

## Two-Man Positioning:

### (Concept #1) Two-man Priorities

#### Priorities & Responsibilities Splits:

1. Fair/foul
2. Catch/No catch
3. Plays
4. Base touches

### (Concept #2) Two-Man Responsibilities

#### Two-Man Umpire Jurisdictions/Responsibilities:

**No Runners on Base** (BU in Position A) (LL and SBL use the same field mechanics with no one on base.)

#### Base Umpire (BU):

##### Fair/Foul:

Any ball past 1st base.

Any fly ball near the RF line.

Any fly ball near the right field foul pole.

Exception: On a pop-up around the 1st base bag, let PU call fair/foul and catch/no catch. BU should position for a play at 1st or pivot into the infield and cover subsequent plays on BR.

##### Catch/No Catch:

BU is responsible for line drives where F3 or F4 dive directly at BU (let PU take routine infield fly balls.) BU should go out and cover "trouble" plays on fly balls to F9, or if F8 is moving straight in, straight back or towards RF. Use the Pause, Read and React mechanic. On routine plays to this area, allow the responsibility to revert to PU.

##### Touch Bases or Plays:

BU takes base touches and plays on BR to 3rd unless BU goes out for fair/foul or catch/no catch. After BR passes the 45 foot mark, BU has tag attempts on BR.

BU has primary responsibility for swipe tags near 1st base. (Ask PU only as a last resort.)

BU has secondary responsibility for run-lane interference calls. (Call only if PU does not.)

#### Plate Umpire (PU):

##### Fair/Foul:

Any ball down the 3rd base or LF foul line.

Any ball down 1st base line up to and including the 1st base bag.

Any pop-up around the 1st base bag.

On any ball down the RF foul line that the BU does not go out on, responsibility reverts to PU.

##### Catch/No Catch:

PU is responsible for all fly balls to infielders except low line drives drawing F3 or F4 toward BU. (PU should move as far as the play will allow. PU must be set before the catch.)

PU is responsible for all fly balls to F7 and fly balls to F8 moving toward the LF foul line.

Responsibility reverts to PU for all catch/no catch attempts by F9 or if F8 is moving straight in, straight back or towards RF when BU pivots into the infield. (PU must key off of BU's actions since BU's inferior angle may hamper his judgment of F8's direction of travel.)

##### Touch Base or Plays:

If BU goes out, then PU assumes responsibility for all base touches and plays on BR. Note: BU should return to cover any subsequent play on BR at the plate.

If BU does not go out, PU has responsibility for ground rules on the batted ball.

Before BR reaches the 45 foot mark, PU has tag attempts on BR.

PU has primary responsibility for run-lane interference calls and ground rulings on overthrown balls. (When BU steps into foul territory for position and the ball is overthrown at 1st, PU takes subsequent plays on BR while BU moves to cover the throw entering dead ball territory (DBT).)

PU has secondary responsibility for swipe tags near 1st base and only gives help if asked by BU.

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**(Concept #3) PU & BU Primary/Secondary Responsibilities**

PU has primary responsibility for:

- Run-lane interference calls
- Ground rulings on overthrown balls  
(When BU steps into foul territory for position and the ball is overthrown at 1st, PU takes subsequent plays on BR while BU moves to cover the throw entering dead ball territory (DBT)).

PU has secondary responsibility and only gives help if asked by BU for:

- Swipe tags near 1st base.
- Pulled foot at 1<sup>st</sup> base.

BU has primary responsibility for:

- Swipe tags near 1st base. (Ask PU only as a last resort.)

BU has secondary responsibility for:

- Run-lane interference calls. (Call only if PU does not.)
- **PU moving up the 1<sup>st</sup> base line on a ground ball on the infield**
  - Primary Responsibilities:
    - 3 foot run lane violation
    - Over-thrown ball entering dead ball area
  - Secondary Responsibilities:
    - Swipe tag on BR at 1<sup>st</sup> base
    - F3 pulling foot from 1<sup>st</sup> base

**Ground ball on infield to right side:**

**PU Responsibilities:**

1. Fair/foul:
2. Catch/no catch:
3. Plays:
  - a. Swipe tag on BR before reaching the 45-foot line (primary).
  - b. 3-foot run lane violation (primary).
  - a. Overthrown ball going out of play – Bounce into foul territory towards DBT – call & award (primary).
  - b. If asked by BU (secondary), then help on swipe tag near 1<sup>st</sup> base.
  - c. If asked by BU (secondary), then help on pulled foot at 1<sup>st</sup> base.

**Plate Umpire (PU):**

- **Fair/Foul**
- **Catch/No Catch**
- **Plays or Touch Bases**

**Fair/Foul:**

- Any ball down the 3rd base or LF foul line.
- Any ball down 1st base line up to and including the 1st base bag.
- Any pop-up around the 1st base bag.
- On any ball down the RF foul line that the BU does not go out on, responsibility reverts to PU.

**Catch/No Catch:**

- PU is responsible for all fly balls to infielders except low line drives drawing F3 or F4 toward BU. (PU should move as far as the play will allow. PU must be set before the catch.)
- PU is responsible for all fly balls to F7 and fly balls to F8 moving toward the LF foul line.
- Responsibility reverts to PU for all catch/no catch attempts by F9 or if F8 is moving straight in, straight back or towards RF when BU pivots into the infield. (PU must key off of BU's actions since BU's inferior angle may hamper his judgment of F8's direction of travel.)

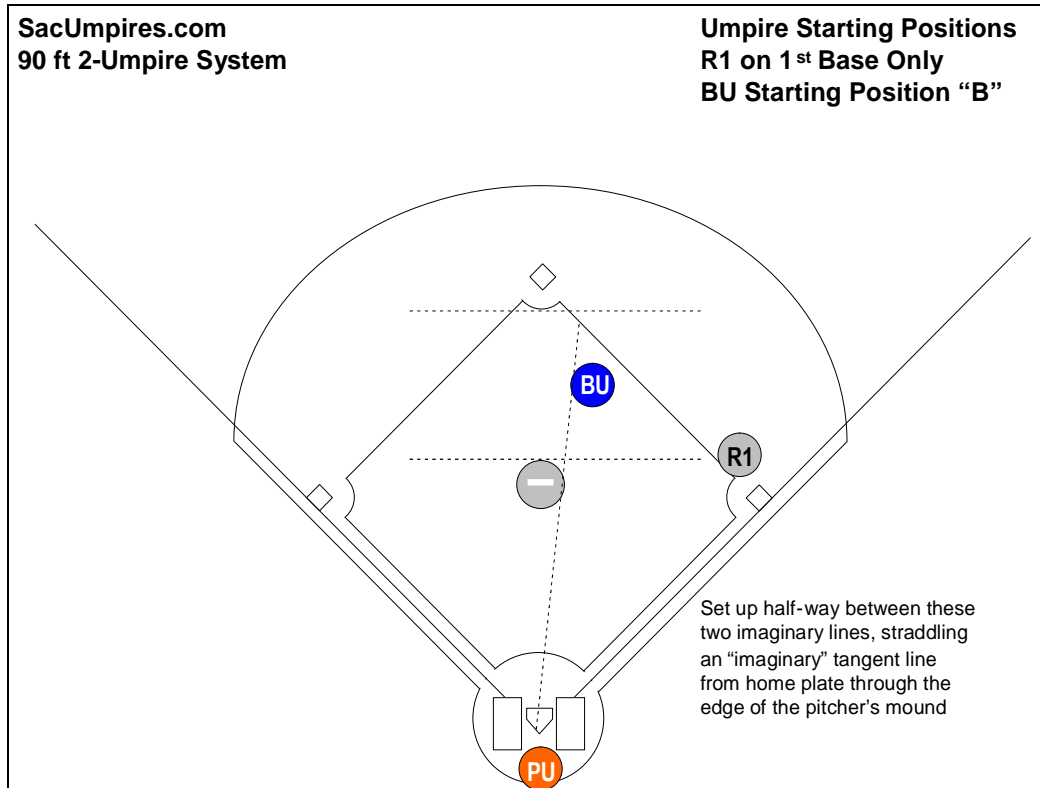
**Plays or Touch Bases:**

- If BU goes out, then PU assumes responsibility for all base touches and plays on BR. Note: BU should return to cover any subsequent play on BR at the plate, if possible.
- If BU does not go out, PU has responsibility for ground rules on the batted ball.
- Before BR reaches the 45 foot mark, PU has tag attempts on BR.
- PU has primary responsibility for run-lane interference calls and ground rulings on overthrown balls. (When BU steps into foul territory for position and the ball is overthrown at 1st, PU takes subsequent plays on BR while BU moves to cover the throw entering dead ball territory (DBT).)
- PU has secondary responsibility for swipe tags near 1st base and only gives help if asked by BU.

90 Ft. Diamond Starting Positions with Runner(s) on Base:

General Techniques for Basic Starting Position:

- Square your shoulders to home plate and assume the hands-on-knees set position when the pitcher gets on the rubber
- "Settle" into this set position rather than abruptly "jumping" into it
- Distribute your weight forward while in your stance to enhance agility



Starting Position "B" is used when with R1 is on 1<sup>st</sup> base only or R3 & R1 are on 3<sup>rd</sup> & 1<sup>st</sup> bases respectfully

**Starting Position "B"** (used in situations with R1 only or R3 & R1):

Assume a position halfway between 2<sup>nd</sup> base and the mound on an "imaginary" line that extends from home plate and is tangent to the 1<sup>st</sup> base side of pitcher's mound.

**BU's Starting Position "B":**

- Position on the 1<sup>st</sup> base side of the infield
- Position yourself midway between the back edge of the pitcher's mound grass line and the 2<sup>nd</sup> base "cutout"
- Position yourself so that if an "imaginary" line were drawn from home plate through and tangent to the right edge of the pitcher's mound and extended towards 2<sup>nd</sup> base, you would be straddling that line.
- Your body should be squared to the front edge of home plate.

**Important Notes:**

- You will not shift from this starting position on any change of outs.
- **Proper Starting Position Essential for Steals or Pick-Offs at the Corners:** This starting positioning "B" is very important, and you should make sure that you are **not too deep** towards 2<sup>nd</sup> base when assuming this position. If you are positioned midway between the mound and 2<sup>nd</sup> base, you will be in a good starting position for steals at 2<sup>nd</sup> base, pick-offs at 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> bases as well as other plays to the infield. If you are too "deep" towards 2<sup>nd</sup> base to start with, you will never be able to get a proper angle for steals or pick-offs at the corners and will end up looking up the back end of those plays.
- The positioning just described refers to fields where the grass lines are as recommended the Official Rules. You will have to adjust accordingly on fields which vary from this standard.

