



# One Umpire Mechanics

Section 1 – **Working behind the Plate**

Section 2 – **Working behind the Mound**

# One Umpire Mechanics

## Section 1 – **Working behind the Plate**

## SECTION 1.1

### 1.1 Basic Principles

1. **Distance is secondary, angle is primary.** While this mechanics manual does not delve into specifics of where an umpire should take a play, know this: With only one umpire, you're not going to be able to get as close as you'd like on some plays. Work to get a great angle.
2. **The plate umpire (PL)** will move and trailing batter-runner to look for pulled foot and swipe tags at first base...look for illegal slides at second base...covering plays at third base...the PL is responsible for much than balls and strikes.
3. **Studying one umpire mechanics will help you understand two umpire mechanics.** The one umpire system is the basis for moving around the infield.

### 1.2 Balk Concentration PL

**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.
- 7) Right-handed pitchers breaking their front knees before the jump turn.

### 1.3 Basic Outfield Coverage

- A. Pause, read and react. Then go hard and get a good angle over distance.  
Be stopped when the play occurs.

# Plays Within the Infield

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Man Mechanics

## 1.3.1 No Runners On

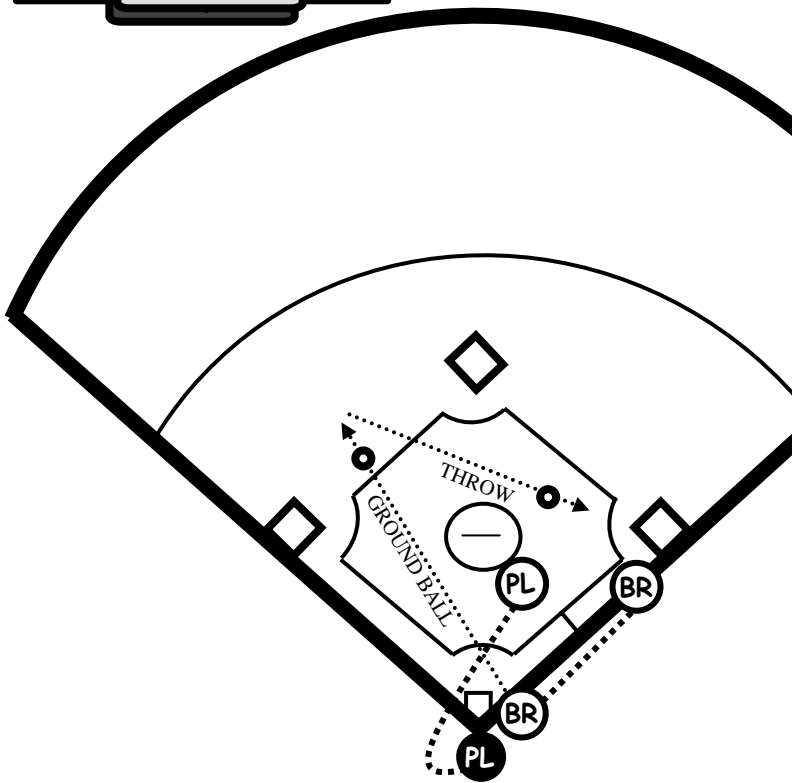
### Action on the field:

Ground ball to shortstop, throws to first base.

### Umpire responsibilities:

PL enters the infield first base side and observes the play and rules on batter-runner.

PL looking for pulled foot and swipe tags at first base.



# Clean Hit to the Outfield

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Man Mechanics

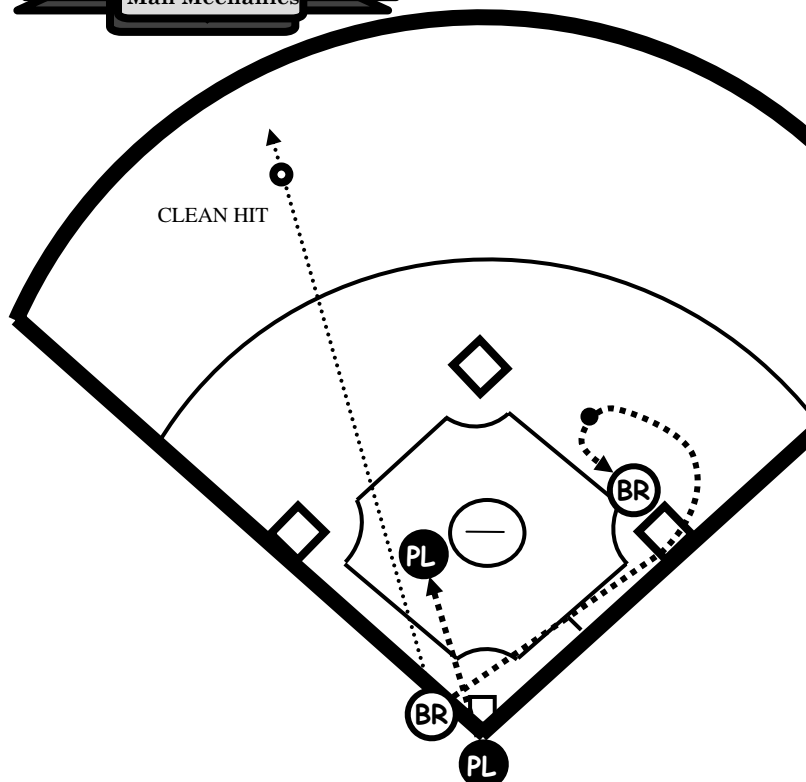
## 1.3.2 No Runners On

### Action on the field:

A clean hit to the outfield.

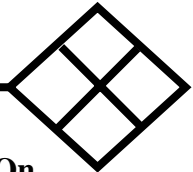
### Umpire responsibilities:

PL moves close to the pitchers mound and observes the outfield coverage.



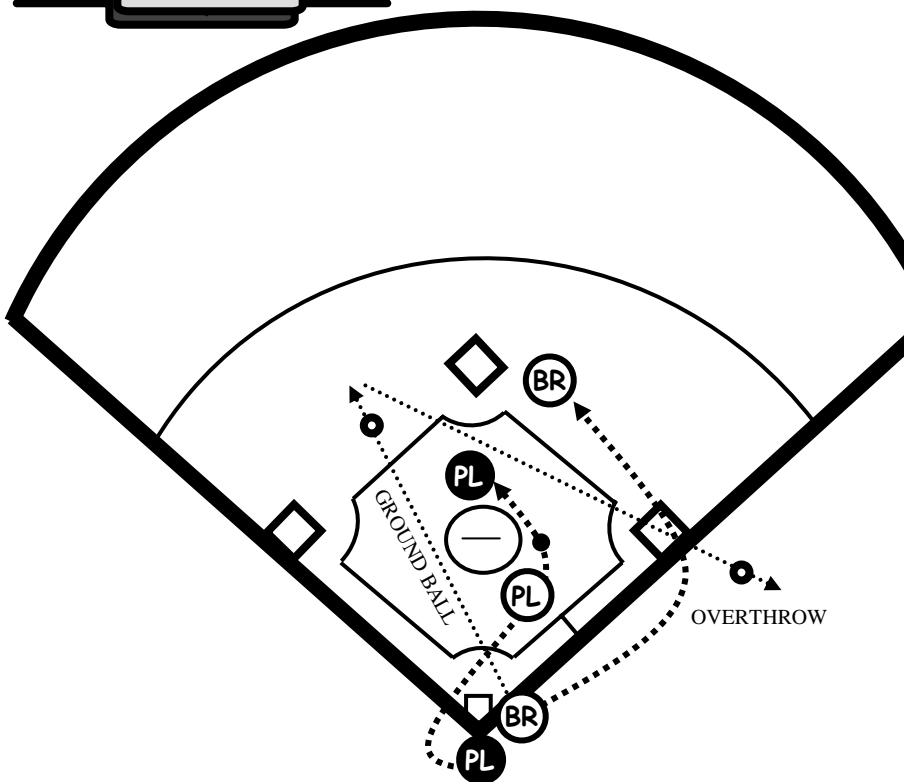
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## Plays Within the Infield: Overthrow



Man Mechanics

## 1.3.3 No Runners On

**Action on the field:**

Ground ball to shortstop,  
overthrown to first base.

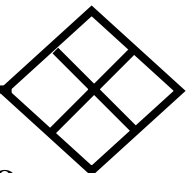
**Umpire responsibilities:**

Since the ball is overthrown at  
first base, PL enters the infield  
and looks at the touch at first  
base on batter-runner has all  
plays on the base.

PL observes the ball and rules  
if it enters dead-ball territory,  
moving to second base if  
necessary.

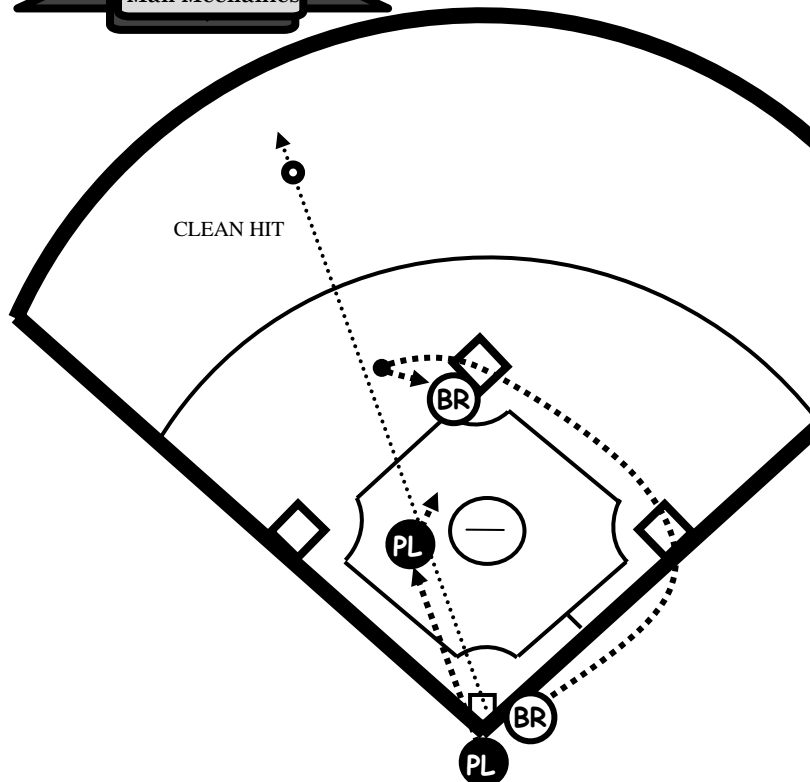
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## Clean Hit to the Outfield



Man Mechanics

## 1.3.4 No Runners On

**Action on the field:**

A clean hit to the outfield.

**Umpire responsibilities:**

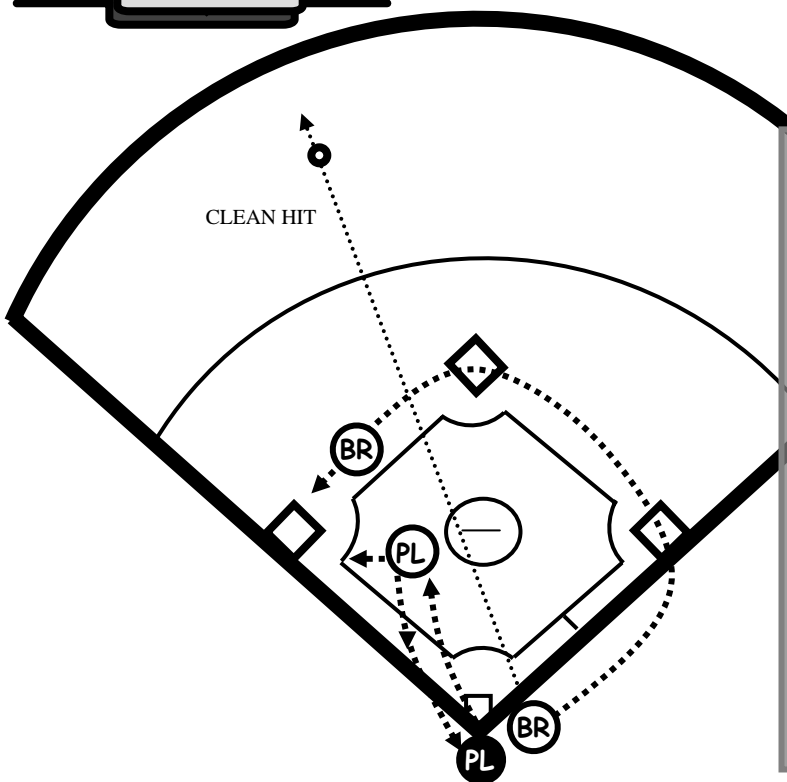
PL enters the infield and  
prepares for all plays on the  
batter-runner at second base.

