

# *2024 MECHANICS PRESENTATION*

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PRESENTATION PREPARED BY  
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## ***TONIGHTS TOPICS***

**1. NEW PITCHING RULES**

**2. WORKING THE RIM**

**3. CHECK SWINGS**

**4. PICK OFF AT 1<sup>ST</sup> FROM THE “C “POSITION**

**5. UNEXPECTED CALLS REQUIRE STRONG  
VOICE, SIGNALS**

**THE NEW PITCHING RULE ALLOWS FOR THE PITCHER TO HAVE BOTH FEET IN THE AIR DURING THE DELIVERY OF THE PITCH. THE BALL MUST BE RELEASED FROM THE PITCHERS HAND PRIOR TO EITHER FOOT RESETTING ON THE GROUND.**





THIS PICTURE WAS TAKEN IN 2018 , WHEN THIS DELIVERY WAS CLEARLY ILLEGAL, BUT YET RARELY CALLED.

PITCHERS USING THIS DELIVERY STYLE WERE ALLOWED AN ADVANTAGE THAT OTHER PITCHERS WHOSE PIVOT FOOT REMAINED ON THE GROUND DID NOT GAIN . JETTING HER BODY INTO THE AIR ALLOWED HER TO RELEASE THE BALL WITH MORE VELOCITY.

PITCHING VIOLATIONS ARE CALLED BY EITHER THE BASE UMPIRE OR THE PLATE UMPIRE, THOUGH IT IS CLEARLY OBVIOUS THAT THE BASE UMPIRE HAS THE CLEAREST VIEW OF THIS MOTION , BECAUSE OF THE PLATE UMPIRES RESPONSIBILITY TO WATCH THE PITCH RELEASE FROM THE HAND.

THE BASE UMPIRE MUST WATCH TO MAKE SURE THAT THE BALL IS RELEASED BEFORE EITHER FOOT RE-PLANTS ON THE GROUND. SHOULD THE BALL BE IN THE HAND OF THE PITCHER AFTER THE FOOT TOUCHES THE GROUND, THE BASE UMPIRE WILL SIGNAL A DELAYED DEAD BALL SIGNAL FOR AN ILLEGAL PITCH. WE CAN NOT ALLOW A REPLANT. CALL THIS FROM THE START OF SCRIMMAGES. IF YOU GIVE AN INCH THEY WILL TAKE A FOOT.

# A LEGAL PITCH THIS YEAR




SHE BEGINS HER MOTION AS HER HANDS SEPARATE FROM THE GLOVE, STEPPING OFF THE PITCHING PLATE





HANDS SEPERATED ; FEET LEAVING THE SURFICE  
AS HER ARM MOVES IN A  
CLOCKWISE ROTATION  
TO THE RELEASE  
"POETRY IN MOTION"

A softball pitcher in a white and blue uniform with the number 10 is captured in mid-throw on a dirt field. Her right arm is extended upwards, holding a yellow softball, while her left arm is extended horizontally to the side, holding a white glove. The background shows a grassy field, a black fence, and bare trees under a clear sky.

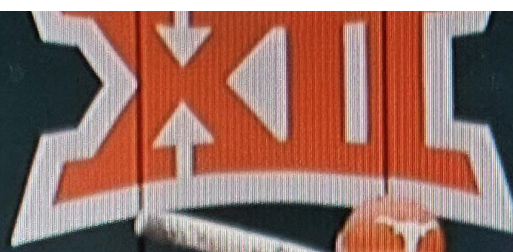
FULLY AIRBOURNE, ARM AND  
HAND COMING THROUGH HER  
FINAL MOTION BEFORE SHE  
RELEASES THE BALL

AS SHE LANDS AND RELEASES, NO  
VISIBLE WEIGHT PLACED ON  
THE PIVOT FOOT AS THE  
BALL RELEASES





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NOW LETS WATCH A CROW HOP AS  
A PITCHER STARTS HER MOVEMENT

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AS SHE BEGINS HER DELIVERY  
NON PIVOT FOOT LIFTING  
HANDS BEGIN TO SEPERATE



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HANDS CONTINUE TO SEPARATE AS SHE PUSHES OFF AND UP FROM THE PITCHERS PLATE




SHE IS CLEARLY RISING OFF THE GROUND AS HER ARM GOES THROUGH THE ROTATION



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PITCHING HAND AT THE TOP THE OF ROTATION  
AS HER FEET RETURN TO THE GROUND



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HAND AND BALL COMING THROUGH  
THE MOTION AS SHE PLANTS AND  
PUSHES OFF FOR RELEASE

s.com/Tickets

BALL IS RELEASED FROM SECONDARY POINT  
WITH BOTH FEET ON THE GROUND



A photograph of a softball game in progress. A pitcher in a red uniform with the number 38 on her back is in the middle of a pitching motion. The batter, wearing a white pinstriped uniform with the number 6, is swinging the bat. The catcher, in a red and black uniform, is crouching behind home plate. An umpire in a black uniform is positioned behind the catcher. The background features a green outfield fence with a large orange and white 'XII' logo and a red banner with the text 'Sports.com/Tickets'.