**Multiple Runner Situations:**

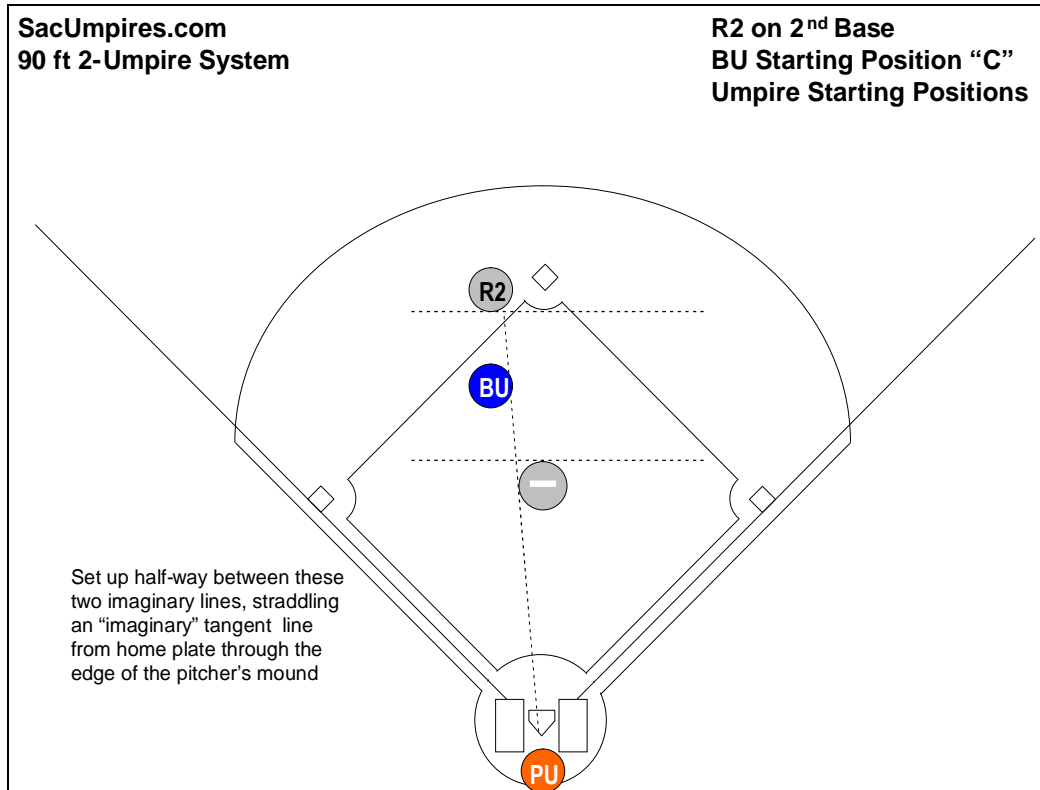
- Multiple runners = multiple responsibilities: You must be aware of other potential play possibilities.
- Compromise is required to maintain balanced responsibilities coverage.
- You will use similar techniques as in single runner situations, but need to compromise aggressive, ideal position to keep coverage of other plays.
- Use the "working area" concept to temper positioning and maintain overall coverage goals.

**Two Umpire System Mechanics Concepts**

**90 Ft. Diamond Starting Positions with Runner(s) on Base:**

General Techniques for Basic Starting Position:

- Square his shoulders to home plate and assume the hands-on-knees set position when the pitcher gets on the rubber
- "Settle" into this set position rather than abruptly "jumping" into it
- Distribute his weight forward in his stance to enhance his agility



Starting Position "C" with R3 only, R2 only, R3 & R2, R2 & R1 or Based Loaded

**Starting Position "C"** (used in all other situations with runner(s) on base(s)):

Assume a position halfway between 2<sup>nd</sup> base and the mound on an "imaginary" line that extends from home plate and is tangent to the 3<sup>rd</sup> base side of pitcher's mound.

**BU's Starting Position "C":**

- Position on the 3<sup>rd</sup> base side of the infield.
- Position yourself midway between the edge of the pitcher's mound grass line and the 2<sup>nd</sup> base "cutout."
- Position yourself so that if an "imaginary" line were drawn from home plate through and tangent to the left edge of the pitcher's mound and extended towards 2<sup>nd</sup> base, you would be straddling that line.
- Your body should be squared to the edge of home plate or a diagonal line drawn from 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> base.

**Important Notes:**

- With R3 only, R2 only, R3 & R2, R2 & R1 or bases loaded, starting position "C" is used.
- You will not shift from this starting position on any change of outs.
- **Proper Starting Position Essential for Steals or Pick-Offs at the Corners:** This starting positioning "C" is very important, and you should make sure that you are *not too deep* towards 2<sup>nd</sup> base when assuming this position. If you are positioned midway between the mound and 2<sup>nd</sup> base, you will be in a good starting position for steals and pick-offs at all bases as well as other plays to the infield. If you are too "deep" towards 2<sup>nd</sup> base to start with, you will never be able to get a proper angle for steals or pick-offs at the corners and will end up looking up the back end of those plays.
- The positioning just described refers to fields where the grass lines are as recommended the Official Rules. You will have to adjust accordingly on fields which vary from this standard.

**Multiple Runner Situations:**

- Multiple runners = multiple responsibilities: You must be aware of other potential play possibilities.
- Compromise is required to maintain balanced responsibilities coverage.
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**Two Umpire System Mechanics Concepts**

**(Concept #54) Pick-Off from F1 at 1<sup>st</sup> Base with BU in Starting Position "B" Using "Two Step" Technique:**

Your feet should be shoulder width or just slightly more apart. If they are too wide, you will limit & hurt your agility and movement. Position halfway between the pitcher's mound grass line and the 2<sup>nd</sup> base "cutout" on a tangent line from home plate extended through the 1<sup>st</sup> base side of pitcher's mound. Position is important. If you are too close, you increase your chances of being struck by batted balls. If you are too deep, then you will not be in proper position for viewing a pick-off attempt at 1<sup>st</sup> base. (You will be more "straight-lined".) Correct starting position is essential to good pick-off coverage. Start from a "hands-on-knees" set position in starting position "B". As described earlier, squat like sitting in a chair, flex your knees and lean forward on your toes. Lean slightly on your right foot. Square your body to home plate, but turn your head and face F1.



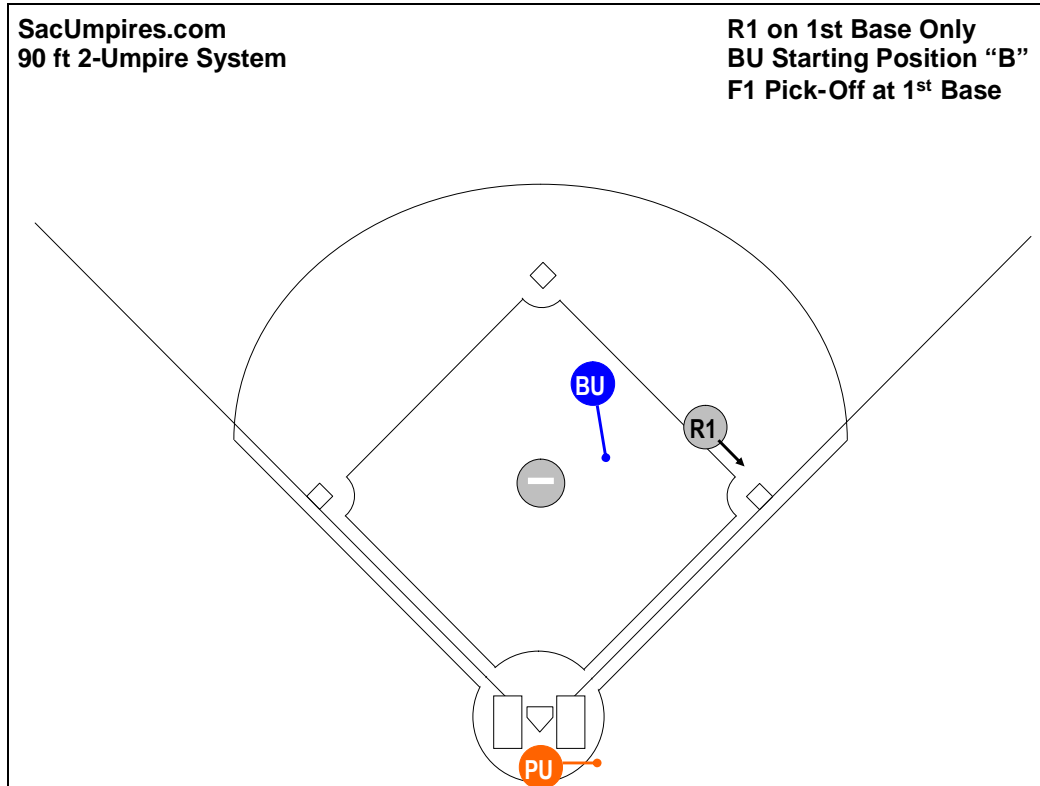
If you shift your weight slightly to your right foot when F1 takes the rubber, when F1 picks to 1<sup>st</sup>, your left foot will naturally be pulled forward as you lean into your step and toward the 45 ft. mark. Keep your rear end close to the ground for maximum leg extension. When the pick-off at 1<sup>st</sup> base starts, lean and leap aggressively forward without standing up. Keep your rear end as low to the ground as when you started in your "hands-on-knees" set position. "Open the gate" and angle your left foot and first step towards the 45 ft. mark on the first base line. This will angle you for a good look at 1<sup>st</sup> base and be the best use of and balance between angle and distance.



Continue crossing over while turning your body during the step with your right leg and face 1<sup>st</sup> base. Observe how low to the ground you should still be. Keeping your rear end down and extending your legs fully during both steps are important components to gaining maximum distance and developing your angle for viewing the pick-off. Next, spring forward with you right leg and allow it to swing your body around to face 1<sup>st</sup> base. If you finish this step by staying low to the ground, your aggressive movement forward will cause you to fall over.



When your right foot makes contact with the ground, push hard, thrust it upward and stand up. This will stop your forward momentum and force it upward. You will then end in a "standing" set position to view the pick-off at 1<sup>st</sup> base. A common mistake is to stand up straight before stepping forward. This will reduce the distance of each of your steps, reduce your distance gained, reduce your angle produced and prevent you from planting hard and standing up into your "standing" set position. The pick-off from F1 is a difficult play to cover because of the short time frame it occurs during. Use your movement and time productively to maximize your position.

**(Concept #54) Pick-Off from F1 at 1<sup>st</sup> Base from Starting Position "B":**

When F1 Attempts a Pick-Off to 1<sup>st</sup> Base, you can use a one or two step technique angled toward the 45 ft mark in positioning for the F1 pick to 1<sup>st</sup> base.

