

## **2-Umpire Mechanics**

### **Basic Rules**

1. "Angle is primary, Distance is secondary." - With only two umpires, you're not going to be able to get as close as you'd like on some plays. Work to get an angle.
2. The plate umpire (U1) will move. Helping on a pulled foot at first base ... helping on force play slides at second base ... covering plays at third base ...U1 is responsible for much more than balls and strikes.
3. Studying two-umpire mechanics will help you to understand three-umpire mechanics. The two umpire system is the basis for many coverage's with multiple umpires.

#### Balk Concentration: Two Umpires

There are some balks that are more obvious from some positions.

##### A. Plate umpire should concentrate on:

1. Left-handed pitchers stepping to home plate.
2. Left-handed pitchers coming to a complete stop.
3. Right-handed pitchers coming to a complete stop.
4. Right-handed pitchers stepping to the plate on the third to first move,.
5. Right-handed pitchers gaining ground on the jump turn.
6. Right-handed pitchers closing their front shoulder before the jump turn.

##### B. Base Umpire should concentrate on:

1. Left-handed pitchers stepping to home plate.
2. Left-handed pitchers coming to a complete stop.
3. Right-handed pitchers breaking their front knees before the jump turn.
4. Right-handed pitchers gaining ground on the jump turn.
5. Right-handed pitchers closing their front shoulder before the jump turn.

##### C. Special Duties:

1. Split these duties among yourselves. You have "four *eyes*" out there.

Both of you should not be concentrating on the move. This should be done during your pre-game.

## Outfield Coverage

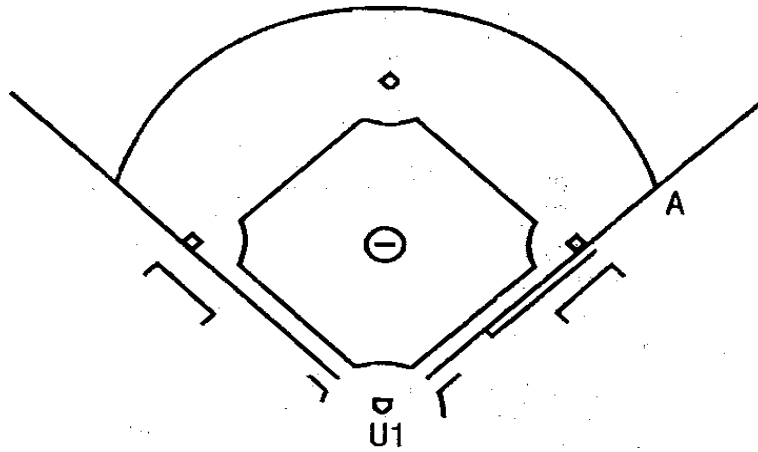
- A. Do not go out automatically on all fly balls in your coverage area.
- B. Pause, Read and React (3 important ingredients to making correct calls.)
- C. Four conditions that require an umpire to go to the outfield:
  - 1. The outfielder turns and begins to run toward the outfield fence.
  - 2. Multiple players converging on a fly ball.
  - 3. A catch being made below the waist.
  - 4. Outfielder moving toward the foul line and possible fair/foul decision.
- D. If in doubt, go out on fly balls in your coverage area.
  - 1. If you are going out, go out hard.
  - 2. Leave no doubt in your partners mind about whether or not you are going out.
  - 3. Signal your partner by raising your arm if you are going out.
  - 4. If you are not going out, hold your arm out, your palm facing your partner and continue with your responsibilities.
  - 5. Once you go out, do not return until the play is complete.
    - a. Exception: With no runners on base and U2 goes out, U2 would return to home plate after ruling no catch for any play on the batter-runner there.
  - 6. Base Umpire positioned within the infield should never cross the base path to observe catch/no catch,

# 2-MAN MECHANICS

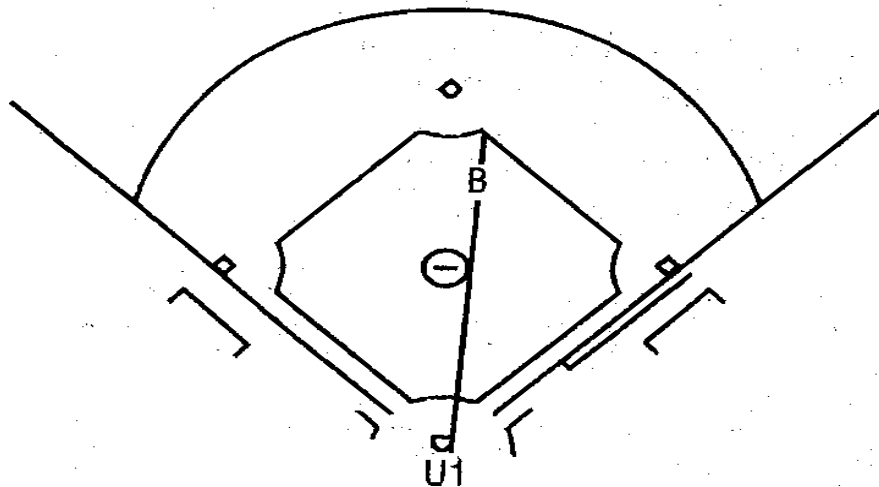
## STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES ABBREVIATIONS:

The plate umpire will be described as U1 and the field umpire as U2. It is assumed that in all situations U1 will start out behind home plate. The three basic positions for U2 on the bases are described as follows:

**POSITION A** Both feet in foul territory, approximately 10 feet behind the first baseman. This will be the basic position with no runners on base.

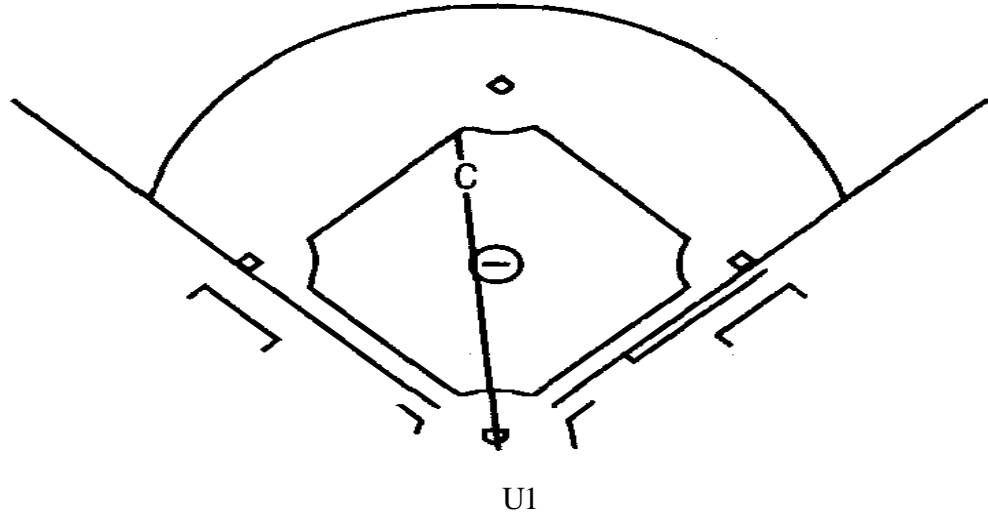


**POSITION B** Approximately halfway between the pitcher's mound and second base, on the first-base side of the infield, more or less on a line extended from the plate through the edge of the mound, with feet positioned parallel to the pitcher's plate so the umpire can move to cover a pickoff attempt at first or an attempted steal of second. This Will be the position used with first-base occupied in the two-man system.