1

Man Mechanics

# Clean Hit to the Outfield: Extra Bases

1.3.5 No Runners On



## Action on the field:

A clean hit to the outfield is misplayed, resulting in extra bases.

## Umpire responsibilities:

PL enters the infield looks at the touch at first and Second base on batter-runner and prepares for all plays on the batter-runner at third base.

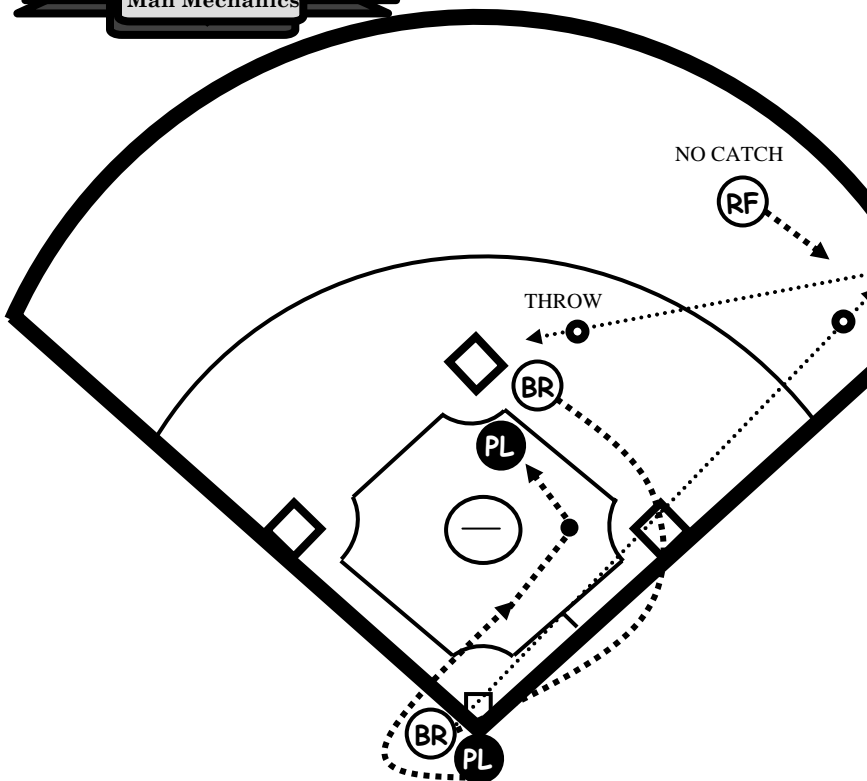
PL observes the outfield coverage and returns to home plate if there're any play there.

1

Man Mechanics

# Fly Ball to Right Field: No Catch

1.3.6 No Runners On



## Action on the field:

Fly ball to right field, no catch; the batter-runner advances toward second base.

## Umpire responsibilities:

PL moves into position to best view the no catch.

PL moves to the infield and has the touch at first base and all plays on the batter-runner at first, second and third base.

## SECTION 1.4

## Initial Positions and Outfield Coverage

## Infield Catch Coverage

PL has catches:

1. All catches

## Fair/Foul Coverage

PL has all outfield coverage's

## Plays Within the Infield

## 1.4.1 Runner on First

**Action on the field:**

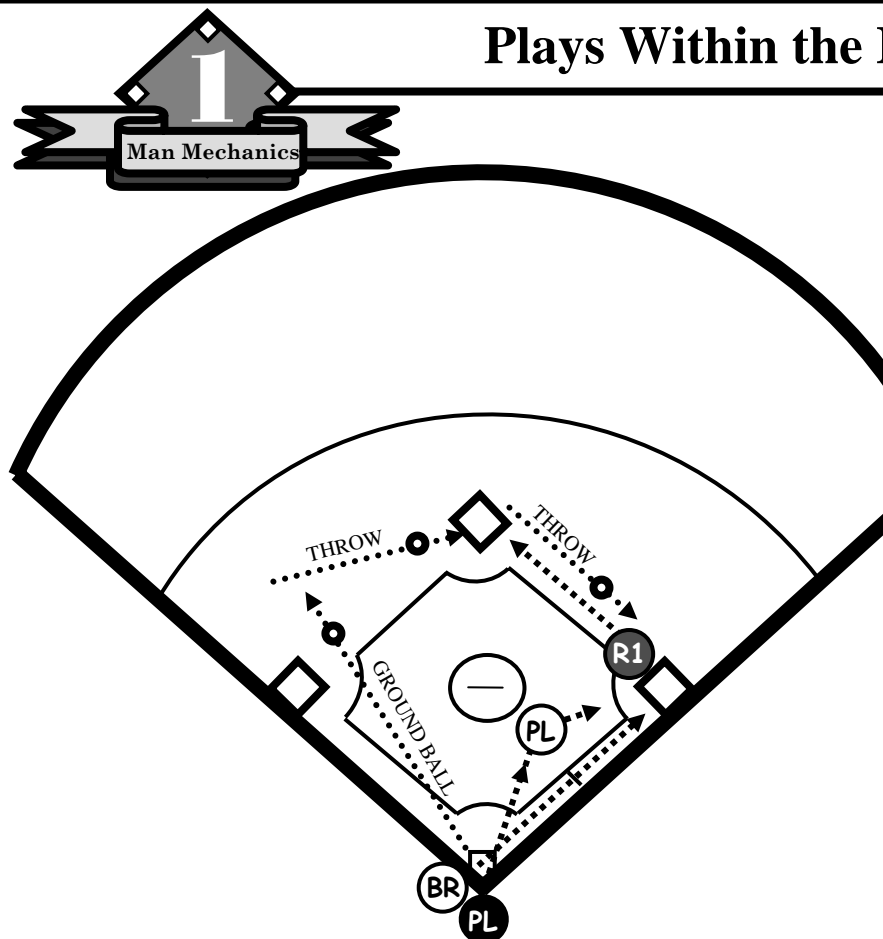
Double-play ground ball to third base, with a throw to second base and a second throw to first base.

**Umpire responsibilities:**

PL move to the first base side of the pitcher's mound to rule on plays at second and first base, including a "drift" toward first due to a potential double play.

PL has secondary responsibility swipe tag and / or pulled foot at first base.

Note: On any batted ball within the home plate area or near the first-base line, PL must remain with the batter-runner to observe him running within the running lane.



# Plays Within the Infield: Overthrow

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Man Mechanics

R1

## 1.4.2 Runner on First

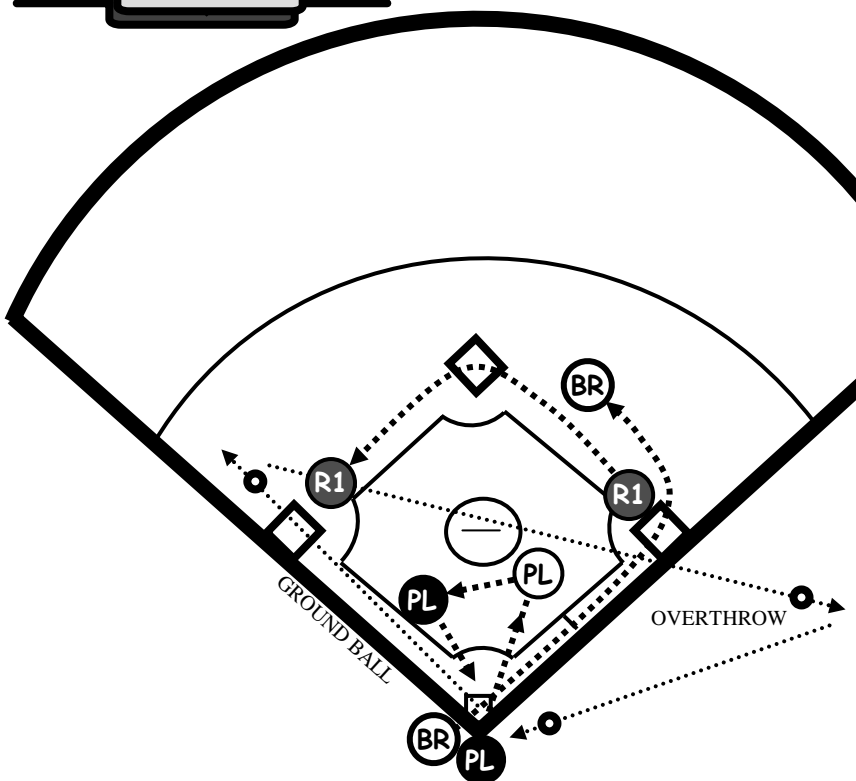
### Action on the field:

Ground ball to third base with an overthrow to first base; R1 advances to third base; batter-runner advances to second base.

### Umpire responsibilities:

PL is responsible for the ball going out of play and has all plays at first. Second and third base.

If a play develops at third base and R1 then attempts to advance to home plate on the wild throw, PL must retreat (to third base side) for any play at home plate.



# Plays Within the Infield: PL Stays On the Foul Line

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Man Mechanics

R1

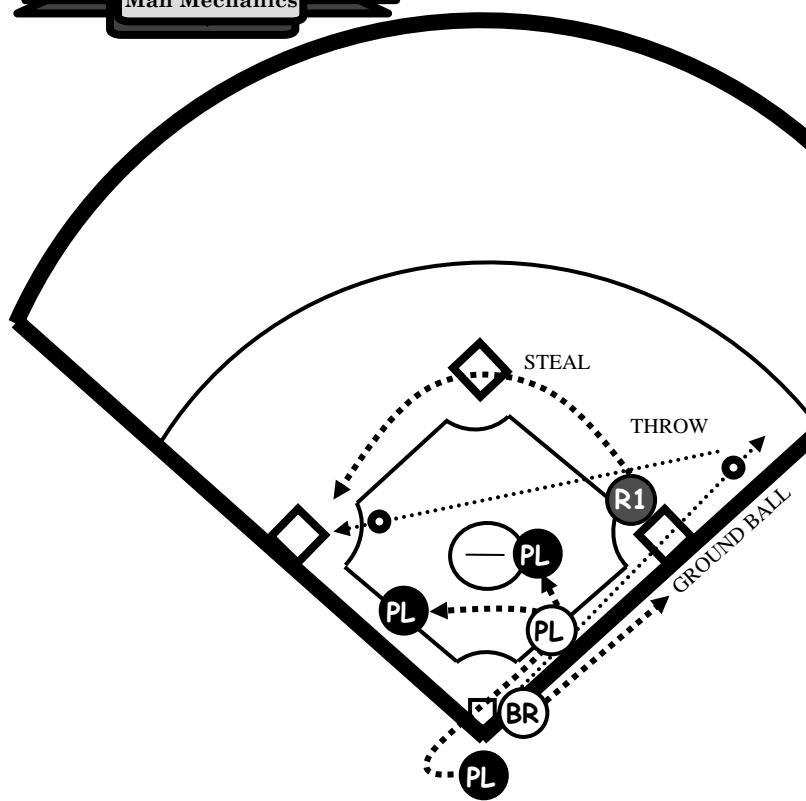
## 1.4.3 Runner on First

### Action on the field:

Ground ball along the first-base; R1 after seal attempt of second base, advance toward third base on the ground ball, drawing a throw there.

