both ears.

**7.01.H** All offensive players shall use a double ear-flap batting helmet whenever at bat, on deck, on base or any other time outside of the dugout and the ball is live and in play.

**7.01.I** Special Protective Gear: USSSA continues its long-standing policy of permitting players to determine the use of the protective equipment when they deem it appropriate. 7.01.J Bat / ball boys / girls under the age of eighteen (18) shall not be permitted.

**7.01.K** All Playing equipment shall not contain undue commercialization of the product.

**7.01.L** The Ball. USSSA licensed baseballs must have a USSSA Mark, must weigh between 5 and 5.25 ounces, must have a circumference of between 8.95 and 9.25 inches, have a COR of between .5 and .555 and have an ASTM standard compression of between 200 and 350 pounds. Molded balls without a traditional cover will be allowed in USSSA play but will require at least 6 weeks of field testing by USSSA and written approval of USSSA in advance of applying the USSSA Mark to such balls, which written approval may add additional performance/design requirements not otherwise applicable to other USSSA licensed balls.

#### 7.02 Game Preliminaries –

**7.02.A** A flip of a coin between the two teams shall determine the home team for each pool play game if not designated prior to play and the "if" game in championship play. The highest seeded team will be the home team for bracket play games in single elimination brackets, the highest seeded team will be the home team until the championship game. In the championship game, the team in the winner's bracket will be the home team and a coin toss will determine the home team for the if game.

*AAD/USSSA addendum - tournament play the higher seed in the elimination bracket will have the choice of home or visitor and all championship games the home team will be decided by a coin toss.*

**Rule 7.02.A Comment:** For league play, a system to predetermine the home team is acceptable.

**7.02.B** In League, Qualifying Tournament and State Championship play, time limits may be used with approval of the League / Tournament / State Director.

**7.02.C** In World Series play, time limits may be used in pool play and consolation bracket games with approval of the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball.

#### 7.02.D Approved Team Line-ups:

*AAD/USSSA Addendum – Lineups must be submitted on the approved AAD/USSSA Lineup card complete with all players present (first and last names and uniform numbers) as well as all adult coaches and their role for that game.*

**7.02.D.1** Teams may bat a nine (9) player line-up, or a nine (9) player line-up with a Designated Hitter (DH), or a ten (10) player line-up with an Extra Hitter (EH), or a 10-player line-up with a DH and EH, or a continuous line-up of all present, eligible, uniformed players. Such line-up must be declared before the start of the game and used the entire game. A Designated Hitter (DH) can be used for ages 9u thru 14u (Note: The DH can be used for any position player.)

**7.02.D.1(a)** If a team uses a line-up that contains substitute players, all starting players may be removed and re-enter the game once, but must re-enter in their original position in the batting order. Non-starters are not allowed to re-enter. When a starter re-enters, the player in the starter's batting position in the batting order must be removed from the game and is ineligible for the remainder of the game.

**7.02.D.1(b)** If a team uses a line-up that contains ten (10) players, the player in the Extra Hitter position, while not actually playing a defensive position, will be treated as such for substitution purposes.

**7.02.D.1(c)** If a team uses a continuous line-up, all players other than the nine (9) defensive position players are Extra Hitters and may move freely in defensive positions with the exception of the pitching position. Any player(s) arriving after the game has begun, shall be added to the bottom of the batting line-up. When using the continuous lineup and a player has to leave the game for any reason, that position in the line-up becomes an out when that at bat comes around.

**7.02.E** In scholastic divisions 15U – 18U, if the Extra Hitter (EH) is not be utilized, then the Designated Hitter (DH) may be utilized in accordance with the NFHS (National Federation of High School Association) baseball rules.

**7.02.E.1** A Designated Hitter may be (not mandatory) selected for any one starting player and all subsequent substitutes for that player in the game.

**7.02.E.2** A starting defensive player cannot be listed as the Designated Hitter in the starting line-up.

**7.02.E.3** A Designated Hitter for said player shall be selected prior to the start of the game, and his name shall be included on the line-up.

**7.02.E.4** Failure to declare a Designated Hitter prior to the game precludes the use of a DH in the game.

**7.02.E.5** If a pinch hitter or pinch runner for the Designated Hitter is used, that player becomes the new DH.

**7.02.E.6** The player who was the Designated Hitter may re-enter pursuant to USSSA Rule 7.02.D.1(a).

**7.02.E.7** A Designated Hitter and the player for whom the DH is batting are locked into the batting order. No multiple substitutions may be made that will alter the batting order.

**7.02.E.8** The role of the Designated Hitter is terminated for the remainder of the game when:

**7.02.E.8(a)** The defensive player, or any previous defensive player for whom the Designated Hitter batted, subsequently bats, pinch-hits, or runs for the DH;

**7.02.E.8(b)** The Designated Hitter or any previous DH assumes a defensive position.

**7.02.F** Teams may play an official game with an eight (8) player line-up. If a team plays with an eight (8) player line-up, an out shall be declared for the ninth (9th) position in the batting line-up each turn at bat. A ninth (9th) player and all subsequent players may be added to the bottom of the batting line-up as soon as they become available.

**7.02.G** A team may continue a game with a minimum of eight (8) eligible players.

*AAD/USSSA Addendum – In league play the number of players in the lineup may differ. Be sure to refer to the event specific rules.*

### **7.03 Starting and Ending a Game –**

**7.03.A** A regulation game consists of six (6) innings for age divisions 4U – 12U and seven (7) innings for age divisions 13U – 18U, unless the game is:

**7.03.A.1** Extended because the score is tied after the completion of the regulation number of innings, in which case, play shall continue until the visiting team has scored more total runs than the home team at the end of a completed inning, or the home team scores the winning run in an uncompleted inning; or

**7.03.A.2** Shortened because the home team needs none of its half of the last inning or only a fraction of it to win; or

**7.03.A.3** Shortened because an imposed Time Limit expires; or

**7.03.A.4** Shortened because any applicable part of USSSA Rule 7.03.B has been met; or

**7.03.A.5** Shortened because any applicable part of USSSA Rule 7.03.C has been met.

**7.03.B** An imposed Mercy (run) Rule shall be used to complete a regulation game when one team's margin of lead is greater than or equal to the listed run differential in the corresponding listed start inning. In enforcing this rule, the home team shall not bat if they are winning and the mercy requirement is met prior to the bottom half of the listed inning. Similarly, if the home team is batting and meets the mercy requirement in the bottom half of a listed inning the home team shall cease batting and the game shall end.

*AAD/USSSA Addendum – Run rules may vary in league and tournament play. Be sure to refer to the event specific rules.*

**7.03.C** If a game is called due to rain, weather, light failure or other acts of God and cannot be resumed, it is a regulation game if:

**7.03.C.1** For a scheduled six (6) inning game, if three (3) innings have

been completed or if the home team has scored more runs in two (2) innings or two and one half (2 1/2) innings than the visiting team has scored in three (3) complete innings or if the home team scores one (1) or more runs in its half (1/2) of the third (3rd) inning to tie the score.

**7.03.C.1(a)** If a regulation game is called with the score tied and one (1) or more innings has been completed beyond three (3) innings, the score shall revert back to last completed inning, or last completed half (1/2) inning if the home team leads but back no further than the third (3rd) inning. Games that cannot be declared a regulation game by USSSA Rules 7.03.C.1 & 7.03.C.1(a) shall be a suspended game.

**7.03.C.2** For a scheduled seven (7) inning game, if four (4) innings have been completed or if the home team has scored more runs in three (3) innings or three and one half (3 1/2) innings than the visiting team has scored in four (4) complete innings or if the home team scores one (1) or more runs in its half (1/2) of the fourth (4th) inning to tie the score.

**7.03.C.2(a)** If a regulation game is called with the score tied and one (1) or more innings has been completed beyond four (4) innings, the score shall revert back to last completed inning, or last completed half (1/2) inning if the home team leads but back no further than the fourth (4th) inning. Games that cannot be declared a regulation game by USSSA Rules 7.03.C.2 & 7.03.C.2(a) shall be a suspended game.

**7.03.D** All games that for any reason cannot be declared a regulation game pursuant to USSSA Rule 7.03.C shall be a suspended game. A suspended game when resumed, will resume from the exact point of suspension.

*AAD/USSSA Addendum – for league play 11u and 12u games are seven innings. League games can end in a tie. For tournament play pool games can end in a tie. Be sure to refer to the event specific rules.*

### **7.04 The Batter, Batter Runner & Runner –**

**7.04.A** An Intentional Walk may be issued upon announcement from either the pitcher or catcher. The four (4) pitches need not be thrown.

**7.04.B** At any time, the offensive team may use a courtesy runner for the pitcher and catcher of record the previous inning on defense. The courtesy runner must be a player not presently in the line-up. If no players not presently in the line-up are available, the courtesy runner shall be the player making the last batted out. The re-entry status of the courtesy runner, pitcher, and catcher shall not be affected by this rule. If at any time, a courtesy runner is determined to be ineligible, a proper replacement pursuant to these rules (if available) will be used without penalty.

**7.04.C** Whenever a tag play is evident, a runner must slide or seek to avoid contact with the fielder and / or catcher.

Attempting to jump, leap, or dive over the fielder and / or catcher is not interpreted as seeking to avoid contact. Malicious contact shall supersede all obstruction penalties.

*Rule 7.04.C Penalty:* The runner shall be called out and may be ejected from the game at the umpire's discretion. *Rule 7.04.C Comment:* When enforcing this rule, the umpire should judge the runner's intent. If the umpire feels that the contact was unintentional, then the runner should only be declared out. If the umpire feels that the contact was intentional and / or malicious, then the runner should be declared out and ejected.

**7.04.D** A runner who jumps over a player will be called out whether or not contact is made with the defensive player.

### **7.05 The Pitcher –**

**7.05.A** Leagues and tournaments shall adopt the following rules pertaining to the visit of the manager or a coach to the pitcher. This rule limits the number of visits a manager or a coach may make to any pitcher in any one (1) inning:

**7.05.A.1** A second (2nd) visit to the same pitcher in the same inning will cause this pitcher's automatic removal from the pitching position;

**7.05.A.2** The manager or a coach is prohibited from making a second (2nd) visit to the mound while the same batter is at bat, but

**7.05.A.3** If a pinch-hitter is substituted for this batter, the manager or a coach may make a second (2nd) visit to the mound, but must remove the pitcher. A manager or a coach is considered to have concluded his visit to the mound when he leaves the eighteen (18) foot circle surrounding the pitcher's rubber.

**7.05.B** A player removed from the pitching position (starting pitcher or subsequent relief pitcher) may not return to the pitching position for the remainder of the game. The defensive team may correct this rules infraction at any time by substituting a legal pitcher without penalty. If an illegal pitcher is permitted to pitch, any pitch or play that results is legal. The rule violation should be caught by the umpire or the offensive team and immediately corrected. If the violating pitcher has legal innings remaining, the violation is deemed an improper substitution and is corrected without penalty. If the violating pitcher has no legal innings remaining, it's deemed a pitching limitations violation pursuant to USSSA Rule 7.05.C.7.

## **RULE 8.00 – COACH PITCH SPECIFIC RULES**

**8.01** Fair Ball Arc: There shall be a twenty (20) foot arc drawn from first (1st) baseline to third (3rd) baseline in front of home plate. A batted ball must go past this line to be a fair ball.

**8.02** Safety Arc: There shall be a thirty (30) foot arc drawn from first (1st) baseline to third (3rd) baseline in front of home plate. Infielders must stay behind this line until the ball is hit.

**8.03** Pitching Circle: There shall be a ten (10) foot diameter circle with the front edge at forty-two (42) feet from the rear point of home plate.

**8.04** Pitcher's Line: There shall be a line drawn from the pitcher's circle to the safety arc.

**8.04.A** The pitching coach shall keep one foot on or straddle the pitcher's line. The Coach can pitch anywhere in-between the 30' Safety Arc and the 42' Pitching Circle.

**8.04.B** The pitching coach shall not verbally or physically coach while in the pitching position 8.04.C The pitching coach shall position himself as not to be an obstruction to the

defensive team on any possible play once the ball has been hit. *Rule 8.04.C Penalty:* If a coach violates this rule after the ball is pitched, obstruction shall be called. *Rule 8.04.C*

*Additional Penalty:* If a coach violates this rule before the ball is pitched, First Offense: Warning; Second Offense: Removal of coach as the pitcher for the remainder of the game.

**8.05** Pitching Coach: The Pitching Coach shall be an adult at least eighteen (18) years of age.

**8.06** The catcher shall receive the pitch in the catcher's box in a normal baseball manner. If in the Umpire's judgment, the catcher is not receiving the ball in a normal baseball manner, there shall be a warning issued. If the act continues after the warning, the offending teams' manager shall be ejected.

**8.07** Ten (10) defensive players shall play in the field with four (4) outfielders. The fourth (4th) outfielder shall not assume an infield position. All outfielders shall stay behind the baseline.

**8.08** The defensive player listed as pitcher shall not leave the pitching circle until the ball is hit. *Rule 8.08 Penalty:* The play continues. After the play has ended, the offensive team has the option of taking the result of the play or no-pitch. *Rule 8.08 Additional Penalty:* First Offense: Warning; Second Offense: Removal of player from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.

**8.09** Defensive coaches shall not be allowed on the field of play and shall coach from the dugout.

**8.10** The Infield Fly Rule shall not be in effect at any time.

**8.11** The batting order shall constitute all present players on the team roster at the beginning of the game. Late arrivals shall be inserted at the bottom of the batting order. All players on the roster shall bat before returning to the top of the batting order. **8.11.A** Teams may start a game with eight (8) players. The ninth (9th) & tenth (10th) positions in the batting order shall be declared an out each turn at bat. *Rule 8.11.A Approved Ruling:* A ninth (9th) & tenth (10th) player and all subsequent players may be added to the bottom of the batting line-up as soon as they become available.

**8.12** Teams may use free substitution on defense but the batting order shall remain the same.

**8.13** Bunting shall not be allowed.

**8.14** The batter shall receive a maximum of six (6) pitches or three (3) swinging strikes.

**8.15** A player may only be Intentionally Walked once per game by announcement from the defensive team.



- 8.16** Runners shall not lead-off or steal bases. A runner is out for leaving the base before the ball is hit or reaches home plate.
- 8.17** A courtesy runner for catcher of record only the previous inning may be used. The courtesy runner shall be the player that made the previous out. If no outs have been recorded in the game, the courtesy runner shall be the previous batter not on base. If the team batting has not played defense yet and a courtesy runner is used for a player, the player that was run for must assume the catching position the next inning. This scenario only applies in the first inning for the visiting team.
- 8.18** A team may score a maximum of seven (7) runs per inning.
- 8.19** The game is over, when the opposing team is mathematically eliminated from scoring enough runs to win or tie the game.
- 8.20** Umpires shall call "Time" after every play and declare the ball dead. "Time" shall be called as soon as the all runners are not attempting to advance. "Time" does not have to be called by the defense for the purpose of this rule. Rule 8.20 Comment: When a runner stands off a base and "jukes" or "feints" back and forth, this is to be interpreted as "not attempting to advance" and "Time" shall be called.
- 8.21** When a batted ball hits the Pitching Coach, the following shall apply:
- 8.21.A** If in the Umpire's judgment, the coach did not make a legitimate attempt to avoid contact, the batter is declared out and no runners shall advance.
- 8.21.B** If in the Umpire's judgment, the coach did make a legitimate attempt to avoid contact, the ball becomes dead and a no-pitch is declared.

#### AAD/USSSA COACH PITCH NOTES –

A desired pitching speed of around 32 MPH is desired.

A maximum of 5 coaches (manager included in the 5) is allowed to assist a coach pitch team.

The pitching coach is an island and is not allowed to communicate with players on his team

In this age is it critical to have very good communication skills and a positive, supportive relationship with the coaches. That said, it is also critical to limit the chatter/banter between teams as at this age it seems to be prevalent and not always supportive.

#### **RULE 13.00 – SAFETY RULES**

##### 13.01 FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL CONCUSSION LAWS:

USSSA, as a sanctioning body of athletic events, shares the concerns being raised on a national and local level regarding concussions and concussion symptoms in participants, coaches/managers and umpires/referees in USSSA sanctioned activities. USSSA encourages its directors, umpires, coaches, referees, teams, team managers, and all adults involved in youth activities and participants to learn all they can about concussions in athletics and requires each of them and each of the USSSA directors to follow all federal, state and local laws (including concussion training and reaction laws) with regard to athletic competition sanctioned by USSSA. In addition, USSSA has added the following to the rule books of each USSSA sport which does not defer to another organization for its rule book.

Upon becoming aware that a participant or coach/manager of his team has received a suspected concussion (or has been struck in the head area with any significant force), the Team Manager will not allow that person to participate in any USSSA sanctioned event and if occurring during a USSSA sanctioned event, shall have that person removed from the playing field of any USSSA sanctioned event. Upon becoming aware that a participant, coach/manager or official/umpire/referee has received a suspected concussion (or has been struck in the head area with any significant force), a USSSA official/umpire/referee or director will have that person removed from the playing field of any USSSA sanctioned event. Without a written medical clearance from a licensed medical doctor to return to play, such persons will not be allowed to return to the USSSA playing field in a USSSA sanctioned event. For officials/umpires/referees, the medical written consent must be presented to the Team Manager and retained permanently by the USSSA State Director. For participants and coaches/managers, the medical written medical consent must be presented to the Team Manager and retained permanently by the Team Manager. Any Team Manager, who allows a coach/manager or participant back on a USSSA sanctioned event playing field without first obtaining the required written consent, may be suspended by the State Director for up to one year and upon request of the State Director, may be suspended for a longer duration by the USSSA disbarment committee. State Directors allowing an official/umpire/referee back in the field of play without the necessary consent will be subject to being disciplined as determined by the USSSA Board of Directors.

In the event of severe head trauma in a USSSA sanctioned activity, the injured person will not be moved and an ambulance will be called, unless otherwise directed by a qualified medical professional. The parent or guardian of the injured person, however, will not be bound by this protocol and may choose a different approach consistent with their legal rights as the parent or guardian.

**13.01** All players, coaches, managers, sponsors and spectators are expected to conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner at all times.

**13.02** Any player, coach, manager, sponsor or spectator whose conduct is unbecoming or abusive shall at a minimum be reprimanded with a warning. If warranted, the offending party shall be ejected from the game at the discretion of the Umpires and / or the League / Tournament Director.

**13.03** Any player, coach, manager, sponsor or spectator leaving their position or base, in the field, on the bench, in the dugout area or grandstands to participate in a fight, brawl or altercation shall be immediately ejected from the game and may be disbarred / suspended pursuant to USSSA Rule 13.00.

**13.04** Any coach, manager, sponsor or spectator ejected from a game shall immediately remove himself from the vicinity of the playing field and / or grandstands for the remainder of the game. Additional penalties may be assessed at the discretion of the League / Tournament Director.

**13.05** Any player ejected from a game shall either immediately remove himself from the vicinity of the playing field for the remainder of the game or be confined to the dugout area for the remainder of the game at the discretion of the League / Tournament Director.

**13.06** All persons ejected may be asked to leave the park and / or venue at the discretion of the League / Tournament Director.

**13.07** Abusive language or cursing shall not be tolerated under any circumstances and shall result in an automatic ejection.