## POSITION C

Approximately halfway between the pitcher's mound and second base, on the third-base side of the infield, more or less on a line extended from the plate through the edge of the mound, with the feet positioned parallel to the pitcher's plate so the umpire can move to cover any attempted pick-off or steal at any base. This position will be used in any situation with runners occupying bases other than first base in the two-man system.



### GENERAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- U1:
1. Calls balls and strikes.
  2. Hustle! Just because you have the "plate" does not mean it is your only responsibility.
  3. Rule on fair/foul situations from home plate to the left-field foul pole. If U2 is in Position A, rule fair/foul on all batted balls that come to rest or are played upon in front of first base. Call fair/foul on all batted balls from home plate to the right-field foul pole if U2 is in Position B or C. Be careful not to call foul too soon.
  4. Get your mask off and move on all batted balls.
    - a. On ground balls in the infield, come into the infield and be ready to move to cover plays which are your responsibility and to help your partner. Watch ground balls close to the line carefully to make the fair/foul call. With a runner at third base, be careful not to go with the ball. Watch the play from the base line extended so you can see the runner touch home plate.
    - b. On fly balls to the infield, call catch/no catch on foul flies up to both bags and fair flies to the left of second base or taken by the pitcher or catcher.
    - c. On fly ball to the outfield with U2 in Position A, call catch/no catch on any fly ball that U2 does not go out on. If U2 is in the infield, call catch/no catch on all fly balls to left or right field on which the outfielder moves toward his respective foul line.
    - d. Remember to watch the tag up on any runner at third base or the lead runner in a situation involving multiple runners.

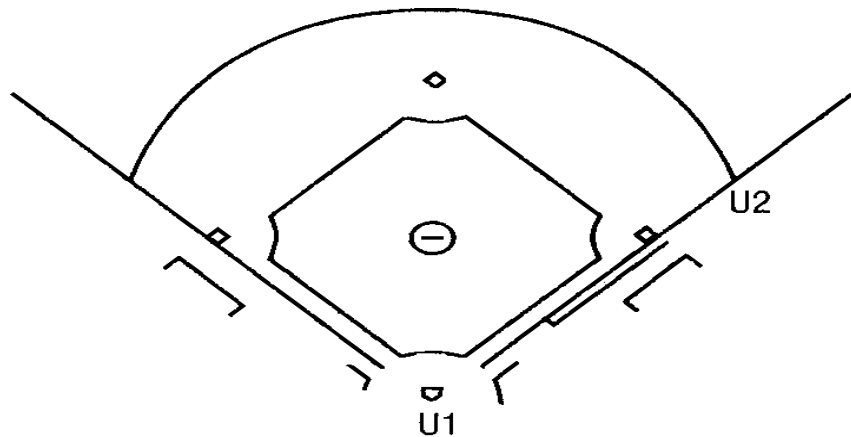
5. Be prepared to move to third base if a play happens there on a batted ball or to first base to help your partner on a throw behind the runner or in a rundown if possible.
6. With a throw near home plate, observe the batter-runner's position in relation to the 3-foot running lane. If the batter-runner is not in the lane and interferes with the throw, call interference and the batter-runner out.
7. On a pop foul to the catcher, move with the catcher while observing him and not the ball. Do not remove your mask until the catcher has tossed his mask. If the catch is near the screen, position yourself so that you will know if the ball touched the screen.

**U2:**

1. Hustle on every play to be in the best position possible to make your calls. Remember. "Pause, Read, React." Angle is everything.
2. When in Position A, take one or two steps toward home plate with the pitch.
3. With no runners on, you will always be in Position A; with a single runner at first base, you will always be in Position B; with a runner as far as second base, you will be in Position C. These positions remain the same; it is not dependent on the number of outs.
4. In Position A, call fair/foul on balls hit down the first-base line from the front edge of the bag to the foul pole, especially on balls bounding over the bag. Be alert to help U1 on a slow roller or bunt down the line. If you see a batted ball, contact the batter in the batters box, call "Foul Ball." Ball is Dead immediately.
5. The first play by an infielder is always your call, except at home plate. Let the ball take you into the play.
6. Make catch/no catch calls on fly balls in the following situations:
  - a. Fly balls in the infield which are taken by the first or second baseman;
  - b. If in Position A, go out to make a call on any difficult catch by the right-fielder or the center-fielder moving toward second base. Always go out on a close fair or foul call. On routine fly balls, come in and make your pivot. UI will make the catch/no catch ruling.
  - c. If in Position B or C, fly balls to the outfield unless the catch is attempted by either fielder moving to the respective foul line. In this situation U1 has both the fair/foul call and the catch/no catch. "Do Not Cross the Base Paths to go Make A Call."
7. Line up the tag-up of a single runner, unless at third base, and on following runners in a multiple runner situation.
8. Be alert to either move to cover home plate if U1 is at third base and there are no following runners or to take a following runner into third base if UI has a play at the plate, as in a bases-loaded situation.