Sports.com/Tickets

WE AS UMPIRES MUST NOT ALLOW THE REPLANT TO TAKE PLACE. STOP THIS EARLY AND LET NOT CREATE ANOTHER PITCHING ADVANTAGE GOING FORWARD



# “Working outside” on balls hit to the outfield aka...working the rim

## So...Why we are making this Change

- Concern increasing as the speed and athleticism of the game has changed
  - Umpire health
    - Crossing throwing lanes when a throw is imminent
    - Inherent stress on the lower body when button hooking at game speed
  - Umpires late to attaining calling position
  - Umpires losing parts of the 4-key elements, if only for a moment, is
    - impacting call accuracy
    - reducing ability to help in secondary calling areas
    - reducing ability to monitor unsporting behavior.

# Working the rim – continued

## What is Changing

- Adding the option to use the area outside the base path
  - Every tag play has two positions to get your 90 degree angle
  - Every force play has two positions to get your 90 degree angle
  - Leverage your knowledge of the game to avoid unnecessary movement and stress on the body.

# Working the rim – continued

What is not changing:

- Fundamentals of good base umpiring have not changed
  - Keep all 4 key elements in front of you
    - Ball
    - Base
    - Runner
    - Fielder
  - 12-15 feet from the tag
  - 18-21 feet from the force
  - 90 degrees to the tag
  - 90 degrees from the throw on force outs
- Expectation of hustle into primary calling position and then to the next position
- The option to work inside the diamond when appropriate

# 2-Umpire Base Mechanics

## “Working the Rim”

Fundamentals of 2-Umpire system have not changed:

- All infield ground balls
  - BU has first play in the infield
  - PU has any secondary plays at 3<sup>rd</sup> ONLY
- Any fly ball with multiple runners
  - BU has all tags at 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>
  - PU has all tags at at 3<sup>rd</sup>
  - BU has all calls at 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>
  - PU has all calls at 3<sup>rd</sup> and home

**EXCEPTION:** If PU has an attempted play at home, BU has all remaining runners and calls.

THOUGH THIS MECHANIC OF BASE UMPIRING IS NOT NEW TO THE SPORT OF SOFTBALL, IT IS PRESENTLY BEING USED ON THE COLLEGE LEVEL AND IN HIGH SCHOOLS FROM OTHER PARTS OF THE COUNTRY.

THIS COMMITTEE WILL CAUTION YOU NOT TO ALLOW THIS TECHNIQUE TO MAKE YOU BECOME A LAZY UMPIRE.

THE RIM WILL BE BEST UTILIZED IN SOFTBALL WITH RUNNERS ON BASE, WHERE SINGLE BASE MOVEMENTS TAKE PLACE. AN EXAMPLE WOULD BE, A BALL HIT TO THE OUTFIELD, FIELDER THEN ATTEMPTS TO MAKE A FORCE PLAY ON THE RUNNER OR BATTER RUNNER. THIS PLAY IS QUICK AND FAST , OFTEN MISSED BY BASE UMPIRES TRYING TO HOOK INTO POSITION . INSTEAD STAY OUT AND WATCH THIS PLAY DEVELOP, SEE THE FOUR ELEMENTS THEN GET INTO POSITION TO MAKE THE CALL FROM THE RIM.

TO THE FLIP SIDE . DO NOT FIND YOURSELF STARTING IN THE “ B “ POSITION MAKING A CALL FROM THE RIM ON THE BATTER RUNNER COMING INTO SECOND. THIS WOULD BE CONSIDERED LAZY UMPIRING AND COULD FIND YOU OUT OF POSITION CHASING THE B R, SHOULD SHE CONTINUE TO 3<sup>RD</sup>.

**ASKING FOR HELP ON A CHECK SWING FROM A BASE UMPIRE IN ANY POSITION IS BACK TO BEING ALLOWED**

FOR THE PAST FEW YEARS CHECK SWINGS COULD ONLY BE CHECKED ON BATTERS FROM THE RIGHTHANDED BOX AND ASKED ONLY TO AN UMPIRE IN THE “ A “ POSITION.