### Umpire responsibilities:

On any batted ball within the home plate area or near the first-base line, PL must remain near the foul line to judge fair/foul and must stay with the batter-runner to observe the batter-runner running within the running lane. When PL stays on the line; He also has any plays that develop at first, second or third base.





# Clean Hit to the Outfield

1

Man Mechanics

R1

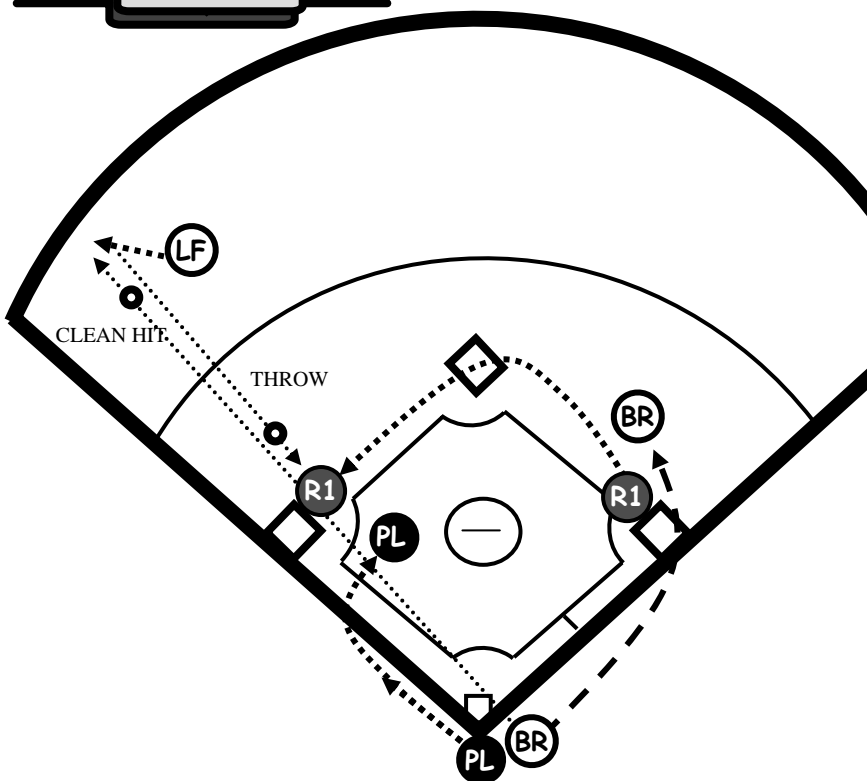
## 1.4.4 Runner on First

### Action on the field:

A clean hit to left field, no catch; R1 advances to third base, drawing a throw there.

### Umpire responsibilities:

PL reads R1 and the ball and moves into a position for any plays at third base on R1.



# Clean Hit to the Outfield: Overthrow

1

Man Mechanics

R1

## 1.4.5 Runner on First

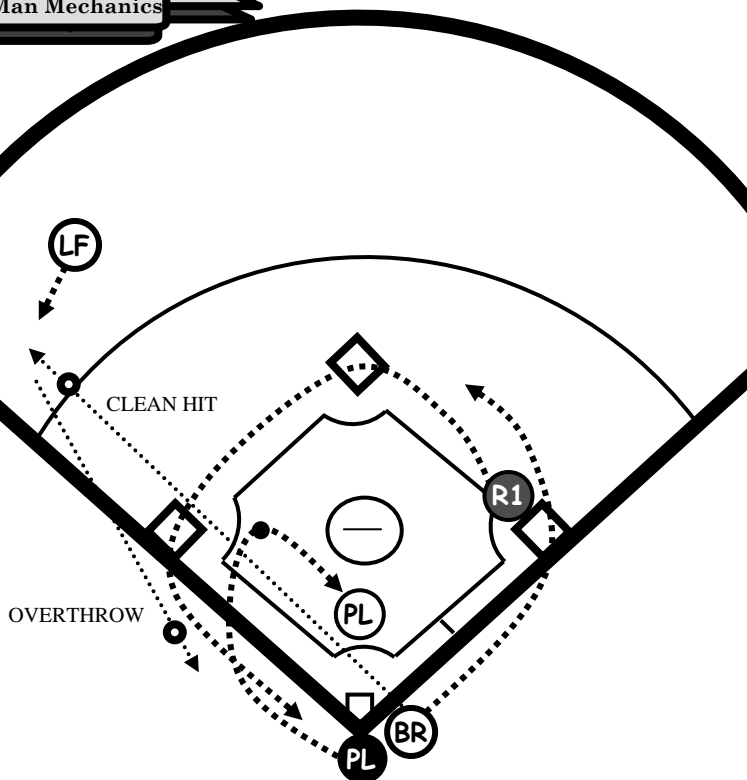
### Action on the field:

A clean hit to left, no catch; R1 advances toward third base, drawing a throw there; the ball is overthrow home plate; the batter-runner rounds first base.

### Umpire responsibilities:

If a play develops at third base and R1 then attempts to advance to home plate on a wild throw, PL must retreat (in fair territory) for any play at home plate.

And observes the batter-runner touch first base and has all plays at first, second and third base on the batter-runner.

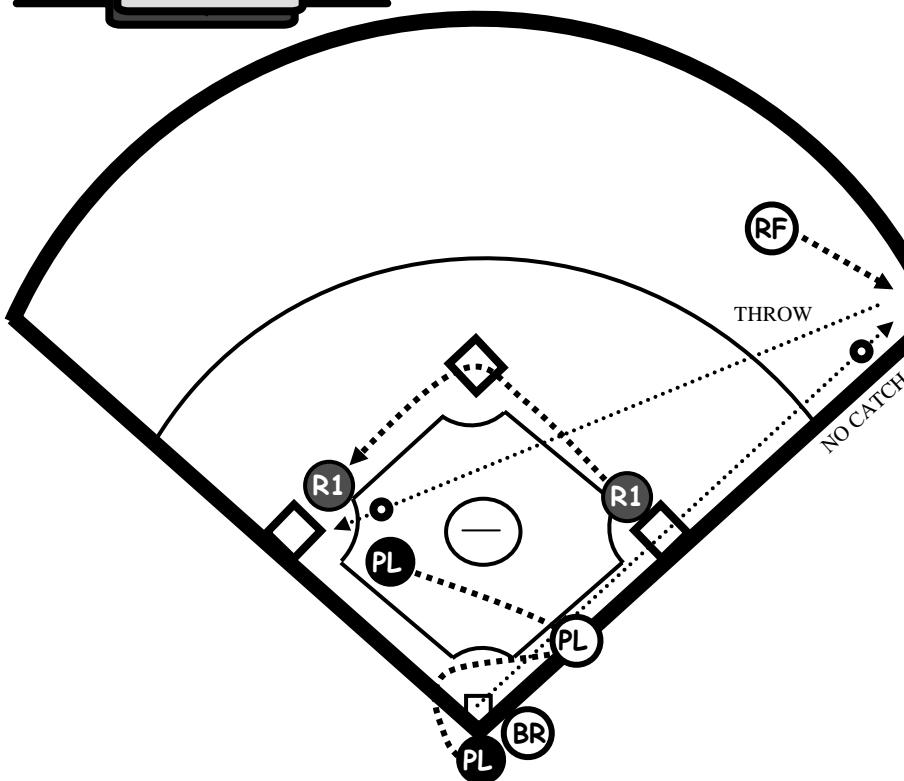


## Fly Ball to Right Field: No Catch: PL Stays on the Foul Line

1

Man Mechanics

R1



### 1.4.6 Runner on First

#### Action on the field:

Deep fly ball along the right field foul line, no catch; PL remains along the foul line; R1 advances toward third base, drawing a throw there; the batter-runner rounds first base.

#### Umpire responsibilities:

Since the ball is near the foul line; PL must remain near the foul line to rule on catch/no catch and fair/foul. He also has any plays that develop at first, second and third base.

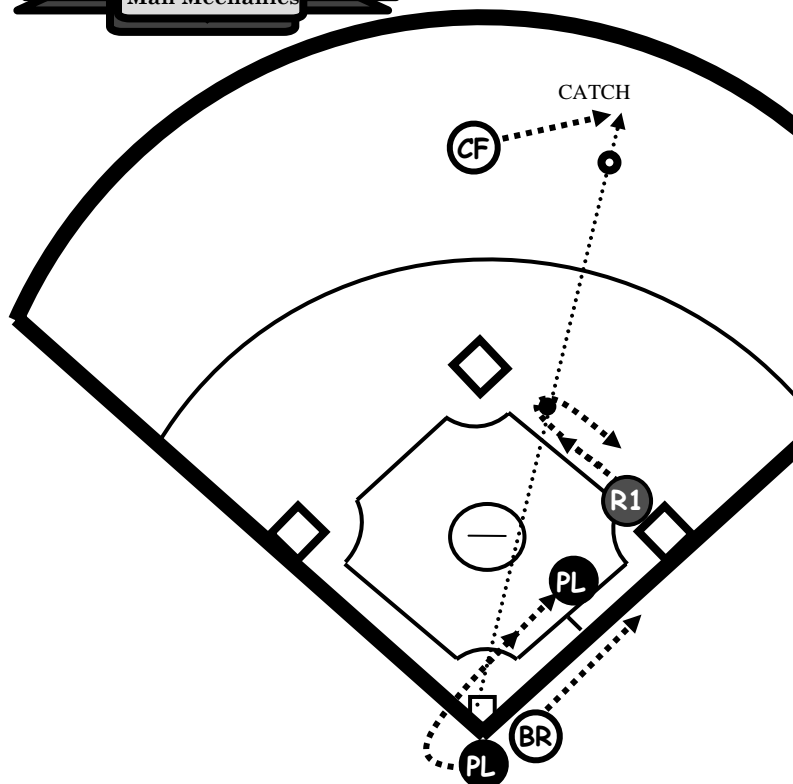
Note: If the ball is caught, PL moves toward first base for a possible play on R1 at first base.

## Fly Ball to Center Field: Catch

1

Man Mechanics

R1



### 1.4.7 Runner on First

#### Action on the field:

Fly ball caught by the center fielder, R1 returns to first base.

#### Umpire responsibilities:

PL moves to the best position possible to view the catch. PL also is prepared for any throw back on R1 at first base plus any play at second and third base.

PL must read the batter ball. If the PL reads that the ball will be caught, PL should move toward first base.

Note: If the PL reads that the ball will not be caught, PL rotates to third base for any play on R1. If a play develops at third base and R1 then attempts to advance to home plate on a wild throw, PL must retreat (in fair territory) for any play at home plate.

PL then observes the action and has all plays at first and second base on R1 and all plays on the Batter-runner at all base.