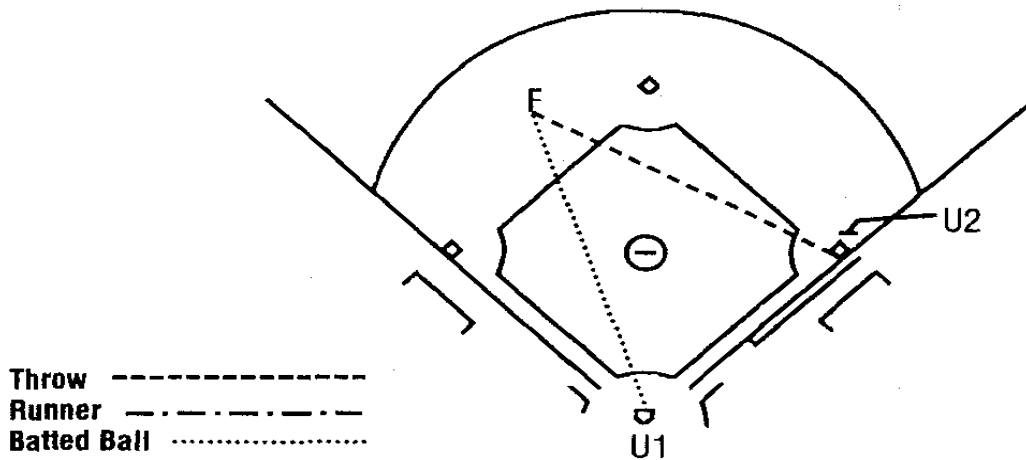
## FIELD MECHANICS COVERAGE

### ARTICLE 1: NO RUNNERS ON BASE

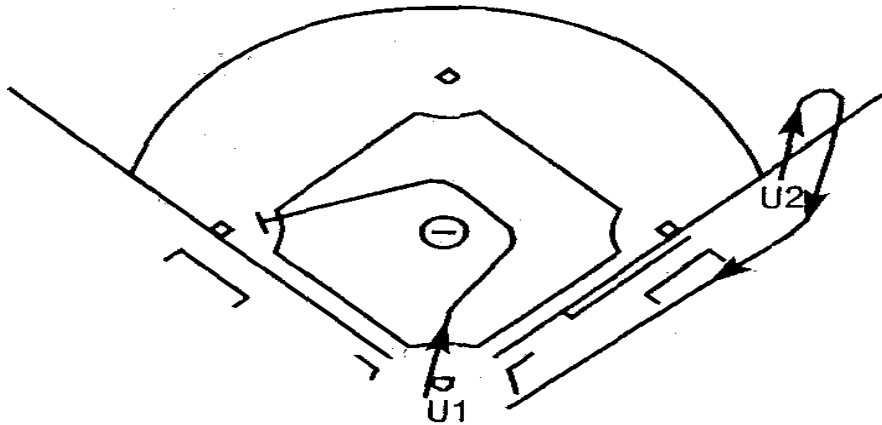


#### U1: COVERAGE:

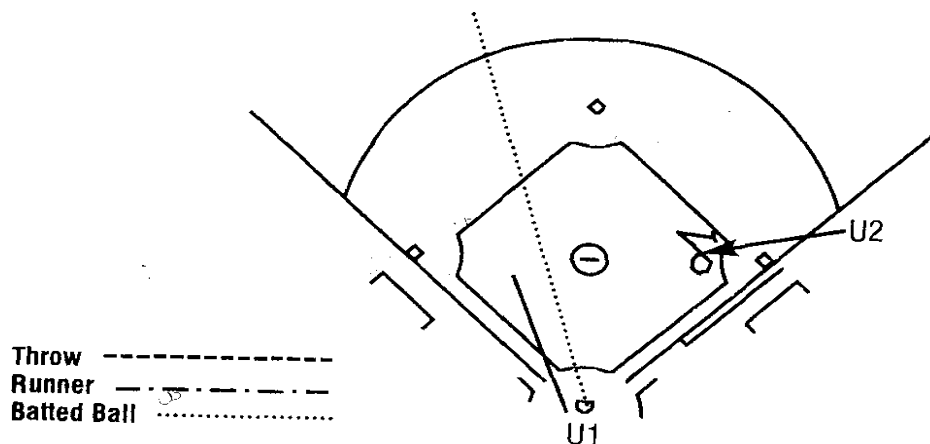
1. Move out on all batted balls; be ready to move to make calls on the batter-runner advancing to third base. You are responsible for the ground rules on an overthrow at first. In case of an overthrow, U1 should react toward foul territory with the path of the overthrown ball.



2. If U2 has the catch/no catch call on a fly ball, move to watch the batter-runner touch first base and be prepared to move to cover any attempted play on the batter-runner returning to first base or to move to make a call at second base if U2 is held up by a ball down the line.



3. Call catch/no catch on all fly balls to the left side of the infield or fielded by the pitcher or catcher, and on any foul fly balls fielded by the first baseman between the plate and the first base bag.
4. Call catch/no catch on all fly balls to left field or on which the center fielder turns his back on U2. Make the call verbally to assist your partner, who is watching the batter-runner touch first base.

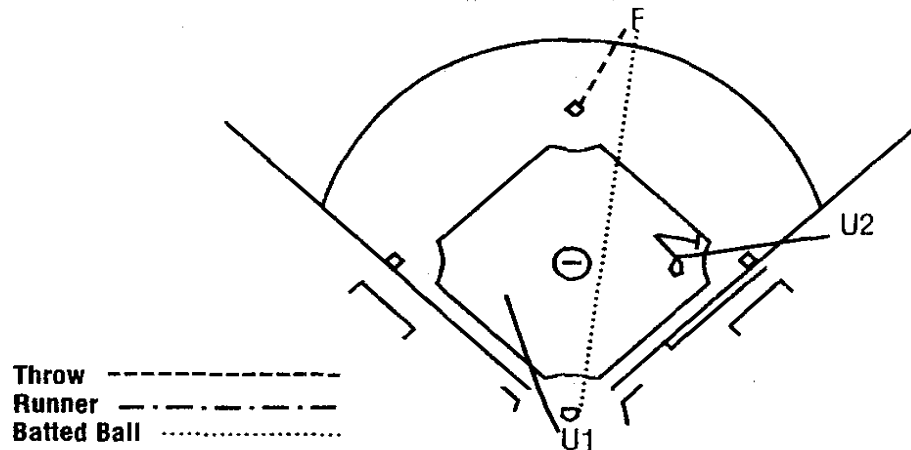


5. Call fair/foul on all batted balls down the third-base line to the foul pole in left field, and all batted balls that are played on or come to rest between home plate and the front edge of first base. Follow bunted balls down the foul line.

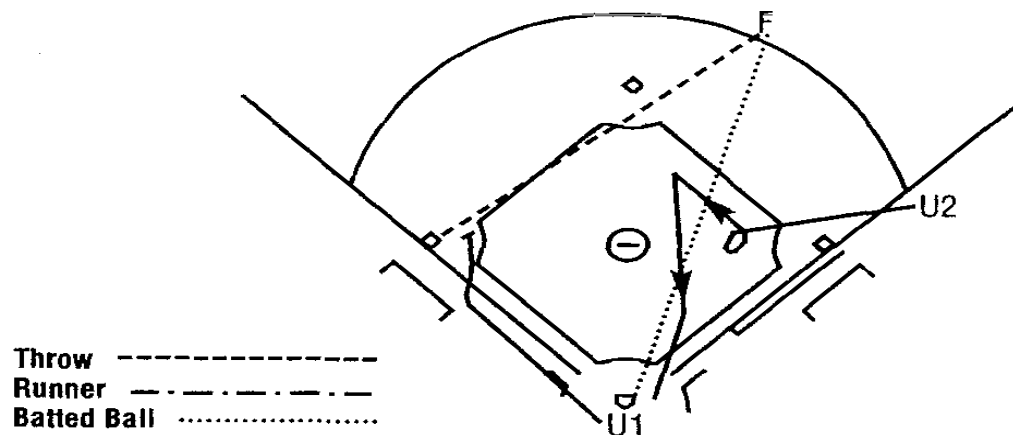
#### U2: POSITION A

##### COVERAGE:

1. Move to make all calls at first base on plays in the infield. To get a good angle, take a few hard steps toward the player fielding the ball, then set, pause, react, let the throw turn you to the bag.
2. On base hits, come into the infield, pivot while watching the batter-runner touch first base, and be ready to move to second base if he should attempt to advance.



3. On extra base hit, take the batter only as far as second base; U1 has him at third base. Be alert for the runner returning to second or advancing home on an overthrow at third base. You're responsible for covering home plate for U1.
4. Go out on fair/foul or catch/no catch situations down the right-field line, getting an angle if possible. Be ready to return to take the play at the plate, since U1 has the bases behind you.