**Proper Starting Position "B" Is Essential for F1 Pick-Offs at 1<sup>st</sup> Base:**

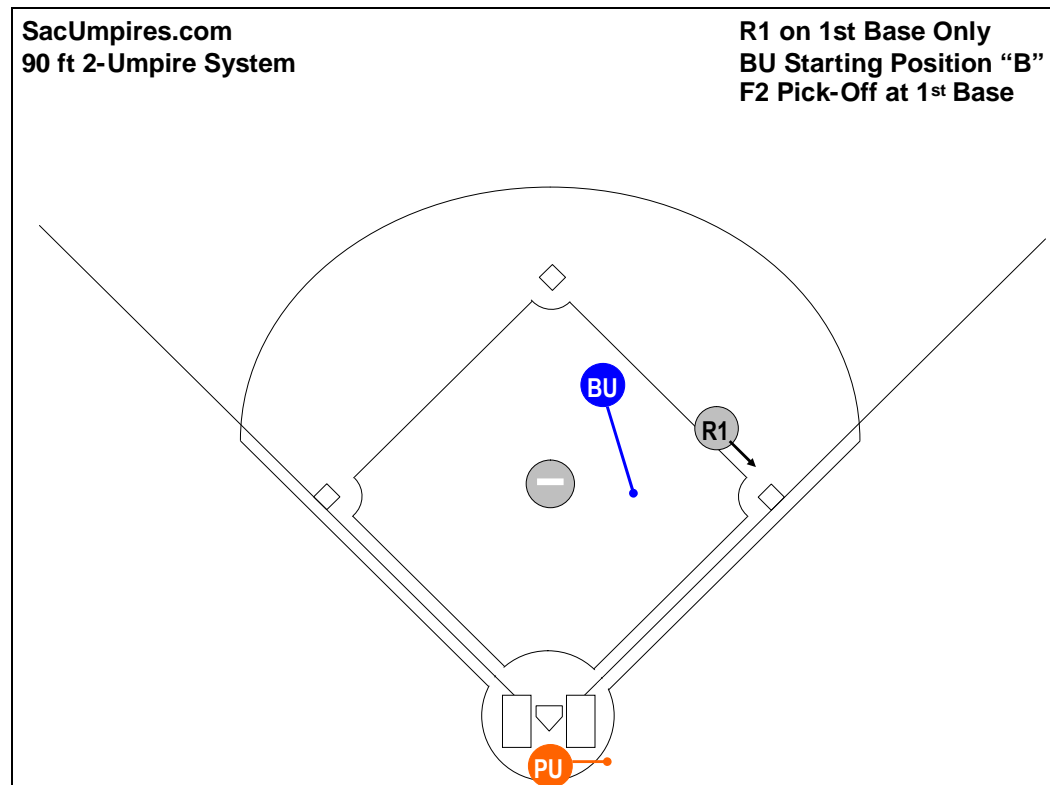
- It is very important that you assume the proper starting position "B" in the middle of the infield with R1 on 1<sup>st</sup> base. This starting position is particularly critical when it comes to pick-offs at 1<sup>st</sup> base because if you are too "deep" towards 2<sup>nd</sup> base to start with, you will never be able to achieve a proper angle for the pick-off at 1<sup>st</sup> base and will end up looking up the back end of the play at 1<sup>st</sup>.

**F1 Attempts a Pick-Off to 1<sup>st</sup> Base:**

- You should focus on F1 prior to the pick-off.
- As you see F1 begin to throw to 1<sup>st</sup> base in a pick-off attempt, there are two acceptable methods of covering the play. These two methods differ only in the steps you take when moving into position for the play, and either of the following two procedures is acceptable:
  - Take two quick steps forward starting with his *right* foot, *moving in the direction of the 45-foot line*. After taking two steps forward (right followed by left), you will turn (pivoting on his left foot), face the play, and set for the call.
  - Take a quick step forward with his *left* foot, *moving in the direction of the 45-foot line*. After taking this initial step forward, you will turn (pivoting on his left foot), face the play, and set for the call.

**Important Notes:**

- The preceding two techniques are very similar; the basic difference being how much time is available and how much distance may be gained during the pick-off move. The first alternative allows you to take one extra step towards the 45-foot line before turning and facing the play. Always use the time available wisely and position to see the play well.
- The pick-off from F1 takes little time and means you have very little time to react, step and set. Two steps on this pick is about all that can be achieved realistically.
- **The same technique is use whether the pick occurs with R1 only or R3 and R1 on bases from starting position B.**

**(Concept #55) Pick-Off from F2 at 1<sup>st</sup> Base with BU in Starting Position "B":**

It is possible that F2 may try to pick off R1 at 1<sup>st</sup> base with a quick throw following a pitch. If this should happen, your movements would be virtually the same as just described for a pick-off move by F1, however, you will be able to get a step or two more and gain more ground for a better position.

**Proper Starting Position "B" Is Essential for F1 Pick-Offs at 1<sup>st</sup> Base:**

- It is very important that BU assume the proper starting position "B" in the middle of the infield with R1 on 1<sup>st</sup> base. This starting position is particularly critical when it comes to pick-offs at 1<sup>st</sup> base because if BU is too "deep" towards 2<sup>nd</sup> base to start with, he will never be able to get a proper angle for the pick-off at 1<sup>st</sup> base and will end up looking up the back end of the play at 1<sup>st</sup>.

**F2 Attempts a Pick-off on R1 at 1<sup>st</sup> Base:**

- BU will read F2's movements preparing to throw the ball to 1<sup>st</sup> base after the pitch crosses the plate and is caught
- BU will anticipate the throw by starting to *move in the direction of the 45-foot line*.
- BU will take two or more quick cross-over steps forward starting with his left foot
- BU will move as far as the play will allow.
- After taking several steps forward, BU will turn (pivoting on his left foot),
- Face the play, and set for the call just before the tag is applied.

**Important Notes:**

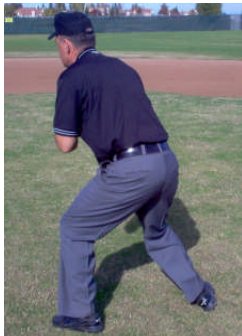
- The pick-off from F2 takes longer to develop and gives BU more time to gain ground, develop angle and position for the play.
- The key is to read F2's first movement toward 1<sup>st</sup> base. You should start your movements as soon as you see F2 stride toward 1<sup>st</sup> base with his left for the throw. Watch F2 receive the pitch, step towards 1<sup>st</sup>, react immediately by moving toward the 45 foot line, gain as much ground as the play will permit while getting set before the tag is applied on R1 at 1<sup>st</sup> base.

**(BU #56) Pick-Off at 3<sup>rd</sup> Base from Starting Position "B":**

Pick-offs at 3<sup>rd</sup> base are relatively rare in today's game strategies. The odds are greatly in favor of a pick-off to 1<sup>st</sup> over 3<sup>rd</sup> base. Therefore, with R3 on 3<sup>rd</sup> and R1 on 1<sup>st</sup> bases we will start in starting position "B". Briefly, assume a "hands-on-knees" set position. Again, squat like sitting in a chair, flex your knees and lean forward on your toes. Lean slightly on your right foot. Square your body to the plate, but turn your head and face F1. Remember, correct starting position is essential to good pick-off coverage. Use similar body movements as in the pick-off from F1 to 1<sup>st</sup> base and maximize your distance gained during this event.



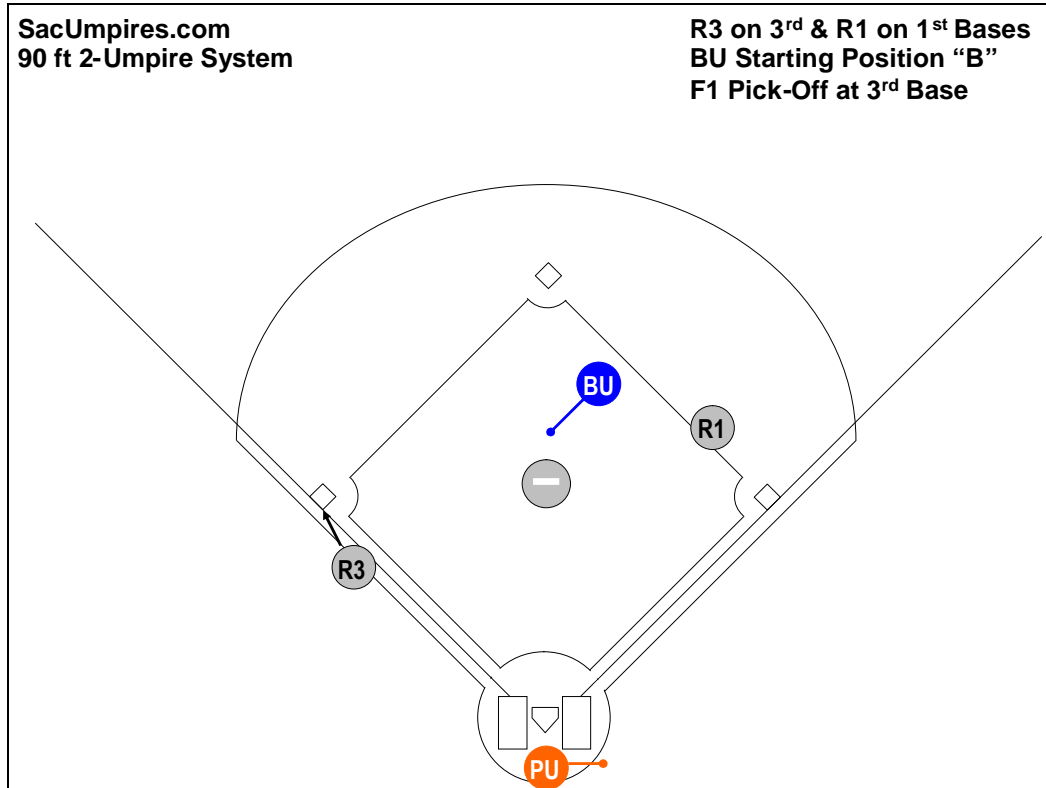
When the pick-off goes to 3<sup>rd</sup> base, lean and leap aggressively forward without standing up. Keep your rear end low to the ground. "Open the gate" and angle your right foot and first step towards the "imaginary" 45 ft. mark on the third base line. This will angle you for a good look at 3<sup>rd</sup> base. Unfortunately, you won't have as good of look at this play as the play at 1<sup>st</sup> base because of the increased distance involved, but you must position by the percentages. The 2-umpire system requires compromises.



Observe how low to the ground you should still be. Keep your rear end down and extend your legs fully during both steps. This will gain you maximum distance and develop your angle for viewing the pick-off at 3<sup>rd</sup> base. Next, spring forward with your left leg and allow it to swing your body around to face 3<sup>rd</sup> base.



When your left foot makes contact with the ground, push hard, thrust it upward and stand up. This will stop your forward momentum and force it upward. You will then end in a "standing" set position to view the pick-off at 3<sup>rd</sup> base. A common mistake is to stand up straight before stepping forward. This will reduce the distance of each of your steps, reduce your distance gained, reduce your angle produced and prevent you from planting hard and standing up into your "standing" set position. The pick-off from F1 is a difficult play to cover because of the short time frame it occurs during. Use your movement and time productively to maximize your position.

**(BU #56) Pick-Off at 3<sup>rd</sup> Base from Starting Position "B":**

Although you are a long distance from 3<sup>rd</sup> base in starting position "B", proper angle development with help you see this play well.

**Pick-off at 3<sup>rd</sup> base (F1 vs. F2 attempts)****F1 Attempts a Pick-Off at 3<sup>rd</sup> Base:**

- You must be in proper starting position "B" in the middle of the infield (not too deep towards 2<sup>nd</sup> base, not too close to the mound).
- As F1 begins his throw to 3<sup>rd</sup> base, use either of the following two procedures:
  - Take two quick steps forward starting with his *left* foot, moving in the direction of an "imaginary" 45-foot line along the 3<sup>rd</sup> base line. After taking two steps forward (right followed by left), you will turn (pivoting on his right foot), face the play and set for the call.
  - Take a quick step forward with his *right* foot, moving in the direction on an "imaginary" 45-foot line along the 3<sup>rd</sup> base line. After taking this initial step forward, you will turn (pivoting on his right foot), face the play and set for the call.

**Note:** The preceding two techniques are very similar; the basic difference being which foot begins the pick-off move and how many steps are taken. As mentioned previously, either of the preceding two techniques is acceptable in covering pick-offs at 3<sup>rd</sup> base.