**13.08** Throwing of equipment shall result in an automatic ejection.

**13.09** If necessary, a team may be forced to forfeit a game and / or be removed from the league / tournament.

**13.10** As these rules indicate, the matter of disorderly conduct shall be taken seriously. The leagues / tournaments your team will be participating in will include some of the finest baseball teams in the world. The level of competition will be high and at times fierce. Because of this, please remind all players, coaches, managers, sponsors and spectators to be extra aware of good sportsmanship.

*AAD/USSSA Addendum – For league and tournament play the following restrictions exist:*

- 1. Music played, during warm ups, is allowed as long as it is moderate in volume and does not contain offensive lyrics. No music is allowed during live ball situations and "walk up" music (during dead ball situations) must end when the batter reaches the box.
- 2. Once a pitcher is "set", excessive noise, (as deemed by the game officials) by the offensive team as an attempt to balk the pitcher is not allowed.
- Tobacco use is prohibited on the field or in the dugout

#### **RULE 15.00 – UMPIRES**

**15.01** All leagues and tournaments played under the jurisdiction and administration of USSSA Baseball shall utilize umpires who are registered with the Association.

#### **RULE 16.00 – PROTESTS**

**16.01** Umpires shall work to settle all situations on the field. Protests shall be allowed for age and pitching violations or rule interpretations only. Uniform numbers cannot be protested. Protests must be declared to the Umpire-in-Chief and then to the League / Tournament Director before the next pitch following the dispute. If a call to be protested is the last recorded out of a game or on a game ending play, the protest MUST be filed prior to the Umpires and the protesting team leaving the field of play. No protest shall be allowed following the game. League / Tournament officials shall rule on all protests and their decisions shall be final. **16.02** The Protest fee shall be \$100.00 CASH. The fee shall be returned only if the protest is upheld. Leagues may develop their own fee structure and methods of recording and settling protests.

**Rule 15.02 Comment:** Leagues may develop their own method of fee structure, recording and settling protests.

#### **RULE 18.00 – TOBACCO & TOBACCO RELATED PRODUCTS**

**18.01** The use of ANY tobacco product shall be prohibited by all participants (including but not limited to players, manager, coaches) within the confines of the playing field and dugouts. Local facilities may have stricter policies prohibiting tobacco from facility and parking areas. These policies, if any, shall be recognized and enforced during USSSA events.

#### **RULE 19.00 – ITEMS NOT SPECIFICALLY COVERED**

**19.01** Items not specifically covered herein including player eligibility shall be referred to the USSSA Baseball State Director with guidance from the Association's Executive Vice President of Baseball.

#### **WEATHER SOP FOR OFFICIALS**

As the official for your assigned field you have the ultimate responsibility in determining if the weather conditions warrant a stoppage in play or a cancellation of a game. If at any time you feel that either the field is no longer playable or lightening is too close to the fields you are required to stop play. If a delay is your decision, when the conditions improve, you and you alone decide when to resume the game.

If you feel it is necessary to halt play you must notify, (via text) both the UIC and Director of your specific field situation. After you get home you must notify the league email ([abquussa@aol.com](mailto:abquussa@aol.com)) within 24 hours of the specific game situation to include the following:

Date:

Scheduled game time:

Field:

Start time:

Time play was suspended:

Home team name and score:

Visiting team name and score:

Inning play was suspended:

Top or bottom half of the inning:

Number of outs in the inning:

Plate official name:

Base official name:

## MLB OFFICIAL BASEBALL RULES

2016 Edition



## 2018 Edition OFFICIAL BASEBALL RULES

1.00 – OBJECTIVES OF THE GAME

3.00 – EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORMS

3.03 Player Uniforms

3.04 Catcher's Mitt

3.05 First Baseman's Glove

3.06 Fielding Gloves

3.07 Pitcher's Glove

3.08 Helmets

3.09 Undue Commercialization

3.10 Taking Equipment From the Field

4.00 – GAME PRELIMINARIES

4.01 Umpire Duties

4.02 Field Manager

4.03 Exchange of Lineup Cards

4.04 Weather and Field Conditions

- 4.05 Special Ground Rules
- 5.00–PLAYING THE GAME
  - 5.01 Starting the Game (“Play Ball!”)
  - 5.02 Fielding Positions
  - 5.03 Base Coaches
  - 5.04 Batting
    - (a) Batting Order
    - (b) The Batter’s Box
    - (c) Completing Time at Bat
  - 5.05 When the Batter Becomes a Runner
  - 5.06 Running the Bases
    - (a) Occupying the Base
    - (b) Advancing Bases
    - (c) Dead Balls
  - 5.07 Pitching
    - (a) Legal Pitching Delivery
      - (1) The Windup Position
      - (2) The Set Position
    - (b) Warm-Up Pitches
    - (c) Pitcher Delays
    - (d) Throwing to the Bases
    - (e) Effect of Removing Pivot Foot From Plate
    - (f) Ambidextrous Pitchers
  - 5.08 How a Team Scores
  - 5.09 Making an Out
    - (a) Retiring the Batter
    - (b) Retiring a Runner
    - (c) Appeal Plays
    - (d) Effect of Preceding Runner’s Failure to Touch a Base
    - (e) Retiring the Side
  - 5.10 Substitutions and Pitching Changes (Including Visits to the Mound)
  - 5.11 Designated Hitter Rule
  - 5.12 Calling “Time” and Dead Balls
- 6.00–IMPROPER PLAY, ILLEGAL ACTION, AND MISCONDUCT
  - 6.01 Interference, Obstruction, and Catcher Collisions
    - (a) Batter or Runner Interference
    - (b) Fielder Right of Way
    - (c) Catcher Interference
    - (d) Unintentional Interference
    - (e) Spectator Interference
    - (f) Coach and Umpire Interference
    - (g) Interference With Squeeze Play or Steal of Home
    - (h) Obstruction
    - (i) Collisions at Home Plate
  - 6.02 Pitcher Illegal Action
    - (a) Balks
    - (b) Illegal Pitches With Bases Unoccupied
    - (c) Pitching Prohibitions
  - 6.03 Batter Illegal Action
    - (a) Batter Out for Illegal Action
    - (b) Batting Out of Turn
  - 6.04 Unsportsmanlike Conduct
- 7.00–ENDING THE GAME
  - 7.01 Regulation Games
  - 7.02 Suspended Games
  - 7.03 Forfeited Games
  - 7.04 Protesting Games
- 8.00–THE UMPIRE
  - 8.01 Umpire Qualifications and Authority
  - 8.02 Appeal of Umpire Decisions
  - 8.03 Umpire Position
  - 8.04 Reporting

## GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS TO UMPIRES

### 1.00 – OBJECTIVES OF THE GAME

- 1.01 (1.01) Baseball is a game between two teams of nine players each, under direction of a manager, played on an enclosed field in accordance with these rules, under jurisdiction of one or more umpires.
- 1.02 (5.04) The offensive team’s objective is to have its batter become a runner, and its runners advance.
- 1.03 (5.05) The defensive team’s objective is to prevent offensive players from becoming runners, and to prevent their advance around the bases.
- 1.04 (5.06) When a batter becomes a runner and touches all bases legally he shall score one run for his team.
- 1.05 (1.02) The objective of each team is to win by scoring more runs than the opponent.
- 1.06 (1.03) The winner of the game shall be that team which shall have scored, in accordance with these rules, the greater number of runs at the conclusion of a regulation game.

### 3.00–EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORMS

#### 3.05 (1.13) First Baseman’s Glove

The first baseman may wear a leather glove or mitt not more than thirteen inches long from top to bottom and not more than eight inches wide across the palm, measured from the base of the thumb crotch to the outer edge of the mitt. The space between the thumb section and the finger section of the mitt shall not exceed four inches at the top of the mitt and three and one-half inches at the base of the thumb crotch. The mitt shall be constructed so that this space is permanently fixed and cannot be enlarged, extended, widened, or deepened by the use of any materials or process whatsoever. The web of the mitt shall measure not more than five inches from its top to the base of the thumb crotch. The web may be either a lacing, lacing through leather tunnels, or a center piece of leather which may be an extension of the palm connected to the mitt with lacing and constructed so that it will not exceed the above mentioned measurements. The webbing shall not be constructed of wound or wrapped lacing or deepened to make a net type of trap. The glove may be of any weight.

The crotch opening shall measure not more than 4 ½ inches at the top, not more than 5 ¾ inches deep, and shall be 3 ½ inches wide at its bottom. The opening of the crotch shall not be more than 4½ inches at any point below its top. The webbing shall be secured at each side, and at top and bottom of crotch. The attachment is to be made with leather lacing, these connections to be secured. If they stretch or become loose, they shall be adjusted to their proper condition. The glove can be of any weight. See Appendix 4 for diagram of glove dimensions.

### **3.06 (1.14) Fielding Gloves**

Each fielder, other than the catcher, may use or wear a leather glove. The measurements covering size of glove shall be made by measuring front side or ball receiving side of glove. The tool or measuring tape shall be placed to contact the surface or feature of item being measured and follow all contours in the process. The glove shall not measure more than 13 inches from the tip of any one of the 4 fingers, through the ball pocket to the bottom edge or heel of glove. The glove shall not measure more than 7¾ inches wide, measured from the inside seam at base of first finger, along base of other fingers, to the outside edge of little finger edge of glove. The space or area between the thumb and first finger, called crotch, may be filled with leather webbing or back stop. The webbing may be constructed of two plies of standard leather to close the crotch area entirely, or it may be constructed of a series of tunnels made of leather, or a series of panels of leather, or of lacing leather thongs. The webbing may not be constructed of wound or wrapped lacing to make a net type of trap. When webbing is made to cover entire crotch area, the webbing can be constructed so as to be flexible. When constructed of a series of sections, they must be joined together. These sections may not be so constructed to allow depression to be developed by curvatures in the section sides. The webbing shall be made to control the size of the crotch opening.

The crotch opening shall measure not more than 4½ inches at the top, not more than 5¾ inches deep, and shall be 3½ inches wide at its bottom. The opening of the crotch shall not be more than 4½ inches at any point below its top. The webbing shall be secured at each side, and at top and bottom of crotch. The attachment is to be made with leather lacing, these connections to be secured. If they stretch or become loose, they shall be adjusted to their proper condition. The glove can be of any weight. See Appendix 4 for diagram of glove dimensions.

### **3.07 (1.15) Pitcher's Glove**

(a) The pitcher's glove may not, exclusive of piping, be white, gray, nor, in the judgment of an umpire, distracting in any manner. No fielder, regardless of position, may use a fielding glove

that falls within a PANTONE® color set lighter than the current 14-series.

(b) No pitcher shall attach to his glove any foreign material of a color different from the glove.

(c) The umpire-in-chief shall cause a glove that violates Rules 3.07(a) or (b) (Rules 1.15(a) or 1.15(b)) to be removed from the game, either on his own initiative, at the recommendation of another umpire or upon complaint of the opposing manager that the umpire-in-chief agrees has merit.

### **3.10 (3.14) Taking Equipment From the Field**

Members of the offensive team shall carry all gloves and other equipment off the field and to the dugout while their team is at bat. No equipment shall be left lying on the field, either in fair or foul territory.

## **4.00 – GAME PRELIMINARIES**

### **4.01 (3.01) Umpire Duties**

Before the game begins the umpire shall:

(a) Require strict observance of all rules governing implements of play and equipment of players;

(b) Be sure that all playing lines (heavy lines on Appendices No. 1 and No.2) are marked with lime, chalk or other white material easily distinguishable from the ground or grass;

(c) Receive from the home club a supply of regulation baseballs, the number and make to be certified to the home club by the League President. The umpire shall inspect the baseballs and

ensure they are regulation baseballs and that they are properly rubbed so that the gloss is removed. The umpire shall be the sole judge of the fitness of the balls to be used in the game;

(d) Be assured by the home club that at least one dozen regulation reserve balls are immediately available for use if required;

(e) Have in his possession at least two alternate balls and shall require replenishment of such supply of alternate balls as needed throughout the game. Such alternate balls shall be put in play when:

(1) A ball has been batted out of the playing field or into the spectator area;

(2) A ball has become discolored or unfit for further use;

(3) The pitcher requests such alternate ball.

Rule 4.01(e) Comment (Rule 3.01(e) Comment): The umpire shall not give an alternate ball to the pitcher until play has ended and the previously used ball is dead. After a thrown or batted ball goes out of the playing field, play shall not be resumed with an alternate ball until the runners have reached the bases to which they are entitled. After a home run is hit out of the playing grounds, the umpire shall not deliver a new ball to the pitcher or the catcher until the batter hitting the home run has crossed the plate.

(f) Ensure that an official rosin bag is placed on the ground behind the pitcher's plate prior to the start of each game.

(g) (4.14) The umpire-in-chief shall order the playing field lights turned on whenever in his opinion darkness makes further play in daylight hazardous.

### **4.02 (2.00) Field Manager**

(a) The club shall designate the manager to the League President or the umpire-in-chief not less than thirty minutes before the scheduled starting time of the game.

(b) The manager may advise the umpire-in-chief that he has delegated specific duties prescribed by the rules to a player or coach, and any action of such designated representative shall be official. The manager shall always be responsible for his team's conduct, observance of the official rules, and deference to the umpires.

(c) If a manager leaves the field, he shall designate a player or coach as his substitute, and such substitute manager shall have the duties, rights and responsibilities of the manager. If the manager fails or refuses to designate his substitute before leaving, the umpire-in-chief shall designate a team member as substitute manager.

### **4.03 (4.01) Exchange of Lineup Cards**

Unless the home club shall have given previous notice that the game has been postponed or will be delayed in starting, the umpire, or umpires, shall enter the playing field five minutes before the

hour set for the game to begin and proceed directly to home base where they shall be met by the managers of the opposing teams. In sequence:

(a) First, the home manager, or his designee, shall give his batting order to the umpire-in-chief, in duplicate.

(b) Next, the visiting manager, or his designee, shall give his batting order to the umpire-in-chief, in duplicate.

(c) As a courtesy, each lineup card presented to the umpire-in chief should list the fielding positions to be played by each player in the batting order. If a designated hitter is to be used,

the lineup card shall designate which hitter is to be the designated hitter. See Rule 5.11(a) (Rule 6.10(b)). As a courtesy, potential substitute players should also be listed, but the failure to list a potential substitute player shall not make such potential substitute player ineligible to enter the game.

(d) The umpire-in-chief shall make certain that the original and copies of the respective batting orders are identical, and then tender a copy of each batting order to the opposing manager.

The copy retained by the umpire shall be the official batting order. The tender of the batting order by the umpire shall establish the batting orders. Thereafter, no substitutions shall be made by either manager, except as provided in the rules.

(e) As soon as the home team's batting order is handed to the umpire-in-chief the umpires are in charge of the playing field and from that moment the umpire-in-chief shall have sole authority to determine when a game shall be called, suspended or resumed on account of weather or the condition of the playing field. The umpire-in-chief shall not call the game until at least 30 minutes after he has suspended play. The umpire-in chief may continue the suspension so long as he believes there is any chance to resume play. Rule 4.03 Comment (Rule 4.01 Comment): Obvious errors in the batting order, which are noticed by the umpire-in-chief before he calls "Play" for the start of the game, should be called to the attention of the manager or captain of the team in error, so the correction can be made before the game starts. For example, if a manager has inadvertently listed only eight men in the batting order, or has listed two players with the same last name but without an identifying initial and the errors are noticed by the umpire before he calls "play," he shall cause such error or errors to be corrected before he calls "play" to start the game. Teams should not be "trapped" later by some mistake that obviously was inadvertent and which can be corrected before the game starts. The umpire-in-chief shall at all times try to complete a game. His authority to resume play following one or more suspensions of as much as 30 minutes each shall be absolute and he shall terminate a game only when there appears to be no possibility of completing it. The Major Leagues have determined that Rule 4.03(e) (Rule 4.01(e)) does not apply to any Wild Card, Division Series, League Championship Series or World Series games or for any additional Major League championship season game played to break a tie.

#### **4.06 (3.09) No Fraternization**

Players in uniform shall not address or mingle with spectators, nor sit in the stands before, during, or after a game. No manager, coach or player shall address any spectator before or during a game.

Players of opposing teams shall not fraternize at any time while in uniform.

#### **4.07 Security**

(a) (3.15) No person shall be allowed on the playing field during a game except players and coaches in uniform, managers, news photographers authorized by the home team, umpires, officers of the law in uniform and watchmen or other employees of the home club.

(b) (3.18) The home team shall provide police protection sufficient to preserve order. If a person, or persons, enter the playing field during a game and interfere in any way with the play, the visiting team may refuse to play until the field is cleared.

PENALTY: If the field is not cleared in a reasonable length of time, which shall in no case be less than 15 minutes after the visiting team's refusal to play, the umpire in-chief may forfeit the game to the visiting team.

#### **4.08 (4.13) Doubleheaders**

(a) (1) Only two championship games shall be played on one date. Completion of a suspended game shall not violate this rule.

(2) If two games are scheduled to be played for one admission on one date, the first game shall be the regularly scheduled game for that date.

(b) After the start of the first game of a doubleheader, that game shall be completed before the second game of the doubleheader shall begin.

(c) The second game of a doubleheader shall start twenty minutes after the first game is completed, unless a longer interval (not to exceed thirty minutes) is declared by the umpire-in-chief and announced to the opposing managers at the end of the first game.

EXCEPTION: If the League President has approved a request of the home club for a longer interval between games for some special event, the umpire-in-chief shall declare such longer interval and announce it to the opposing managers. The umpire-in-chief of the first game shall be the timekeeper controlling the interval between games.

(d) The umpire shall start the second game of a doubleheader, if at all possible, and play shall continue as long as ground conditions, local time restrictions, or weather permit.

(e) When a regularly scheduled doubleheader is delayed in starting for any cause, any game that is started is the first game of the doubleheader.

(f) When a rescheduled game is part of a doubleheader the rescheduled game shall be the second game, and the first game shall be the regularly scheduled game for that date.

(g) (3.11) Between games of a doubleheader, or whenever a game is suspended because of the unfitness of the playing field, the umpire-in-chief shall have control of ground-keepers and assistants for the purpose of making the playing field fit for play.

PENALTY: For violation, the umpire-in-chief may forfeit the game to the visiting team.

## **5.00 –PLAYING THE GAME**

### **5.01 Starting the Game ("Play Ball!")**

(a) (4.02 and 5.01) At the time set for beginning the game the players of the home team shall take their defensive positions, the first batter of the visiting team shall take his position in the batter's box, the umpire-in-chief shall call "Play," and the game shall start.

(b) (5.02) After the umpire calls "Play" the ball is alive and in play and remains alive and in play until for legal cause, or at the umpire's call of "Time" suspending play, the ball becomes dead.

(c) (5.03) The pitcher shall deliver the pitch to the batter who may elect to strike the ball, or who may not offer at it, as he chooses.

5.02 (4.03) Fielding Positions When the ball is put in play at the start of, or during a game, all fielders other than the catcher shall be on fair territory.

(a) The catcher shall station himself directly back of the plate. He may leave his position at any time to catch a pitch or make a play except that when the batter is being given an intentional base on balls, the catcher must stand with both feet within the lines of the catcher's box until the ball leaves the pitcher's hand.

PENALTY: Balk.

(b) The pitcher, while in the act of delivering the ball to the batter, shall take his legal position;

(c) Except the pitcher and the catcher, any fielder may station himself anywhere in fair territory.