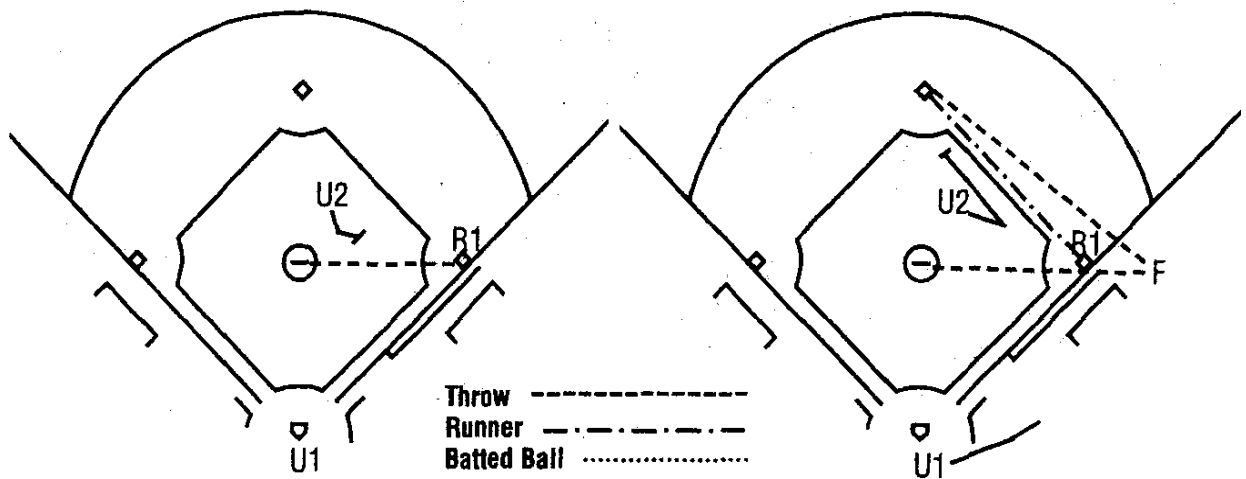
5. Go out on fair/foul or catch/no catch situations down the right-field line, getting an angle if possible. Be ready to return to take the play at the plate, since U1 has the bases behind you. Be sure to go over fly-ball coverage with your partner in your pre-game conference. It is important to communicate with each other on fly balls in gray areas. If you are going to take the catch, immediately call out, "I've got the ball!" This will alert your partner to watch the batter-runner.

## U2 POSITION B

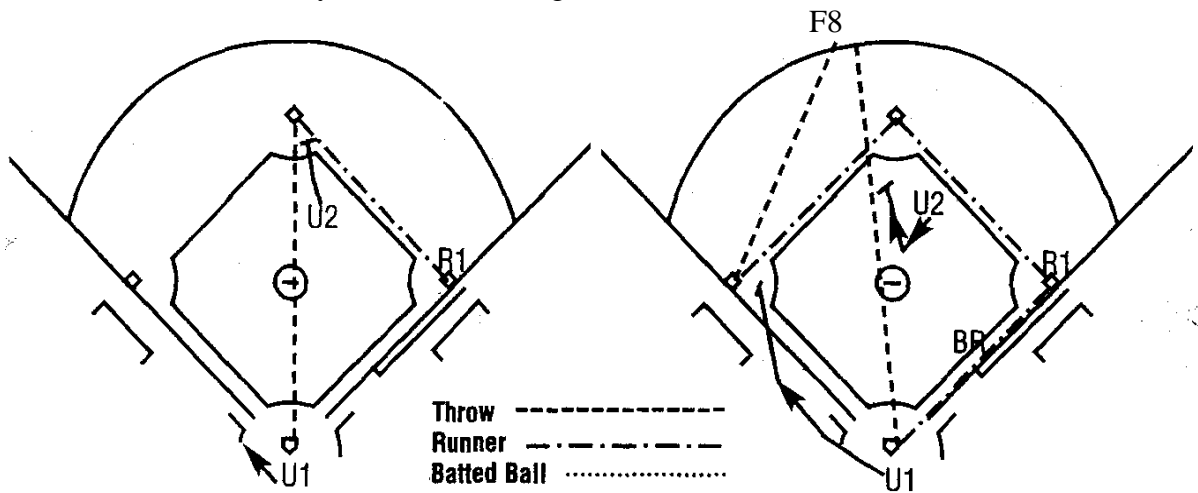
### COVERAGE:

1. Be alert for pickoff attempts at first, either by the pitcher or catcher; be alert for possible balks. A quick step or two toward the beginning of the 45 ft, 3 foot running lane before turning on a pickoff will improve your angle at first base.



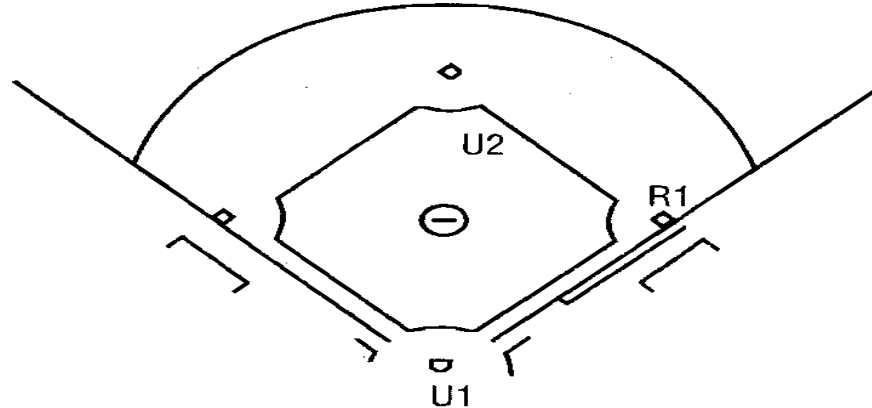


2. On an attempted steal, step back and let the throw turn you into the play. Following the ball all the way into the fielder's glove. Pause, Read, React.



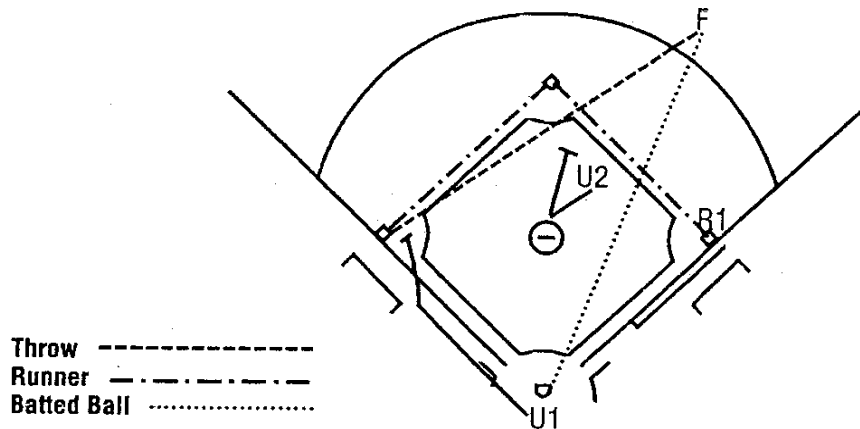
3. On base hits, be sure to watch the runner from first base touch second base and the batter-runner touch first base and any succeeding bases.
4. Call the first play in the infield; on double plays, after seeing the force play at second base, turn and move to see the play at first base.
5. Call catch/no catch on fly balls fielded in the middle of the infield and on fly balls to the outfield in-between the left and right fielders.
6. Be alert to help your partner on checked swings, despite the poor angle you will have.