STARTING THIS SEASON YOU CAN AGAIN ASKED FOR HELP ON A SWING REGARDLESS OF THE SIDE THE BATTER IS ON, OR THE POSITION THE BASE UMPIRE IS IN.

THIS ALLOWS THE PLATE UMPIRE TO ASK HIS PARTNER FOR HELP ANYTIME HE FEELS HE WAS SCREENED OR BLOCKED FROM VIEW OR IF THE DEFENSE ASKS HIM TO GET HELP. THE PLATE UMPIRE COULD THEN RELINQUISH HIMSELF FROM MAKING THAT CALL AND REFER IT TO HIS PARTNER WHO THEN WILL BE THE UMPIRE TO MAKE THAT CALL.

***THE MECHANICS:***

***THE PLATE UMPIRE AFTER MAKING NO CALL, OR A BALL CALL AND THEN CHALLENGED BY THE DEFENSE, WILL STEP BACK, POINTS TO HIS PARTNER AND ASKED IN A LOUD SHARP VOICE “ DID SHE GO ”. PARTNER WILL THEN REPLY EITHER “ NO SHE DID NOT “ USING A SAFE HAND SIGNAL OR “ YES SHE DID “ USING THE STRIKE SIGNAL TO CALL A STRIKE. PRIOR TO THE NEXT PITCH THE PLATE UMPIRE SHOULD GIVE THE COUNT ON THE BATTER TO MAKE SURE EVERYONE UNDERSTANDS THE RESULT OF THE PLAY.***

**COVERAGE FOR THE PICK-OFF AT FIRST WHEN THE BASE UMPIRE IS IN THE “ C “ POSITION**

**WHENEVER THE BASE UMPIRE IS IN THE “C” POSITION AND THERE IS A RUNNER ON FIRST THE PICK OFF PLAY FROM BOTH THE CATCHER OR THE PITCHER WILL BE THE CALL OF THE PLATE UMPIRE.**

**REMINDER: IN YOUR PRE-GAME WITH YOUR PARTNER, YOU GO OVER A SIGNAL BETWEEN THE TWO OF YOU TO IDENTIFY EACH AND EVERY TIME THE PICK OFF PLAY COMES UP. THIS IS TO REMIND THE PLATE UMPIRE OF HIS RESPONSIBILITY. THIS SIGNAL SHOULD BE SIMILAR TO OTHER ONES USED FOR INFIELD FLY, 1<sup>ST</sup> TO 3<sup>RD</sup> COVERAGE, BALL DOWN ECT.... AND SHOULD BE GIVEN EVERYTIME THE SITUATION ARISES.**

**PLATE UMPIRE WILL IMMEDIATELY STEP OUT AND MAKE THE SAFE OR OUT CALL ON THE RUNNER AT FIRST.**

## ***CALLS REQUIRING A STRONGER SIGNAL TO BE GIVEN***

WE ARE TAUGHT EARLY ON AS UMPIRES, SOME PLAYS NEED TO BE SOLD HARDER THAN OTHERS. THE TYPE OF PLAY ALONG WITH THE GAME SITUATION IT FALLS UNDER WILL DICTATE THE INTENSITY OF THE CALL. USUALLY CALLS THAT ARE NOT EXPECTED, OR NOT EASILY SEEN WILL REQUIRE A SHARPER MORE CONVINCING CALL FROM THE UMPIRE. HERE A FEW EXAMPLES OF THESE ALONG WITH THE PROPER MECHANIC:

1. BATTER IS HIT BY A PITCH OUTSIDE THE BATTERS BOX MAKING NO ATTEMPT TO AVOID. THIS CALL WILL MOST LIKELY LEAD TO A PROTEST. IN MOST CASES THE BATTER WOULD HAVE STARTED TO FIRST ALREADY. YOU IMMEDIATELY CALL DEAD BALL, COME OUT FROM BEHIND THE PLATE AND MOTION THE BATTER BACK TO THE BOX USING A STRONG SIGNAL AND POINTING TO THE BATTERS BOX.
2. BATTERS INTERFERENCE IS WHEN THERE IS CONTACT BETWEEN BATTER AND CATCHER ON THE CATCHERS ATTEMPT TO THROW OUT A RUNNER. HOWEVER YOU MAY HAVE INTERFERENCE , WITH NO CONTACT AND NO THROW. THIS WILL REQUIRE YOU TO COME OUT FROM BEHIND THE PLATE, DECLARING DEAD BALL, POINTING EMPHATICALLY AT THE HITTER AND MAKING THE STRONG DEAD BALL, OUT SIGNAL. THEN PROCEED TO POINT TO EACH RUNNER ON BASE AND RETURN THEM TO THE BASE THEY OCCUPIED PRIOR TO THE PITCH. NOW STRETCHING THIS SAME PLAY TO ITS OUTER LIMITS WOULD BE IF THE INTERFERENCE IS PROCEEDED BY A STRIKE THREE CALL. THE PLATE UMPIRE THEN STEPS OUT FROM BEHIND THE PLATE CALLING DEAD BALL, STRIKE THREE, THEN MOVING TOWARDS THE RUNNER CLOSES TO HOME , POINTING AT HER WITH THE OUT SIGNAL STATING INTERFERENCE BY A RETIRED PLAYER. THEN PROCEED TO ANY OTHER BASE RUNNER AND RETURN THEM TO THE BASE THEY OCCUPIED PRIOR TO THE PITCH.