### **5.03 (4.05) Base Coaches**

(a) The team at bat shall station two base coaches on the field during its time at bat, one near first base and one near third base.

(b) Base coaches shall be limited to two in number and shall (1) be in team uniform, and (2) remain within the coach's box at all times.

PENALTY: The offending base coach shall be removed from the game, and shall leave the playing field.

Rule 5.03 Comment (Rule 4.05 Comment): It has been common practice for many years for some coaches to put one foot outside the coach's box or stand astride or otherwise be slightly outside the coaching box lines. Until a batted ball passes a coach, a coach is not permitted to position himself closer to home plate than the coach's box nor closer to fair territory than the coach's box. Otherwise, a coach shall not be considered out of the box unless the opposing manager complains, in which case the umpire shall strictly enforce the rule and require all coaches (on both teams) to remain in the coach's box at all times.

It is also common practice for a coach who has a play at his base to leave the coach's box to signal the player to slide, advance or return to a base. This may be allowed if the coach does not interfere with the play in any manner. Other than exchanging equipment, all base coaches shall refrain from physically touching base runners, especially when signs are being given.

### **5.04 (6.00) Batting**

(a) (6.01) Batting Order

(1) (6.01(a)) Each player of the offensive team shall bat in the order that his name appears in his team's batting order.

(2) (4.04) The batting order shall be followed throughout the game unless a player is substituted for another. In that case the substitute shall take the place of the replaced player in the batting order.

(3) (6.01(b)) The first batter in each inning after the first inning shall be the player whose name follows that of the last player who legally completed his time at bat in the preceding inning.

(b) (6.02) The Batter's Box

(1) The batter shall take his position in the batter's box promptly when it is his time at bat.

(2) The batter shall not leave his position in the batter's box after the pitcher comes to Set Position, or starts his windup.

PENALTY: If the pitcher pitches, the umpire shall call "Ball" or "Strike," as the case may be.

Rule 5.04(b)(2) Comment (Rule 6.02(b) Comment): The batter leaves the batter's box at the risk of having a strike delivered and called, unless he requests the umpire to call "Time." The batter is not at liberty to step in and out of the batter's box at will. Once a batter has taken his position in the batter's box, he shall not be permitted to step out of the batter's box in order to use the resin or the pine tar rag, unless there is a delay in the game action or, in the judgment of the umpires, weather conditions warrant an exception. Umpires will not call "Time" at the request of the batter or any member of his team once the pitcher has started his windup or has come to a set position even though the batter claims "dust in his eyes," "steamed glasses," "didn't get the sign" or for any other cause.

Umpires may grant a hitter's request for "Time" once he is in the batter's box, but the umpire should eliminate hitters walking out of the batter's box without reason. If umpires are not lenient, batters will understand that they are in the batter's box and they must remain there until the ball is pitched. See Rule 5.04(b)(4) (Rule 6.02(d)).

The following two paragraphs are additional material for Rule 5.04(b)(2) Comment (Rule 6.02(b) Comment), for Major League play only:

If pitcher delays once the batter is in his box and the umpire feels that the delay is not justified he may allow the batter to step out of the box momentarily. If after the pitcher starts his windup or comes to a "set position" with a runner on, he does not go through with his pitch because the batter has inadvertently caused the pitcher to interrupt his delivery, it shall not be called a balk. Both the pitcher and batter have violated a rule and the umpire shall call time and both the batter and pitcher start over from "scratch."

The following paragraph is additional material for Rule

5.04 (b)(2) Comment (Rule 6.02(b) Comment), for National Association play (in lieu of the additional two paragraphs, above, that apply to Major League play): If after the pitcher starts his windup or comes to a "set position" with a runner on, he does not go through with his pitch because the batter has stepped out of the box, the umpire shall not call a balk. The umpire shall call an automatic strike if Rule 5.04(b)(4)(A) (Rule 6.02(d)(1)) calls for such sanction.

(3) If the batter refuses to take his position in the batter's box during his time at bat, the umpire shall call a strike on the batter. The ball is dead, and no runners may advance. After the penalty, the batter may take his proper position and the regular ball and strike count shall continue. If the batter does not take his proper position before three strikes have been called, the batter shall be declared out.

Rule 5.04(b)(3) Comment (Rule 6.02(c) Comment): The umpire shall give the batter a reasonable opportunity to take his proper position in the batter's box after the umpire has called a strike pursuant to Rule 5.04(b)(3) (Rule 6.02(c)) and before the umpire calls a successive strike pursuant to Rule

#### **(4) (6.02(d)) THE BATTER'S BOX RULE.**

(A) The batter shall keep at least one foot in the batter's box throughout the batter's time at bat, unless one of the following exceptions applies, in which case the batter may leave the batter's box but not the dirt area surrounding home plate:

- (i) The batter swings at a pitch;
- (ii) The batter is forced out of the batter's box by a pitch;
- (iii) A member of either team requests and is granted "Time";
- (iv) A defensive player attempts a play on a runner at any base;
- (v) The batter feints a bunt;
- (vi) A wild pitch or passed ball occurs;
- (vii) The pitcher leaves the dirt area of the pitching mound after receiving the ball; or
- (viii) The catcher leaves the catcher's box to give defensive signals.

If the batter intentionally leaves the batter's box and delays play, and none of the exceptions listed in Rule 5.04(b)(4)(A)(i) through (viii) (Rule 6.02(d)(1)(i) through (viii)) applies, the umpire shall issue a warning to the batter for the batter's first violation of this Rule in a game. For a batter's second or subsequent violations of this Rule in a game, the League President may issue an appropriate discipline.

(B) The batter may leave the batter's box and the dirt area surrounding home plate when "Time" is called for the purpose of

(i) making a substitution; or (ii) a conference by either team.

Rule 5.04(b)(4)(B) Comment (Rule 6.02(d) Comment): Umpires shall encourage the on-deck batter to take a position in the batter's box quickly after the previous batter reaches base or is put out. (5) (6.03) The batter's legal position shall be with both feet within the batter's box.

APPROVED RULING: The lines defining the box are within the batter's box.

(c) (6.04) Completing Time at Bat

A batter has legally completed his time at bat when he is put out or becomes a runner.

#### **5.05 (6.09) When the Batter Becomes a Runner**

(a) The batter becomes a runner when:

(1) He hits a fair ball;

Rule 5.05(a) Comment (Rule 2.00 (Ball) Comment): If the batter hits a pitch that touches the ground first, the ensuing action shall be the same as if he hit the ball in flight.

(2) The third strike called by the umpire is not caught, providing (1) first base is unoccupied, or (2) first base is occupied with two out;

Rule 5.05(a)(2) Comment (Rule 6.09(b) Comment): A batter who does not realize his situation on a third strike not caught, and who is not in the process of running to first base, shall be declared out once he leaves the dirt circle surrounding home plate.

(3) If the pitch touches the ground and bounces through the strike zone it is a "ball." If such a pitch touches the batter, he shall be awarded first base. If the batter swings at such a pitch after two strikes, the ball cannot be caught, for the purposes of Rule 5.05(b) and 5.09(a)(3). (Rule 2.00 (Ball) Comment)

(4) A fair ball, after having passed a fielder other than the pitcher, or after having been touched by a fielder, including the pitcher, shall touch an umpire or runner on fair territory;

(5) A fair ball passes over a fence or into the stands at a distance from home base of 250 feet or more. Such hit entitles the batter to a home run when he shall have touched all bases legally. A fair fly ball that passes out of the playing field at a point less than 250 feet from home base shall entitle the batter to advance to second base only;

(6) A fair ball, after touching the ground, bounds into the stands, or passes through, over or under a fence, or through or under a scoreboard, or through or under shrubbery, or vines on the fence, in which case the batter and the runners shall be entitled to advance two bases;

(7) Any fair ball which, either before or after touching the ground, passes through or under a fence, or through or under a scoreboard, or through any opening in the fence or scoreboard, or through or under shrubbery, or vines on the fence, or which sticks in a fence or scoreboard, in which case the batter and the runners shall be entitled to two bases;

(8) Any bounding fair ball is deflected by the fielder into the stands, or over or under a fence on fair or foul territory, in which case the batter and all runners shall be entitled to advance two bases;

(9) Any fair fly ball is deflected by the fielder into the stands, or over the fence into foul territory, in which case the batter shall be entitled to advance to second base; but if deflected into the stands or over the fence in fair territory, the batter shall be entitled to a home run. However, should such a fair fly be deflected at a point less than 250 feet from home plate, the batter shall be entitled to two bases only.

(b) The batter becomes a runner and is entitled to first base without liability to be put out (provided he advances to and touches first base) when:

(1) Four "balls" have been called by the umpire; Rule 5.05(b)(1) Comment (Rule 6.08(a) Comment): A batter who is entitled to first base because of a base on balls must go to first base and touch the base before other base runners are forced to advance. This applies when bases are full and applies when a substitute runner is put into the game. If, in advancing, the base runner thinks there is a play and he slides past the base before or after touching it he may be put out by the fielder tagging him. If he fails to touch the base to which he is entitled and attempts to advance beyond that base he may be put out by tagging him or the base he missed.

(2) He is touched by a pitched ball which he is not attempting to hit unless (A) The ball is in the strike zone when it touches the batter, or (B) The batter makes no attempt to avoid being touched by the ball;

If the ball is in the strike zone when it touches the batter, it shall be called a strike, whether or not the batter tries to avoid the ball. If the ball is outside the strike zone when it touches the batter, it shall be called a ball if he makes no attempt to avoid being touched.

APPROVED RULING: When the batter is touched by a pitched ball which does not entitle him to first base, the ball is dead and no runner may advance.

(3) The catcher or any fielder interferes with him. If a play follows the interference, the manager of the offense may advise the plate umpire that he elects to decline the interference penalty and accept the play. Such election shall be made immediately at the end of the play. However, if the batter reaches first base on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batsman, or otherwise, and all other runners advance at least one base, the play proceeds without reference to the interference.

Rule 5.05(b)(3) Comment (Rule 6.08(c) Comment): If catcher's interference is called with a play in progress the umpire will allow the play to continue because the manager may elect to take the play. If the batter-runner missed first base, or a runner misses his next base, he shall be considered as having reached the base, as stated in Note of Rule 5.06(e)(4) (Rule 7.04(d)).

Examples of plays the manager might elect to take:

1. Runner on third, one out, batter hits fly ball to the outfield on which the runner scores but catcher's interference was called. The offensive manager may elect to take the run and have batter called out or have runner remain at third and batter awarded first base.

2. Runner on second base. Catcher interferes with batter as he bunts ball fairly sending runner to third base. The manager may rather have runner on third base with an out on the play than have runners on second and first. If a runner is trying to score by a steal or squeeze from third base, note the additional penalty set forth in Rule 5.13(f) (Rule 7.07).

If the catcher interferes with the batter before the pitcher delivers the ball, it shall not be considered interference on the batter under Rule 5.05(i)(3) (Rule 6.08(c)). In such cases, the umpire shall call "Time" and the pitcher and batter start over from "scratch."

(4) A fair ball touches an umpire or a runner on fair territory before touching a fielder.

If a fair ball touches an umpire after having passed a fielder other than the pitcher, or having touched a fielder, including the pitcher, the ball is in play.

#### **5.06 (7.00) Running the Bases**

##### (a) (7.01) Occupying the Base

(1) A runner acquires the right to an unoccupied base when he touches it before he is out. He is then entitled to it until he is put out, or forced to vacate it for another runner legally entitled to that base.

Rule 5.06(a)/5.06(c) Comment (Rule 7.01 Comment): If a runner legally acquires title to a base, and the pitcher assumes his pitching position, the runner may not return to a previously occupied base.

(2) (7.03(a)) Two runners may not occupy a base, but if, while the ball is alive, two runners are touching a base, the following runner shall be out when tagged and the preceding runner is entitled to the base, unless Rule 5.06(d) (Rule 7.03(b)) applies.

##### (b) Advancing Bases

(1) (7.02) In advancing, a runner shall touch first, second, third and home base in order. If forced to return, he shall retouch all bases in reverse order, unless the ball is dead under any provision of Rule 5.06(g) (Rule 5.09). In such cases, the runner may go directly to his original base.

(2) (7.03(b)) If a runner is forced to advance by reason of the batter becoming a runner and two runners are touching a base to which the following runner is forced, the following runner is entitled to the base and the preceding runner shall be out when tagged or when a fielder possesses the ball and touches the base to which such preceding runner is forced.

(3) (7.04) Each runner, other than the batter, may without liability to be put out, advance one base when:

(A) There is a balk;

(B) The batter's advance without liability to be put out forces the runner to vacate his base, or when

the batter hits a fair ball that touches another runner or the umpire before such ball has been touched by, or has passed a fielder, if the runner is forced to advance; Rule 5.06(b)(3)(B) Comment (Rule 7.04(b) Comment): A runner forced to advance without liability to be put out may advance past the base to which he is entitled only at his peril. If such a runner, forced to advance, is put out for the third out before a preceding runner, also forced to advance, touches home plate, the run shall score.

Play. Two out, bases full, batter walks but runner from second is overzealous and runs past third base toward home and is tagged out on a throw by the catcher. Even though two are out, the run would score on the theory that the run was forced home by the base on balls and that all the runners needed to do was proceed and touch the next base.

(C) A fielder, after catching a fly ball, falls into a bench or stand, or falls across ropes into a crowd

when spectators are on the field; Rule 5.06(b)(3)(C) Comment (Rule 7.04(c) Comment): If a fielder, after having made a legal catch, should fall into a stand or among spectators or into the dugout or any other out-of-play area while in possession of the ball after making a legal catch, or fall while in the dugout after making a legal catch, the ball is dead and each runner shall advance one base, without liability to be put out, from his last legally touched base at the time the fielder fell into, or in, such out-of-play area.

(D) While he is attempting to steal a base, the batter is interfered with by the catcher or any other fielder.

NOTE: When a runner is entitled to a base without liability to be put out, while the ball is in play, or under any rule in which the ball is in play after the runner reaches the base to which he is entitled, and the runner fails to touch the base to which he is entitled before attempting to advance to the next base, the runner shall forfeit his exemption from liability to be put out, and he may be put out by tagging the base or by tagging the runner before he returns to the missed base;

(E) A fielder deliberately touches a pitched ball with his cap, mask or any part of his uniform detached

from its proper place on his person. The ball is in play, and the award is made from the position of the runner at the time the ball was touched.

(4) (7.05) Each runner including the batter-runner may, without liability to be put out, advance:

(A) To home base, scoring a run, if a fair ball goes out of the playing field in flight and he touched all bases legally; or if a fair ball which, in the umpire's judgment, would have gone out of the playing field in flight, is deflected by the act of a fielder in throwing his glove, cap, or any article of his apparel;

(B) Three bases, if a fielder deliberately touches a fair ball with his cap, mask or any part of his uniform detached from its proper place on his person. The ball is in play and the batter may advance to home base at his peril;

(C) Three bases, if a fielder deliberately throws his glove at and touches a fair ball. The ball is in play and the batter may advance to home base at his peril;

(D) Two bases, if a fielder deliberately touches a thrown ball with his cap, mask or any part of his uniform detached from its proper place on his person. The ball is in play;

(E) Two bases, if a fielder deliberately throws his glove at and touches a thrown ball. The ball is in play; Rule 5.06(b)(4)(B) through (E) Comment (Rule 7.05(b) through

7.05(e) Comment): In applying (B-C-D-E) (b-c-d-e) the umpire must rule that the thrown glove or detached cap or mask has touched the ball. There is no penalty if the ball is not touched. Under (C-E) (c-e) this penalty shall not be invoked against a fielder whose glove is carried off his hand by the force of a batted or thrown ball, or when his glove flies off his hand as he makes an obvious effort to make a legitimate catch.

(F) Two bases, if a fair ball bounces or is deflected into the stands outside the first or third base foul lines; or if it goes through or under a field fence, or through or under a scoreboard, or through or under shrubbery or vines on the fence; or if it sticks in such fence, scoreboard, shrubbery or vines;

(G) Two bases when, with no spectators on the playing field, a thrown ball goes into the stands, or into a bench (whether or not the ball rebounds into the field), or over or under or through a field fence, or on a slanting part of the screen above the backstop, or remains in the meshes of a wire screen protecting spectators. The ball is dead. When such wild throw is the first play by an infielder, the umpire, in awarding such bases, shall be governed by the position of the runners at the time the ball was pitched; in all other cases the umpire shall be governed by the position of the runners at the time the wild throw was made;

APPROVED RULING: If all runners, including the batter-runner, have advanced at least one base when an infielder makes a wild throw on the first play after the pitch, the award shall be governed by the position of the runners when the wild throw was made.

Rule 5.06(b)(4)(G) Comment (Rule 7.05(g) Comment): In certain circumstances it is impossible to award a runner two bases. Example: Runner on first. Batter hits fly to short right. Runner holds up between first and second and batter comes around first and pulls up behind him. Ball falls safely. Outfielder, in throwing to first, throws ball into stands. APPROVED RULING: Since no runner, when the ball is dead, may advance beyond the base to which he is entitled, the runner originally on first base goes to third base and the batter is held at second base. The term "when the wild throw was made" means when the throw actually left the player's hand and not when the thrown ball hit the ground, passes a receiving fielder or goes out of play into the stands. The position of the batter-runner at the time the wild throw left the thrower's hand is the key in deciding the award of bases. If the batter-runner has not reached first base, the award is two bases at the time the pitch was made for all runners. The decision as to whether the batter-runner has reached first base before the throw is a judgment call. If an unusual play arises where a first throw by an infielder goes into stands or dugout but the batter did not become a runner (such as catcher throwing ball into stands in attempt to get runner from third trying to score on passed ball or wild pitch) award of two bases shall be from the position of the runners at the time of the throw. (For the purpose of Rule 5.06(b)(4)(G) (Rule 7.05(g)) a catcher is considered an infielder.)

PLAY— Runner on first base, batter hits a ball to the shortstop, who throws to second base too late to get runner at second, and second baseman throws toward first base after batter has crossed first base. RULING: Runner at second scores. (On this play, only if batter-runner is past first base when throw is made is he awarded third base.)

(H) One base, if a ball, pitched to the batter, or thrown by the pitcher from his position on the pitcher's plate to a base to catch a runner, goes into a stand or a bench, or over or through a field fence or backstop. The ball is dead; APPROVED RULING: When a wild pitch or passed ball goes through or by the catcher, or deflects off the catcher, and goes directly into the dugout, stands, above the break, or any area where the ball is dead, the awarding of bases shall be one base. One base shall also be awarded if the pitcher while in contact with the rubber, throws to a base, and the throw goes directly into the stands or into any area where the ball is dead. If, however, the pitched or thrown ball goes through or by the catcher or through the fielder, and remains on the playing field, and is subsequently kicked or deflected into the dugout, stands or other area where the ball is dead, the awarding of bases shall be two bases from position of runners at the time of the pitch or throw.

(I) One base, if the batter becomes a runner on Ball Four or Strike Three, when the pitch passes the catcher and lodges in the umpire's mask or paraphernalia. If the batter becomes a runner on a wild pitch which entitles the runners to advance one base, the batter-runner shall be entitled to first base only.