## ARTICLE 2: R1 AT FIRST BASE ONLY

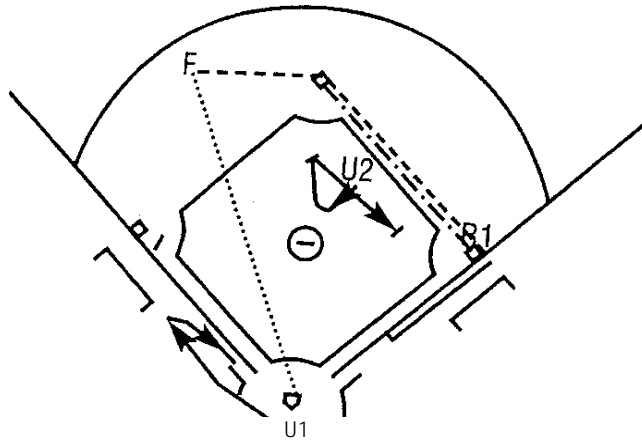


### U1: COVERAGE:

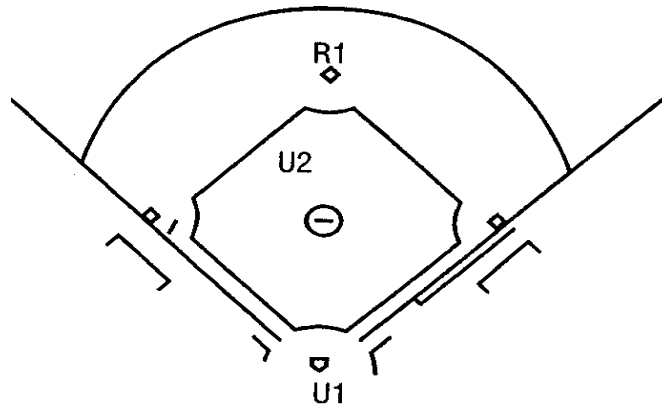
1. Move out on all batted balls; be ready to move to cover a play at third base. The second play in the infield at third base belongs to U 1, If R1 advances to third base on a base hit, that play belongs to U1 unless the ball was hit down the right-field line; in that case U2 would take R1 into third base. Go back to home plate on an overthrow at third base. .



2. Watch all plays in the infield in order to be able to help if asked. Be sure to watch for any interference by the retired runner at second base, then look quickly to see if the first baseman keeps his foot on the bag. Only after help is asked by your partner.
3. Call catch/no catch on all fly balls fielded by the pitcher or catcher or down either line, on all foul balls to the outfield on which the left or right fielder move toward his respective foul line.
4. Call fair/foul on balls down both lines to the foul pole. Follow bunted balls down the line.



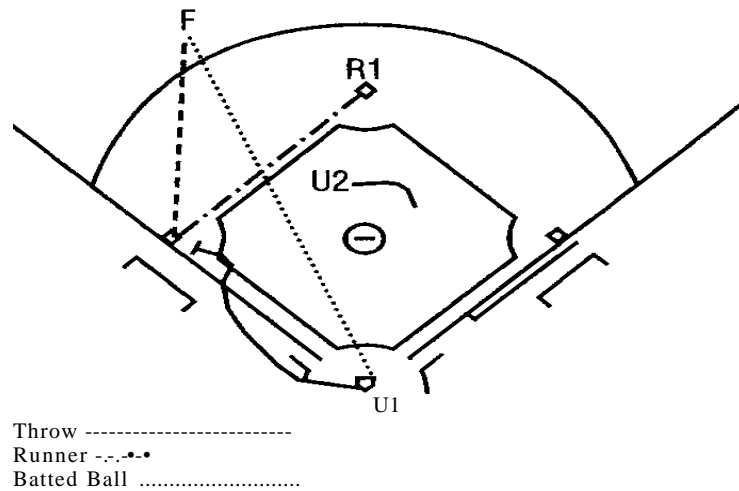
### ARTICLE 3: RI AT SECOND BASE ONLY



#### U1: COVERAGE:

1. Rule fair/foul on ground balls from home plate to the foul pole down both lines; follow bunted balls down the line, but be alert for play situations at home plate; you are responsible for the runner touching third base.
2. On a base hit, move to line up R 1 s touch of third base; be ready to move to cover a play on R1 advancing to home plate or returning to third base.
3. On a ball hit in the infield where R1 is trapped between second and third base, be sure to watch the batter-runner touch first base, then move to third base to help out your partner if the rundown continues. Chances are good that the batter-runner will try to advance to second base on a prolonged rundown.
4. Call catch/no catch on all fly balls fielded by the pitcher or catcher or down either line, on all foul fly balls, and on any fly balls to the outfield on which the left or right fielder moves toward his respective foul line.
5. Call safe/out on R1 advancing after a caught fly ball, except a fly ball down the right-field line. If going to make a call at third base, watch for the pitcher moving to third base to back up the play. Be ready to make the call at third base if it is the second play in the infield.

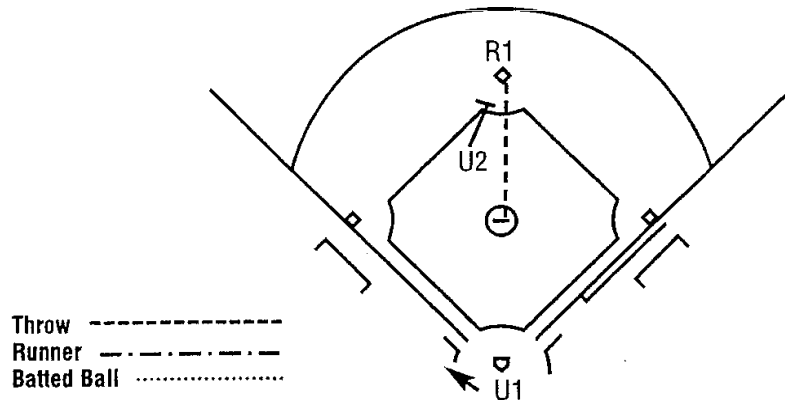
6. Be prepared to call the play at third base if it is the second play in the infield.