**Mechanics on Pick-Offs at 3<sup>rd</sup> Base from F1:**

- It is very important to set up in the proper starting position "B".
- Use the "step, turn and face the ball" technique
- Angle is critical for pick-offs – Move towards an "imaginary" 45-foot line along the 3<sup>rd</sup> base line.
- Follow the ball and let it take you to the play.
  - If you don't watch the ball, you could fall prey to the fake to 3<sup>rd</sup> and throw to 1<sup>st</sup> play.
  - Since you are a little farther than normal from this play, aggressive movement moves you into the middle of the "working area" and keeps you in position for all developing plays.
- It is *imperative* to be **completely stopped and set** for the pick-off.
- Your body should be facing the play and in a set position for this play.

**Pick-Offs at 3<sup>rd</sup> Base from F2:**

- It is possible that F2 may try to pick off R3 at 3<sup>rd</sup> base with a quick throw following a pitch.
- Your movements would be virtually the same as just described for a pick-off move by F1, however, you may be able to gain more distance because time is available on this play to acquire more steps.

**(Concept #57) Pick-Off at 2<sup>nd</sup> Base from Starting Position "C":**

Pick-off at 2<sup>nd</sup> (with R2 – BU starting from Position C):



Starting position "C" already builds your angle in for the pick-off at 2<sup>nd</sup> base. Start from a "hands-on-knees" set position. Squat like sitting in a chair, flex your knees and lean forward on your toes. Normally you are taught to square up to the plate area, but it is probably wise to set your feet parallel to an "imaginary" line drawn from 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> bases. This will help you open your field of vision behind you when glancing back for R2 attempts to steal 3<sup>rd</sup> base. Finally, turn your head and face the plate while moving your eyes and focusing on F1.



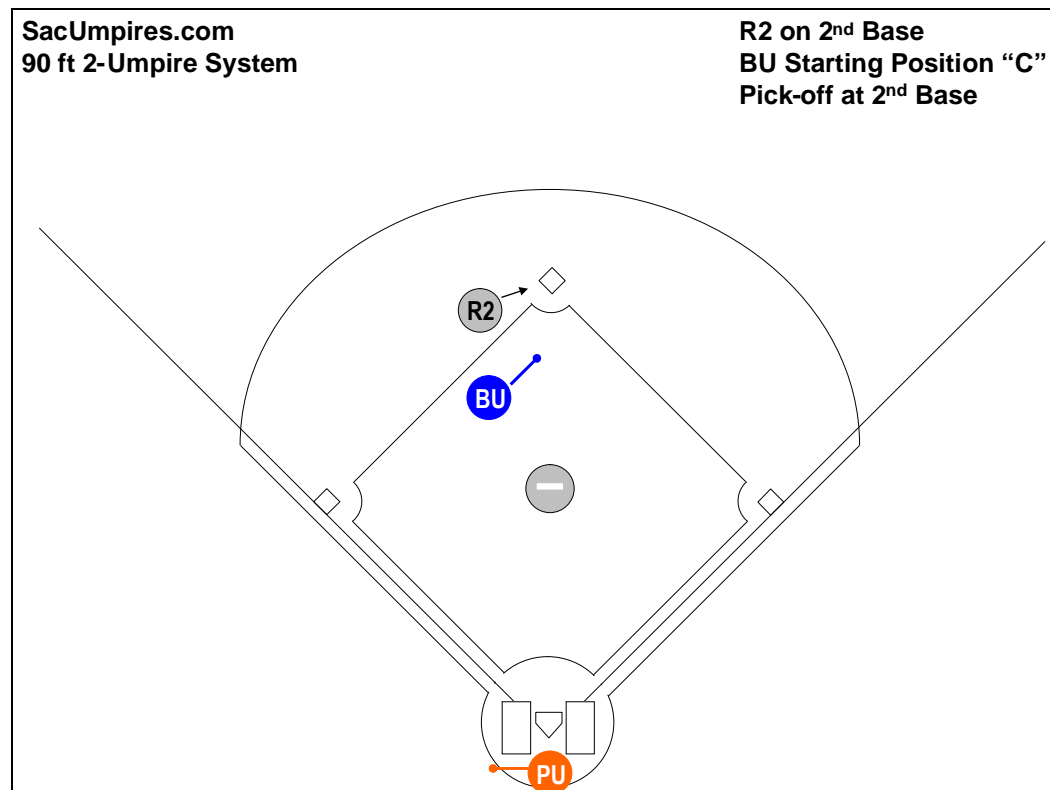
As F1 steps to 2<sup>nd</sup> base, "open the gate" by swinging your left foot towards the right-center field "gap" and begin moving in that direction.



"Cross-over" step and "shoot" off the back of the ball (move just behind the ball without getting hit by it). If you look at 2<sup>nd</sup> base too early and lose sight of the ball, you could easily end up being struck by and "wearing" the thrown ball. If you concentrate on shooting off the back of the ball, you will never turn your back on it or get hit by it.



To maximize angle, you may jab step and lean right behind the ball's path after it passes while landing in a standing set position ready to judge the play. Since R2 is moving away from you, opening an angle around R2 is imperative to maximizing your view. As you turn around, be careful of obstruction and interference judgments that will "explode" on you quickly. Don't be surprised by anything. Trust your eyes and be aware that the unusual could occur there.

**(Concept #57) Pick-Off at 2<sup>nd</sup> Base from Starting Position "C":**

Pickoff attempt of R2 at 2<sup>nd</sup> base by F1 or F2 are covered with some similarity to steals of 2<sup>nd</sup> base by R1. Natural angles are already built into starting position "C" for this play. The same technique is used whether there is a lone runner at 2<sup>nd</sup> base or multiple runners on bases. Limited time translates to limited distance reduction. It forces you to open angle with the limited step available. You may be able to get a couple more steps closer when F2 throws since the ball traveling a greater distance.

**Important Notes – Positioning Goals:**

- Natural angles are already built into starting position "C"
- Concentrate on moving toward the play and reducing distance.

**F1 Attempts a Pick-Off on R2 at 2<sup>nd</sup> Base:** (*Pick-Offs Are Covered with Some Similarity to Steals of 2<sup>nd</sup> Base with R2 on 2<sup>nd</sup> Base*)

- As you see F1 begin the pick-off move towards 2<sup>nd</sup> base, you should "drop step" towards 2<sup>nd</sup> base with your left foot.
- Keep your eyes on the ball and not turning your back on it.
- Then, as F1 releases the ball, continue to move towards 2<sup>nd</sup> base.
- The ball will turn you into the play as the throw passes you (you should more or less be "pivoting" on your left foot as the throw passes).
- Turn and focus on the play, keeping in mind that by this time you should be in proper position and angle for the play at 2<sup>nd</sup> (ideally a few steps to the home plate side of the 2<sup>nd</sup> base cutout).
- It is imperative that BU be *completely set and not moving* for this play. Do not just be in the process of stopping while the play is occurring, it will blur your look. Anticipate when the play will occur and be completely stopped in time for the play.

**Pick-off at 2<sup>nd</sup> with Multiple Runners on Bases** (with R2 & R1 or R3 & R2):

- This multiple runner situation uses the same position development process as above (R2 only at 2<sup>nd</sup> pick off).
- Keep eye contact with the ball and remain in the "working area".
  - If you anticipate the play at 2<sup>nd</sup> and lose sight of the ball or move too close to 2<sup>nd</sup> base, your ability to observe other play possibilities could be hampered.
  - F1 could feint a throw to 2<sup>nd</sup> and instead throw behind R1.
  - Too much anticipation and aggressiveness will cause him to miss the play at 1st.

**On a "Broken Play" During a Pick-Off with R2 on 2<sup>nd</sup> Base** – (The ball gets away and rolls towards the outfield):

- Be prepared to move into position for a possible play at 3<sup>rd</sup> base if R2 decides to go.
- Keep your eye on the original play at 2<sup>nd</sup> base, watching for possible obstruction.

**(Concept #58) Pick-Off at 3<sup>rd</sup> Base from Starting Position "C":**

Start from a "hands-on-knees" set position in starting position "C". As described earlier, squat like sitting in a chair, flex your knees and lean forward on your toes. Balance your weight on both feet just over shoulder width apart. Square your body to the plate, but turn your head and face F1. Correct starting position is essential to good pick-off coverage at 3<sup>rd</sup> base.



Lean and leap aggressively forward without standing up. Keep your rear end as low to the ground as when you started in your "hands-on-knees" set position. "Open the gate" and angle your right foot and first step towards the "imaginary" 45 ft. mark on the third base line. This will angle you for a good look at 3<sup>rd</sup> base.

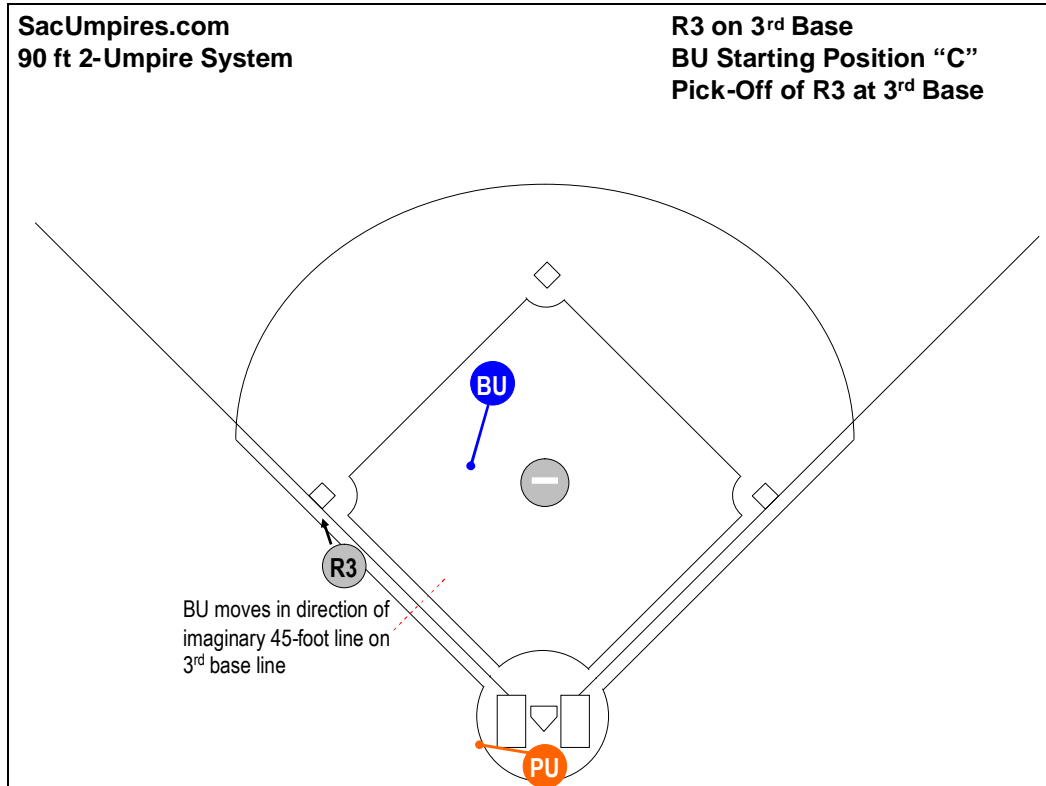


Observe how low to the ground you should still be. Keeping your rear end down and extending your legs fully during both steps are important components to gaining maximum distance and developing your angle for viewing this pick-off. Next, spring forward with you left leg and allow it to swing your body around to face 3<sup>rd</sup> base.