## SECTION 1.5

## Initial Positions and Outfield Coverage

## Infield Catch Coverage

PL has catches:

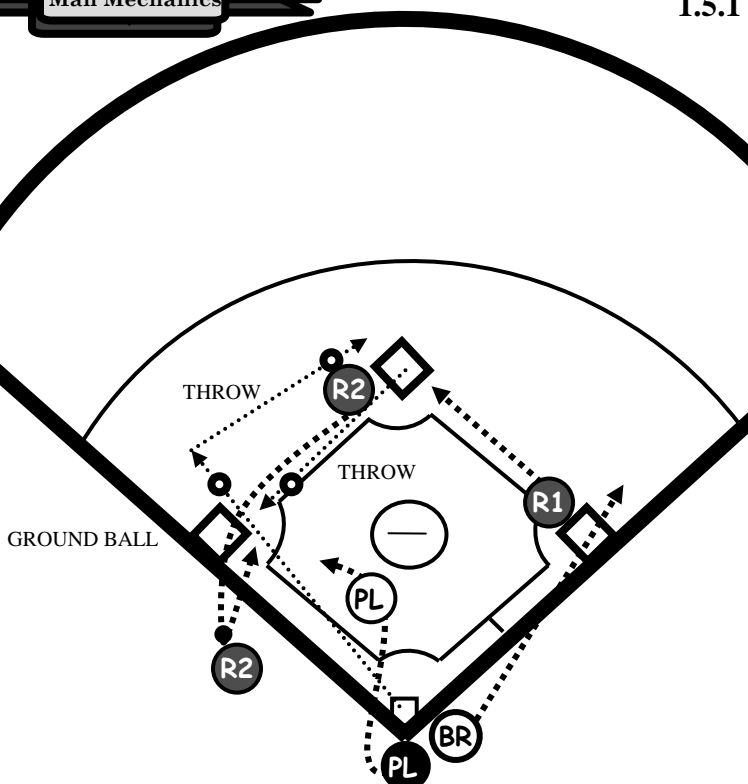
1. All catches

## Fair/Foul Coverage

PL has all outfield coverage's

## Initial Positions and Outfield Coverage

## 1.5.1 Runners on First and Second

**Action on the field:**

Slowly hit ground ball to the third baseman, who throws to second base to retire R1; R2 rounds third base and draws a throw from the second baseman; the batter-runner advances toward first base.

**Umpire responsibilities:**

PL moves into the best position to rule on initial plays at first, second or third base.

PL moves to a position to (third base side of the mound). On the slide at second base by R1. If there is a second play in the infield at third base, PL has responsibility for R2 advancing.

# Clean Hit to the Outfield

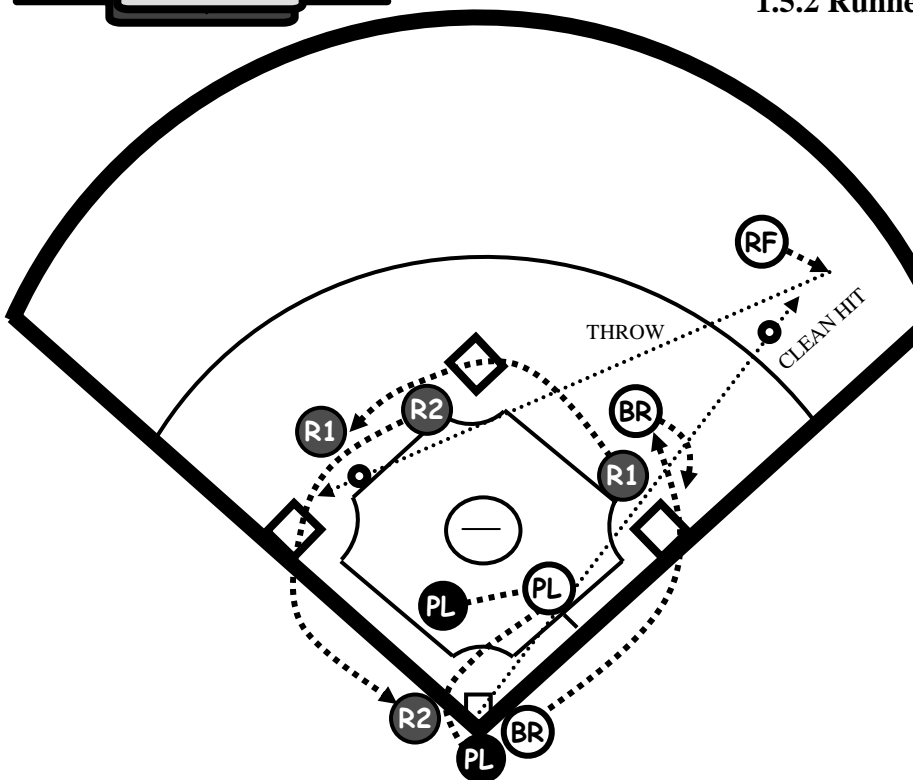
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Man Mechanics

## 1.5.2 Runners on First and Second

R2

R1



### Action on the field:

A clean hit to right field; R2 advances toward home plate; R1 advances toward third base, drawing a throw there; the batter-runner advances toward first base.

### Umpire responsibilities:

PL observes R2's touch of home plate and all base touches at first, second and third base. PL moves to a position to rule on all runners and moves to a position to rule on all plays on the base.

PL observes base touches at all the base on all runners. He also moves to a position to rule on all plays on the bases.

## Runners on First, Second and Third Base

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Man Mechanics

# SECTION 1.6

R2

R3

R1

## Initial Positions and Outfield Coverage

### Infield Catch Coverage

PL has catches:

1. All catches

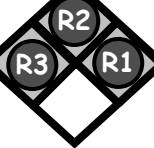
### Fair/Foul Coverage

PL has all outfield coverage's

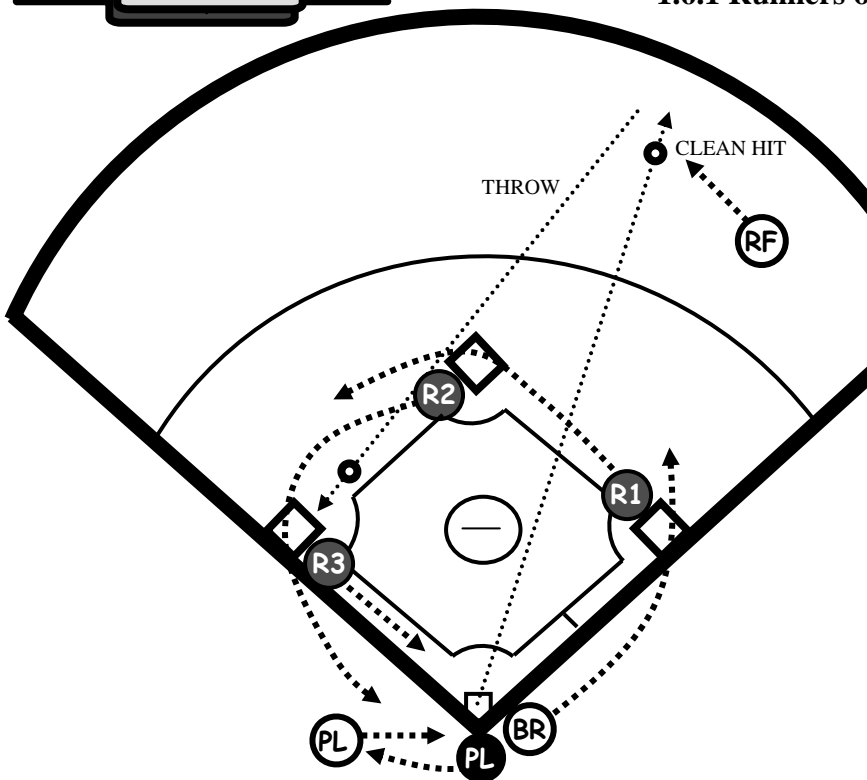
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Man Mechanics

# Clean Hit to the Outfield



## 1.6.1 Runners on First, Second and Third



### Action on the field:

A clean hit to right-center field; R3 advance to home plate; R2 advances to home plate; R1 advances toward third base, drawing a throw there; the batter-runner rounds first base.

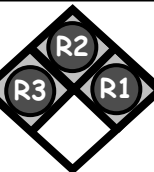
### Umpire responsibilities:

PL observes R3's touch of home plate and the third base touch of R2 (and R1 if applicable). PL moves to a position to rule on all plays at home, third and second base.

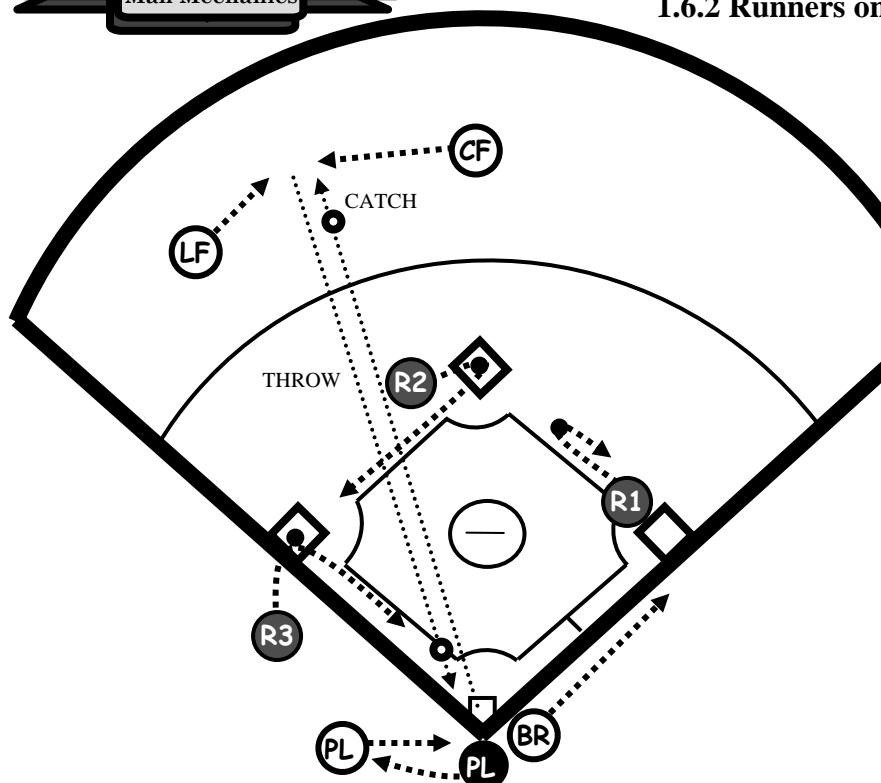
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Man Mechanics

# Fly Ball to Left-Center Field: Catch



## 1.6.2 Runners on First, Second and Third



### Action on the field:

Fly ball caught by the center fielder; R3 tags up at third and draws a throw to home plate; R2 tag up at second and advances toward third base; R1 retreats to first base

### Umpire responsibilities:

PL move to a position to best view R3's tap up at third base and returns to home plate for all plays there.

PL also can moves to the best position possible to view the catch. PL reads the runners and throw and moves to a position to rule on all plays on the base.

Note: If the ball is not caught, PL reads the runners and throw and moves to a position to rule on all plays on the bases and home plate.

## SECTION 1.7

## Initial Positions and Outfield Coverage

## Infield Catch Coverage

PL has catches:

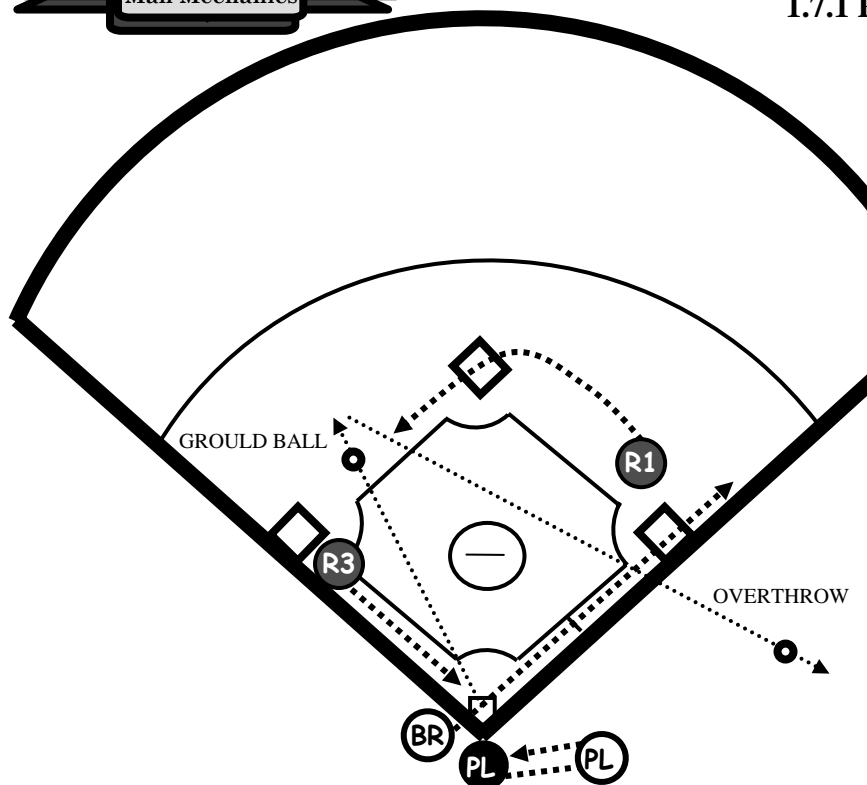
1. All catches

## Fair/Foul Coverage

PL has all outfield coverage's

## Plays Within the Infield: Overthrow

## 1.7.1 Runners on First and Second

**Action on the field:**

Ground ball to shortstop with an overthrow to first base; R3 advances toward home plate; R1 advances toward second base and then advances toward third base on the overthrow.