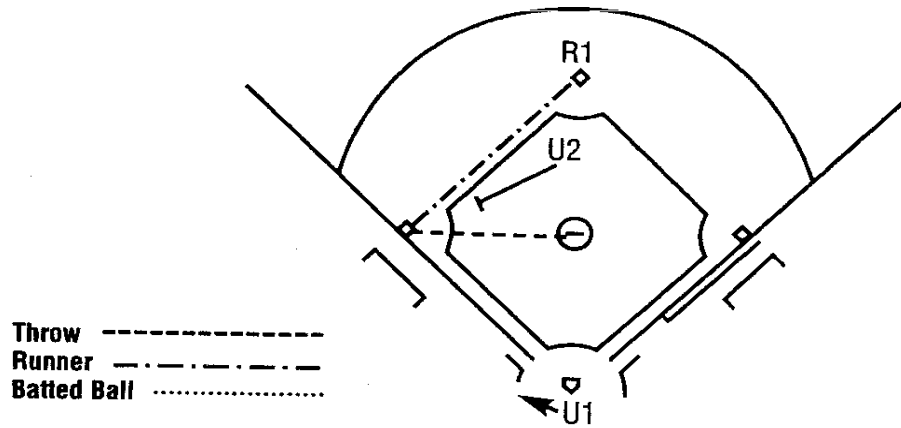
**U2: POSITION: C**

**COVERAGE:**

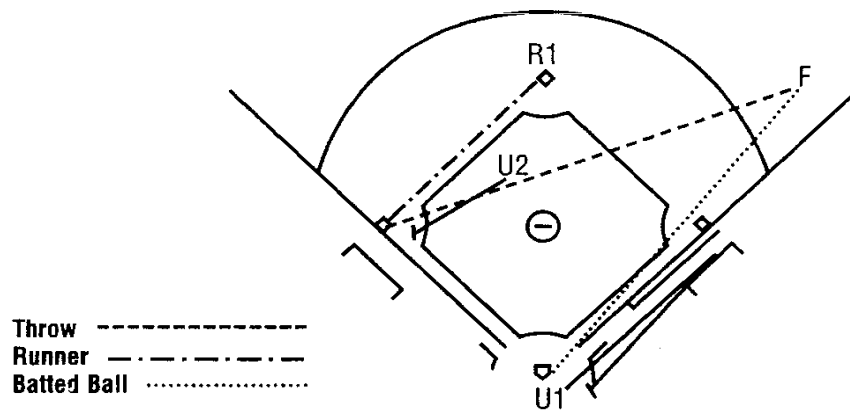
1. Watch out for possible pick-off attempt at second base by either the pitcher or catcher.



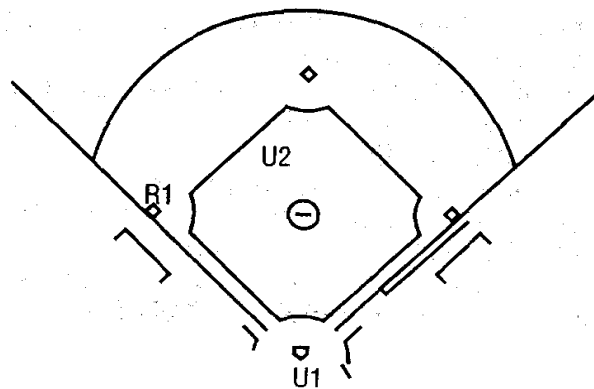
2. Be alert for attempted steal at third base. A quick step toward the plate before turning to move to the base will improve your angle on the steal play. Do not be concerned about the fielder behind you, as to what his is up to. "Concentrate on the catcher." His actions will lead you to the play.
3. On ground balls in the infield, watch the ball as it is fielded and let the throw take you to the play. Remember that the play is not always to first base, so don't anticipate. If the play is to first base, move toward the bag, get set, make the call, and then take a step or two toward the bag after making the call.
4. Call catch/no catch on fly balls fielded in the middle of the infield and on fly balls to the outfield in between the left and right fielders.
5. Move to line up the tag of R1 advancing to third base after a caught fly ball; U1 has the play at third base and you will have any subsequent play at home plate. If U1 has gone down the right field line to rule catch/no catch or fair/foul, you must take RI into third base.



6. On routine fly balls or plays in the infield on which R1 is not advancing to third base, be alert for throws to second base attempting to catch R1 off the bag.
7. On base hits, watch the batter-runner to first and second base.



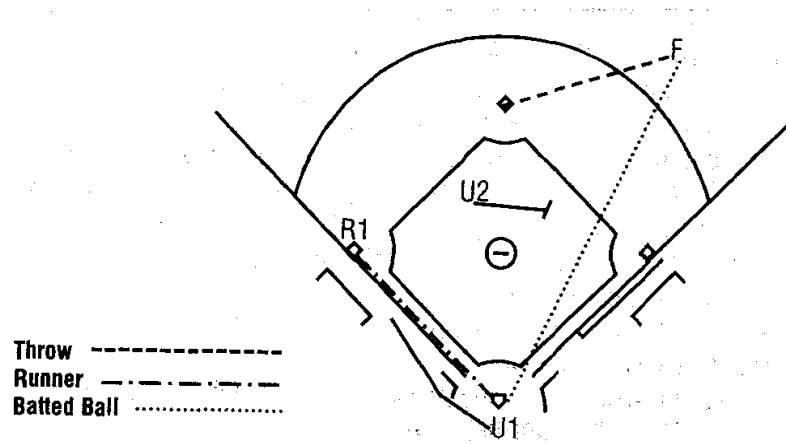
**ARTICLE 4: R1 AT THIRD BASE ONLY**



**U 1: COVERAGE:**

1. Movement is limited because of potential play at home plate; make all calls on R1 advancing to home plate.

2. Be alert for possible squeeze or attempted steal at home plate. Make sure pitcher's delivery is legal, and be sure to call the pitch first, then the play.
3. Call fair/foul on all balls down both lines to the foul pole.
4. Call catch/no catch on all fly balls fielded by the pitcher or catcher or down either line on all foul fly balls, and on any fly balls to the outfield on which the left or right fielder moves toward his respective foul line.
5. On fly balls on which there is a potential advance of R1 to home plate, move to line up tag.
6. On base hits, be sure to watch R1 touch home plate, then be alert to move to cover third base if necessary.

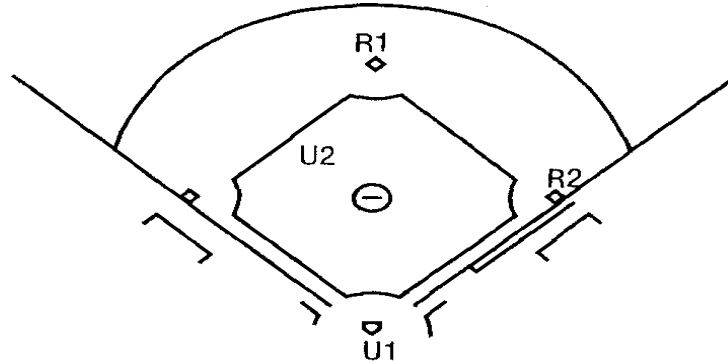


#### U2: POSITION: C

#### COVERAGE:

1. Be alert for a possible pickoff attempt by either the pitcher or catcher. Make sure the pickoff move is legal. Prior to the game, discuss with your partner what each of you will be concentrating on. You don't want all four eyes looking at the same violation.
2. On ground balls in the infield, watch the ball as it is fielded and let the throw turn you into the play.
3. Call catch/no catch on fly balls fielded in the middle of the infield and on fly balls to the outfield in between the left and right fielders. Stay in, do not cross the base path.
4. On base hits, watch the batter-runner touch first and second bases.