Rule 5.06(b)(4)(I) Comment (Rule 7.05(i) Comment): The fact a runner is awarded a base or bases without liability to be put out does not relieve him of the responsibility to touch the base he is awarded and all intervening bases. For example: Batter hits a ground ball which an infielder throws into the stands but the batter-runner missed first base. He may be called out on appeal for missing first base after the ball is put in play even though he was "awarded" second base. If a runner is forced to return to a base after a catch, he must retouch his original base even though, because of some ground rule or other rule, he is awarded additional bases. He may retouch while the ball is dead and the award is then made from his original base.

### (c) (5.02 and 5.09) Dead Balls

(5.09) The ball becomes dead and runners advance one base, or return to their bases, without liability to be put out, when:

(1) A pitched ball touches a batter, or his clothing, while in his legal batting position; runners, if forced, advance;

(2) The plate umpire interferes with the catcher's throw attempting to prevent a stolen base or retire a runner on a pick-off play; runners may not advance.

NOTE: The interference shall be disregarded if the catcher's throw retires the runner.

(5.02) While the ball is dead no player may be put out, no bases may be run and no runs may be scored, except that runners may advance one or more bases as the result of acts which occurred while the ball was alive (such as, but not limited to a balk, an overthrow, interference, or a home run or other fair ball hit out of the playing field).

Rule 5.06(c)(2) Comment (Rule 5.09(b) Comment): Umpire interference may also occur when an umpire interferes with a catcher returning the ball to the pitcher.

(3) A balk is committed; runners advance; (See Penalty 6.02(a) (Penalty 8.05).)

(4) A ball is illegally batted; runners return;

(5) A foul ball is not caught, in which case runners return to their bases. The umpire-in-chief shall not put the ball in play until all runners have retouched their bases;

(6) A fair ball touches a runner or an umpire on fair territory before it touches an infielder including

the pitcher, or touches an umpire before it has passed an infielder other than the pitcher; runners advance, if forced. If a fair ball goes through, or by, an infielder, no other infielder has a chance to make a play on the ball and the ball touches a runner immediately behind the infielder that the ball went through, or by, the ball is in play and the umpire shall not declare the runner out. If a fair ball touches a runner after being deflected by an infielder, the ball is in play and the umpire shall not declare the runner out;

Rule 5.06(c)(6) Comment (Rule 5.09(f) Comment): If a fair ball touches an umpire working in the infield after it has bounded past, or over, the pitcher, it is a dead ball. If a batted ball is deflected by a fielder in fair territory and hits a runner or an umpire while still in flight and then caught by an infielder it shall not be a catch, but the ball shall remain in play. (7) A pitched ball lodges in the umpire's or catcher's mask or paraphernalia, and remains out of play, runners advance one base;

Rule 5.06(c)(7) Comment (Rule 5.09(g) Comment): If a foul tip hits the umpire and is caught by a fielder on the rebound, the ball is "dead" and the batsman cannot be called out. The same shall apply where such foul tip lodges in the umpire's mask or other paraphernalia. If a third strike (not a foul tip) passes the catcher and hits an umpire, the ball is in play. If such ball rebounds and is caught by a fielder before it touches the ground, the batsman is not out on such a catch, but the ball remains in play and the batsman may be retired at first base, or touched with the ball for the out. If a pitched ball lodges in the umpire's or catcher's mask or paraphernalia, and remains out of play, on the third strike or fourth ball, then the batter is entitled to first base and all runners advance one base. If the count on the batter is less than three balls, runners advance one base.

(8) Any legal pitch touches a runner trying to score; runners advance.

### 5.07 (8.00) Pitching

(a) (8.01) Legal Pitching Delivery

There are two legal pitching positions, the Windup Position and the Set Position, and either position may be used at any time. Pitchers shall take signs from the catcher while in contact with the pitcher's plate. Rule 5.07(a) Comment (Rule 8.01 Comment): Pitchers may disengage the rubber after taking their signs but may not step quickly onto the rubber and pitch. This may be judged a quick pitch by the umpire. When the pitcher disengages the rubber, he must drop his hands to his sides. Pitchers will not be allowed to disengage the rubber after taking each sign.

(1) The Windup Position The pitcher shall stand facing the batter, his pivot foot in contact

with the pitcher's plate and the other foot free. From this position any natural movement associated with his delivery of the ball to the batter commits him to the pitch without interruption or alteration. He shall not raise either foot from the ground, except that in his actual delivery of the ball to the batter, he may take one step backward, and one step forward with his free foot. When a pitcher holds the ball with both hands in front of his body, with his pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate and his other foot free, he will be considered in the Windup Position.

Rule 5.07(a)(1) Comment (Rule 8.01(a) Comment): In the Windup Position, a pitcher is permitted to have his "free" foot on the rubber, in front of the rubber, behind the rubber or off the side of the rubber. From the Windup Position, the pitcher may:

(A) deliver the ball to the batter, or

(B) step and throw to a base in an attempt to pick-off a runner, or

(C) disengage the rubber (if he does he must drop his hand to his sides). In disengaging the rubber the pitcher must step off with his pivot foot and not his free foot first. He may not go into a set or stretch position—if he does it is a balk.

(2) The Set Position

Set Position shall be indicated by the pitcher when he stands facing the batter with his pivot foot in contact with, and his other foot in front of, the pitcher's plate, holding the ball in both hands in front of his body and coming to a complete stop. From such Set Position he may deliver the ball to the batter, throw to a base or step backward off the pitcher's plate with his pivot foot. Before assuming Set Position, the pitcher may elect to make any natural preliminary motion such as that known as "the stretch." But if he so elects, he shall come to Set Position before delivering the ball to the batter. After assuming Set Position, any natural motion associated with his delivery of the ball to the batter commits him to the pitch without alteration or interruption. Preparatory to coming to a set position, the pitcher shall have one hand on his side; from this position he shall go to his set position as defined in Rule 5.07(a)(2) (Rule 8.01(b)) without interruption and in one continuous motion. The pitcher, following his stretch, must (a) hold the ball in both hands in front of his body and (b) come to a complete stop. This must be enforced. Umpires should watch this closely. Pitchers are constantly attempting to "beat the rule" in their efforts to hold runners on bases and in cases where the pitcher fails to make a complete "stop" called for in the rules, the umpire should immediately call a "Balk." Rule 5.07(a)(2) Comment (Rule 8.01(b) Comment): With no runners on base, the pitcher is not required to come to a complete stop when using the Set Position. If, however, in the umpire's judgment, a pitcher delivers the ball in a deliberate effort to catch the batter off guard, this delivery shall be deemed a quick pitch, for which the penalty is a ball. See Rule 5.07(f)(5) Comment (Rule 8.05(e) Comment).

### (b) (8.03) Warm-Up Pitches

When a pitcher takes his position at the beginning of each inning, or when he relieves another pitcher, he shall be permitted to pitch not to exceed eight preparatory pitches to his catcher during which play shall be suspended. A league by its own action may limit the number of preparatory pitches to less than eight preparatory pitches. Such preparatory pitches shall not consume more than one minute of time. If a sudden emergency causes a pitcher to be summoned into the game without any opportunity to warm up, the umpire-in-chief shall allow him as many pitches as the umpire deems necessary.

(c) (8.04) Pitcher Delays

When the bases are unoccupied, the pitcher shall deliver the ball to the batter within 12 seconds after he receives the ball. Each time the pitcher delays the game by violating this rule, the umpire shall call "Ball." The 12-second timing starts when the pitcher is in possession of the ball and the batter is in the box, alert to the pitcher. The timing stops when the pitcher releases the ball.



The intent of this rule is to avoid unnecessary delays. The umpire shall insist that the catcher return the ball promptly to the pitcher, and that the pitcher take his position on the rubber promptly. Obvious delay by the pitcher should instantly be penalized by the umpire.

(d) (8.01(c)) Throwing to the Bases

At any time during the pitcher's preliminary movements and until his natural pitching motion commits him to the pitch, he may throw to any base provided he steps directly toward such base before making the throw.

Rule 5.07(d) Comment (Rule 8.01(c) Comment ): The pitcher shall step "ahead of the throw." A snap throw followed by the step directly toward the base is a balk.

(e) (8.01(e)) Effect of Removing Pivot Foot From Plate If the pitcher removes his pivot foot from contact with the pitcher's plate by stepping backward with that foot, he thereby becomes an infielder and if he makes a wild throw from that position, it shall be considered the same as a wild throw by any other infielder. Rule 5.07(e) Comment (Rule 8.01(e) Comment ): The pitcher, while off the rubber, may throw to any base. If he makes a wild throw, such throw is the throw of an infielder and what follows is governed by the rules covering a ball thrown by a fielder.

(f) (8.01(f)) Ambidextrous Pitchers

A pitcher must indicate visually to the umpire-in-chief, the batter and any runners the hand with which he intends to pitch, which may be done by wearing his glove on the other hand while touching the pitcher's plate. The pitcher is not permitted to pitch with the other hand until the batter is retired, the batter becomes a runner the inning ends, the batter is substituted for by a pinch-hitter or the pitcher incurs an injury. In the event a pitcher switches pitching hands during an at-bat because he has suffered an injury, the pitcher may not, for the remainder of the game, pitch with the hand from which he has switched. The pitcher shall not be given the opportunity to throw any preparatory pitches after switching pitching hands. Any change of pitching hands must be indicated clearly to the umpire-in-chief.

**5.08 (4.09) How a Team Scores**

(a) One run shall be scored each time a runner legally advances to and touches first, second, third and home base before three men are put out to end the inning.

EXCEPTION: A run is not scored if the runner advances to home base during a play in which the third out is made (1) by the batter-runner before he touches first base; (2) by any runner being forced out; or (3) by a preceding runner who is declared out because he failed to touch one of the bases.

Rule 5.08(a) Comment (Rule 5.06 Comment): A run legally scored cannot be nullified by subsequent action of the runner, such as but not limited to an effort to return to third base in the belief that he had left the base before a caught fly ball.

(b) When the winning run is scored in the last half-inning of a regulation game, or in the last half of an extra inning, as the result of a base on balls, hit batter or any other play with the bases full which forces the runner on third to advance, the umpire shall not declare the game ended until the runner forced to advance from third has touched home base and the batter-runner has touched first base.

Rule 5.08 (b) Comment (Rule 4.09 (b) Comment ): An exception will be if fans rush onto the field and physically prevent the runner from touching home plate or the batter from touching first base. In such cases, the umpires shall award the runner the base because of the obstruction by the fans.

PENALTY: If the runner on third refuses to advance to and touch home base in a reasonable time, the umpire shall disallow the run, call out the offending player and order the game resumed. If, with two out, the batter-runner refuses to advance to and touch first base, the umpire shall disallow the run, call out the offending player, and order the game resumed. If, before two are out, the batter runner refuses to advance to and touch first base, the run shall count, but the offending player shall be called out.

Rule 5.08 Comment (Rule 4.09 Comment):

APPROVED RULING: No run shall score during a play in which the third out is made by the batter-runner before he touches first base. Example: One out, Jones on second, Smith on first. The batter, Brown, hits safely. Jones scores. Smith is out on the throw to the plate. Two outs. But Brown missed first base. The ball is thrown to first, an appeal is made, and Brown is out. Three outs. Since Jones crossed the plate during a play in which the third out was made by the batter-runner before he touched first base, Jones' run does not count.

APPROVED RULING: Following runners are not affected by an act of a preceding runner unless two are out. EXAMPLE: One out, Jones on second, Smith on first, and batter, Brown, hits home run inside the park. Jones fails to touch third on his way to the plate. Smith and Brown score. The defense holds the ball on third, appeals to umpire, and Jones is out. Smith's and Brown's runs count.

APPROVED RULING: Two out, Jones on second, Smith on first and batter, Brown, hits home run inside the park. All three runs cross the plate. But Jones missed third base, and on appeal is declared out. Three outs. Smith's and Brown's runs are voided. No score on the play.

APPROVED RULING: One out, Jones on third, Smith on second. Batter Brown flies out to center. Two out. Jones scores after catch and Smith scores on bad throw to plate. But Jones, on appeal, is adjudged to have left third before the catch and is out. Three outs. No runs.

APPROVED RULING: Two out, bases full, batter hits home run over fence. Batter, on appeal, is declared out for missing first base. Three outs. No run counts. Here is a general statement that covers: When a runner misses a base and a fielder holds the ball on a missed base, or on the base originally occupied by the runner if a fly ball is caught, and appeals for the umpire's decision, the runner is out when the umpire sustains the appeal; all runners may score if possible, except that with two out the runner is out at the moment he misses the bag, if an appeal is sustained as applied to the following runners.

APPROVED RULING: One out, Jones on third, Smith on first, and Brown flies out to right field. Two outs. Jones tags up and scores after the catch. Smith attempted to return to first but the right fielder's throw beat him to the base. Three outs. But Jones scored before the throw to catch Smith reached first base, hence Jones' run counts. It was not a force play.

**5.09 Making an Out**

(a) (6.05) Retiring the Batter

A batter is out when:

(1) His fair or foul fly ball (other than a foul tip) is legally caught by a fielder;

Rule 5.09(a)(1) Comment (Rule 6.05(a) Comment): A fielder may reach into, but not step into, a dugout to make a catch, and if he holds the ball, the catch shall be allowed. A fielder, in order to make a catch on a foul ball nearing a dugout or other out-of-play area (such as the stands), must have one or both feet on or over the playing surface (including the lip of the dugout) and neither foot on the ground inside the dugout or in any other out-of-play area. Ball is in play, unless the fielder, after making a legal catch, falls into a dugout or other out of play area, in which case the ball is dead. Status of runners shall be as described in Rule 5.06 (c)(3) Comment (Rule 7.04 (c) Comment).

A catch is the act of a fielder in getting secure possession in his hand or glove of a ball in flight and firmly holding it; providing he does not use his cap, protector, pocket or any other part of his uniform in getting possession. It is not a catch, however, if simultaneously or immediately following his contact with the ball, he collides with a player, or with a wall, or if he falls down, and as a result of such collision or falling, drops the ball. It is not a catch if a fielder touches a fly ball which then hits a member of the offensive team or an umpire and then is caught by another defensive player. In establishing the validity of the catch, the fielder shall hold the ball long enough to prove that he has complete control of the ball and that his release of the ball is voluntary and intentional. If the fielder has made the catch and drops the ball while in the act of making a throw following the catch, the ball shall be adjudged to have been caught.

Catch Comment: A catch is legal if the ball is finally held by any fielder, even though juggled, or held by another fielder before it touches the ground. Runners may leave their bases the instant the first fielder touches the ball. A fielder may reach over a fence, railing, rope or other line of demarcation to make a catch. He may jump on top of a railing, or canvas that may be in foul ground. No interference should be allowed when a fielder reaches over a fence, railing, rope or into a stand to catch a ball. He does so at his own risk. If a fielder, attempting a catch at the edge of the dugout, is "held up" and kept from an apparent fall by a player or players of either team and the catch is made, it shall be allowed.

(2) A third strike is legally caught by the catcher;

Rule 5.09 (a) (2) Comment (Rule 6.05(b) Comment ): "Legally caught" means in the catcher's glove before the ball touches the ground. It is not legal if the ball lodges in his clothing or paraphernalia; or if it touches the umpire and is caught by the catcher on the rebound.

If a foul tip first strikes the catcher's glove and then goes on through and is caught by both hands against his body or protector, before the ball touches the ground, it is a strike, and if third strike, batter is out. If smothered against his body or protector, it is a catch provided the ball struck the catcher's glove or hand first.

(3) A third strike is not caught by the catcher when first base is occupied before two are out;

(4) He bunts foul on third strike;

(5) An Infield Fly is declared;

(6) He attempts to hit a third strike and the ball touches him;

(7) His fair ball touches him before touching a fielder. If the batter is in a legal position in the batter's box, see Rule 5.04 (b)(5) (Rule 6.03), and, in the umpire's judgment, there was no intention to interfere with the course of the ball, a batted ball that strikes the batter or his bat shall be ruled a foul ball;

(8) After hitting or bunting a fair ball, his bat hits the ball a second time in fair territory. The ball is dead and no runners may advance. If the batter-runner drops his bat and the ball rolls against the bat in fair territory and, in the umpire's judgment, there was no intention to interfere with the course of the ball, the ball is alive and in play. If the batter is in a legal position in the batter's box, see Rule 5.04 (b)(5) ( Rule 6.03), and, in the umpire's judgment, there was no intention to interfere with the course of the ball, a batted ball that strikes the batter or his bat shall be ruled a foul ball;

Rule 5.09(a )(8) Comment (Rule 6.05(h) Comment): If a bat breaks and part of it is in fair territory and is hit by a batted ball or part of it hits a runner or fielder, play shall continue and no interference called. If batted ball hits part of a broken bat in foul territory, it is a foul ball. If a whole bat is thrown into fair or foul territory and interferes with a defensive player attempting to make a play, interference shall be called, whether intentional or not. In cases where the batting helmet is accidentally hit with a batted ball on or over fair territory or a thrown ball, the ball remains in play the same as if it has not hit the helmet. If a batted ball strikes a batting helmet or any other object foreign to the natural ground while on foul territory, it is a foul ball and the ball is dead. If, in the umpire's judgment, there is intent on the part of a baserunner to interfere with a batted or thrown ball by dropping the helmet or throwing it at the ball, then the runner would be out, the ball dead and runners would return to last base legally touched.

(9) After hitting or bunting a ball that continues to move over foul territory, he intentionally deflects the course of the ball in any manner while running to first base. The ball is dead and no runners may advance;

(10) After a third strike or after he hits a fair ball, he or first base is tagged before he touches first base;

(11) In running the last half of the distance from home base to first base, while the ball is being fielded to first base, he runs outside (to the right of ) the three-foot line, or inside (to the left of ) the foul line, and in the umpire's judgment in so doing interferes with the fielder taking the throw at first base, in which case the ball is dead; except that he may run outside (to the right of ) the three-foot line or inside (to the left of ) the foul line to avoid a fielder attempting to field a batted ball;

Rule 5.09(a )(11) Comment (Rule 6.05(k ) Comment): The lines marking the three-foot lane are a part of that lane and a batter-runner is required to have both feet within the three-foot lane or on the lines marking the lane. The batter-runner is permitted to exit the three-foot lane by means of a step, stride, reach or slide in the immediate vicinity of first base for the sole purpose of touching first base.

(12) An infielder intentionally drops a fair fly ball or line drive, with first, first and second, first and third, or first, second and third base occupied before two are out. The ball is dead and runner or runners shall return to their original base or bases;

APPROVED RULING: In this situation, the batter is not out if the infielder permits the ball to drop untouched to the ground, except when the Infield Fly rule applies.

(13) A preceding runner shall, in the umpire's judgment, intentionally interfere with a fielder who is attempting to catch a thrown ball or to throw a ball in an attempt to complete any play;

Rule 5.09(a )(13) Comment (Rule 6.05(m) Comment): The objective of this rule is to penalize the offensive team for deliberate, unwarranted, unsportsmanlike action by the runner in leaving the baseline for the obvious purpose of crashing the pivot man on a double play, rather than trying to reach the base. Obviously this is an umpire's judgment play.

(14) With two out, a runner on third base, and two strikes on the batter, the runner attempts to steal home base on a legal pitch and the ball touches the runner in the batter's strike zone. The umpire shall call "Strike Three," the batter

is out and the run shall not count; before two are out, the umpire shall call "Strike Three," the ball is dead, and the run counts;

(15) A member of his team (other than a runner) hinders a fielder's attempt to catch or field a batted ball. See Rule 6.01(b) (Rule 7.11). For interference by a runner, see

Rule 5.09(b)(3) (Rule 7.08(b)).