**Umpire responsibilities:**

PL must see touch home plate. If the ball is overthrown at first base, PL must be in the position to rule on the overthrow and whether the ball went out of play. If R1 then attempts to advance to home plate on the wild throw, PL must be in position for any possible play there.

# Plays Within the Infield

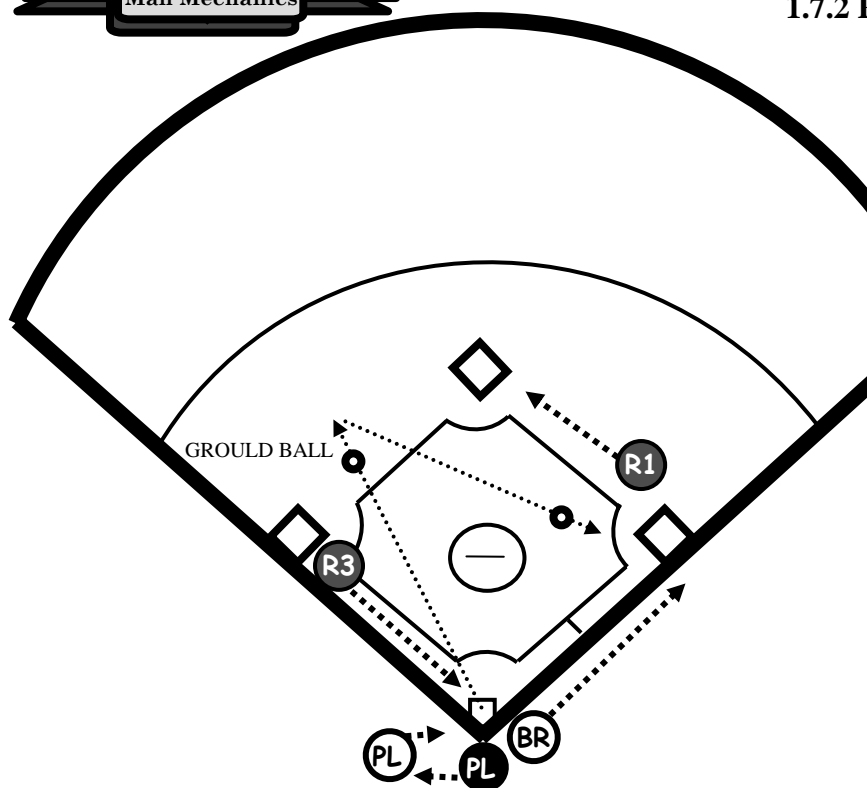
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Man Mechanics

R3

R1

## 1.7.2 Runners on First and Second



### Action on the field:

Ground ball to shortstop throws to first base; R3 advances toward home plate; R1 advances toward second base and then advances toward third base.

### Umpire responsibilities:

PL moves to first base extended back observes the touch at home plate by R3 and rules on the play at first base.

# Fly Ball to Center Field: Catch

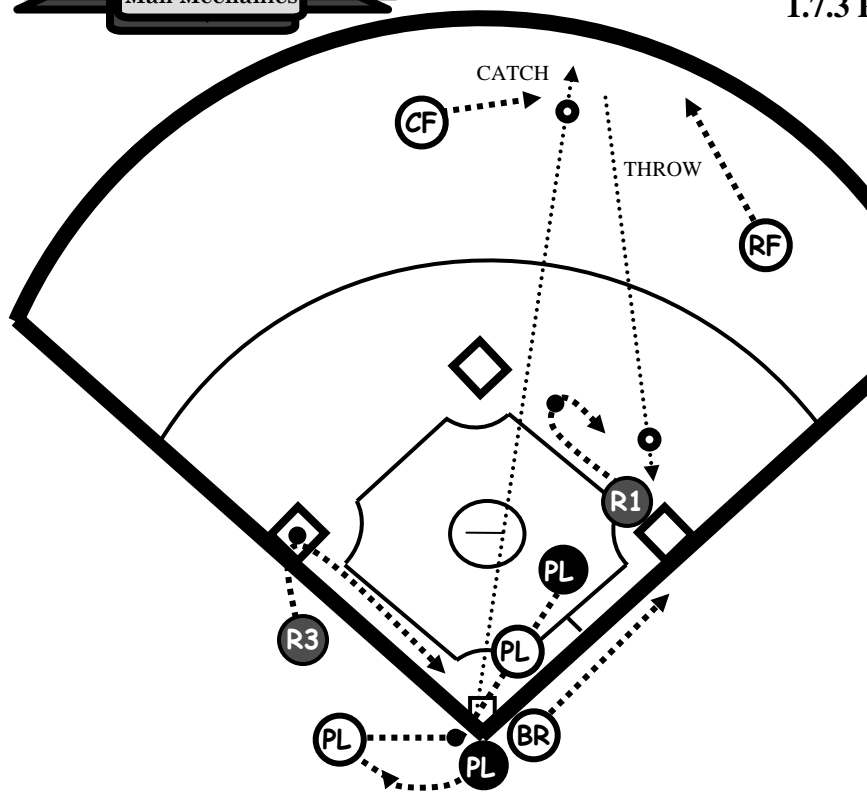
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Man Mechanics

R3

R1

## 1.7.3 Runners on First and Second



### Action on the field:

A fly ball caught by the center fielder; R3 tags at third and advances toward home plate; R1 advance too far toward second base, then scramble to get back to first base and draws a throw there.

### Umpire responsibilities:

PL moves to the best position to view R3's tag up. PL returns to home plate for all plays there.

PL see R1's Scramble back to first base and he moves to the infield for a play there.

Note: PL observes R3's touch of home plate.

# Fly Ball to Left Field: Catch

R3

R1

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Man Mechanics

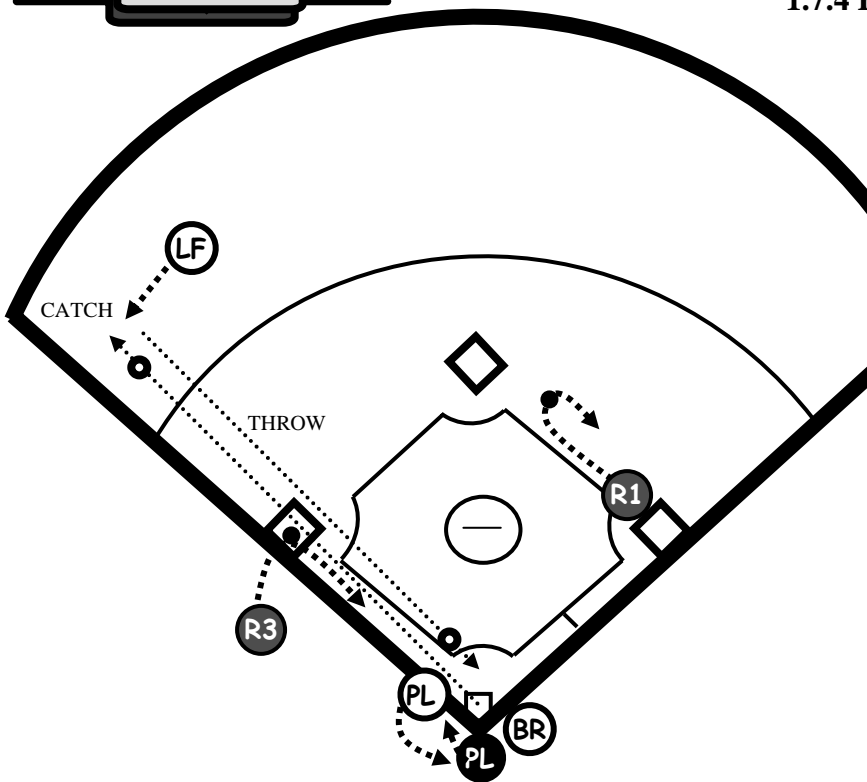
## 1.7.4 Runners on First and Second

### Action on the field:

Fly ball caught by the left fielder; R3 tags up and advances toward home plate, drawing a throw there; R1 retreats toward first base.

### Umpire responsibilities:

PL moves to the best position to view R3's tag up and staying on the foul line for fair/foul coverage. PL returns to home plate for all plays there.



# Fly Ball to Right Field: No Catch

R3

R1

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Man Mechanics

## 1.7.5 Runners on First and Second

### Action on the field:

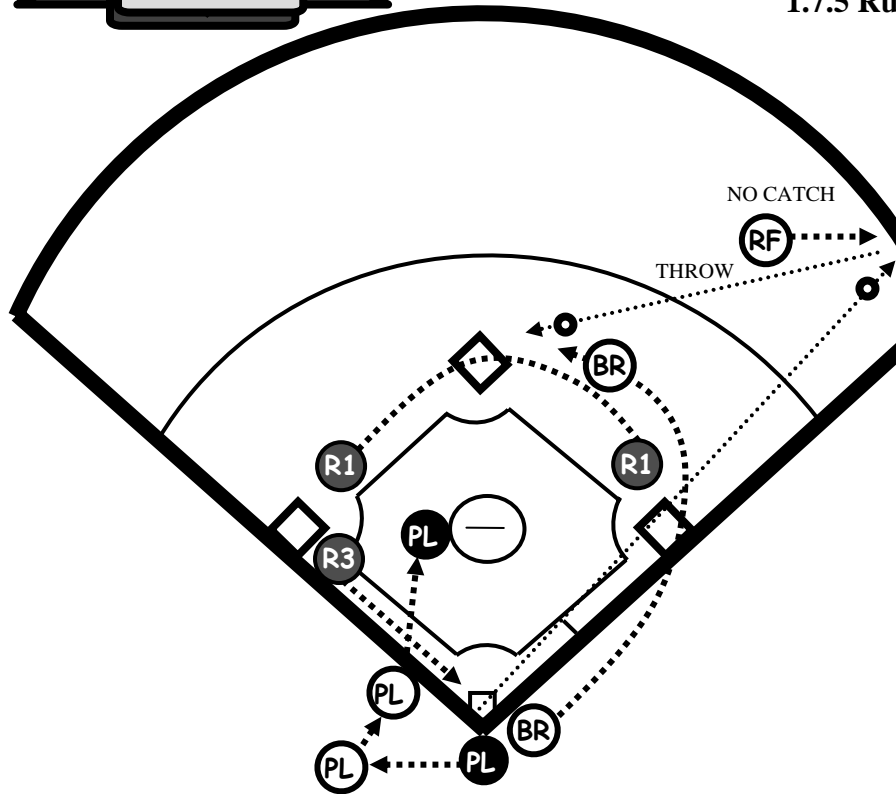
Deep fly ball to right field, no catch; R3 advances toward home plate; R1 advances toward second base and draws a throw there.