If you finish this step by staying low to the ground, your aggressive forward momentum will cause you to fall over. When your left foot makes contact with the ground, push hard, thrust it upward and stand up. This will change your forward momentum and force it upward. You will then end in a "standing" set position to view the pick-off at 3<sup>rd</sup> base.

**Important Note:** A common mistake is to stand up straight before stepping forward. This reduces your distance for each of your steps, reduces your total distance gained, reduces your angle achieved and prevents you from planting hard and standing up into your "standing" set position. The pick-off from F1 is a difficult play to cover because of the short time frame it occurs during. Use your movement and time productively to maximize your position and view of the action.

**(Concept #58) Pick-Off at 3<sup>rd</sup> Base from Starting Position "C":**

Your technique for F1 picking to 3<sup>rd</sup> is similar to that used at 1<sup>st</sup> base. Use a one or two step technique angled toward an "imaginary" 45 ft mark on the 3<sup>rd</sup> base line in positioning for pick-offs to 3<sup>rd</sup> base.

**F1 Makes a Pick-Off Attempt at 3<sup>rd</sup> Base:**

- You must be in proper starting position "C" in the middle of the infield (not too deep towards 2<sup>nd</sup> base, not too close to the mound).
- Move toward the "imaginary" 45 ft. mark on the 3<sup>rd</sup> base side.
- Use the "step, turn and face the ball" technique
- As F1 begins his throw to 3<sup>rd</sup> base, you may use either of the following two procedures:
  - Take two quick steps forward starting with his *right* foot, moving in the direction of an "imaginary" 45-foot line along the 3<sup>rd</sup> base line. After taking two steps forward (right followed by left), turn (pivoting on your right foot), face the play and set for the call.
  - Take a quick step forward with your *left* foot, moving in the direction on an "imaginary" 45-foot line along the 3<sup>rd</sup> base line. After taking this initial step forward, turn (pivoting on your right foot), face the play and set for the call.

**Note:** The preceding two techniques are very similar; the basic difference being which foot begins the pick-off move and how many steps are taken. As mentioned previously, either of the preceding two techniques is acceptable in covering pick-offs at 3<sup>rd</sup> base.

**F2 Attempts a Pick-Off at 3<sup>rd</sup> Base:**

- It is possible that F2 may try to pick off R3 at 3<sup>rd</sup> base with a quick throw following a pitch.
- Your movements would be virtually the same as just described for a pick-off move by F1.

**(Concept #59) Pick-Off at 1<sup>st</sup> Base from Starting Position "C":**

Pick-offs at 1<sup>st</sup> base are not uncommon in today's game strategies. Begin in starting position "C" with a "hands-on-knees" set position. Again, squat like sitting in a chair, flex your knees and lean forward on your toes. Balance your weight evenly under your feet and spread them just over shoulder width apart. Lean slightly forward on your toes. Square your body to the plate, but turn your head and face F1. Correct starting position is essential to good pick-off coverage.



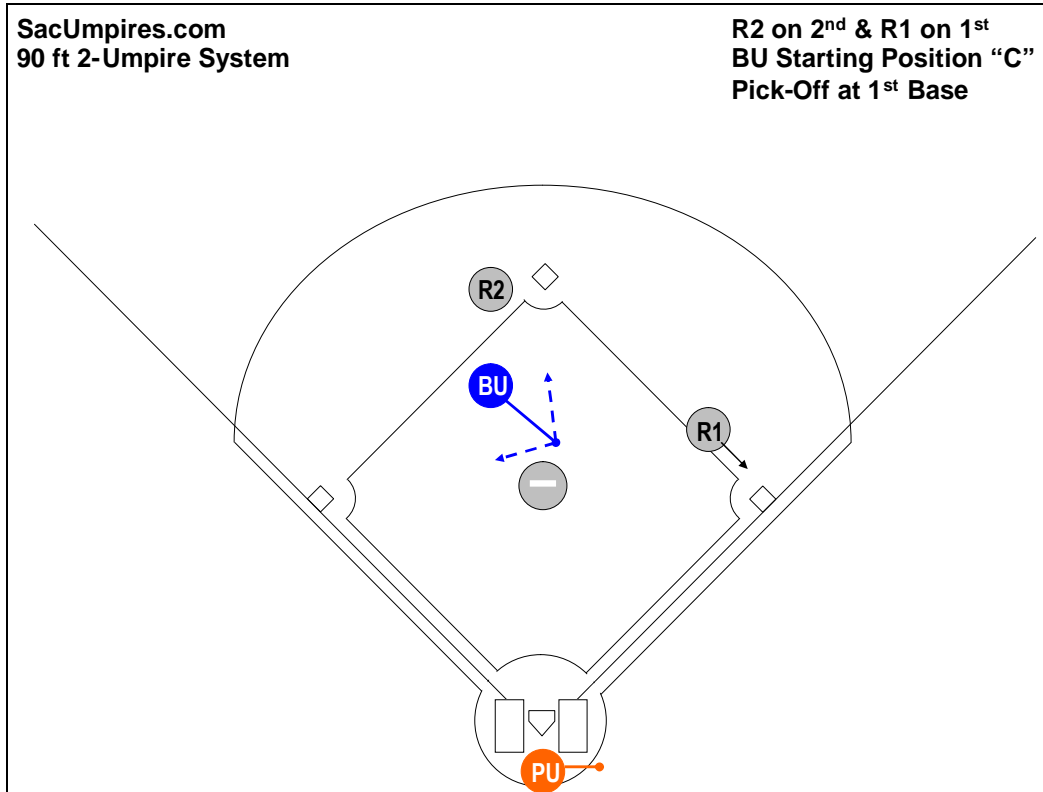
When the pick-off goes to 1<sup>st</sup> base, lean and leap aggressively forward **without** standing up. Keep your rear end low to the ground. "Open the gate" and angle your right foot and first step towards the 45 ft. mark on the first base line. This will help increase your angle viewing the play at 1<sup>st</sup> base. Unfortunately, you won't have as good of look at this play as you would from starting position "B" because of the increased distance involved. Unfortunately the 2-umpire system requires compromises.



Observe how low to the ground you should still be. Keep your rear end down and extend your legs fully during both steps. Leap and spring forward using powerful steps. Maximum your distance gained and develop your angle. Spring forward with your left leg followed by another step with your right leg to swing your body open to 1<sup>st</sup> base.



When your right foot makes contact with the ground, push hard, thrust it upward and stand up. This will stop your forward momentum and force it upward. You will then end in a "standing" set position to view the pick-off at 1<sup>st</sup> base. A common mistake is to stand up straight before stepping forward. This will reduce the distance of each of your steps, reduce your distance gained, reduce your angle produced and prevent you from planting hard and driving up into your "standing" set position. The pick-off from F1 is a difficult play to cover because of the short time frame it occurs during. Use your movement and time productively to maximize your position.



With R2 & R1, the pitcher (F1) or catcher (F2) attempts a pickoff at 1<sup>st</sup> base

**Pick-off at 1<sup>st</sup> from Starting Position "C" (R2 and R1 or Bases Loaded):**

- Moves toward the 45 ft. mark on the 1st base foul line -
  - This opens a better angle for the play
- Obtain a set position before the play occurs.
  - Remember in multiple runner situations to compromise on ideal, single play positioning to remain in coverage for any subsequent play on R2 – "working area" concept.
- PU steps out and watches the play.
  - PU also is responsible for the overthrown ball to dead ball territory (DBT) and R2 attempting to score at home.

**(Review #57 to 59) Review – Pick-offs (BU's Starting Position "C"):****At 3rd or 2<sup>nd</sup> from Starting Position "C" (R3 & R2 on Base):**

- For either play, use the same techniques as discussed in their respective single runner on base plays.
- Use caution and preserve coverage – "working area" concept.
  - Don't be as aggressive with your movements because the further you move to each initial play, the more you move away from any other possible play.

**At 3rd, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 1<sup>st</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> from Starting Position "C" (Bases Loaded):**

- Use the same patterns as established above.
  - For pick-offs at 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> bases:
    - Move toward the 45 ft. mark (or "imaginary" 45 ft. mark)
    - Use the "step, turn and face the ball" technique
  - Pick offs at 2<sup>nd</sup> base have natural angles already built into their initial positions
    - Concentrate on moving toward the play reducing distance.
- From Position C, compromise movement toward 3<sup>rd</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> since your initial position already favors coverage to either of these plays.
  - Any further movement to these plays removes you from the "working area" while over committing you to an individual play.
- In Starting Position "C", you are on the opposite side of the field from a play at 1<sup>st</sup> base.
  - Aggressive movements toward 1<sup>st</sup> allow more advantageous position for viewing and selling the close calls.
  - Aggressive movement from Starting Position "C" toward the 45 ft. mark on the 1<sup>st</sup> base line moves you into the center of the "working area".

**Proper Starting Position Is Essential for Pick-Offs:**

- It is very important to assume the Proper Starting Position "C" in the middle of the infield.. This starting position is particularly critical when it comes to pick-offs at 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> bases because if you are too "deep" towards 2<sup>nd</sup> base to start with, you will never be able to get a satisfactory angle for pick-offs at the corners and will end up looking up the back end of those plays.

**Multiple Runner Situations:**

- Multiple runners = multiple responsibilities:
- Be aware of other potential play possibilities.
- Compromise is required to maintain balanced responsibilities coverage.
- Uses similar techniques as in single runner situations.
- Compromise that aggressive, ideal position to maintain coverage of other play possibilities.
- Use the "working area" concept to temper positioning and maintain overall coverage goals.