#### **( b ) (7.08) Retiring a Runner**

Any runner is out when:

(1) He runs more than three feet away from his base path to avoid being tagged unless his action is to avoid interference with a fielder fielding a batted ball. A runner's base path is established when the tag attempt occurs and is a straight line from the runner to the base he is attempting to reach safely; or

(2) after touching first base, he leaves the base path, obviously abandoning his effort to touch the next base; Rule 5.09(b)(1) and (2) Comment (Rule 7.08(a ) Comment): Any runner after reaching first base who leaves the base path heading for his dugout or his position believing that there is no further play, may be declared out if the umpire judges the act of the runner to be considered abandoning his efforts to run the bases. Even though an out is called, the ball remains in play in regard to any other runner. This rule also covers the following and similar plays: Less than two out, score tied last of ninth inning, runner on first, batter hits a ball out of park for winning run, the runner on first passes second and thinking the home run automatically wins the game, cuts across diamond toward his bench as batter-runner circles bases. In this case, the base runner would be called out "for abandoning his effort to touch the next base" and batter- runner permitted to continue around bases to make his home run valid. If there are two out, home run would not count. See Rule 5.09 (d) ( Rule 7.12). This is not an appeal play.

PLAY—Runner believing he is called out on a tag at first or third base starts for the dugout and progresses a reasonable distance still indicating by his actions that he is out, shall be declared out for abandoning the bases.

(3) He intentionally interferes with a thrown ball; or hinders a fielder attempting to make a play on a batted ball; PENALTY: For penalties applying to a runner's intentional interference with a thrown ball or his hindrance of a fielder's attempt to make a play on a batted ball, see Rule 6.01(a) PENALTY FOR INTERFERENCE Com - ment (Rule 7.08(b) Comment ).

(4) He is tagged, when the ball is alive, while off his base.

EXCEPTION: A batter-runner cannot be tagged out after overrunning or over sliding first base if he returns immediately to the base;

APPROVED RULING: ( A ) If the impact of a runner breaks a base loose from its position, no play can be made on that runner at that base if he had reached the base safely.

APPROVED RULING: (B) If a base is dislodged from its position during a play, any following runner on the same play shall be considered as touching or occupying the base if, in the umpire's judgment, he touches or occupies the point marked by the dislodged bag.

(5) He fails to retouch his base after a fair or foul ball is legally caught before he, or his base, is tagged by a fielder. He shall not be called out for failure to retouch his base after the first following pitch, or any play or attempted play. This is an appeal play; Rule 5.09(b)(5) Comment (Rule 7.08(d) Comment ): Runners need not "tag up" on a foul tip. They may steal on a foul tip. If a so-called tip is not caught, it becomes an ordinary foul. Runners then return to their bases.

(6) He or the next base is tagged before he touches the next base, after he has been forced to advance by reason of the batter becoming a runner. However, if a following runner is put out on a force play, the force is removed and the runner must be tagged to be put out. The force is removed as soon as the runner touches the base to which he is forced to advance, and if he over slides or overruns the base, the runner must be tagged to be put out. However, if the forced runner, after touching the next base, retreats for any reason towards the base he had last occupied, the force play is reinstated, and he can again be put out if the defense tags the base to which he is forced;

Rule 5.09(b)(6) Comment (Rule 7.08(e) Comment): PLAY—Runner on first and three balls on batter: Runner steals on the next pitch, which is fourth ball, but after having touched second he over slides or overruns that base. Catcher's throw catches him before he can return. Ruling is that runner is out. (Force out is removed.) Over sliding and overrunning situations arise at bases other than first base. For instance, before two are out, and runners on first and second, or first, second and third, the ball is hit to an infielder who tries for the double play. The runner on first beats the throw to second base but over slides the base. The relay is made to first base and the batter-runner is out. The first baseman, seeing the runner at second base off the bag, makes the return throw to second and the runner is tagged off the base. Meanwhile runners have crossed the plate. The question is: Is this a force play? Was the force removed when the batter-runner was out at first base? Do the runs that crossed the plate during this play and before the third out was made when the runner was tagged at second, count? Answer: The runs score. It is not a force play. It is a tag play.

(7) He is touched by a fair ball in fair territory before the ball has touched or passed an infielder. The ball is dead and no runner may score, nor runners advance, except runners forced to advance. EXCEPTION: If a runner is touching his base when touched by an Infield Fly, he is not out, although the batter is out; Rule 5.09(b)(7) Comment (Rule 7.08( f ) Comment): If two runners are touched by the same fair ball, only the first one is out because the ball is instantly dead. If a runner is touched by an Infield Fly when he is not touching his base, both the runner and batter are out.

(8) He attempts to score on a play in which the batter interferes with the play at home base before two are out. With two out, the interference puts the batter out and no score counts;

(9) He passes a preceding runner before such runner is out;

(10) After he has acquired legal possession of a base, he runs the bases in reverse order for the purpose of confusing the defense or making a travesty of the game. The umpire shall immediately call "Time" and declare the runner out;

Rule 5.09(b)(10) Comment (Rule 7.08(i) Comment): If a runner touches an unoccupied base and then thinks the ball was caught or is decoyed into returning to the base he last touched, he may be put out running back to that base, but if he reaches the previously occupied base safely he cannot be put out while in contact with that base.

(11) He fails to return at once to first base after overrunning or over sliding that base. If he attempts to run to second he is out when tagged. If, after overrunning or over sliding first base he starts toward the dugout, or toward his position, and fails to return to first base at once, he is out, on appeal, when he or the base is tagged;

Rule 5.09(b)(11) Comment (Rule 7.08(j) Comment): Runner who touches first base in overrunning and is declared safe by the umpire has, within the intent of Rule 5.08(a) (Rule 4.09(a) "reached first base" and any run which scores on such a play counts, even though the runner subsequently becomes the third out for failure to return "at once," as covered in Rule 5.09(b)(11) (Rule 7.08(j)).

(12) In running or sliding for home base, he fails to touch home base and makes no attempt to return to the base, when a fielder holds the ball in his hand, while touching home base, and appeals to the umpire for the decision; Rule 5.09(b)(12) Comment (Rule 7.08(k) Comment): This rule applies only where runner is on his way to the bench and the catcher would be required to chase him. It does not apply to the ordinary play where the runner misses the plate and then immediately makes an effort to touch the plate before being tagged. In that case, runner must be tagged.

(13) A play on him is being made and a member of his team (other than a runner) hinders a fielder's attempt to field a thrown ball. See Rule 5.09(b)(3) (Rule 7.11). For interference by a runner, see Rule 5.09(b)(3) (Rule 7.08(b)).

#### **(c) (7.10) Appeal Plays**

Any runner shall be called out, on appeal, when:

(1) After a fly ball is caught, he fails to retouch his original base before he or his original base is tagged;

Rule 5.09(c)(1) Comment (Rule 7.10(a) Comment): "Retouch," in this rule, means to tag up and start from a contact with the base after the ball is caught. A runner is not permitted to take a flying start from a position in back of his base.

(2) With the ball in play, while advancing or returning to a base, he fails to touch each base in order before he, or a missed base, is tagged;

APPROVED RULING: (A) No runner may return to touch a missed base after a following runner has scored. (B) When the ball is dead, no runner may return to touch a missed base or one he has left after he has advanced to and touched a base beyond the missed base.

Rule 5.09(c)(2) Comment (Rule 7.10(b) Comment):

PLAY—(A) Batter hits ball out of park or ground rule double and misses first base (ball is dead)—he may return to first base to correct his mistake before he touches second but if he touches second he may not return to first and if defensive team appeals he is declared out at first.

PLAY—(B) Batter hits ball to shortstop who throws wild into stand (ball is dead)—batter-runner misses first base but is awarded second base on the overthrow. Even though the umpire has awarded the runner second base on the overthrow, the runner must touch first base before he proceeds to second base. These are appeal plays.

(3) He overruns or over slides first base and fails to return to the base immediately, and he or the base is tagged;

(4) He fails to touch home base and makes no attempt to return to that base, and home base is tagged.

Any appeal under this rule must be made before the next pitch, or any play or attempted play. If the violation occurs during a play which ends a half-inning, the appeal must be made before the defensive team leaves the field. An appeal is not to be interpreted as a play or an attempted play. Successive appeals may not be made on a runner at the same base. If the defensive team on its first appeal errs, a request for a second appeal on the same runner at the same base shall not be allowed by the umpire. (Intended meaning of the word "err" is that the defensive team in making an appeal threw the ball out of play. For example, if the pitcher threw to first base to appeal and threw the ball into the stands, no second appeal would be allowed.) Appeal plays may require an umpire to recognize an apparent "fourth out." If the third out is made during a play in which an appeal play is sustained on another runner, the appeal play decision takes precedence in determining the out. If there is more than one appeal during a play that ends a half-inning, the defense may elect to take

the out that gives it the advantage. For the purpose of this rule, the defensive team has "left the field" when the pitcher and all infielders have left fair territory on their way to the bench or clubhouse.

Rule 5.09(c) Comment (Rule 7.10 Comment): If two runners arrive at home base about the same time and the first runner misses home plate but a second runner legally touches the plate, the runner is tagged out on his attempt to come back and touch the base or is called out, on appeal, then he shall be considered as having been put out before the second runner scored and being the third out. Second runner's run shall not count, as provided in Rule 5.09(d) (Rule 7.12). If a pitcher balks when making an appeal, such act shall be a play. An appeal should be clearly intended as an appeal, either by a verbal request by the player or an act that unmistakably indicates an appeal to the umpire. A player, inadvertently stepping on the base with a ball in his hand, would not constitute an appeal. Time is not out when an appeal is being made. (d) (7.12) Effect of Preceding Runner's Failure to Touch a Base

Unless two are out, the status of a following runner is not affected by a preceding runner's failure to touch or retouch a base. If, upon appeal, the preceding runner is the third out, no runners following

him shall score. If such third out is the result of a force play, neither preceding nor following runners shall score.

(e) (5.07) Retiring the Side

When three offensive players are legally put out, that team takes the field and the opposing team becomes the offensive team.

#### **5.10 Substitutions and Pitching Changes**

(Including Visits to the Mound)

(a) (3.03) A player, or players, may be substituted during a game at any time the ball is dead. A substitute player shall bat in the replaced player's position in the team's batting order.

(b) (3.06) The manager shall immediately notify the umpire-in-chief of any substitution and shall state to the umpire-in-chief the substitute's place in the batting order.

Rule 5.10(b) Comment (Rule 3.06 Comment): To avoid any confusion, the manager should give the name of the substitute, his position in the batting order and his position on the field. When two or more substitute players of the defensive team enter the game at the same time, the manager shall, immediately before they take their positions as fielders, designate to the umpire-in-chief such players' positions in the team's batting order, and the umpire-in-chief shall so notify the official scorer. If this information is not immediately given to the umpire-in-chief, the umpire-in-chief shall have authority to designate the substitutes' places in the batting order. If a double-switch is being made, the manager or coach shall first notify the plate umpire. The umpire-in-chief must be informed of the multiple substitutions and interchanged batting order before the manager calls for a new pitcher (regardless of whether the manager or coach announces the double-switch before crossing the foul line). Signaling or motioning to the bullpen is to be considered an official substitution for the new pitcher. It is not permissible for the manager to go to the mound, call for a new pitcher, and then inform the umpire of multiple substitutions with the intention of interchanging the batting order.

Players for whom substitutions have been made may remain with their team on the bench or may "warm-up" pitchers. If a manager substitutes another player for himself, he may continue to direct his team from the bench or the coach's box. Umpires should not permit players for whom substitutes have been made, and who are permitted to remain on the bench, to address any remarks to any opposing player or manager, or to the umpires.

(c) (3.07) The umpire-in-chief, after having been notified, shall immediately announce, or cause to be announced, each substitution.

(d) (3.03) A player once removed from a game shall not re-enter that game. If a player who has been substituted for attempts to re-enter, or re-enters, the game in any capacity, the umpire-in-chief shall direct the player's manager to remove such player from the game immediately upon noticing the player's presence or upon being informed of the player's improper presence by another umpire or by either manager. If such direction to remove the substituted for player occurs before play commences with the substituted-for player improperly in the game, then the substitute player may enter the game. If such direction to remove the substituted-for player occurs after play has commenced with the substituted-for player in the game, then the substitute player shall be deemed to have been removed from the game (in addition to the removal of the substituted-for player) and shall not enter the game. If a substitute enters the game in place of a player-manager, the manager may thereafter go to the coaching lines at his discretion. When two or more substitute players of the defensive team enter the game at the same time, the manager shall, immediately before they take their positions as fielders, designate to the umpire-in-chief such players' positions in the team's batting order and the umpire-in-chief shall so notify the official scorer. If this information is not immediately given to the umpire-in-chief, he shall have authority to designate the substitutes' places in the batting order.

Rule 5.10(d) Comment (Rule 3.03 Comment): A pitcher may change to another position only once during the same inning; e.g. the pitcher will not be allowed to assume a position other than a pitcher more than once in the same inning. Any player other than a pitcher substituted for an injured player shall be allowed five warm-up throws. (See Rule 5.07(b) (Rule 8.03) for pitchers.) Any play that occurs while a player appears in a game after having been substituted for shall count. If, in an umpire's judgment, the player re-entered the game knowing that he had been removed, the umpire may eject the manager. (e) (3.04) A player whose name is on his team's batting order may not become a substitute runner for another member of his team. Rule 5.10(e) Comment (3.04 Comment): This rule is intended to eliminate the practice of using so-called courtesy runners. No player in the game shall be permitted to act as a courtesy runner for a teammate. No player who has been in the game and has been taken out for a substitute shall return as a courtesy runner. Any player not in the lineup, if used as a runner, shall be considered as a substitute player. (f) (3.05(a)) The pitcher named in the batting order handed the umpire-in-chief, as provided in Rules 4.02(a) and 4.02(b)

(Rules 4.01(a) and 4.01(b)), shall pitch to the first batter or any substitute batter until such batter is put out or reaches first base, unless the pitcher sustains injury or illness which, in the judgment of the umpire-in-chief, incapacitates him from pitching. (g) (3.05(b)) If the pitcher is replaced, the substitute pitcher shall pitch to the batter then at bat, or any substitute batter, until such batter is put out or reaches first base, or until the offensive team is put out, unless the substitute pitcher sustains injury or illness which, in

the umpire-in-chief's judgment, incapacitates him for further play as a pitcher. (h) (3.05(c)) If an improper substitution is made for the pitcher, the umpire shall direct the proper pitcher to return to the game until the provisions of this rule are fulfilled. If the improper pitcher is permitted to pitch, any play that results is legal. The improper pitcher becomes the proper pitcher as soon as he makes his first pitch to the batter, or as soon as any runner is put out.

Rule 5.10(h) Comment (Rule 3.05(c) Comment): If a manager attempts to remove a pitcher in violation of Rule 5.10(h) (Rule 3.05(c)) the umpire shall notify the manager of the offending club that it cannot be done. If, by chance, the umpire-in-chief has, through oversight, announced the incoming improper pitcher, he should still correct the situation before the improper pitcher pitches. Once the improper pitcher delivers a pitch he becomes the proper pitcher. (i) (3.05(d)) If a pitcher who is already in the game crosses the foul line on his way to take his place on the pitcher's plate to start an inning, he shall pitch to the first batter until such batter is put out or reaches first base, unless the batter is substituted for, or the pitcher sustains an injury or illness which, in the judgment of the umpire-in-chief, incapacitates him from pitching. If the pitcher ends the previous inning on base or at bat and does not return to the dugout after the inning is completed, the pitcher is not required to pitch to the first batter of the inning until he makes contact with the pitcher's plate to begin his warm-up pitches. (j) (3.08(a)) If no announcement of a substitution is made, the substitute shall be considered as having entered the game when: (1) If a pitcher, he takes his place on the pitcher's plate; (2) If a batter, he takes his place in the batter's box; (3) If a fielder, he reaches the position usually occupied by the fielder he has replaced, and play commences; (4) If a runner, he takes the place of the runner he has replaced.

(3.08(b)) Any play made by, or on, any of the above mentioned unannounced substitutes shall be legal. (k) (3.17) Players and substitutes of both teams shall confine themselves to their team's benches unless actually participating in the play or preparing to enter the game, or coaching at first or third base. No one except players, substitutes, managers, coaches, trainers and bat boys shall occupy a bench during a game.

PENALTY: For violation the umpire may, after warning, remove the offender from the field.

Rule 5.10(k) Comment (Rule 3.17 Comment): Players on the disabled list are permitted to participate in pre-game activity and sit on the bench during a game but may not take part in any activity during the game such as warming up a pitcher, bench jockeying, etc. Disabled players are not allowed to enter the playing surface at any time or for any purpose during the game. (l)

(8.06) Visits to the Mound A professional league shall adopt the following rule pertaining to the visit of the manager or coach to the pitcher:

- (1) This rule limits the number of trips a manager or coach may make to any one pitcher in any one inning;
- (2) A second trip to the same pitcher in the same inning will cause this pitcher's automatic removal from the game;
- (3) The manager or coach is prohibited from making a second visit to the mound while the same batter is at bat, but
- (4) if a pinch-hitter is substituted for this batter, the manager or coach may make a second visit to the mound, but must remove the pitcher from the game. A manager or coach is considered to have concluded his visit to the mound when he leaves the 18-foot circle surrounding the pitcher's rubber.

Rule 5.10(l) Comment (Rule 8.06 Comment): If the manager or coach goes to the catcher or infielder and that player then goes to the mound or the pitcher comes to him at his position before there is an intervening play (a pitch or other play) that will be the same as the manager or coach going to the mound. Any attempt to evade or circumvent this rule by the manager or coach going to the catcher or an infielder and then that player going to the mound to confer with the pitcher shall constitute a trip to the mound. If the coach goes to the mound and removes a pitcher and then the manager goes to the mound to talk with the new pitcher, that will constitute one trip to that new pitcher that inning. A manager or coach shall not be considered to have concluded his visit to the mound if he temporarily leaves the 18-foot circle surrounding the pitcher's rubber for purposes of notifying the umpire that a double-switch or substitution is being made. In a case where a manager has made his first trip to the mound and then returns the second time to the mound in the same inning with the same pitcher in the game and the same batter at bat, after being warned by the umpire that he cannot return to the mound, the manager shall be removed from the game and the pitcher required to pitch to the batter until he is retired or gets on base. After the batter is retired, or becomes a base runner, then this pitcher must be removed from the game. The manager should be notified that his pitcher will be removed from the game after he pitches to one hitter, so he can have a substitute pitcher warmed up. The substitute pitcher will be allowed eight preparatory pitches or more if in the umpire's judgment circumstances justify.

### 5.11 (6.10) Designated Hitter Rule

Any League may elect to use Rule 5.11(a) (Rule 6.10(b)), which shall be called the Designated Hitter Rule.

(a) (6.10(b)) The Designated Hitter Rule provides as follows:

(1) A hitter may be designated to bat for the starting pitcher and all subsequent pitchers in any game without otherwise affecting the status of the pitcher(s) in the game. A Designated Hitter for the pitcher, if any, must be selected prior to the game and must be included in the lineup cards presented to the Umpire-in-Chief. If a manager lists 10 players in his team's lineup card, but fails to indicate one as the Designated Hitter, and an umpire or either manager (or designee of either manager who presents his team's lineup card) notices the error before the umpire-in-chief calls "Play" to start the game, the umpire-in-chief shall direct the manager who had made the omission to designate which of the nine players, other than the pitcher, will be the Designated Hitter.