## ARTICLE 5: R1 AT SECOND BASE AND R2 AT FIRST BASE

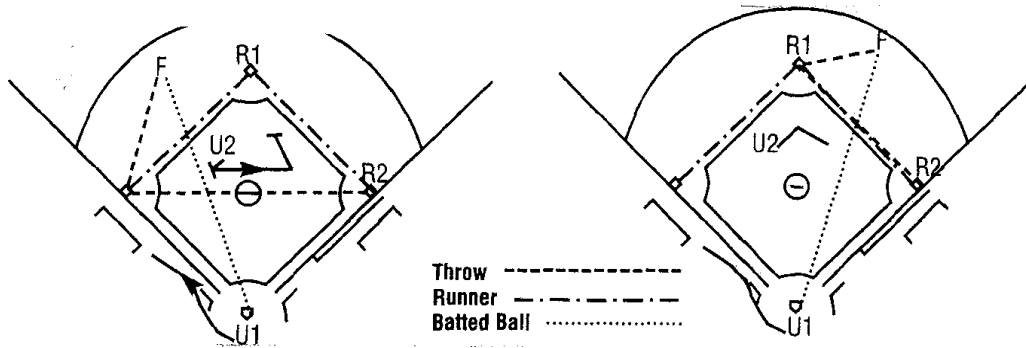


1. Be aware of the infield fly situation with less than two outs; signal your partner.
2. Call fair/foul down both lines to the foul pole.
3. Call catch/no catch on all fly balls fielded by the pitcher or catcher or down either line, on all foul balls, and on any fly balls in the outfield on which the left or right fielder moves toward his respective foul line. Observe the tag on R1 at second base on any fly ball hit to the outfield.
4. On ground balls in the infield, move to watch the slide of a retired runner on a double-play attempt; watch the touch of third base by advancing R1. Move to be able to make a call at third base if the first play in the infield is a first or second base; any succeeding play at third base is yours. It is unlikely, but a potential play at home plate following a bobbled ball or a double-play attempt would be yours as well.
5. Move to make the call on R1 advancing after a caught fly ball unless ruling on a ball down the right=field line.
6. On base hits, move to watch R1 touch third base and be ready to retreat to make a call on R1 advancing to home plate. Also be ready to move to third base for a play on R2.
7. Be prepared to call the play at third base if it is the second play in the infield, unless R1 is advancing to home plate.

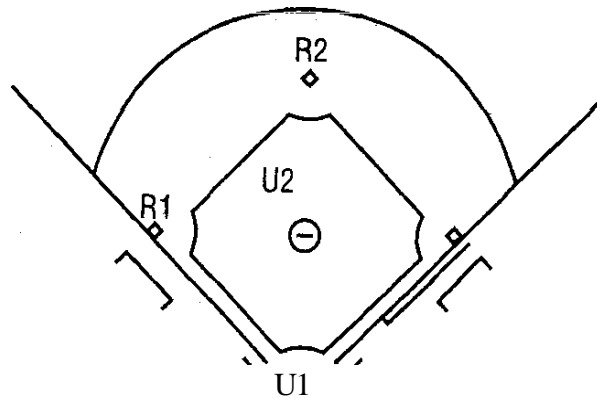
### U2: POSITION C

#### COVERAGE:

1. Be prepared and aware of the infield-fly situation; signal your partner.
2. Call catch/no catch on fly balls fielded in the middle of the infield and on fly balls to the outfield between the left and right-fielders. Be alert for line drives which may become double plays.
3. Call the first play in the infield; on double plays, after viewing the force out. Turn and move to get position for the back end of the play. Don't anticipate what the play might be.

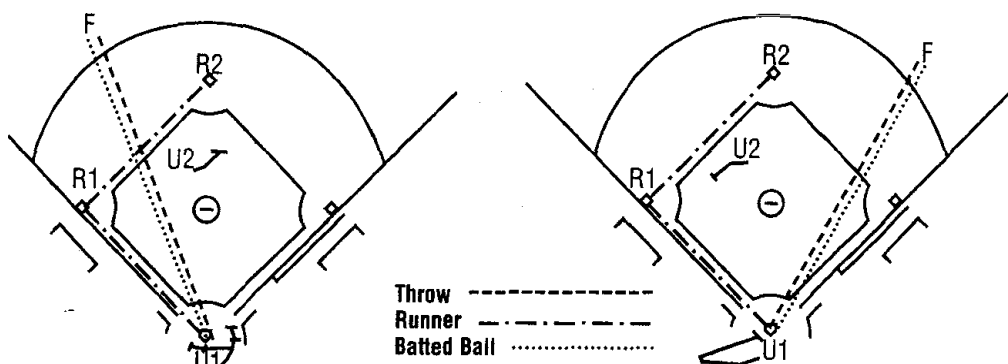


ARTICLE 6: R1 AT THIRD AND R2 AT SECOND



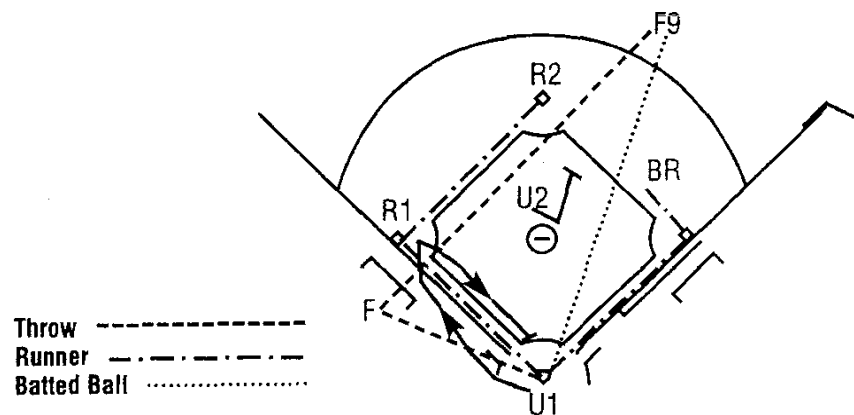
U1: COVERAGE:

1. Movement is very limited because of a potential play at home plate; make all calls on R1 advancing to home plate.
2. Be alert for a possible steal at home plate or squeeze play. Make sure pitcher's delivery is legal; be sure to call the pitch first, then the play.
3. Call fair/foul down both lines to the foul poles.
4. Call catch/no catch on all fly balls fielded by the pitcher or catcher or down either line on all foul fly balls, and on any fly balls to the outfield on which the left or right fielder moves toward his respected foul line.
5. Move to line up the tag of R1 at third base. Make calls at home plate from base line.





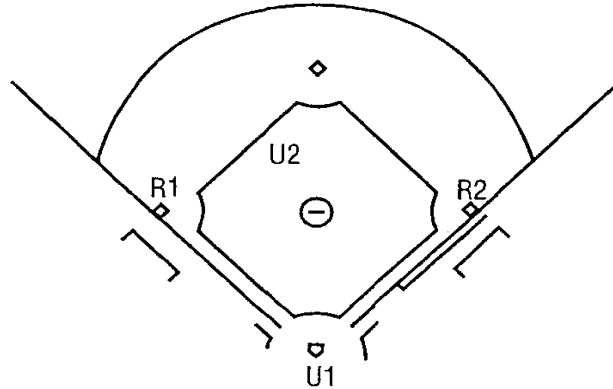
6. With two outs, be alert for a time play situation involving R2 and the batter-runner. Signal your partner. Watch the play on R2 and listen for your partner's call to determine if R1 scores before the third out.
7. On a ground ball in the infield with the first play being made at first base, move as you get into position to make a call on R2 at third base.
8. On a base hit, move up the third-base line in foul ground as above. Watch R1 touch home plate, then get in position to either move to third base or to retreat to home plate for a play on R2.