3. BATTER STEPS COMPLETELY OUT OF BATTERS BOX WHILE MAKING CONTACT ON AN ATTEMPTED BUNT REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THE CONTACTED BUNT GOES FAIR OR FOUL THE PLATE UMPIRE WILL STEP OUT, CALL DEAD BALL, POINT DIRECTLY TO THE SPOT THE FOOT STEPPED OUT , MAKING STRONG BATTER OUT CALL.
4. INVOKING THE FORCE PLAY SLIDE RULE. WHEN THE RUNNER COMING INTO SECOND BASE ON A FORCE PLAY AND THE RUNNER CAUSES INTERFERENCE BY NOT SLIDING, THE BASE UMPIRE SHALL, WHILE POINTING AT THE RUNNER, SHOUT OUT DEAD BALL “THAT’S INTERFERENCE “ FOLLOWED BY TURNING AND POINTING TO FIRST AND SIGNALING THAT THE BATTER RUNNER IS ALSO OUT.
5. ANOTHER SITUTATION THAT NEEDS TO BE SOLD IS THE CATCH THEN FOLLOWED BY THE DROP OF THE BALL ON A VOLUNTARY RELEASE. MOST COMMON SITUATION IS THE FRONT END OF A DOUBLE PLAY. AS YOU SELL THE CATCH AND OUT AT SECOND WITH A STRONG OUT SIGNAL, WHICH IS THEN FOLLOWED BY THE MIMICKING OF THE TRANFER FROM THE GLOVE TO THE THROWING HAND. MAKE SURE YOUR TWO HANDS ARE MOVING IN A VERTICLE DIRECTION, NOT TO BE CONFUSED WITH THE SAFE SIGNAL.

6. ONE LAST POINT THAT WOULD RESULT IN EMPHISIS ON SELLING THE CALL WOULD BE THE **TIMING PLAY** . THIS PLAY IS GENERALLY GONE OVER IN A PRE-GAME WITH YOUR PARTNER AND HAS A HAND SIGNAL USED TO NOTIFY EACH THAT IT IS A POSSIBILITY OF OCCURRING. WHEN THE THIRD OUT IS MADE ON A NON FORCE-OUT SITUATION ON THE BASES , AT THE SAME TIME A RUNNER FROM THIRD IS ABOUT TO STEP ON THE PLATE, THE PLATE UMPIRE MUST DETERMINE IF THE RUNNER SCORED BEFORE OR AFTER THE THIRD OUT WAS RECORDED.

***THE MECHANIC:***

IF THE RUN SCORES THE PLATE UMPIRE SHOULD STEP OUT IN FRONT HOME PLATE AND THEN POINT FORCEFULLY DOWN TO THE PLATE INDICATING THAT THE RUN SCORES. CONVERSELY, IF THE OUT WAS MADE PRIOR TO SCORING, UMPIRE NEEDS TO BE JUST AS VIGOROUS IN SELLING ALSO BY STEPPING OUT IN FRONT OF THE PLATE, OPEN PALMS OF HAND OVER THE HEAD CROSSING BACK AND FORTH. THIS SIGNAL IS SIMILAR TO A FOOTBALL SIGNAL FOR AN INCOMPLETE PASS.

IN CLOSING I WOULD WISH ALL OF YOU A GREAT SEASON OF SOFTBALL.  
I HOPE THAT WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO BRING JUST ONE TOPIC THAT YOU  
CAN POSSIBLY USE IN THE UP COMING SEASON.  
IT IS OUR COMMITMENT TO TRY TO KEEP OUR UMPIRES ON THE TOP.  
IF THERE IS ANYTHING THAT I OR MY COMMITTEE CAN DO TO HELP YOU THIS  
SEASON  
PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO REACH OUT.

HAVE A GREAT YEAR