Rule 5.11(a)(1) Comment (Rule 6.10(b)(1) Comment): A correction of a failure to indicate a Designated Hitter when 10 players are listed in a batting order is an "obvious" error that may be corrected before a game starts. See Rule 4.02 Comment (Rule 4.01 Comment).

(2) The Designated Hitter named in the starting lineup must come to bat at least one time, unless the opposing club changes pitchers.

(3) It is not mandatory that a club designate a hitter for the pitcher, but failure to do so prior to the game precludes the use of a Designated Hitter for that club for that game. (4) Pinch-hitters for a Designated Hitter may be used. Any substitute hitter for a Designated Hitter becomes the Designated Hitter. A replaced Designated Hitter shall not re-enter the game in any capacity.

(5) The Designated Hitter may be used on defense, continuing to bat in the same position in the batting order, but the pitcher must then bat in the place of the substituted defensive player, unless more than one substitution is made, and the manager then must designate their spots in the batting order.

(6) A runner may be substituted for the Designated Hitter and the runner assumes the role of Designated Hitter. A Designated Hitter may not pinch-run.

(7) A Designated Hitter is "locked" into the batting order. No multiple substitutions may be made that will alter the batting rotation of the Designated Hitter.

(8) Once the game pitcher is switched from the mound to a position on defense, such move shall terminate the Designated Hitter role for that club for the remainder of the game.

(9) Once a pinch-hitter bats for any player in the batting order and then enters the game to pitch, such move shall terminate the Designated Hitter role for that club for the remainder of the game.

(10) Once the game pitcher bats or runs for the Designated Hitter, such move shall terminate the Designated Hitter role for that club for the remainder of the game. The game pitcher may pinch-hit or pinch-run only for the Designated Hitter.

(11) If a manager lists 10 players in his team's lineup card, but fails to indicate one as the Designated Hitter, and the opposing manager brings the failure to list a Designated Hitter to the attention of the umpire-in-chief after the game starts, then (A) the pitcher will be required to bat in the batting order in the place of the listed player who has not assumed a position on defense, if the team has taken the field on defense, or (B) if the team has not yet taken the field on defense, the pitcher will be placed in the batting order in place of any player, as chosen by the manager of that team.

In either case, the player whom the pitcher replaces in the batting order shall be considered to have been substituted for and is removed from the game and the Designated Hitter role for that club shall be terminated for the remainder of the game. Any play that occurred before the violation is brought to the attention of the umpire-in-chief shall count, subject to Rule 6.03(b) (Rule 6.07) (Batting Out of Turn).

(12) Once a Designated Hitter assumes a position on defense, such move shall terminate the Designated Hitter role for that club for the remainder of the game.

(13) A substitute for the Designated Hitter need not be announced until it is the Designated Hitter's turn to bat.

(14) If a player on defense goes to the mound (i.e., replaces the pitcher), this move shall terminate the Designated Hitter's role for that club for the remainder of the game.

(15) The Designated Hitter may not sit in the bullpen unless serving as a catcher in the bullpen. (b) (6.10(a)) In the event of inter-league competition between clubs of leagues using the Designated Hitter Rule and clubs of leagues not using the Designated Hitter Rule, the rule will be used as follows:

(a) (3.12) When an umpire suspends play, he shall call "Time." At the umpire-in-chief's call of "Play," the suspension is lifted and play resumes. Between the call of "Time" and the call of "Play" the ball is dead. (b) (5.10) The ball becomes dead when an umpire calls "Time." The umpire-in-chief shall call "Time":

(1) When in his judgment weather, darkness or similar conditions make immediate further play impossible;

(2) When light failure makes it difficult or impossible for the umpires to follow the play; NOTE: A league may adopt its own regulations governing games interrupted by light failure.

(3) When an accident incapacitates a player or an umpire; (A) If an accident to a runner is such as to prevent him from proceeding to a base to which he is entitled, as on a home run hit out of the playing field, or an award of one or more bases, a substitute runner shall be permitted to complete the play.

- (4) When a manager requests "Time" for a substitution, or for a conference with one of his players.
- (5) When the umpire wishes to examine the ball, to consult with either manager, or for any similar cause.
- (6) When a fielder, after catching a fly ball, falls into a bench or stand, or falls across ropes into a crowd when spectators are on the field. As pertains to runners, the provisions of Rule 5.06(b)(3)(C) (Rule 7.04(c)) shall prevail. If a fielder after making a catch steps into a bench, but does not fall, the ball is in play and runners may advance at their own peril.
- (7) When an umpire orders a player or any other person removed from the playing field.
- (8) Except in the cases stated in paragraphs (2) and (3)(A) of this rule, no umpire shall call "Time" while a play is in progress.

(5.11) After the ball is dead, play shall be resumed when the pitcher takes his place on the pitcher's plate with a new ball or the same ball in his possession and the plate umpire calls "Play." The plate umpire shall call "Play" as soon as the pitcher takes his place on his plate with the ball in his possession.

## **6.00 – IMPROPER PLAY, ILLEGAL ACTION, AND MISCONDUCT**

### **6.01 Interference, Obstruction, and Catcher Collisions**

(a) (7.09) Batter or Runner Interference It is interference by a batter or a runner when:

- (1) After a third strike he clearly hinders the catcher in his attempt to field the ball. Such batter-runner is out, the ball is dead, and all other runners return to the bases they occupied at the time of the pitch; Rule 6.01(a)(1) Comment (Rule 7.09(a) Comment): If the pitched ball deflects off the catcher or umpire and subsequently touches the batter-runner, it is not considered interference unless, in the judgment of the umpire, the batter-runner clearly hinders the catcher in his attempt to field the ball.
- (2) He intentionally deflects the course of a foul ball in any manner;
- (3) Before two are out and a runner on third base, the batter hinders a fielder in making a play at home base; the runner is out;
- (4) Any member or members of the offensive team stand or gather around any base to which a runner is advancing, to confuse, hinder or add to the difficulty of the fielders. Such runner shall be declared out for the interference of his teammate or teammates;
- (5) Any batter or runner who has just been put out, or any runner who has just scored, hinders or impedes any following play being made on a runner. Such runner shall be declared out for the interference of his teammate; Rule 6.01(a)(5) Comment (Rule 7.09(e) Comment): If the batter or a runner continues to advance after he has been put out, he shall not by that act alone be considered as confusing, hindering or impeding the fielders.
- (6) If, in the judgment of the umpire, a base runner willfully and deliberately interferes with a batted ball or a fielder in the act of fielding a batted ball with the obvious intent to break up a double play, the ball is dead. The umpire shall call the runner out for interference and also call out the batter runner because of the action of his teammate. In no event may bases be run or runs scored because of such action by a runner;
- (7) If, in the judgment of the umpire, a batter-runner willfully and deliberately interferes with a batted ball or a fielder in the act of fielding a batted ball, with the obvious intent to break up a double play, the ball is dead; the umpire shall call the batter-runner out for interference and shall call out the runner who had advanced closest to the home plate regardless where the double play might have been possible. In no event shall bases be run because of such interference;
- (8) In the judgment of the umpire, the base coach at third base, or first base, by touching or holding the runner, physically assists him in returning to or leaving third base or first base;
- (9) With a runner on third base, the base coach leaves his box and acts in any manner to draw a throw by a fielder;
- (10) He fails to avoid a fielder who is attempting to field a batted ball, or intentionally interferes with a thrown ball, provided that if two or more fielders attempt to field a batted ball, and the runner comes in contact with one or more of them, the umpire shall determine which fielder is entitled to the benefit of this rule, and shall not declare the runner out for coming in contact with a fielder other than the one the umpire determines to be entitled to field such a ball. The umpire shall call the runner out in accordance with Rule 5.09(b)(3) (former Rule 7.08(b)). If the batter-runner is adjudged not to have hindered a fielder attempting to make a play on a batted ball, and if the base runner's interference is adjudged not to be intentional, the batter-runner shall be awarded first base; Rule 6.01(a)(10) Comment (Rule 7.09(j) Comment): When a catcher and batter-runner going to first base have contact when the catcher is fielding the ball, there is generally no violation and nothing should be called. "Obstruction" by a fielder attempting to field a ball should be called only in very flagrant and violent cases because the rules give him the right of way, but of course such "right of way" is not a license to, for example, intentionally trip a runner even though fielding the ball. If the catcher is fielding the ball and any fielder, including the pitcher, obstructs a runner going to first base, "obstruction" shall be called and the base runner awarded first base.
- (11) A fair ball touches him on fair territory before touching a fielder. If a fair ball goes through, or by, an infielder, and touches a runner immediately back of him, or touches the runner after having been deflected by a fielder, the umpire shall not declare the runner out for being touched by a batted ball. In making such decision the umpire must be convinced that the ball passed through, or by, the fielder, and that no other infielder had the chance to make a play on the ball. If, in the judgment of the umpire, the runner deliberately and intentionally kicks such a batted ball on which the infielder has missed a play, then the runner shall be called out for interference.

**PENALTY FOR INTERFERENCE:** The runner is out and the ball is dead. If the umpire declares the batter, batter-runner, or a runner out for interference, all other runners shall return to the last base that was in the judgment of the umpire, legally touched at the time of the interference, unless otherwise provided by these rules. (Definition of Terms (Interference))

In the event the batter-runner has not reached first base, all runners shall return to the base last occupied at the time of the pitch; provided, however, if during an intervening play at the plate with less than two outs a runner scores, and then the batter runner is called out for interference outside the three-foot lane, the runner is safe and the run shall count. (Definition of Terms (Interference) Comment)

Rule 6.01(a) Penalty for Interference Comment (Rule 7.08(b) Comment): A runner who is adjudged to have hindered a fielder who is attempting to make a play on a batted ball is out whether it was intentional or not.

If, however, the runner has contact with a legally occupied base when he hinders the fielder, he shall not be called out unless, in the umpire's judgment, such hindrance, whether it occurs on fair or foul territory, is intentional. If the umpire declares the hindrance intentional, the following penalty shall apply: With less than two out, the umpire shall declare both the runner and batter out. With two out, the umpire shall declare the batter out. If, in a run-down between third base and home plate, the succeeding runner has advanced and is standing on third base when the runner in a run-down is called out for offensive interference, the umpire shall send the runner standing on third base back to second base. This same principle applies if there is a run-down between second and third base and succeeding runner has reached second (the reasoning is that no runner shall advance on an interference play and a runner is considered to occupy a base until he legally has reached the next succeeding base).

(b) (7.11) Fielder Right of Way The players, coaches or any member of a team at bat shall vacate any space (including both dugouts or bullpens) needed by a fielder who is attempting to field a batted or thrown ball. If a member of the team at bat (other than a runner) hinders a fielder's attempt to catch or field a batted ball, the ball is dead, the batter is declared out and all runners return to the bases occupied at the time of the pitch. If a member of the team at bat (other than a runner) hinders a fielder's attempt to field a thrown ball, the ball is dead, the runner on whom the play is being made shall be declared out and all runners return to the last legally occupied base at the time of the interference.

Rule 6.01(b) Comment (Rule 2.00 (Interference)): Defensive interference is an act by a fielder that hinders or prevents a batter from hitting a pitch.

(c) Catcher Interference (6.08) The batter becomes a runner and is entitled to first base without liability to be put out (provided he advances to and touches first base) when the catcher or any fielder interferes with him. If a play follows the interference, the manager of the offense may advise the plate umpire that he elects to decline the interference penalty and accept the play. Such election shall be made immediately at the end of the play. However, if the batter reaches first base on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batsman, or otherwise, and all other runners advance at least one base, the play proceeds without reference to the interference.

Rule 6.01(c) Comment (Rule 6.08(c) Comment): If catcher's interference is called with a play in progress the umpire will allow the play to continue because the manager may elect to take the play. If the batter-runner missed first base, or a runner misses his next base, he shall be considered as having reached the base, as stated in Note of Rule 5.06(b)(3)(D) (Rule 7.04(d)). Examples of plays the manager might elect to take:

1. Runner on third, one out, batter hits fly ball to the outfield on which the runner scores but catcher's interference was called. The offensive manager may elect to take the run and have batter called out or have runner remain at third and batter awarded first base.
2. Runner on second base. Catcher interferes with batter. As he bunts ball fairly sending runner to third base. The manager may rather have runner on third base with an out on the play than have runners on second and first. If a runner is trying to score by a steal or squeeze from third base, note the additional penalty set forth in Rule 6.01(g) (Rule 7.07). If the catcher interferes with the batter before the pitcher delivers the ball, it shall not be considered interference on the batter under Rule 5.05(b)(3) (Rule 6.08(c)). In such cases, the umpire shall call "Time" and the pitcher and batter start over from "scratch."

(d) (3.15) Unintentional Interference

In case of unintentional interference with play by any person herein authorized to be on the playing field (except members of the team at bat who are participating in the game, or a base coach, any of whom interfere with a fielder attempting to field a batted or thrown ball; or an umpire) the ball is alive and in play. If the interference is intentional, the ball shall be dead at the moment of the interference and the umpire shall impose such penalties as in his opinion will nullify the act of interference.

Rule 6.01(d) Comment (Rule 3.15 Comment): For interference with a fielder attempting to field a batted or thrown ball by members of the team at bat or base coaches, who are excepted in Rule 6.01(d) (Rule 3.15), see Rule 6.01(b) (Rule 7.11). See also Rules 5.06 (c)(2), 5.06 (c)(6) and 5.05(b)(4) ( Rules 5.09 ( b ) ) , 5.09 ( f ) and 6.08(d)), which cover interference by an umpire, and Rule 5.09(b)(3) (Rule 7.08(b)), which covers interference by a runner. The question of intentional or unintentional interference shall be decided on the basis of the person's action. For example: a bat boy, ball attendant, policeman, etc., who tries to avoid being touched by a thrown or batted ball but still is touched by the ball would be involved in unintentional interference. If, however, he kicks the ball or picks it up or pushes it, that is considered intentional interference, regardless of what his thought may have been.

PLAY: Batter hits ball to shortstop, who fields ball but throws wild past first baseman. The coach at first base, to avoid being hit by the ball, falls to the ground and the first baseman on his way to retrieve the wild thrown ball, runs into the coach. The batter-runner finally ends up on third base. Whether the umpire should call interference on the part of the coach is up to the judgment of the umpire and if the umpire felt that the coach did all he could to avoid interfering with the play, no interference need be called. If, in the judgment of the umpire, the coach was attempting to make it appear that he was trying not to interfere, the umpire should rule interference.

(e) (3.16) Spectator Interference

When there is spectator interference with any thrown or batted ball, the ball shall be dead at the moment of interference and the umpire shall impose such penalties as in his opinion will nullify the act of interference.

APPROVED RULING: If spectator interference clearly prevents a fielder from catching a fly ball, the umpire shall declare the batter out.

Rule 6.01(e) Comment (Rule 3.16 Comment): There is a difference between a ball which has been thrown or batted into the stands, touching a spectator thereby being out of play even though it rebounds onto the field and a spectator going onto the field or reaching over, under or through a barrier and touching a ball in play or touching or otherwise interfering with a player. In the latter case it is clearly intentional and shall be dealt with as intentional interference as in Rule 6.01 (d) (Rule 3.15). Batter and runners shall be placed where in the umpire's judgment they would have been had the interference not occurred.

No interference shall be allowed when a fielder reaches over a fence, railing, rope or into a stand to catch a ball. He does so at his own risk. However, should a spectator reach out on the playing field side of such fence, railing or rope, and plainly prevent the fielder from catching the ball, then the batsman should be called out for the spectator's interference.

EXAMPLE: Runner on third base, one out and a batter hits a fly ball deep to the outfield (fair or foul). Spectator clearly interferes with the outfielder attempting to catch the fly ball. Umpire calls the batter out for spectator interference. Ball is dead at the time of the call. Umpire decides that because of the distance the ball was hit, the runner on third base would have scored after the catch if the fielder had caught the ball which was interfered with, therefore, the runner is permitted to score. This might not be the case if such fly ball was interfered with a short distance from home plate.

(f) (5.08) Coach and Umpire Interference

If a thrown ball accidentally touches a base coach, or a pitched or thrown ball touches an umpire, the ball is alive and in play. However, if the coach interferes with a thrown ball, the runner is out. Rule 6.01(f) Comment (Rule 2.00 ( Interference)(c) ) and Comment: Umpire's interference occurs (1) when a plate umpire hinders, impedes or prevents a catcher's throw attempting to prevent a stolen base or retire a runner on a pick-off play; or (2) when a fair ball touches an umpire on fair territory before passing a fielder. Umpire interference may also occur when an umpire interferes with a catcher returning the ball to the pitcher.

(g)(7.07) Interference With Squeeze Play or Steal of Home

If, with a runner on third base and trying to score by means of a squeeze play or a steal, the catcher or any other fielder steps on, or in front of home base without possession of the ball, or touches the batter or his bat, the pitcher shall be charged with a balk, the batter shall be awarded first base on the interference and the ball is dead.

(h)(7.06) Obstruction

When obstruction occurs, the umpire shall call or signal "Obstruction."

(1) If a play is being made on the obstructed runner, or if the batter-runner is obstructed before he touches first base, the ball is dead and all runners shall advance, without liability to be put out, to the bases they would have reached, in the umpire's judgment, if there had been no obstruction. The obstructed runner shall be awarded at least one base beyond the base he had last legally touched before the obstruction. Any preceding runners, forced to advance by the award of bases as the penalty for obstruction, shall advance without liability to be put out.

Rule 6.01(h)(1) Comment (Rule 7.06 (a) Comment): When a play is being made on an obstructed runner, the umpire shall signal obstruction in the same manner that he calls "Time," with both hands overhead. The ball is immediately dead when this signal is given; however, should a thrown ball be in flight before the obstruction is called by the umpire, the runners are to be awarded such bases on wild throws as they would have been awarded had not obstruction occurred. On a play where a runner was trapped between second and third and obstructed by the third baseman going into third base while the throw is in flight from the shortstop, if such throw goes into the dugout the obstructed runner is to be awarded home base. Any other runners on base in this situation would also be awarded two bases from the base they last legally touched before obstruction was called.

(2) If no play is being made on the obstructed runner, the play shall proceed until no further action is possible. The umpire shall then call "Time" and impose such penalties, if any, as in his judgment will nullify the act of obstruction. Rule 6.01(h)(2) Comment (Rule 7.06(b) Comment): Under Rule 6.01(h)(2) ( Rule 7.06(b) ) when the ball is not dead on obstruction and an obstructed runner advances beyond the base which, in the umpire's judgment, he would have been awarded because of being obstructed, he does so at his own peril and may be tagged out. This is a judgment call.

NOTE: The catcher, without the ball in his possession, has no right to block the pathway of the runner attempting to score. The base line belongs to the runner and the catcher should be there only when he is fielding a ball or when he already has the ball in his hand.

**Rule 6.01(h) Comment (Rule 2.00 (Obstruction) Comment):**

If a fielder is about to receive a thrown ball and if the ball is in flight directly toward and near enough to the fielder so he must occupy his position to receive the ball he may be considered "in the act of fielding a ball." It is entirely up to the judgment of the umpire as to whether a fielder is in the act of fielding a ball. After a fielder has made an attempt to field a ball and missed, he can no longer be in the "act of fielding" the ball.