#### U2 POSITION C COVERAGE:

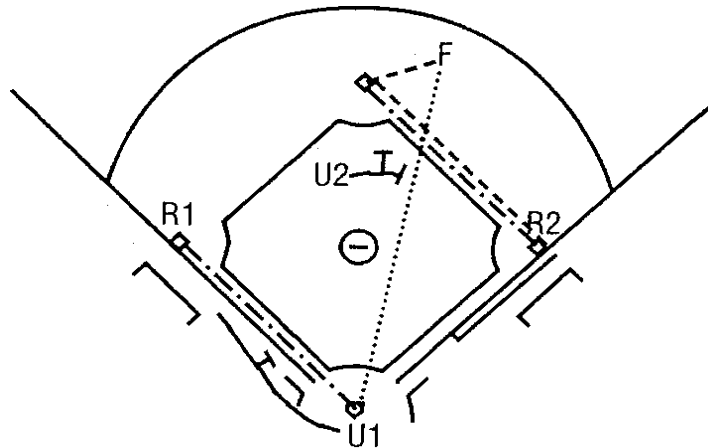
1. Be alert for a possible pickoff attempt at second or third base by the pitcher or catcher. Divide your concentration on the pitcher with your partner.
2. Call catch/no catch on all fly balls to the outfield in between the left and right fielders. When the ball goes out, you back peddle toward the mound getting a better angle. When the ball is thrown back in, you follow the throw to its perspective base. Line up R2 at second base on the tag up.
3. With two outs, be alert for a time play situation involving R2 and the batter-runner. Make the out call on the batter-runner in a loud voice so your partner can hear you.
4. On base hits, watch the batter-runner touch first base and be prepared to either take him into second base or returning to first base.

## ARTICLE 7: R1 AT THIRD AND R2 AT FIRST



### U1: COVERAGE:

1. Make all calls on R1 advancing to home plate. Be alert for a possible steal at home plate or a double steal. A squeeze is less likely, but never impossible.
2. Call fair/foul down both lines. Call catch/no catch on all fly balls down the lines on all foul/fly balls, and on any fly balls to the outfielder on which the left or right fielder moves toward his respective foul line.
3. On any play situation, move to watch R1 touch home plate, then cover other plays. On ground balls in the infield, your second responsibility is to watch the play at second base for interference with an attempted double play or "force play slide rule."



Throw  
Runner  
Batter Ball

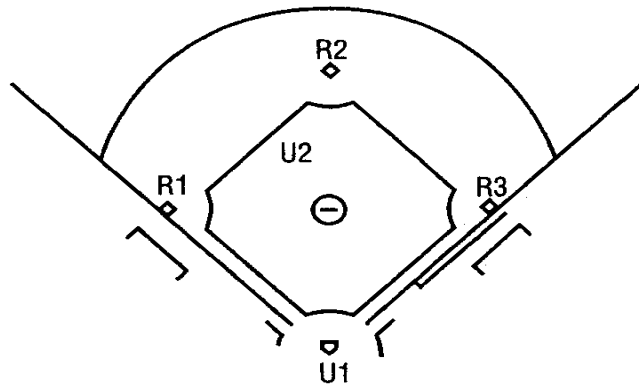
4. If the first play on a ground ball is on R1 at home plate, remember it is not a force out.
5. On fly balls to the outfield, move to line up the tag of R1 at third base, then move back to home plate.
6. On base hits, move toward third base in foul ground, ready to cover third base on a play there or to retreat to home plate if R2 attempts to score on the hit.

## U2: POSITION: C

### COVERAGE:

1. Be alert for pickoff attempts by the pitcher or catcher at first or third base. Make sure the pitcher's move is legal on the feint to third base followed by a throw back to first base. Otherwise known as the: 3-1 move.
2. Especially with two outs, watch for the delayed double steal rundown play. Be sure to make a loud and clear call on the putout because of the time play.
3. Make any call on the first play by an infielder. Be alert for line drives which may become double plays, signal catch/no catch immediately. On ground ball double plays, watch the force out, then move and turn to get into position for the call on the back end of the play.
4. On base hits, watch R2 touch second base, then look to see the batter-runner touch first base. Stay aware of the positions of the runners and your partner, since R2 could either try to return to second base or get caught in a rundown between second and third base, in which case the play at second base is yours. If the batter-runner attempts to reach second base, the play is also yours. Obviously, communication is vital in this situation.

## ARTICLE 8: R1 AT THIRD, R2 AT SECOND, AND R3 AT FIRST

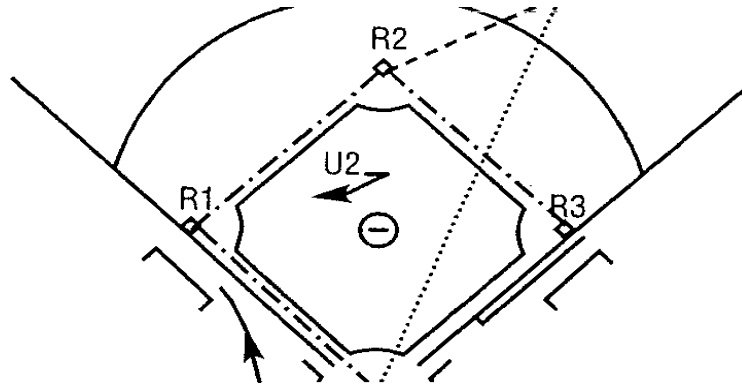


### U 1: COVERAGE:

1. Be alert for a steal, passed ball or squeeze play. Call the pitch first, then the play.
2. Hold position on all balls in play to make calls on all runners advancing to home plate.
3. Call fair/foul on balls down both lines to the foul poles.
4. Call catch/no catch on all fly balls fielded by the pitcher or catcher or down either line, on all foul/fly balls, and on any fly balls to the outfield on which the left or right fielder moves to his respective foul line.
5. On all balls in play, first watch R1 touch home plate, then look to cover other plays, such as interference on an attempted double play.

6. Move away from home plate to line up the touch of R1 at third base on fly balls to the outfield.

If it is clear there will be no play at home plate, move up the third base line in foul ground while watching R1 score in case of a play at third base. Let your partner know you have third base covered. "I got third! I got third if he comes."



7. Be careful on a play at home plate not to get too close to the play, either on a force out or a tag, because you don't want to get taken out on the play.
8. Be alert for a possible time play situation with two outs or infield-fly situations with less than two outs, and signal your partner in either situation.

#### U2: POSITION: C

##### COVERAGE:

1. Be alert for any potential pickoffs. Make sure the pitcher's move is legal. (Divide responsibilities)
2. Call catch/no catch on fly balls fielded in the middle of the infield and on fly balls to the outfield in between the left and right fielders.
3. Make the call on the first play on a ground ball hit in the infield at any base except at home plate.
4. Move to line up the tag of R2 at second base on fly balls to the outfield; look back at first base to get some hint as to R3's tag at first base. If the throw after the catch goes to home plate, be ready to move to any base to make a call on an advancing or returning runner.
5. On base hits, watch R3 touch second base, then look to see the batter-runner touch first base, and be ready to go wherever the play takes you. Generally, first and second base is your call; third base and home plate will belong to your partner. "COMMUNICATE!" In this situation, the two of you are hopelessly outnumbered by possible play situations.
6. Be alert to potential time play situations with two outs and infield-fly situations. Always signal your partner.