### Umpire responsibilities:

PL moves to the best position to view R3's tag up and staying on the foul line, first base extended back for fair/foul coverage.

PL see R1's advancing to second base he moves to the infield for a play there.

Note: PL observes R3's touch of home plate and R2's touch of second base.





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Man Mechanics

## Runner on Second Base

R2

## SECTION 1.8

## Initial Positions and Outfield Coverage

## Infield Catch Coverage

PL has catches:

1. All catches

## Fair/Foul Coverage

PL has all outfield coverage's

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Man Mechanics

## Plays Within the Infield

R2

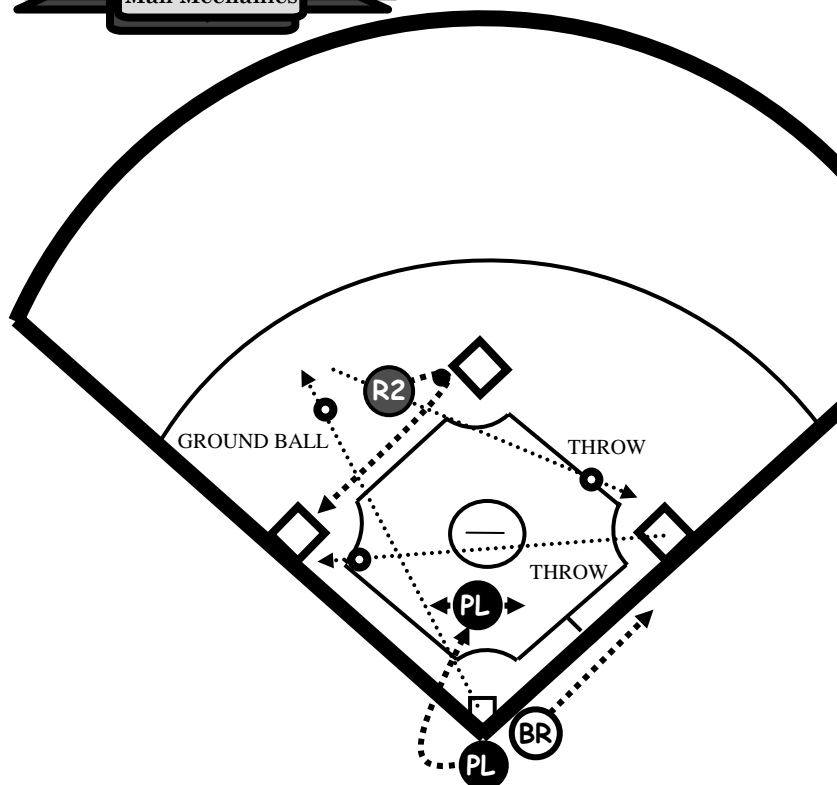
## 1.8.1 Runner on Second

## Action on the field:

Ground ball to shortstop with a throw to first base; R2 advance toward third base on the throw and draws a throw to third base.

## Umpire responsibilities:

PL observes the action at first base looking for swipe tag or pulled foot by the baseman and then returns to see the play at third base.



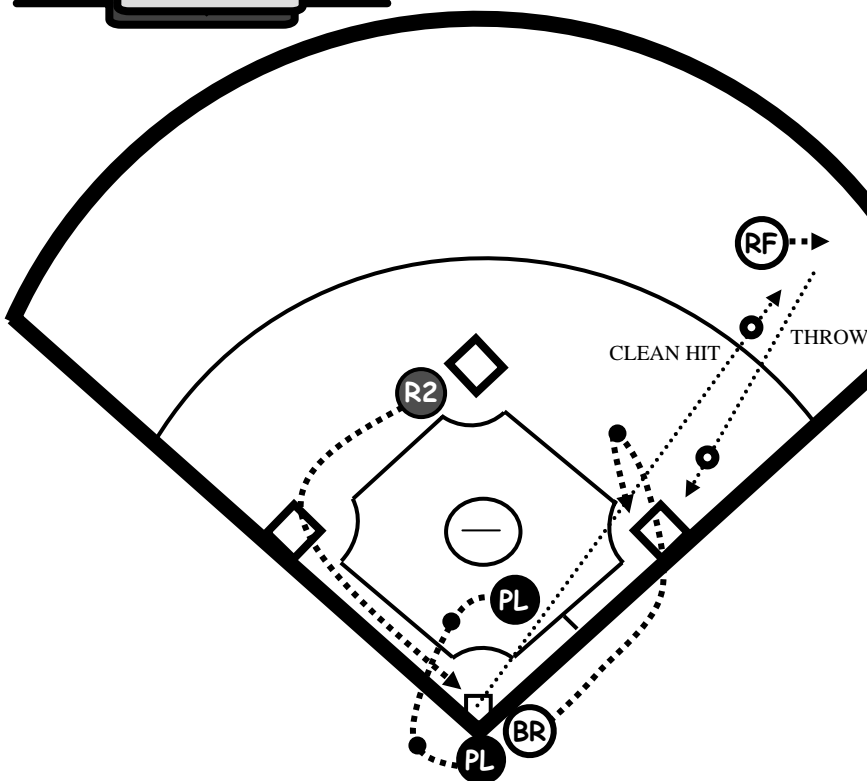
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Man Mechanics

# Clean Hit to Outfield

R2

## 1.8.2 Runner on Second



### Action on the field:

Clean hit to right field, no catch; R2 advances toward home plate; the batter-runner rounds first and draws a throwback into first base.

### Umpire responsibilities:

PL observes R2's touch at third and home plate.

PL also see batter-runners touch of first base and moves to first base for the play on batter-runners, overrun of first base.

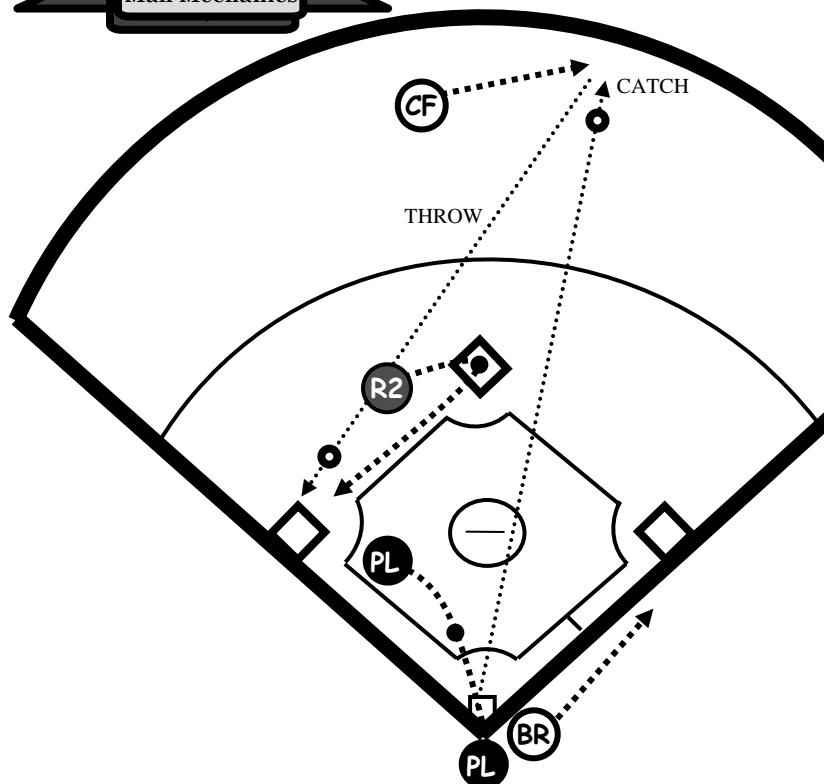
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Man Mechanics

# Fly Ball to Center Field: Catch

R2

## 1.8.3 Runner on Second



### Action on the field:

Fly ball caught by the center field; R2 tags up and advances toward third, drawing a throw there.

### Umpire responsibilities:

PL moves to the best position possible to view the catch. PL observes R2's tap up and moves to position to rule on all plays at second, third base and home plate.

Note: If the ball is not caught; PL retreats and moves to position for all plays on the bases and home plate.

## SECTION 1.9

## Initial Positions and Outfield Coverage

## Infield Catch Coverage

PL has catches:

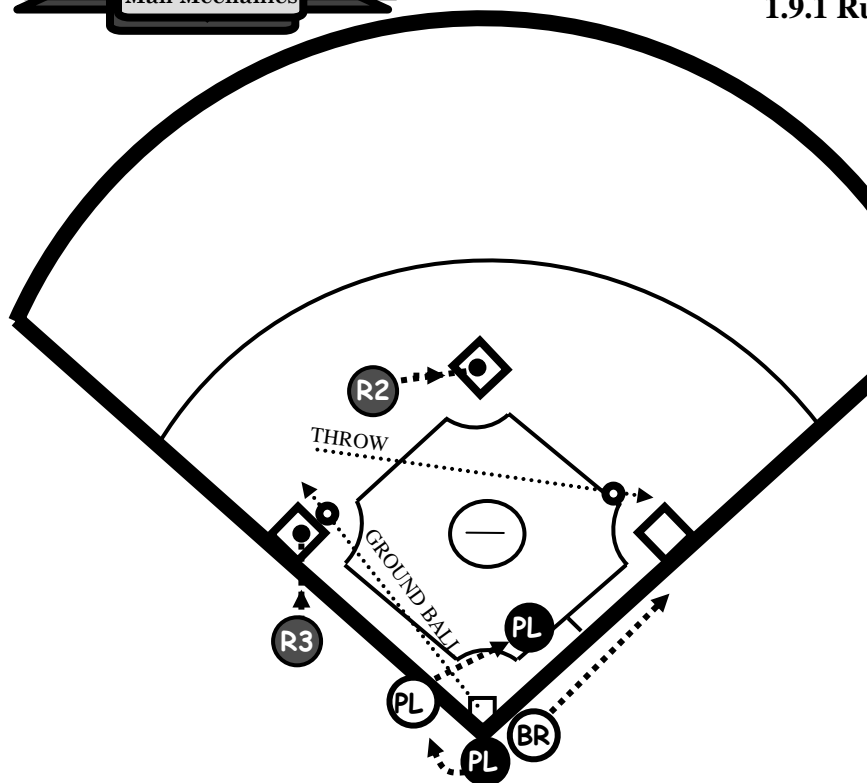
1. All catches

## Fair/Foul Coverage

PL has all outfield coverage's

## Plays Within the Infield

## 1.9.1 Runners on Second and Third

**Action on the field:**

Ground ball to third base with a throw to first base; R3 retreats to third base; R2 retreats to second base.

**Umpire responsibilities:**

PL moves into position to rule on the fair/foul ball. PL secondary responsibility for look for swipe tag and pulled foot.

PL moves into the infield for the best position to rule on all plays at first, second and third base.