For example: An infielder dives at a ground ball and the ball passes him and he continues to lie on the ground and delays the progress of the runner, he very likely has obstructed the runner.

**(7.13) COLLISIONS AT HOME PLATE.**

(1) A runner attempting to score may not deviate from his direct pathway to the plate in order to initiate contact with the catcher (or other player covering home plate), or otherwise initiate an avoidable collision. If, in the judgment of the umpire, a runner attempting to score initiates contact with the catcher (or other player covering home plate) in such a manner, the umpire shall declare the runner out (regardless of whether the player covering home plate maintains possession of the ball). In such circumstances, the umpire shall call the ball dead, and all other base runners shall return to the last base touched at the time of the collision. If the runner slides into the plate in an appropriate manner, he shall not be adjudged to have violated Rule 6.01(i) (Rule 7.13).

Rule 6.01(i)(1) Comment (Rule 7.13(1) Comment): The failure by the runner to make an effort to touch the plate, the runner's lowering of the shoulder, or the runner's pushing through with his hands, elbows or arms, would support a determination that the runner deviated from the pathway in order to initiate contact with the catcher in violation of Rule 6.01(i) (Rule 7.13), or otherwise initiated a collision that could have been avoided. A slide shall be deemed appropriate, in the case of a feet first slide, if the runner's buttocks and legs should hit the ground before contact with the catcher. In the case of a head first slide, a runner shall be deemed to have slid appropriately if his body should hit the ground before contact with the catcher. If a catcher blocks the pathway of the runner, the umpire shall not find that the runner initiated an avoidable collision in violation of this Rule 6.01(i)(1) (Rule 7.13(1)).

(2) Unless the catcher is in possession of the ball, the catcher cannot block the pathway of the runner as he is attempting to score. If, in the judgment of the umpire, the catcher without possession of the ball blocks the pathway of the runner, the umpire shall call or signal the runner safe. Notwithstanding the above, it shall not be considered a violation of this Rule 6.01(i)(2) (Rule 7.13(2)) if the catcher blocks the pathway of the runner in a legitimate attempt to field the throw (e.g., in reaction to the direction, trajectory or the hop of the incoming throw, or in reaction to a throw that originates from a pitcher or drawn-in infielder). In addition, a catcher without possession of the ball shall not be adjudged to violate this Rule 6.01(i)(2) (Rule 7.13(2)) if the runner could have avoided the collision with the catcher (or other player covering home plate) by sliding.

Rule 6.01(i)(2) Comment (Rule 7.13(2) Comment): A catcher shall not be deemed to have violated Rule 6.01(i)(2) (Rule 7.13(2)) unless he has both blocked the plate without possession of the ball (or when not in a legitimate attempt to field the throw), and also hindered or impeded the progress of the runner attempting to score. A catcher shall not be deemed to have hindered or impeded the progress of the runner if, in the judgment of the umpire, the runner would have been called out notwithstanding the catcher having

blocked the plate. In addition, a catcher should use best efforts to avoid unnecessary and forcible contact while tagging a runner attempting to slide. Catchers who routinely make unnecessary and forcible contact with a runner attempting to slide (e.g., by initiating contact using a knee, shin guard, elbow or forearm) may be subject to discipline by the League President.

This Rule 6.01(i)(2) (Rule 7.13(2)) shall not apply to force plays at home plate.

6.02 (5.07)(f), (g), (i), (j) Pitcher Illegal Action

**(a) (8.05) Balks**

If there is a runner, or runners, it is a balk when:

- (1) The pitcher, while touching his plate, makes any motion naturally associated with his pitch and fails to make such delivery; Rule 6.02(a)(1) Comment (Rule 8.05(a) Comment): If a lefthanded or right-handed pitcher swings his free foot past the back edge of the pitcher's rubber, he is required to pitch to the batter except to throw to second base on a pick-off play.
- (2) The pitcher, while touching his plate, feints a throw to first or third base and fails to complete the throw;
- (3) The pitcher, while touching his plate, fails to step directly toward a base before throwing to that base; Rule 6.02(a)(3) Comment (Rule 8.05(c) Comment): Requires the pitcher, while touching his plate, to step directly toward a base before throwing to that base. If a pitcher turns or spins off of his free foot without actually stepping or if he turns his body and throws before stepping, it is a balk. A pitcher is to step directly toward a base before throwing to that base and is required to throw (except to second base) because he steps. It is a balk if, with runners on first and third, the pitcher steps toward third and does not throw, merely to bluff the runner back to third; then seeing the runner on first start for second, turn and step toward and throw to first base. It is legal for a pitcher to feint a throw to second base.
- (4) The pitcher, while touching his plate, throws, or feints a throw to an unoccupied base, except for the purpose of making a play; Rule 6.02(a)(4) Comment (Rule 8.05(d) Comment): When determining whether the pitcher throws or feints a throw to an unoccupied base for the purpose of making a play, the umpire should consider whether a runner on the previous base demonstrates or otherwise creates an impression of his intent to advance to such unoccupied base.
- (5) The pitcher makes an illegal pitch; Rule 6.02(a)(5) Comment (Rule 8.05(e) Comment): A quick pitch is an illegal pitch. Umpires will judge a quick pitch as one delivered before the batter is reasonably set in the batter's box. With runners on base the penalty is a balk; with no runners on base, it is a ball. The quick pitch is dangerous and should not be permitted.
- (6) The pitcher delivers the ball to the batter while he is not facing the batter;
- (7) The pitcher makes any motion naturally associated with his pitch while he is not touching the pitcher's plate;
- (8) The pitcher unnecessarily delays the game; Rule 6.02(a)(8) Comment (Rule 8.05(h) Comment): Rule 6.02(a)(8) (Rule 8.05(h)) shall not apply when a warning is given pursuant to Rule 6.02(c)(8) (Rule 8.02(c)) (which prohibits intentional delay of a game by throwing to fielders not in an attempt to put a runner out). If a pitcher is ejected pursuant to Rule 6.02(c)(8) (Rule 8.02(c)) for continuing to delay the game, the penalty in Rule 6.02(a)(8) (Rule 8.05(h)) shall also apply. Rule 5.07(c) (Rule 8.04) (which sets a time limit for a pitcher to deliver the ball when the bases are unoccupied) applies only when there are no runners on base.
- (9) The pitcher, without having the ball, stands on or astride the pitcher's plate or while off the plate, he feints a pitch;
- (10) The pitcher, after coming to a legal pitching position, removes one hand from the ball other than in an actual pitch, or in throwing to a base;
- (11) The pitcher, while touching his plate, accidentally or intentionally has the ball slip or fall out of his hand or glove;
- (12) The pitcher, while giving an intentional base on balls, pitches when the catcher is not in the catcher's box;
- (13) The pitcher delivers the pitch from Set Position without coming to a stop.

**PENALTY:** The ball is dead, and each runner shall advance one base without liability to be put out, unless the batter reaches first on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batter, or otherwise, and all other runners advance at least one base, in which case the play proceeds without reference to the balk.

**APPROVED RULING:** In cases where a pitcher balks and throws wild, either to a base or to home plate, a runner or runners may advance beyond the base to which he is entitled at his own risk.

**APPROVED RULING:** A runner who misses the first base to which he is advancing and who is called out on appeal shall be considered as having advanced one base for the purpose of this rule.

Rule 6.02(a)

Comment (Rule 8.05 Comment): Umpires should bear in mind that the purpose of the balk rule is to prevent the pitcher from deliberately deceiving the base runner. If there is doubt in the umpire's mind, the "intent" of the pitcher should govern. However, certain specifics should be borne in mind:

(A) Straddling the pitcher's rubber without the ball is to be interpreted as intent to deceive and ruled a balk.

(B) With a runner on first base the pitcher may make a complete turn, without hesitating toward first, and throw to second. This is not to be interpreted as throwing to an unoccupied base.

(b)(8.01(d)) Illegal Pitches With Bases Unoccupied

If the pitcher makes an illegal pitch with the bases unoccupied, it shall be called a ball unless the batter reaches first base on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batter or otherwise.

Rule 6.02(b) Comment (Rule 8.01(d) Comment): A ball which slips out of a pitcher's hand and crosses the foul line shall be called a ball; otherwise it will be called no pitch. This would be a balk with men on base.

**(c) (8.02) Pitching Prohibitions**

The pitcher shall not:

- (1) While in the 18-foot circle surrounding the pitcher's plate, touch the ball after touching his mouth or lips, or touch his mouth or lips while he is in contact with the pitcher's plate. The pitcher must clearly wipe the fingers of his pitching hand dry before touching the ball or the pitcher's plate.  
**EXCEPTION:** Provided it is agreed to by both managers, the umpire prior to the start of a game played in cold weather, may permit the pitcher to blow on his hand.  
**PENALTY:** For violation of this part of this rule the umpires shall immediately remove the ball from play and issue a warning to the pitcher. Any subsequent violation shall be called a ball. However, if the pitch is made and a batter reaches first base on a hit, an error, a hit batsman or otherwise, and no other runner is put out before advancing at least one base, the play shall proceed without reference to the violation. Repeat offenders shall be subject to a fine by the League President.
- (2) expectorate on the ball, either hand or his glove;
- (3) rub the ball on his glove, person or clothing;
- (4) apply a foreign substance of any kind to the ball;
- (5) deface the ball in any manner; or
- (6) deliver a ball altered in a manner prescribed by Rule 6.02(c)(2) through (5) or what is called the "shine" ball, "spit" ball, "mud" ball or "emery" ball. The pitcher is allowed to rub the ball between his bare hands.
- (7) Have on his person, or in his possession, any foreign substance.  
Rule 6.02(c)(7) Comment (Rule 8.02(b) Comment): The pitcher may not attach anything to either hand, any finger or either wrist (e.g., Band-Aid, tape, Super Glue, bracelet, etc.). The umpire shall determine if such attachment is indeed a foreign substance for the purpose of Rule 6.02(c)(7) (Rule 8.02(b)), but in no case may the pitcher be allowed to pitch with such attachment to his hand, finger or wrist.
- (8) Intentionally delay the game by throwing the ball to players other than the catcher, when the batter is in position, except in an attempt to retire a runner.  
**PENALTY:** If, after warning by the umpire, such delaying action is repeated, the pitcher shall be removed from the game.
- (9) Intentionally Pitch at the Batter.

If, in the umpire's judgment, such a violation occurs, the umpire may elect either to:

(A) Expel the pitcher, or the manager and the pitcher, from the game, or

(B) may warn the pitcher and the manager of both teams that another such pitch will result in the

immediate expulsion of that pitcher (or a replacement) and the manager. If, in the umpire's judgment, circumstances warrant, both teams may be officially "warned" prior to

the game or at any time during the game.

(League Presidents may take additional action under authority provided in Rule 8.04 (Rule 9.05))

Rule 6.02(c)(9) Comment (Rule 8.02(d) Comment): Team personnel may not come onto the playing surface to argue or dispute a warning issued under Rule 6.02(c)(9) (Rule 8.02(d)). If a manager, coach or player leaves the dugout or his position to dispute a warning, he should be warned to stop. If he continues, he is subject to ejection. To pitch at a batter's head is unsportsmanlike and highly dangerous. It should be—and is—condemned by everybody. Umpires should act without hesitation in enforcement of this rule.

(d) PENALTY: For violation of any part of (c)(2) through (7):

(1) The pitcher shall be ejected immediately from the game and shall be suspended automatically. In National Association Leagues, the automatic suspension shall be for 10 games.

(2) If a play follows the violation called by the umpire, the manager of the team at bat may advise the umpire-in-chief that he elects to accept the play. Such election shall be made immediately at the end of the play. However, if the batter reaches first base on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batsman, or otherwise, and no other runner is put out before advancing at least one base, the play shall proceed without reference to the violation.

(3) Even though the team at bat elects to take the play, the violation shall be recognized and the penalties in subsection 1 will still be in effect.

(4) If the manager of the team at bat does not elect to accept the play, the umpire-in-chief shall call an automatic ball and, if there are any runners on base, a balk.

(5) The umpire shall be sole judge on whether any portion of this rule has been violated.

Rule 6.02(d)(1) through 6.02(d)(5) Comment (Rule 8.02(a)(2) through 8.02(a)(6) Comment): If a pitcher violates either Rule 6.02(c)(2) or Rule 6.02(c)(3) (Rule 8.02(a)(2) or Rule 8.02(a)(3)) and, in the judgment of the umpire, the pitcher did not intend, by his act, to alter the characteristics of a pitched ball, then the umpire may, in his discretion, warn the pitcher in lieu of applying the penalty set forth for violations of Rules 6.02(c)(2) through 6.02(c)(6) (Rules 8.02(a)(2) through 8.02(a)(6)). If the pitcher persists in violating either of those Rules, however, the umpire should then apply the penalty.

Rule 6.02(d) Comment (Rule 8.02(a) Comment): If at any time the ball hits the rosin bag it is in play. In the case of rain or wet field, the umpire may instruct the pitcher to carry the rosin bag in his hip pocket. A pitcher may use the rosin bag for the purpose of applying rosin to his bare hand or hands. Neither the pitcher nor any other player shall dust the ball with the rosin bag; neither shall the pitcher nor any other player be permitted to apply rosin from the bag to his glove or dust any part of his uniform with the rosin bag. (Rule 8.02(a) Comment)

### **6.03 Batter Illegal Action**

(a) (6.06) A batter is out for illegal action when:

(1) He hits a ball with one or both feet on the ground entirely outside the batter's box.

Rule 6.03(a)(1) Comment (Rule 6.06(a) Comment): If a batter hits a ball fair or foul while out of the batter's box, he shall be Rule 6.02 to 6.03 called out. Umpires should pay particular attention to the position of the batter's feet if he attempts to hit the ball while he is being intentionally passed. A batter cannot jump or step out of the batter's box and hit the ball.

(2) He steps from one batter's box to the other while the pitcher is in position ready to pitch;

(3) He interferes with the catcher's fielding or throwing by stepping out of the batter's box or making any other movement that hinders the catcher's play at home base.

EXCEPTION: Batter is not out if any runner attempting to advance is put out, or if runner trying to score is called out for batter's interference.

Rule 6.03(a)(3) Comment (Rule 6.06(c) Comment): If the batter interferes with the catcher, the plate umpire shall call "interference." The batter is out and the ball dead. No player may advance on such interference (offensive interference) and all runners must return to the last base that was, in the judgment of the umpire, legally touched at the time of the interference. If, however, the catcher makes a play and the runner attempting to advance is put out, it is to be assumed there was no actual interference and that runner is out—not the batter. Any other runners on the base at the time may advance as the ruling is that there is no actual interference if a runner is retired. In that case play proceeds just as if no violation had been called. If a batter strikes at a ball and misses and swings so hard he carries the bat all the way around and, in the umpire's judgment, unintentionally hits the catcher or the ball in back of him on the backswing, it shall be called a strike only (not interference). The ball will be dead, however, and no runner shall advance on the play.

(4) He uses or attempts to use a bat that, in the umpire's judgment, has been altered or tampered with in such a way to improve the distance factor or cause an unusual reaction on the baseball. This includes bats that are filled, flat-surfaced, nailed, hollowed, grooved or covered with a substance such as paraffin, wax, etc. No advancement on the bases will be allowed (except advancements that are not caused by the use of an illegal bat, e.g., stolen base, balk, wild pitch, passed ball), and any out or outs made during a play shall stand. In addition to being called out, the player shall be ejected from the game and may be subject to additional penalties as determined by his League President.

Rule 6.03(a)(4) Comment (Rule 6.06(d) Comment): A batter shall be deemed to have used or attempted to use an illegal bat if he brings such a bat into the batter's box.

### **(b) (6.07) Batting Out of Turn**

(1) A batter shall be called out, on appeal, when he fails to bat in his proper turn, and another batter completes a time at bat in his place.

(2) The proper batter may take his place in the batter's box at any time before the improper batter becomes a runner or is put out, and any balls and strikes shall be counted in the proper batter's time at bat.

(3) When an improper batter becomes a runner or is put out, and the defensive team appeals to the umpire before the first pitch to the next batter of either team, or before any play or attempted play, the umpire shall (1) declare the proper batter out; and (2) nullify any advance or score made because of a ball batted by the improper batter or because of the improper batter's advance to first base on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batter or otherwise.

(4) If a runner advances, while the improper batter is at bat, on a stolen base, balk, wild pitch or passed ball, such advance is legal.

(5) When an improper batter becomes a runner or is put out, and a pitch is made to the next batter of either team before an appeal is made, the improper batter thereby becomes the proper batter, and the results of his time at bat become legal.

(6) When the proper batter is called out because he has failed to bat in turn, the next batter shall be the batter whose name follows that of the proper batter thus called out.

(7) When an improper batter becomes a proper batter because no appeal is made before the next pitch, the next batter shall be the batter whose name follows that of such legalized improper batter. The instant an improper batter's actions are legalized, the batting order picks up with the name following that of the legalized improper batter.

Rule 6.03(b)(7) Comment (Rule 6.07 Comment): The umpire shall not direct the attention of any person to the presence in the batter's box of an improper batter. This rule is designed to require constant vigilance by the players and managers of both teams. There are two fundamentals to keep in mind: When a player bats out of turn, the proper batter is the player called out. If an improper batter bats and reaches base or is out and no appeal is made before a pitch to the next batter, or before any play or attempted play, that improper batter is considered to have batted in proper turn and establishes the order that is to follow.

APPROVED RULING: To illustrate various situations arising from batting out of turn, assume a first-inning batting order as follows:

Abel-Baker-Charles-Daniel-Edward-Frank-George-Hooker-Irwin.

PLAY (1) — Baker bats. With the count 2 balls and 1 strike, (a) the offensive team discovers the error or (b) the defensive team appeals. Ruling—In either case, Abel replaces Baker, with the count on him 2 balls and 1 strike.

PLAY (2) — Baker bats and doubles. The defensive team appeals (a) immediately or (b) after a pitch to Charles. RULING: (a) Abel is called out and Baker is the proper batter; (b) Baker stays on second and Charles is the proper batter.

PLAY (3) — Abel walks. Baker walks. Charles forces Baker. Edward bats in Daniel's turn. While Edward is at bat, Abel scores and Charles goes to second on a wild pitch. Edward grounds out, sending Charles to third. The defensive team appeals (a) immediately or (b) after a pitch to Daniel.

RULING: (a) Abel's run counts and Charles is entitled to second base since these advances were not made because of the improper batter batting a ball or advancing to first base. Charles must return to second base because his advance to third resulted from the improper batter batting a ball. Daniel is called out, and Edward is the proper batter; (b) Abel's run counts and Charles stays on third. The proper batter is Frank.

PLAY (4) —With the bases full and two out. Hooker bats in Frank's turn, and triples, scoring three runs. The defensive team appeals (a) immediately, or (b) after a pitch to George.

RULING: (a) Frank is called out and no runs score. George is the proper batter to lead off the second inning; (b) Hooker stays on third and three runs score. Irwin is the proper batter.

PLAY (5) —After Play (4)(b) above, George continues at bat. (a) Hooker is picked off third base for the third out, or (b) George flies out, and no appeal is made. Who is the



proper leadoff batter in the second inning?

RULING: (a) Irwin. He became the proper batter as soon as the first pitch to George legalized Hooker's triple; (b) Hooker. When no appeal was made, the first pitch to the leadoff batter of the opposing team legalized George's time at bat.