## Rundowns on BR or Only One Runner:

**Instruction Notes – Simplified Content:** Simple rundowns involving one runner only.

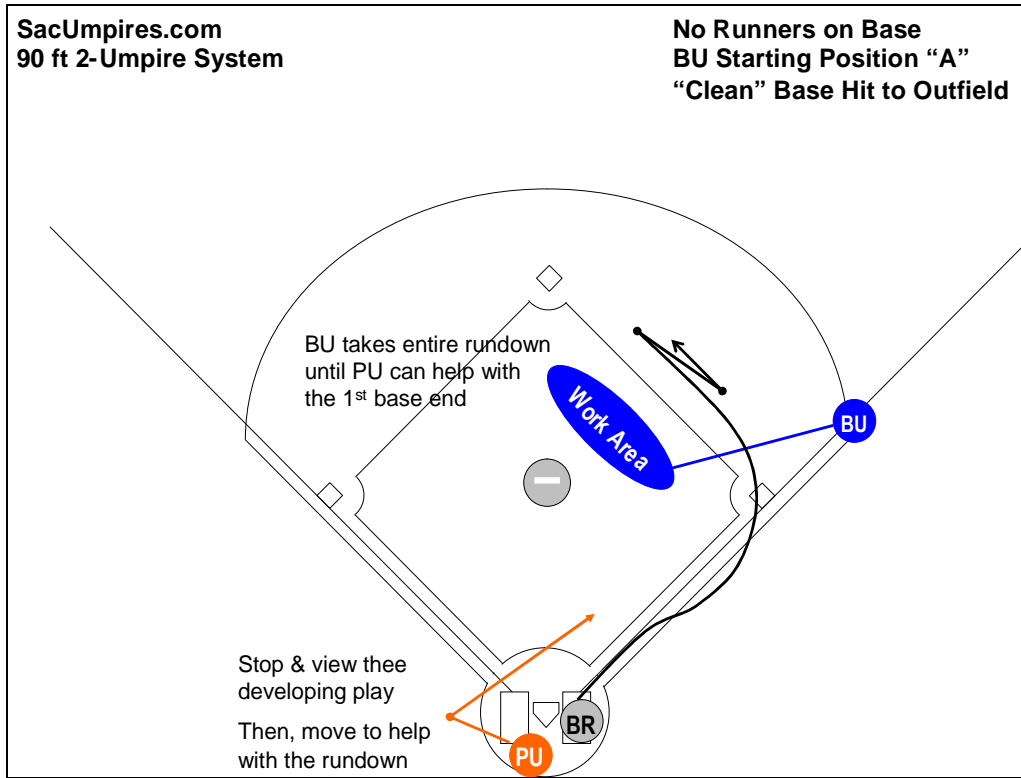
*(Multiple runner rundowns - more complex crew coverage – will be covered in detail during future instruction.)*

**Rundown on BR between 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>:** If the rundown should develop between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> or between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> :

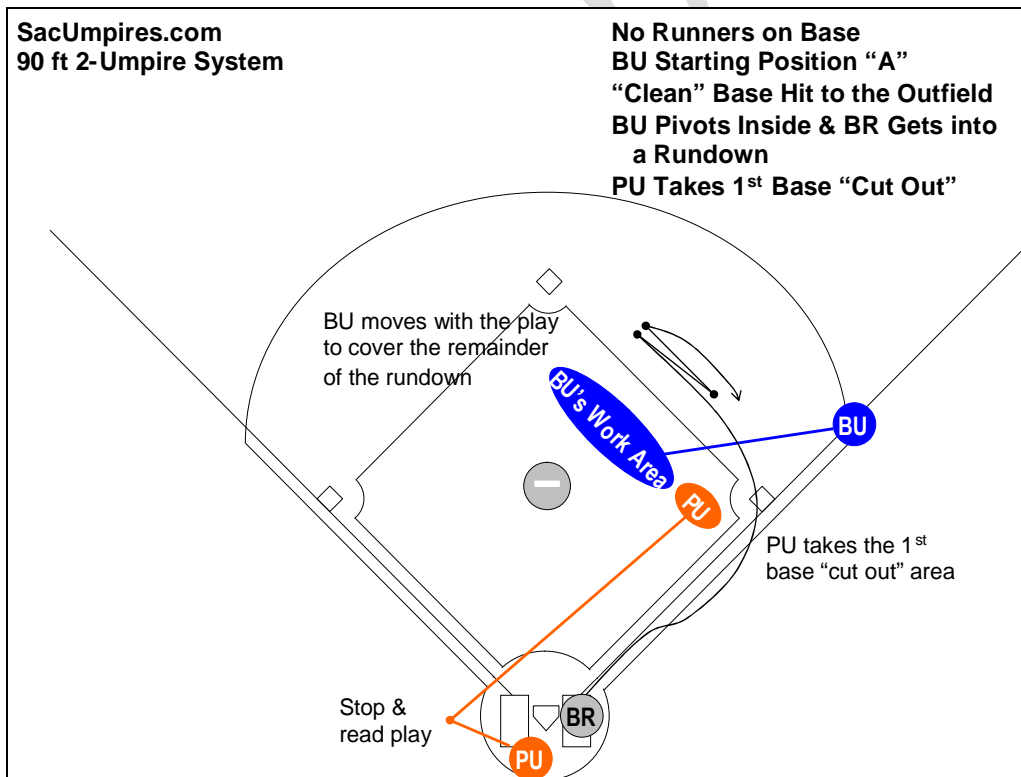
- When these rundowns start, BU is responsible for it entirely.
- When PU sees one of these rundowns, PU will run down the foul line towards the 1<sup>st</sup> (or 3<sup>rd</sup>) base cutout.
- PU should wait until BR is running the **opposite way from the cutout** before setting up in the cutout. (He must be careful not to run his partner off during the rundown.)
- As PU is moving into the cutout and is ready to assume responsibility, he will communicate to BU, "I've got this end, Bill! I've got this end!"
- PU will then be responsible for any play made on BR **at the cutout area only**.
- BU will still have the responsibility for the rest of the rundown.
- Additional similar situations:
  - R1 gets into a rundown between 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> after pick-off
  - R2 gets into a rundown between 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> bases on

(Concept #89) Rundowns on One Runner Only – Responsibilities & Coverage

- Runner between 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup>:



**Rundown on BR between 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup>:** As a rundown begins on BR between 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> bases, BU covers the entire play alone until PU can move into position, communicate and help. BU establishes a "working area" far enough away from the baseline to "roughly" mirror BR's movements in the rundown.

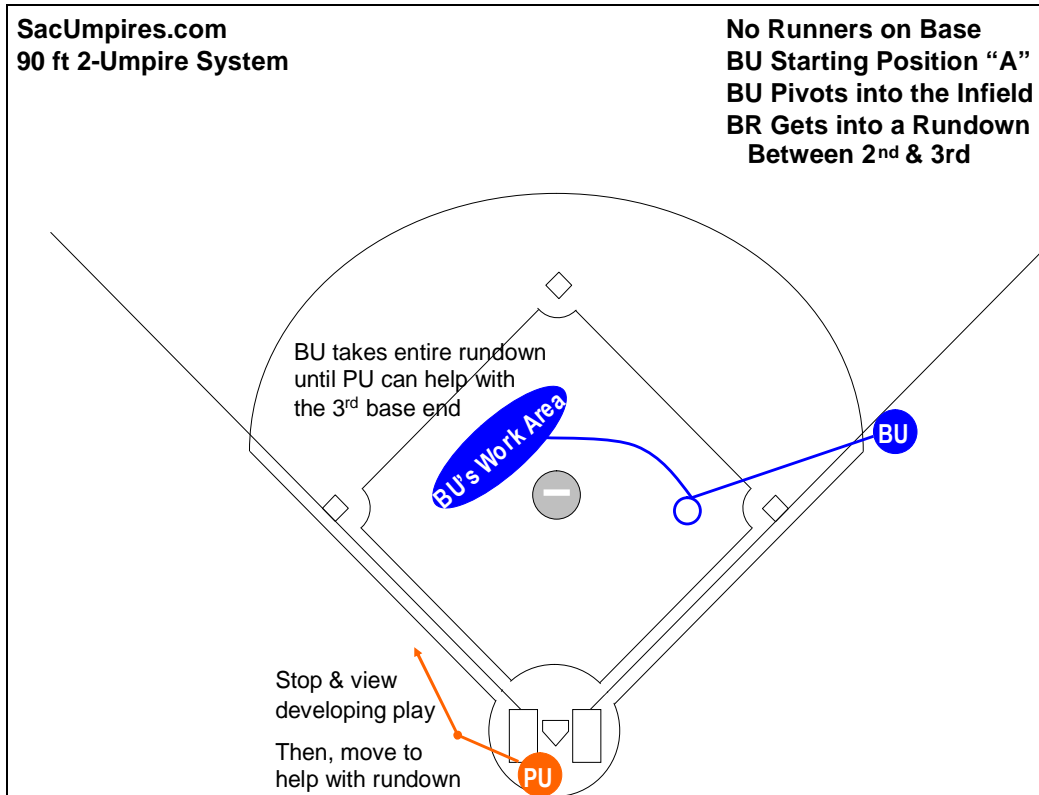


**Rundown on BR between 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup>:** As PU moves down the 1<sup>st</sup> base line, he must wait until BR is running the **opposite way from the cutout** before setting up in the cutout and communicating, "I've got this end."

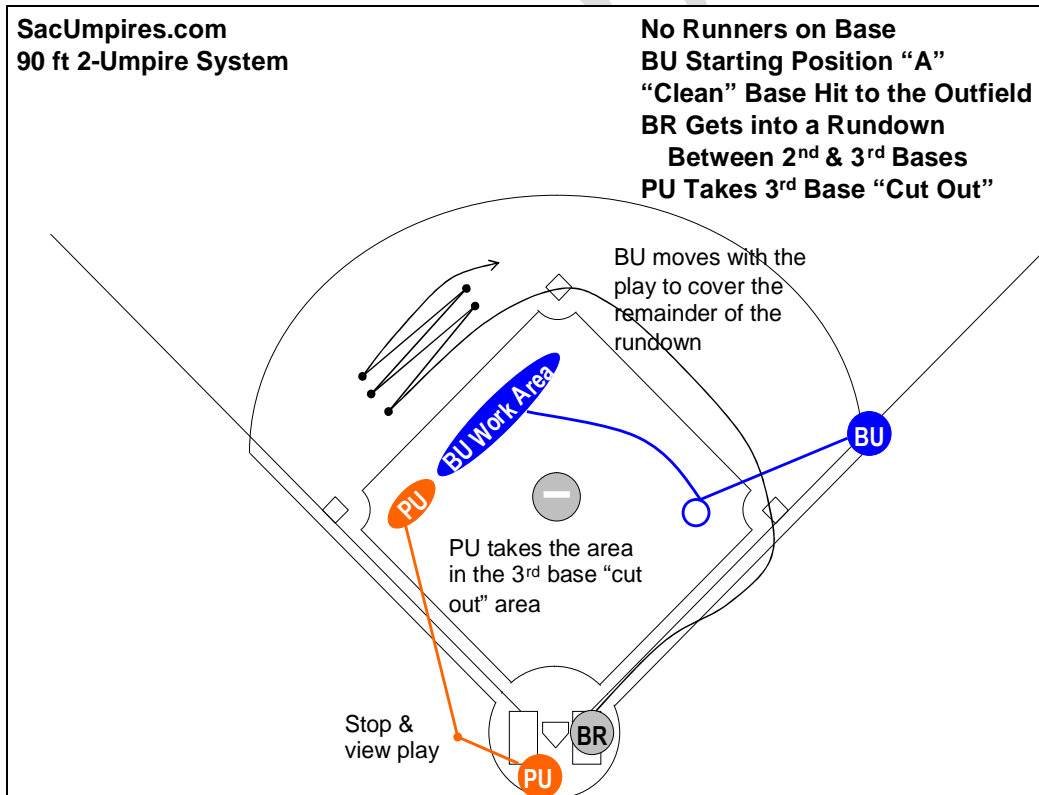
**Two Umpire System Mechanics Concepts**

(Concept #90) Rundowns on One Runner Only – Responsibilities & Coverage

- Runner between 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Bases:



Rundown on BR between 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>: The rundown between 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> is a "mirror" image of the rundown between 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup>.



Rundown on BR between 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>: PU moves into the 3<sup>rd</sup> base cutout and takes the "cutout" area of the rundown while BU covers the remainder of the rundown.