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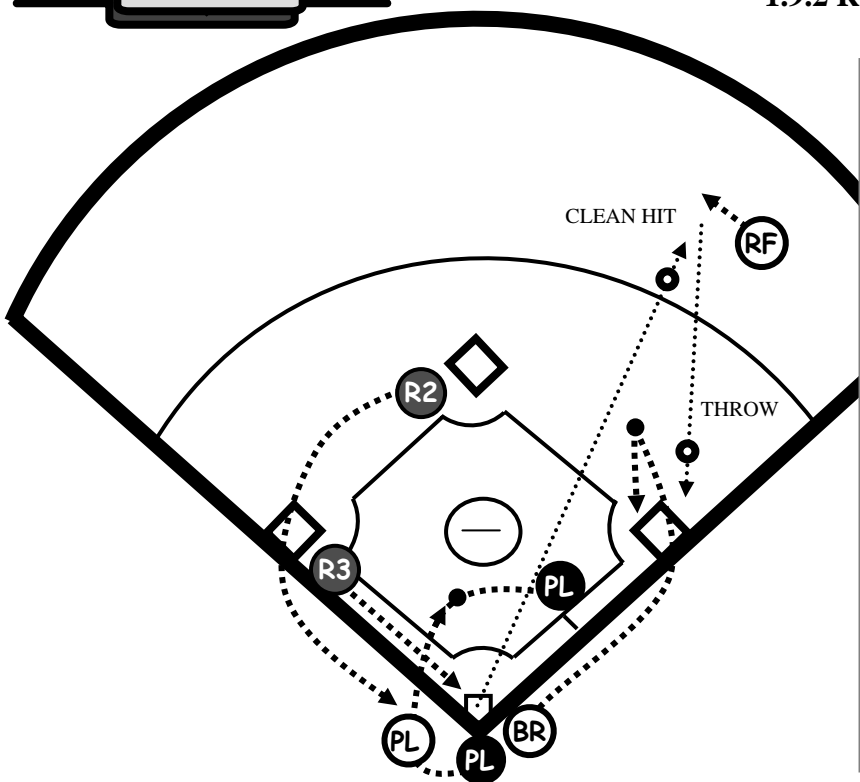
Man Mechanics

# Clean Hit to Outfield

R3

R2

## 1.9.2 Runners on Second and Third



### Action on the field:

Clean hit to right field, no catch; R3 advances toward home plate; R2 advances toward home plate; the batter-runner rounds first base and draws a throw back to first base.

### Umpire responsibilities:

PL observes R3's touch of home plate and all base touches.

PL moves into the infield to rule on the batter-runner overrunning first base.

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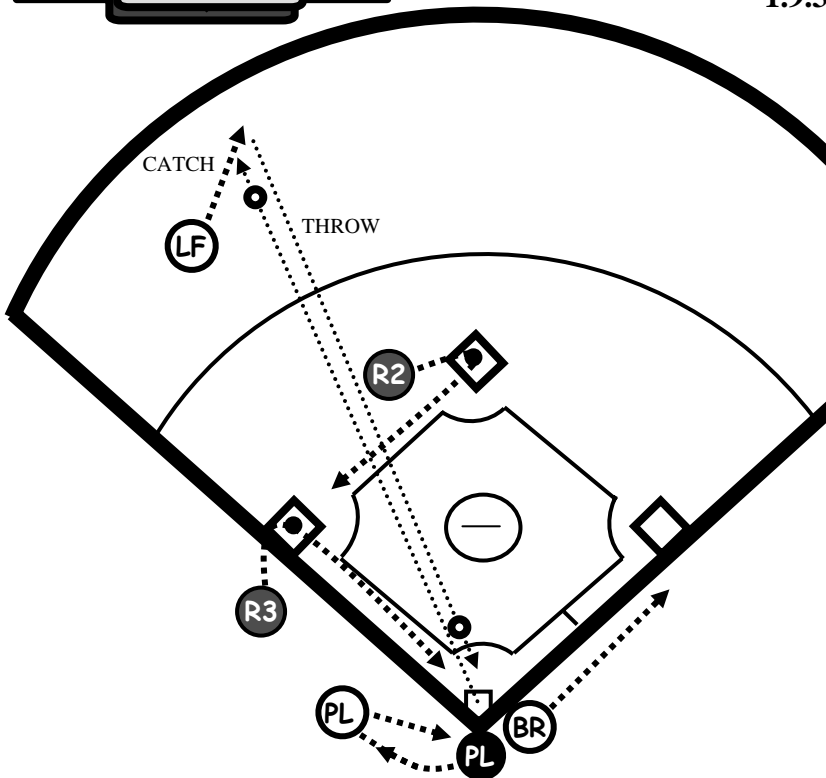
Man Mechanics

# Fly Ball to Left-Center Field Catch

R3

R2

## 1.9.3 Runners on Second and Third



### Action on the field:

Fly ball caught by the left fielder; R3 tags up and advances toward home plate, drawing a throw there; R2 tags up and advances toward third base.

### Umpire responsibilities:

PL moves to the best position possible to view the catch and R3's tag up and R2's tag up. PL returns to home plate for all plays there.

Note: If the ball is not caught, PL moves to position for all plays on the bases and home plate.

## Man Mechanics

A diagram of a baseball field showing player positions and movement paths. The field is represented by a diamond shape with a circle in the center representing the pitcher's mound. The bases are marked with squares. The pitcher's mound is marked with a circle and a horizontal line. The positions are labeled as follows: LF (Left Field), R2 (Right Center Field), R3 (Right Field), PL (Pitcher), BR (Batter), and PL (Pitcher). The paths are indicated by dotted lines with arrows. A path from the pitcher to the batter is labeled "THROW". A path from the batter to the first base is labeled "CATCH".

Note: If the ball is not caught, PL  
movers to position for all plays on  
the bases and home plate.

## Man Mechanics

A diagram of a baseball field showing player positions and movement paths. The field is represented by a diamond shape with concentric arcs for the bases. The pitcher's mound is marked with a circle and a horizontal line. The bases are marked with squares. The pitcher is labeled 'PL' and is positioned on the pitcher's mound. The catcher is labeled 'BR' and is positioned behind home plate. The first baseman is labeled 'R3' and is positioned at first base. The second baseman is labeled 'R2' and is positioned at second base. The third baseman is labeled 'R1' and is positioned at third base. The right fielder is labeled 'RF' and is positioned in the right field. The left fielder is labeled 'LF' and is positioned in the left field. The center fielder is labeled 'CF' and is positioned in the center field. Dotted arrows indicate movement paths: from 'PL' to 'BR', from 'BR' to 'R3', from 'R3' to 'R2', from 'R2' to 'R1', from 'R1' to 'RF', and from 'RF' to 'CATCH'. A solid arrow labeled 'THROW' points from 'R1' towards the center of the field.

Note: if the ball is not caught, PL has all plays on the bases and home plate.

## SECTION 1.10

## Initial Positions and Outfield Coverage

## Infield Catch Coverage

PL has catches:

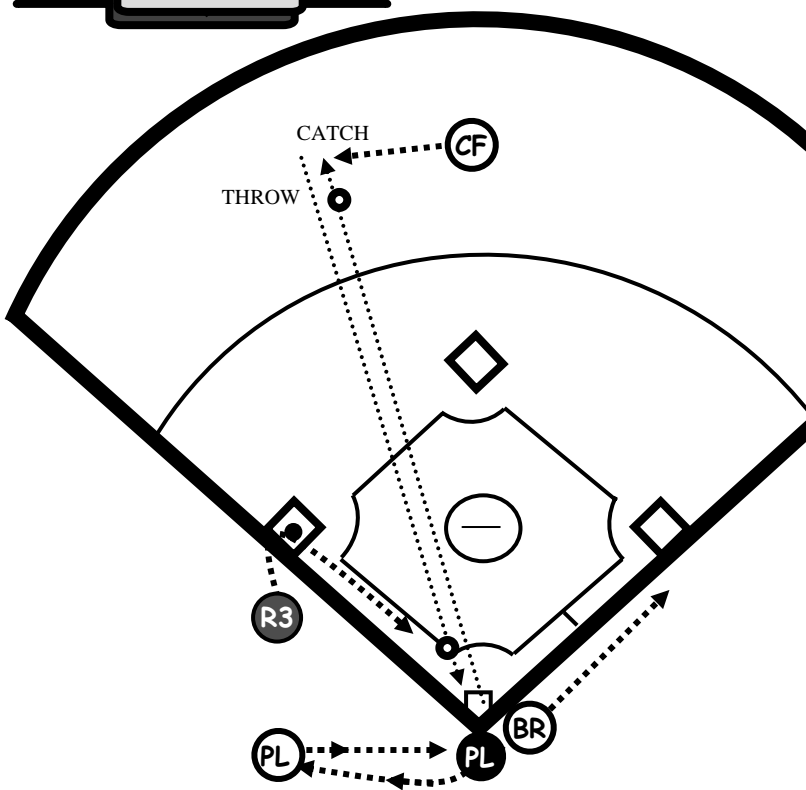
1. All catches

## Fair/Foul Coverage

PL has all outfield coverage's

## Fly Ball to Center field: Catch

## 1.10.1 Runner on Third



## Action on the field:

Fly ball caught by the center field; R3 tag up and advances toward home pate, drawing a throw there.

## Umpire responsibilities:

PL moves to the best position possible to view the catch and observe R3's tag up at third base.

PL returns to home plate for all plays there.

Note: If the ball is not caught, PL observes the batter-runner and has all plays in the bases and home plate.

# Fly Ball to Left Field: Catch

R3

1

Man Mechanics

## 1.10.2 Runner on Third

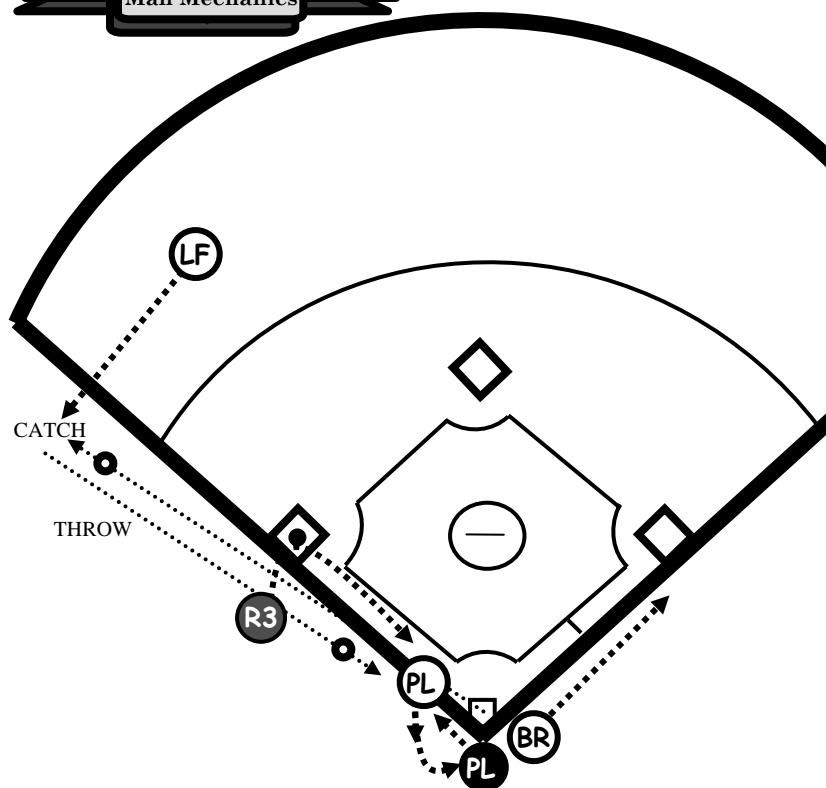
### Action on the field:

Foul-fly ball caught by left fielder; R3 tag up and advances toward home plate, drawing a throw there.

### Umpire responsibilities:

PL moves to the best position possible to view the catch and observe R3's tag up at third base. PL returns to home plate for all plays there.

Note: If the ball is not caught, it is a foul ball.