PLAY (6) — Daniel walks and Abel comes to bat. Daniel was an improper batter, and if an appeal is made before the first pitch to Abel, Abel is out, Daniel is removed from base, and Baker is the proper batter. There is no appeal, and a pitch is made to Abel. Daniel's walk is now legalized, and Edward thereby becomes the proper batter. Edward can replace Abel at any time before Abel is put out or becomes a runner. He does not do so. Abel flies out, and Baker comes to bat. Abel was an improper batter, and if an appeal is made before the first pitch to Baker, Edward is out, and the proper batter is Frank. There is no appeal, and a pitch is made to Baker. Abel's out is now legalized, and the proper batter is Baker. Baker walks. Charles is the proper batter. Charles flies out. Now Daniel is the proper batter, but he is on second base. Who is the proper batter?

RULING: The proper batter is Edward. When the proper batter is on base, he is passed over, and the following batter becomes the proper batter.

#### **6.04 (4.06) Unsportsmanlike Conduct**

(a) No manager, player, substitute, coach, trainer or batboy shall at any time, whether from the bench, the coach's box or on the playing field, or elsewhere:

- (1) Incite, or try to incite, by word or sign a demonstration by spectators;
- (2) Use language which will in any manner refer to or reflect upon opposing players, an umpire, or any spectator;
- (3) Call "Time," or employ any other word or phrase or commit any act while the ball is alive and in play for the obvious purpose of trying to make the pitcher commit a balk.
- (4) Make intentional contact with the umpire in any manner.

(b) (3.09) Players in uniform shall not address or mingle with spectator, nor sit in the stands before, during, or after a game. No manager, coach or player shall address any spectator before or during a game. Players of opposing teams shall not fraternize at any time while in uniform.

(c) No fielder shall take a position in the batter's line of vision, and with deliberate unsportsmanlike intent, act in a manner to distract the batter.

PENALTY: The offender shall be removed from the game and shall leave the playing field, and, if a balk is made, it shall be nullified.

(d) (4.07) When a manager, player, coach or trainer is ejected from a game, he shall leave the field immediately and take no further part in that game. He shall remain in the club house or change to street clothes and either leave the park or take a seat in the grandstand well removed from the vicinity of his team's bench or bullpen.

Rule 6.04 (d) Comment (Rule 4.07 Comment ): If a manager, coach or player is under suspension he may not be in the dugout or press box during the course of a game.

(e) (4.08) When the occupants of a player's bench show violent disapproval of an umpire's decision, the umpire shall first give warning that such disapproval shall cease.

PENALTY: [If such action continues] The umpire shall order the offenders from the bench to the club house. If he is unable to detect the offender, or offenders, he may clear the bench of all substitute players. The manager of the offending team shall have the privilege of recalling to the playing field only those players needed for substitution in the game.

#### **7.00 –ENDING THE GAME**

7.01 (4.10) Regulation Games (a) A regulation game consists of nine innings, unless extended because of a tie score, or shortened (1) because the home team needs none of its half of the ninth inning or only a fraction of it, or (2) because the umpire-in-chief calls the game.

EXCEPTION: National Association leagues may adopt a rule providing that one or both games of a doubleheader shall be seven innings in length. In such games, any of these rules applying to the ninth inning shall apply to the seventh inning.

(b) If the score is tied after nine completed innings play shall continue until (1) the visiting team has scored more total runs than the home team at the end of a completed inning, or (2) the home team scores the winning run in an uncompleted inning.

(c) If a game is called, it is a regulation game:

- (1) If five innings have been completed;
- (2) If the home team has scored more runs in four or four and a fraction half-innings than the visiting team has scored in five completed half-innings;
- (3) If the home team scores one or more runs in its half of the fifth inning to tie the score.

(d) If a regulation game is called with the score tied, it shall become a suspended game. See Rule 7.02 (Rule 4.12 ).

(e) If a game is called before it has become a regulation game, the umpire-in-chief shall declare it "No Game."

(f) A League President may determine whether rain checks will be honored for any regulation or suspended game that has progressed to or beyond a point of play described in Rule 7.01(c) (Rule 4.10(e)).

Rule 7.01 Comment (Rule 4.10 Comment ): The Major Leagues have determined that Rules 7.01(c) and 7.01(e) (Rules 4.10 (c) and 4.10 (e)) do not apply to any Wild Card, Division Series,

League Championship Series or World Series games or for any additional Major League championship season game played to break a tie.

(g) (4.11) The score of a regulation game is the total number of runs scored by each team at the moment the game ends.

- (1) The game ends when the visiting team completes its half of the ninth inning if the home team is ahead.
- (2) The game ends when the ninth inning is completed, if the visiting team is ahead.
- (3) If the home team scores the winning run in its half of the ninth inning (or its half of an extra inning after a tie), the game ends immediately when the winning run is scored.

EXCEPTION: If the last batter in a game hits a home run out of the playing field, the batter-runner and all runners on base are permitted to score, in accordance with the base-running rules, and the game ends when the batter-runner touches home plate.

APPROVED RULING: The batter hits a home run out of the playing field to win the game in the last half of the ninth or an extra inning, but is called out for passing a preceding runner. The game ends immediately when the winning run is scored, unless there are two out and the winning run has not yet reached home plate when the runner passes another, in which case the inning is over and only those runs that scored before the runner passes another shall count.

(4) A called game ends at the moment the umpire terminates play, unless it becomes a suspended game pursuant to (Rule 7.02(a) (Rule 4.12 (a))).

#### **7.02 (4.12) Suspended Games**

(a) A game shall become a suspended game that must be completed at a future date if the game is terminated for any of the following reasons:

- (1) A curfew imposed by law;
- (2) A time limit permissible under league rules;
- (3) Light failure, malfunction of, or unintentional operator error in employing, a mechanical or field device or equipment under the control of the home club (e.g., a retractable roof, a tarpaulin, or other water removal equipment);
- (4) Darkness, when a law prevents the lights from being turned on;
- (5) Weather, if a regulation game is called while an inning is in progress and before the inning is completed, and the visiting team has scored one or more runs to take the lead, and the home team has not retaken the lead; or
- (6) It is a regulation game that is called with the score tied; National Association Leagues may also adopt the following rules for suspended games. (If adopted by a National Association League, Rule 7.01(e) ( Rule 4.10 (e)) would not apply to their games.);
- (7) The game has not become a regulation game (4½ innings with the home team ahead, or 5 innings with the visiting club ahead or tied);
- (8) If a game is suspended before it becomes a regulation game, and is continued prior to another regularly scheduled game, the regularly scheduled game shall be seven innings in length. See the exception described in Rule

7.01(a) (Rule 4.10(a));

(9) If a game is suspended after it is a regulation game, and is continued prior to another regularly scheduled game, the regularly scheduled game shall be a nine-inning game.

NOTE: Weather and similar conditions—Rules 7.02(a)(1) through 7.02(a)(5) (Rules 4.12(a)(1) through 4.12(a)(5))— shall take precedence in determining whether a called game shall be a suspended game. If a game is halted by weather, and subsequent light failure or an intervening curfew or time limit prevents its resumption, the game shall not be a suspended game. If a game is halted by light failure, and weather or field conditions prevent its resumption, the game shall not be a suspended game. A game can only be considered a suspended game if stopped for any of the six reasons specified in Rule 7.02(a) (Rule 4.12(a)).

(c) A suspended game shall be resumed at the exact point of suspension of the original game. The completion of a suspended game is a continuation of the original game. The lineup and batting order of both teams shall be exactly the same as the lineup and batting order at the moment of suspension, subject to the rules governing substitution. Any

player may be replaced by a player who had not been in the game prior to the suspension. No player removed before the suspension may be returned to the lineup. A player who was not with the club when the game was suspended may be used as a substitute, even if he has taken the place of a player no longer with the club who would not have been eligible because he had been removed from the lineup before the game was suspended.

Rule 7.02(c) Comment (Rule 4.12(c) Comment): If immediately prior to the call of a suspended game, a substitute pitcher has been announced but has not retired the side or pitched until the batter becomes a base runner, such pitcher, when the suspended game is later resumed may, but is not required to start the resumed portion of the game. However, if he does not start he will be considered as having been substituted for and may not be used in that game.

### **7.03 Forfeited Games**

(a) (4.15) A game may be forfeited to the opposing team when a team:

- (1) Fails to appear upon the field, or being upon the field, refuses to start play within five minutes after the umpire-in-chief has called "Play" at the appointed hour for beginning the game, unless such delayed appearance is, in the umpire-in-chief's judgment, unavoidable;
- (2) Employs tactics palpably designed to delay or shorten the game;
- (3) Refuses to continue play during a game unless the game has been suspended or terminated by the umpire-in-chief;
- (4) Fails to resume play, after a suspension, within one minute after the umpire-in-chief has called "Play;"
- (5) After warning by the umpire, willfully and persistently violates any rules of the game;
- (6) Fails to obey within a reasonable time the umpire's order for removal of a player from the game;
- (7) Fails to appear for the second game of a doubleheader within twenty minutes after the close of the first game unless the umpire-in-chief of the first game shall have extended the time of the intermission.

(b) (4.17) A game shall be forfeited to the opposing team when a team is unable or refuses to place nine players on the field.

(c) (4.16) A game shall be forfeited to the visiting team if, after it has been suspended, the order of the umpire to groundskeepers respecting preparation of the field for resumption of play intentionally or willfully is not complied with.

(d) (4.18) If the umpire-in-chief declares a game forfeited he shall transmit a written report to the League President within 24 hours thereafter, but failure of such transmittal shall not affect the forfeiture.

### **7.04 (4.19) Protesting Games**

Each league shall adopt rules governing procedure for protesting a game, when a manager claims that an umpire's decision is in violation of these rules. No protest shall ever be permitted on judgment decisions by the umpire. In all protested games, the decision of the League President shall be final. Even if it is held that the protested decision violated the rules, no replay of the game will be ordered unless in the opinion of the League President the violation adversely affected the protesting team's chances of winning the game. Rule 7.04 (Rule 4.19 Comment): Whenever a manager protests a game because of alleged misapplication of the rules the protest will not be recognized unless the umpires are notified at the time the play under protest occurs and before the next pitch, play or attempted play. A protest arising on a game-ending play may be filed until 12 noon the following day with the league office.

## **8.00 –THE UMPIRE (9.00)**

### **8.01 Umpire Qualifications and Authority**

(a) The League President shall appoint one or more umpires to officiate at each league championship game. The umpires shall be responsible for the conduct of the game in accordance with these official rules and for maintaining discipline and order on the playing field during the game.

(b) Each umpire is the representative of the league and of professional baseball, and is authorized and required to enforce all of these rules. Each umpire has authority to order a player, coach, manager or club officer or employee to do or refrain from doing anything which affects the administering of these rules, and to enforce the prescribed penalties.

(c) Each umpire has authority to rule on any point not specifically covered in these rules.

(d) Each umpire has authority to disqualify any player, coach, manager or substitute for objecting to decisions or for unsportsmanlike conduct or language, and to eject such disqualified person from the playing field. If an umpire disqualifies a player while a play is in progress, the disqualification shall not take effect until no further action is possible in that play.

(e) Each umpire has authority at his discretion to eject from the playing field (1) any person whose duties permit his presence on the field, such as ground crew members, ushers, photographers, newsmen, broadcasting crew members, etc., and (2) any spectator or other person not authorized to be on the playing field.

### **8.02 Appeal of Umpire Decisions**

(a) Any umpire's decision which involves judgment, such as, but not limited to, whether a batted ball is fair or foul, whether a pitch is a strike or a ball, or whether a runner is safe or out, is final. No player, manager, coach or substitute shall object to any such judgment decisions.

Rule 8.02(a) Comment (Rule 9.02(a) Comment): Players leaving their position in the field or on base, or managers or coaches leaving the bench or coaches box, to argue on BALLS AND STRIKES will not be permitted. They should be warned if they start for the plate to protest the call. If they continue, they will be ejected from the game.

(b) If there is reasonable doubt that any umpire's decision may be in conflict with the rules, the manager may appeal the decision and ask that a correct ruling be made. Such appeal shall be made only to the umpire who made the protested decision.

(c) If a decision is appealed, the umpire making the decision may ask another umpire for information before making a final decision. No umpire shall criticize, seek to reverse or interfere with another umpire's decision unless asked to do so by the umpire making it. If the umpires consult after a play and change a call that had been made, then they have the authority to take all steps that they may deem necessary, in their discretion, to eliminate the results and consequences of the earlier call that they are reversing, including placing runners where they think those runners would have been after the play, had the ultimate call been made as the initial call, disregarding interference or obstruction that may have occurred on the play; failures of runners to tag up based upon the initial call on the field; runners passing other runners or missing bases; etc., all in the discretion of the umpires. No player, manager or coach shall be permitted to argue the exercise of the umpires' discretion in resolving the play and any person so arguing shall be subject to ejection.

Rule 8.02(c) Comment (Rule 9.02(c) Comment): A manager is permitted to ask the umpires for an explanation of the play and how the umpires have exercised their discretion to eliminate the results and consequences of the earlier call that the umpires are reversing. Once the umpires explain the result of the play, however, no one is permitted to argue that the umpires should have exercised their discretion in a different manner. The manager or the catcher may request the plate umpire to ask his partner for help on a half swing when the plate umpire calls the pitch a ball, but not when the pitch is called a strike. The manager may not complain that the umpire made an improper call, but only that he did not ask his partner for help. Field umpires must be alerted to the request from the plate umpire and quickly respond. Managers may not protest the call of a ball or strike on the pretense they are asking for information about a half swing.

Appeals on a half swing may be made only on the call of ball and when asked to appeal, the home plate umpire must refer to a base umpire for his judgment on the half swing. Should the base umpire call the pitch a strike, the strike call shall prevail. Appeals on a half swing must be made before the next pitch, or any play or attempted play. If the half swing occurs during a play which ends a half-inning, the appeal must be made before all infielders of the defensive team leave fair territory. Baserunners must be alert to the possibility that the base umpire on appeal from the plate umpire may reverse the call of a ball to the call of a strike, in which event the runner is in jeopardy of being out by the catcher's throw. Also, a catcher must be alert in a base stealing situation if a ball call is reversed to a strike by the base umpire upon appeal from the plate umpire.

The ball is in play on appeal on a half swing. On a half swing, if the manager comes out to argue with first or third base umpire and if after being warned he persists in arguing, he can be ejected as he is now arguing over a called ball or strike.

(d) No umpire may be replaced during a game unless he is injured or becomes ill.

If there is only one umpire, he shall have complete jurisdiction in administering the rules. He may take any position on the playing field which will enable him to discharge his duties (usually behind the catcher, but sometimes behind the pitcher if there are runners). He shall be considered umpire-in-chief.

(e) If there are two or more umpires, one shall be designated umpire-in-chief and the others field umpires.

### **8.03 Umpire Position**

(a) The umpire-in-chief shall stand behind the catcher. (He usually is called the plate umpire.) His duties shall be to:

- (1) Take full charge of, and be responsible for, the proper conduct of the game;
- (2) Call and count balls and strikes;
- (3) Call and declare fair balls and fouls except those commonly called by field umpires;
- (4) Make all decisions on the batter;
- (5) Make all decisions except those commonly reserved for the field umpires;
- (6) Decide when a game shall be forfeited;

- (7) If a time limit has been set, announce the fact and the time set before the game starts;
  - (8) Inform the official scorer of the official batting order, and any changes in the lineups and batting order, on request;
  - (9) Announce any special ground rules, at his discretion.
- (b) A field umpire may take any position on the playing field he thinks best suited to make impending decisions on the bases. His duties shall be to:
- (1) Make all decisions on the bases except those specifically reserved to the umpire-in-chief;
  - (2) Take concurrent jurisdiction with the umpire-in-chief in calling "Time," balks, illegal pitches, or defacement or discoloration of the ball by any player.
  - (3) Aid the umpire-in-chief in every manner in enforcing the rules, and excepting the power to forfeit the game, shall have equal authority with the umpire-in-chief in administering and enforcing the rules and maintaining discipline.
- (c) If different decisions should be made on one play by different umpires, the umpire-in-chief shall call all the umpires into consultation, with no manager or player present. After consultation, the umpire-in-chief (unless another umpire may have been designated by the League President) shall determine which decision shall prevail, based on which umpire was in best position and which decision was most likely correct. Play shall proceed as if only the final decision had been made.

#### **8.04 Reporting**

- (a) The umpire shall report to the League President within twelve hours after the end of a game all violations of rules and other incidents worthy of comment, including the disqualification of any trainer, manager, coach or player, and the reasons therefor.
- (b) When any trainer, manager, coach or player is disqualified for a flagrant offense such as the use of obscene or indecent language, or an assault upon an umpire, trainer, manager, coach or player, the umpire shall forward full particulars to the League President within four hours after the end of the game.
- (c) After receiving the umpire's report that a trainer, manager, coach or player has been disqualified, the League President shall impose such penalty as he deems justified, and shall notify the person penalized and the manager of the club of which the penalized person is a member. If the penalty includes a fine, the penalized person shall pay the amount of the fine to the league within five days after receiving notice of the fine. Failure to pay such fine within five days shall result in the offender being debarred from participation in any game and from sitting on the players' bench during any game, until the fine is paid.

#### **GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS TO UMPIRES**

- Umpires, on the field, should not indulge in conversation with players.
- Keep out of the coaching box and do not talk to the coach on duty.
- Keep your uniform in good condition. Be active and alert on the field.
- Be courteous, always, to club officials; avoid visiting in club offices and thoughtless familiarity with officers or employees of contesting clubs.
- When you enter a ball park your sole duty is to umpire a ball game as the representative of baseball.
- Do not allow criticism to keep you from studying out bad situations that may lead to protested games.
- Carry your rule book. It is better to consult the rules and hold up the game ten minutes to decide a knotty problem than to have a game thrown out on protest and replayed.
- Keep the game moving. A ball game is often helped by energetic and earnest work of the umpires.
- You are the only official representative of baseball on the ball field.
  - It is often a trying position which requires the exercise of much patience and good judgment, but do not forget that the first essential in working out of a bad situation is to keep your own temper and self-control.
- You no doubt are going to make mistakes, but never attempt to "even up" after having made one.
- Make all decisions as you see them and forget which is the home or visiting club.
- Keep your eye everlastingly on the ball while it is in play. It is more vital to know just where a fly ball fell, or a thrown ball finished up, than whether or not a runner missed a base.
- Do not call the plays too quickly, or turn away too fast when a fielder is throwing to complete a double play.
- Watch out for dropped balls after you have called a man out.
- Do not come running with your arm up or down, denoting "out" or "safe." Wait until the play is completed before making any arm motion.
- Each umpire team should work out a simple set of signals, so the proper umpire can always right a manifestly wrong decision when convinced he has made an error.
- If sure you got the play correctly, do not be stampeded by players' appeals to "ask the other man." If not sure, ask one of your associates. Do not carry this to extremes, be alert and get your own plays. But remember! The first requisite is to get decisions correctly.
- If in doubt don't hesitate to consult your associate. Umpire dignity is important but never as important as "being right."
- Most important rule for umpires is always "BE IN POSITION TO SEE EVERY PLAY." Even though your decision may be 100% right, players still question it if they feel you were not in a spot to see the play clearly and definitely.
- Finally, be courteous, impartial and firm, and so compel respect from all.