Two Umpire System Mechanics Concepts

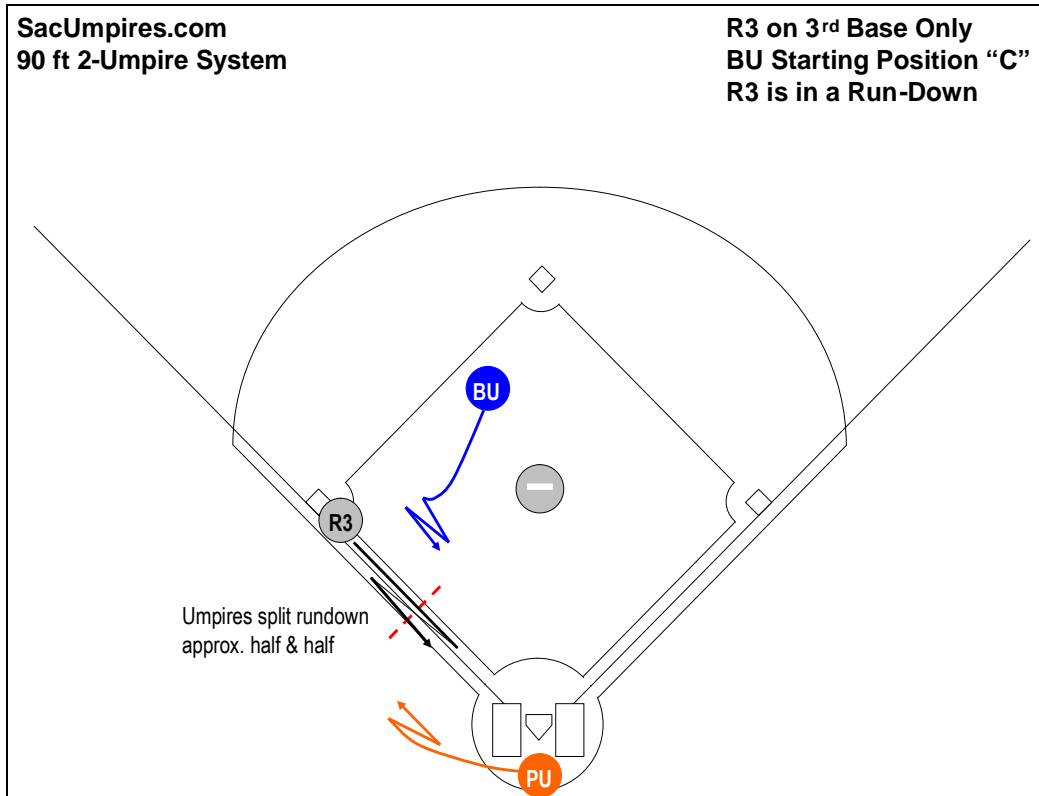
**(Concept #91) Rundowns on One Runner Only – Responsibilities & Coverage**

- Runner between 3<sup>rd</sup> Base & Home Plate:

**Rundowns on BR or Only One Runner:**

**Rundown on BR between 3<sup>rd</sup> and Home Plate:** If a rundown develops between 3<sup>rd</sup> and home:

- The umpires will split the rundown half-and-half; i.e., PU will take the home plate half of the rundown while BU takes the 3<sup>rd</sup> base half.
- Communication between the umpires would be, "I've got this Bill! I've got this half!" or "Half and half! Half and half!"
- Additional similar situation:
  - R3 gets into a rundown between 3<sup>rd</sup> and home plate



**Rundown on BR between 3<sup>rd</sup> and Home Plate:** The rundown between 3<sup>rd</sup> & home is covered differently. Both umpires position to split the rundown in half. BU moves between pitcher's mound and 3<sup>rd</sup> base while PU angles deeper into foul territory and towards 3<sup>rd</sup> base. PU must not move so as to take himself out of a play at the plate and will continue to move with R3 when in his area.

**(Concept #68) Starting Position "B" – Ground Ball on the Infield – "Working Area" Concept:**

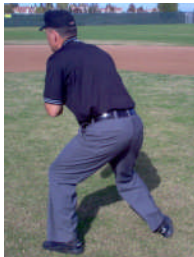
- Ball Hit to the Left Side – "Step Up, Turn & Face the Ball"



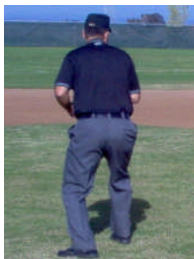
Your feet should be shoulder width or just slightly more apart. If they are too wide, you will limit & hurt your agility and movement. Position halfway between the pitcher's mound grass line and the 2<sup>nd</sup> base "cutout" on a tangent line from home plate extended through the 1<sup>st</sup> base side of pitcher's mound. Position is important. If you are too close, you increase your change of being struck by batted balls. If you are too deep, then it will be more difficult to get as close as necessary to the back of the pitcher's mound. (You will be more "straight-lined".) Correct starting position is essential to good pick-off coverage. Start from a "hands-on-knees" set position in starting position "B". As described earlier, squat like sitting in a chair, flex your knees and lean forward on your toes. Lean slightly on your right foot. Square your body to home plate, but turn your head and face F1.



When the ball is hit to the left side of the infield, you will need to spring forward without standing up and step aggressively first with your right foot (the one that's closest to the fielded ball) while keeping your body close to the ground as in the pick-off techniques. Angle yourself right behind the middle of pitcher's mound.



Next, swing your "chest to the ball" as you open your body up to the ball by swinging your left leg around.



Then open up and rotate your body around "clock-wise" while continuing aggressively backing up toward the mound. You will finish by taking one more step back with your right foot and leg. If performed properly, you will be within 10-15 feet of the back of the mound and straddling an "imaginary" line drawn from home plate through 2<sup>nd</sup> base.



This area is often called your "working space." It is like your middle of the infield "library" area because you will be "reading" the playing action from there and then reacting to where the play takes you. Proper "working space" positioning will put you deep enough behind the mound to take you out of all "throwing lanes" except throws from F5 or F6 throwing from the "hole." From there, it will position you to read the play and "bounce" to your play position easily.

## Two Umpire System Mechanics Concepts

**(Concept #69) Starting Position "B" – Ground Ball on the Infield – "Working Area" Concept:**

- Ball Hit to the Right Side – "Step Up, Turn & Face the Ball"



Your feet should be shoulder width or just slightly more apart. If they are too wide, you will limit & hurt your agility and movement. Position halfway between the pitcher's mound grass line and the 2<sup>nd</sup> base "cutout" on a tangent line from home plate extended through the 1<sup>st</sup> base side of pitcher's mound. Position is important. If you are too close, you increase your change of being struck by batted balls. If you are too deep, then it will be more difficult to get as close as necessary to the back of the pitcher's mound. (You will be more "straight-lined".) Correct starting position is essential to good pick-off coverage. Start from a "hands-on-knees" set position in starting position "B". As described earlier, squat like sitting in a chair, flex your knees and lean forward on your toes. Lean slightly on your right foot. Square your body to home plate, but turn your head and face F1.



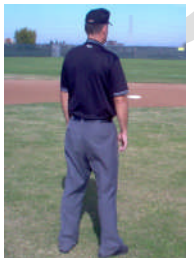
When the ball is hit to the right side of the infield, you will need to spring forward without standing up and step aggressively first with your left foot (the one that's closest to the fielded ball) while keeping your body close to the ground as in the pick-off techniques. Angle yourself hard away from the ball and right behind the middle of pitcher's mound.



Next, swing your "chest to the ball" as you open your body up to the ball by swinging your right leg around.



Then open up and rotate your body around "clock-wise" while continuing aggressively backing up toward the mound. You will finish by taking one more step back with your right foot and leg. If performed properly, you will be within 10-15 feet of the back of the mound and straddling an "imaginary" line drawn from home plate through 2<sup>nd</sup> base.



This area is often called your "working space." It is like your middle of the infield "library" area because you will be "reading" the playing action from there and then reacting to where the play takes you. Proper "working space" positioning will put you deep enough behind the mound to take you out of all "throwing lanes." From there, it will position you to read the play and "bounce" to your play position easily.

**(Concept #70) Starting Position "C" – Ground Ball on the Infield – "Working Area" Concept:**

- Ball Hit to the Left Side – "Step Up, Turn & Face the Ball"



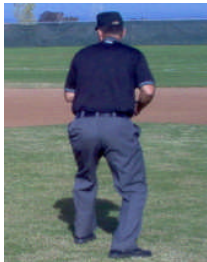
Start from a "hands-on-knees" set position. Squat like sitting in a chair, flex your knees and lean forward on your toes. Normally you are taught to square up to the plate area, but it is probably wise to set your feet parallel to an "imaginary" line drawn from 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> bases. This will help you open your field of vision behind you when glancing back for R2 attempting to steal 3<sup>rd</sup> base. Finally, turn your head and face the plate while moving your eyes and focusing on the hitting zone.



When the ball is hit to the left side of the infield, you will need to spring forward without standing up and step aggressively first with your right foot (the one that's closest to the fielded ball) while keeping your body close to the ground as in the pick-off techniques. Angle yourself hard away from the ball and right behind the middle of pitcher's mound.



Next, swing your "chest to the ball" as you open your body up to the ball by swinging you left leg around.



Then open up and rotate your body around "clock-wise" while continuing aggressively backing up toward the mound. You will finish by taking one more step back with your right foot and leg. If performed properly, you will be within 10-15 feet of the back of the mound and straddling an "imaginary" line drawn from home plate through 2<sup>nd</sup> base.



This area is often called your "working space." It is like your middle of the infield "library" area because you will be "reading" the playing action from there and then reacting to where the play takes you. Proper "working space" positioning will put you deep enough behind the mound to take you out of all "throwing lanes" except throws from F5 or F6 throwing from the "hole." From there, it will position you to read the play and "bounce" to your play position easily.

## Two Umpire System Mechanics Concepts

**(Concept #70) Starting Position "C" – Ground Ball on the Infield – "Working Area" Concept:**

- Ball Hit to the Right Side – "Step Up, Turn & Face the Ball"



Start from a "hands-on-knees" set position. Squat like sitting in a chair, flex your knees and lean forward on your toes. Normally you are taught to square up to the plate area, but it is probably wise to set your feet parallel to an "imaginary" line drawn from 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> bases. This will help you open your field of vision behind you when glancing back for R2 attempting to steal 3<sup>rd</sup> base. Finally, turn your head and face the plate while moving your eyes and focusing on the hitting zone.



When the ball is hit to the right side of the infield, you will need to spring forward without standing up and step aggressively first with your left foot (the one that's closest to the fielded ball) while keeping your body close to the ground as in the pick-off techniques. Angle yourself right behind the middle of pitcher's mound.



Next, swing your "chest to the ball" as you open your body up to the ball by swinging you right leg around.



Then open up and rotate your body around while continuing aggressively backing up toward the mound. You will finish by taking one more step back with your left foot and leg. If performed properly, you will be within 10-15 feet of the back of the mound and straddling an "imaginary" line drawn from home plate through 2<sup>nd</sup> base.



This area is often called your "working space." It is like your middle of the infield "library" area because you will be "reading" the playing action from there and then reacting to where the play takes you. Proper "working space" positioning will put you deep enough behind the mound to take you out of all "throwing lanes." From there, it will position you to read the play and "bounce" to your play position easily.