# Fly Ball to Right Field: Catch

R3

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Man Mechanics

## 1.10.3 Runner on Third

### Action on the field:

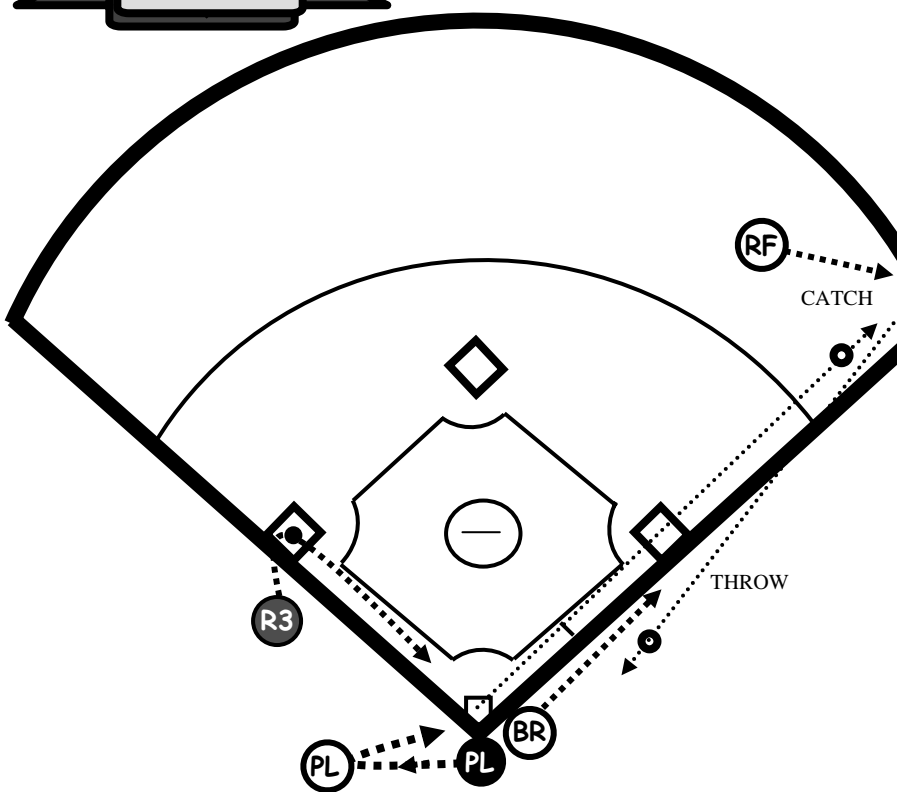
Deep fly ball caught by right fielder; R3 tags up and advances toward home plate, drawing a throw there.

### Umpire responsibilities:

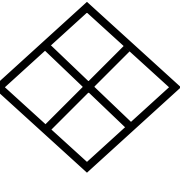
PL move first base line extended back for catch, no catch fair/foul responsibilities and seeing R3's tag up.

PL returns to home plate for all plays there.

Note: If the ball is not caught, PL moves to position for all plays on the bases and home plate.

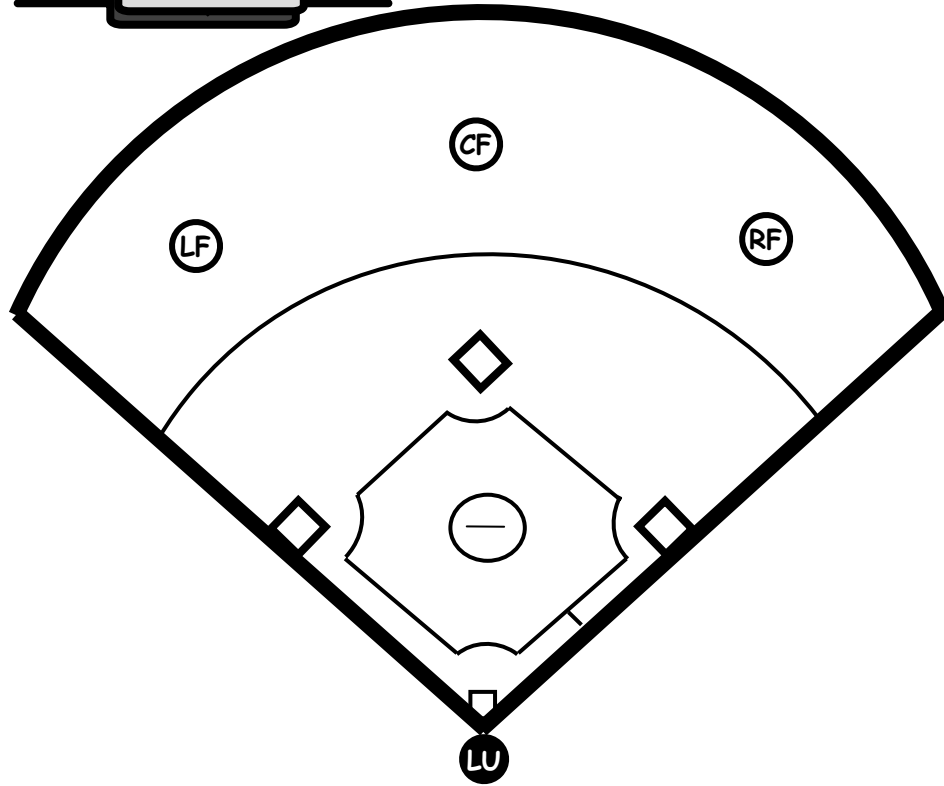


# Notes



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Man Mechanics



Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

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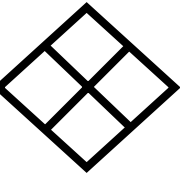
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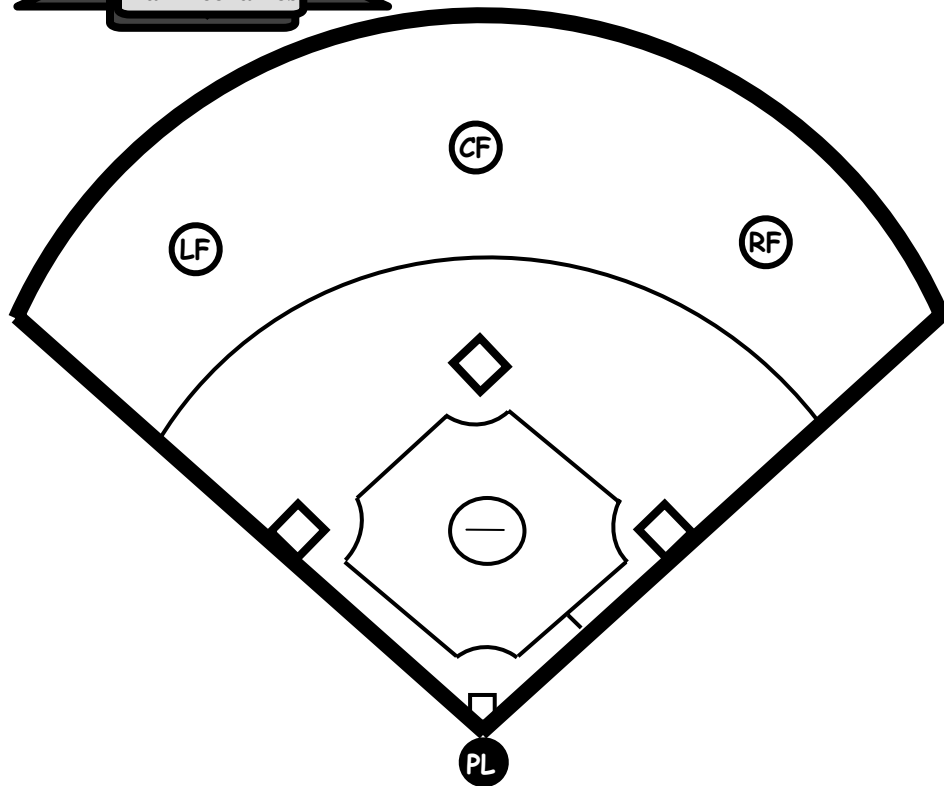
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# Notes



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Man Mechanics



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# One Umpire Mechanics

## Section 2 – **Working behind the Mound**

# CALLING BALLS/STRIKES FROM BEHIND THE MOUND? FOLLOW AN EASY SAFETY TIP

Jun 6th, 2020

*WHAT THIS ARTICLE IS NOT: This article is not a recommendation for umpires to call balls and strikes from behind-the-mound, nor is it a recommendation for a 1-man system. It is for those who are doing so in any system.*

STAYING SAFE ANNOUNCEMENT from line drives if required and willing to work behind the mound.

## BACK OFF FROM THE MOUND

Brent Rice, former administrator and instructor at the Wendlestedt Umpire School shared this on an [“Umpiring through COVID” Zoom call with the American Sports Officials, Inc.](#)

(Paraphrasing) Distance is not as important as angle. You can get farther back from the mound and still be just as effective calling balls and strikes than if you were hugging the mound.

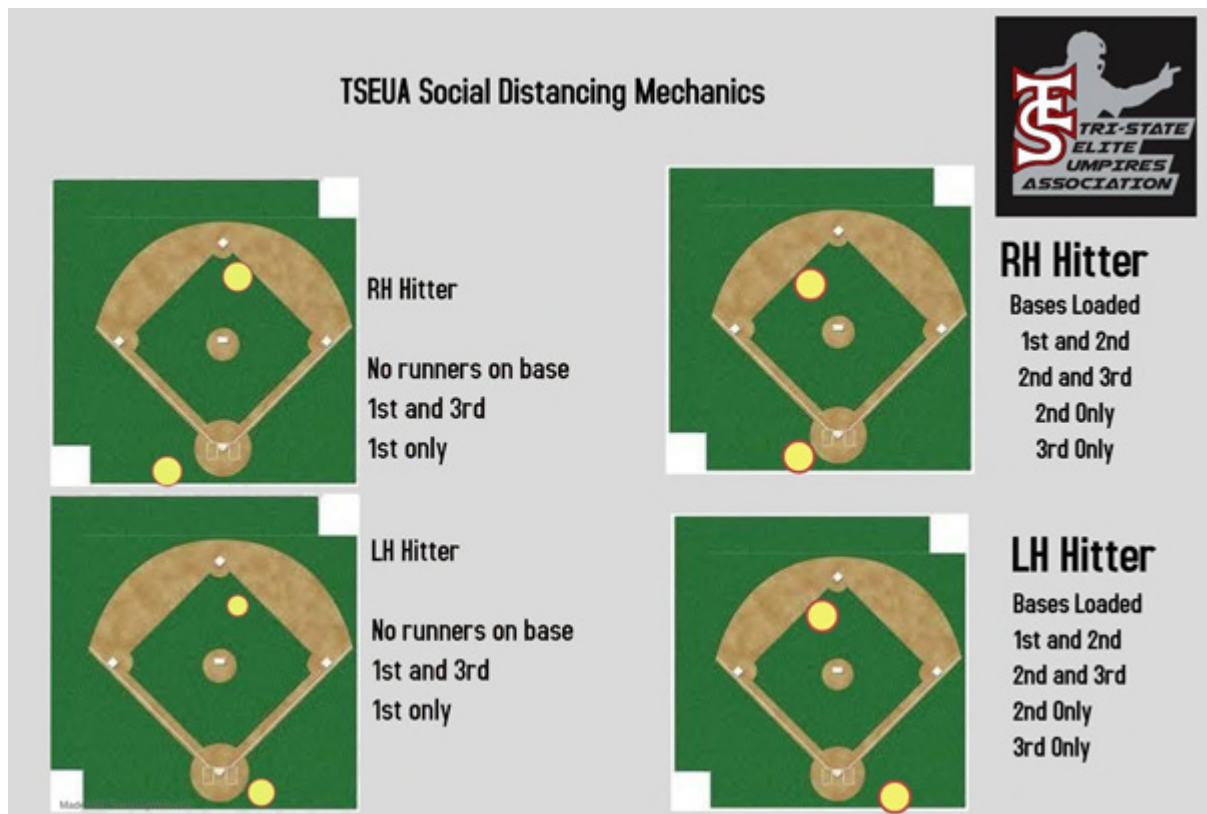


In other words, find the distance behind the mound that works best for you from both an accuracy and safety standpoint. Backing off helps give you more time to react to a line drive.

## SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

"To adhere to social distancing guidelines, we want to best prepare our umpires for any possible scenario.

If that includes calling balls and strikes behind the mound, I would recommend 10-12 feet back when we have a potential steal of 3rd base. Otherwise, I would prefer our umpires 2-3 steps deeper.



The position should change slightly based on age, mobility, etc."