

From: Terry Fischer, OSAA Baseball Rules Interpreter

Three-Umpire Mechanics

With the playoffs upon us, we are using the Three Man Umpire System. For some umpires these mechanics may be new or rare. Included are some areas of emphasis taken from the 2010 CCA Baseball Umpires Manual for you to read and understand. Remember, a complete and thorough pre game with the entire crew is critical to your comfort level and performance on the field. Please allow ample time prior to taking the field to cover the Pre game Conference Outline found on page 38 in the 2010 CCA Baseball Umpires Manual.

Remember to have fun and enjoy what you are doing!

Mechanics for Three Umpires

There is only one change in the three-umpire system for 2010, however it is a very significant one-- switching who has the *quarterback* fly-ball responsibility with no runners on base from the third-base umpire to the first-base umpire.

There are several reasons for this change. Primarily, this mechanic change was made to better read and react to a fly ball that is hit to the center fielder coming straight forward. The first-base umpire is used to reading that fly ball in the two-umpire system. Additionally, making the change will allow better coverage in having the third-base umpire ahead of the play at second base.

Also, in the past there were times where both the third-base and first-base umpire have each started to go out on a fly ball. Having the third-base umpire now reading the first-base umpire will eliminate a first-base umpire coming back into the infield and having to cross the baseline in front of the batter-runner. That often led to the first-base umpire having to make a call at second base as he was trailing the batter-runner

Studying and understanding the Three-Umpire Mechanics is critical. Please refer to the CCA Manual or if you do not have access to this manual, the NFHS Umpire's Manual with the Oregon revisions applied.

Here are some items from the CCA Manual that are emphasized. Please study the Mechanics Manual to be best prepared for your playoff games.

Balk Concentration – There are some balks that are more obvious from some positions. Unlike the two-man system, three-man allows for a better look at the pitcher. Study the manual for all the details.

U1 should concentrate on:

1. Left-handed pitcher's step, or body movement, to home plate
2. Left-handed pitcher's coming to a complete stop
3. Left-handed pitcher's breaking the back edge of the pitcher's rubber
4. Right handed pitcher's breaking their front knee before the jump turn

Infield Umpires Going Out - FLY BALL COVERAGE- In some situations, an umpire positioned in the middle of the diamond may cross the base paths and head into the outfield for better coverage.

Basic Outfield Coverage:

- A. Do not go out automatically from any position on fly balls in your coverage area.
- B. Pause, Read and React. Then go hard and get a good angle. Be stopped when the play occurs.

- C. Four conditions that require an umpire to go to the outfield from the "A" and "D" positions:
1. The outfielder turns and begins to run toward the outfield fence (possible home run).
 2. Multiple players converging on a fly ball.
 3. A catch being made below the waist.
 4. Outfielder moving toward the foul line and a possible fair/foul decision.
- D. When a base umpire goes out from any position, the crew will revert back to the two-man system in most cases.
- E. In the three- umpire system, it is acceptable for umpires positioned within the infield to go to the outfield for fly ball coverage. Some basic principles apply:
1. Umpires stationed within the infield must communicate (signal and verbal) with their partners before every situation that might call for them to leave the infield on a batted ball.
 2. Umpires should only leave the infield on batted balls in their coverage area that are deep into the outfield or when outfielders are moving in and a catch is in doubt.
 3. Umpires should not leave the infield on line drives or other situations when partners would not have an opportunity to assume their coverage.
- F. If in doubt, go out on fly balls in your coverage area. Remember:
1. If you go out, go out hard.
 2. Leave no doubt in your partner's minds about whether or not you are going out.
 3. Signal your partners by raising your arm if you are going out and be verbal.
 4. If you are not going out, hold your arm out to your partners with your palm facing them.
 5. If you do not go out, you still maintain responsibility for the catch.
 6. Once you go out, do not return until play is complete.

Please contact Terry Fischer (terrylf5@mail.com) with questions.