(Concept #71) Starting Position “B” – Ground Ball on the Infield – “Working Area” Concept:

## Simplified Coverage – Ground Balls on the Infield (from Starting Position “B”):

### **Instruction Notes – Simplified Content:**

*No R1 to 3<sup>rd</sup> base coverage on infield plays: Ball to the infield (not rolling up either foul line)*

### **Instruction Notes – Simplified Content:**

*BU’s mechanics with a ground ball to the infield:*

- *Ball to the infield with R1 and R3 on bases (not a double play)*
- *Double plays (simplified – just spin from behind the hill – take both plays from the “working area”)*

### Simplified Coverage – PU Mechanics with R1 on 1<sup>st</sup> and on a Ground Ball to the Infield (Not Rolling up Either Foul Line):

- PU will swing out from behind the plate a few feet into foul territory in the direction of 3<sup>rd</sup> base.
- PU will stay on the 1<sup>st</sup> base line and **WILL NOT** assume responsibility of R1 from 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup>. (BU assumes that responsibility.)
- Should the ground ball develop into a double-play situation, as *soon as the lead runner is declared out at 2<sup>nd</sup> base*, PU will immediately move to take his responsibilities with a ground ball with no one on base. PU will move **straight** up the 1<sup>st</sup> base foul line so that he again will have a view of the play at 1<sup>st</sup> base looking up the 1<sup>st</sup> base foul line.
- There are three reasons for having PU come up the line. PU will be responsible for **Primary/Secondary Responsibilities**:
  - PU will be watching for **interference** by BR while out of the 45-foot lane. Should PU see such an infraction, he should make the call. This is not to say, however, that BU may never make such a call. For example, if BU observes BR interfere with the play at 1<sup>st</sup> base while *clearly* out of the 45-foot lane, it is of course permissible for BU to make this call also.
  - PU will be ready for any **overthrows** at 1<sup>st</sup> base. If PU sees the ball being overthrown at 1<sup>st</sup> base, he will immediately and rapidly move with the overthrow and take responsibility for the ball going out of play.
  - PU is also in position to help on **“swipe tags”** on BR at 1<sup>st</sup> base. Although this is rarely used, it is permissible for BU to ask for help on a “swipe tag” on this play – if, for some reason, BU does not have a good look at the play. (Note that the “appeal” should be initiated by BU *immediately* and *before* a confrontation with a player or manager occurs.) The terminology by BU would be, “Bill, did he tag him?” or “Bill, do you have a tag?” while pointing to PU. The response by PU would be a **very emphatic**, “Yes! He’s out on the tag!” or “No! He missed him!” while using a strong visual signal.

### **Ground Balls Rolling Up Either Foul Line**

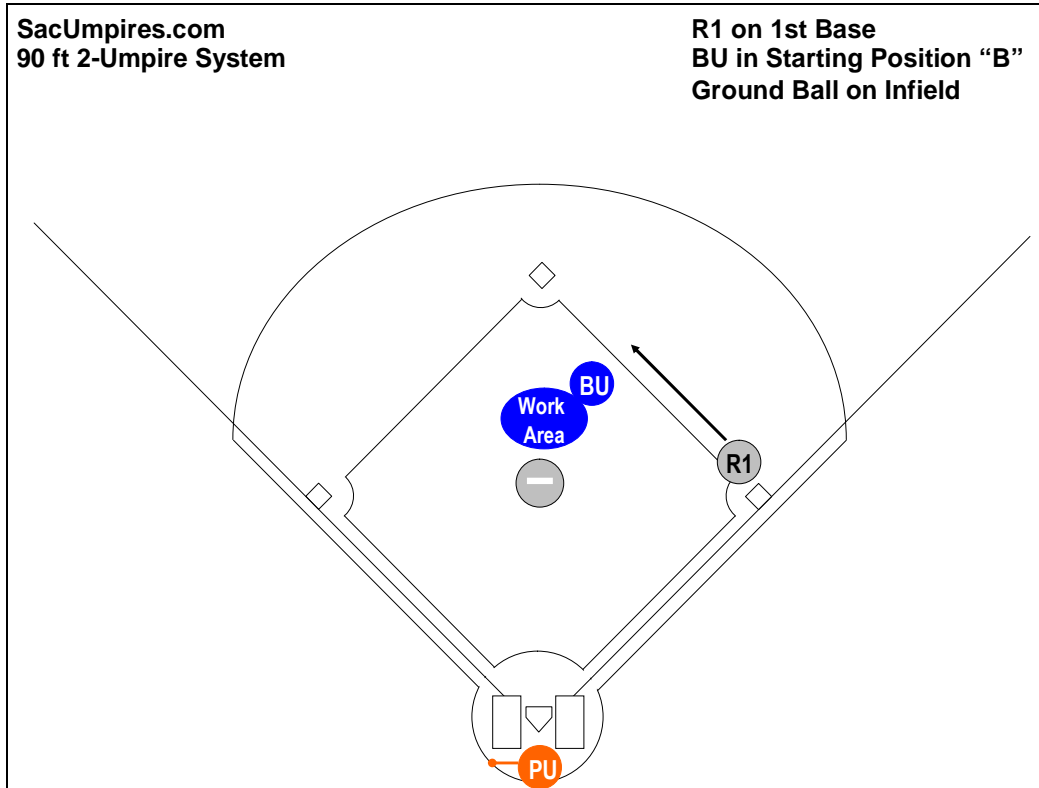
**PU’s Mechanics with a Ground Ball Rolling up the 3<sup>rd</sup> Base Line and R1 Only:**

- PU must come out from behind the plate and be prepared to make a fair/foul decision on the ball rolling up the line.
- If PU points the ball fair and the ball is then thrown to 1<sup>st</sup> base, he will then continue up the 3<sup>rd</sup> base line towards 3<sup>rd</sup> base and assume responsibility of R1 coming from 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- PU should communicate with BU on this type of play
- If the same ball is fielded and thrown to 2<sup>nd</sup> base forcing out R1 – PU would retreat to the 1<sup>st</sup> base foul line as described in the previous section.

**PU’s Mechanics with a Ground Ball Rolling up the 1<sup>st</sup> Base Line and R1 Only:**

- PU will come up the 1<sup>st</sup> base line for the decision as well as for taking responsibility of tag/no tag on BR up to the 45-foot line.
- PU will stay on the line and **WILL NOT** assume responsibility of R1 from 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup>. (BU assumes that responsibility.)
- PU should communicate with BU on this type of play (i.e., ground ball up the 1<sup>st</sup> base line) by saying, “I’m on the line, Bill!” although this must be done with some care so that the infielders are not confused by PU’s communication.
- BU should be aware that if the ball is rolling up the 1<sup>st</sup> base line, PU will be taking responsibility for the fair/foul. This makes it very difficult for BU on the occasions when the play is made at 1<sup>st</sup> with a following (and usually very close) play at 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- Also note that this same mechanic (i.e., PU staying with the ball and remaining on the 1<sup>st</sup> base line to watch for interference out of the three-foot lane, overthrows, etc.) would also be used on a ground ball fielded *in the general vicinity of home plate* with R1 on 1<sup>st</sup> base only in addition to those hit up the 1<sup>st</sup> base line.
- BU will step up and turn with the ball, facing the fielder as he is fielding the ball. With less than two out, the double play is in order, and BU must react with good anticipation as to how the play will develop.

(Concept #71) Starting Position "B" – Ground Ball on the Infield – "Working Area" Concept:



**Simplified Coverage** – Ground Ball on the Infield with Runner(s) on Base(s): On a ground ball to the infield, BU will "step-up, turn & face the ball" and move into the "working area." From there, BU will read the play and react as the ball is thrown to any base for a play.

**(Concept #72) Starting Position “B” – Ground Ball on the Infield – “Working Area” Concept****Advanced Coverage – Ground Balls on the Infield (BU’s Starting Position “B”):****PU Mechanics with R1 on 1<sup>st</sup> and on a Ground Ball to the Infield (Not Rolling up Either Foul Line):**

- PU will swing out from behind the plate a few feet into foul territory in the direction of 3<sup>rd</sup> base.
- PU will be moving towards 3<sup>rd</sup> base in case R1 should attempt 3<sup>rd</sup> on the play, in which case the play at 3<sup>rd</sup> base would belong to PU.
- Should the ground ball develop into a double-play situation, *as soon as the lead runner is declared out at 2<sup>nd</sup> base*, PU will stop his movement in the direction of 3<sup>rd</sup> base and will immediately retreat in one of two ways to take his usual responsibilities with a ground ball with no one on base. PU may either (1) retreat **straight back** down the 3<sup>rd</sup> base foul line towards home plate so that he is looking up the 1<sup>st</sup> base foul line as the play is being made at 1<sup>st</sup> base; or (2) he may cut **straight across** the infield grass towards the 1<sup>st</sup> base foul line so that he again will have a view of the play at 1<sup>st</sup> base looking up the 1<sup>st</sup> base foul line. Either method is acceptable.
- There are three reasons for having PU come up the line. PU will be responsible for **Primary/Secondary Responsibilities**:
  - PU will be watching for **interference** by BR while out of the 45-foot lane. Should PU see such an infraction, he should make the call. This is not to say, however, that BU may never make such a call. For example, if BU observes BR interfere with the play at 1<sup>st</sup> base while *clearly* out of the 45-foot lane, it is of course permissible for BU to make this call also.
  - PU will be ready for any **overthrows** at 1<sup>st</sup> base. If PU sees the ball being overthrown at 1<sup>st</sup> base, he will immediately and rapidly move with the overthrow and take responsibility for the ball going out of play.
  - PU is also in position to help on **“swipe tags”** on BR at 1<sup>st</sup> base. Although this is rarely used, it is permissible for BU to ask for help on a “swipe tag” on this play – if, for some reason, BU does not have a good look at the play. (Note that the “appeal” should be initiated by BU *immediately* and *before* a confrontation with a player or manager occurs.) The terminology by BU would be, “Bill, did he tag him?” or “Bill, do you have a tag?” while pointing to PU. The response by PU would be a **very emphatic**, “Yes! He’s out on the tag!” or “No! He missed him!” while using a strong visual signal.

**Ground Balls Rolling Up Either Foul Line****PU’s Mechanics with a Ground Ball Rolling up the 3<sup>rd</sup> Base Line and R1 Only:**

- PU must come out from behind the plate and be prepared to make a fair/foul decision on the ball rolling up the line.
- If PU points the ball fair and the ball is then thrown to 1<sup>st</sup> base, he will then continue up the 3<sup>rd</sup> base line towards 3<sup>rd</sup> base and assume responsibility of R1 coming from 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- If the same ball is fielded and thrown to 2<sup>nd</sup> base forcing out R1 – PU would retreat to the 1<sup>st</sup> base foul line as described in the previous section.

**PU’s Mechanics with a Ground Ball Rolling up the 1<sup>st</sup> Base Line and R1 Only:**

- PU will come up the 1<sup>st</sup> base line for the decision as well as for taking responsibility of tag/no tag on BR up to the 45-foot line.
- PU will stay on the line and **WILL NOT** assume responsibility of R1 from 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup>. (BU in this case assumes that responsibility.)
- PU should communicate with BU on this type of play (i.e., ground ball up the 1<sup>st</sup> base line) by saying, “I’m on the line, Bill!” although this must be done with some care so that the infielders are not confused by PU’s communication.
- BU should be aware that if the ball is rolling up the 1<sup>st</sup> base line, PU will be taking responsibility for the fair/foul and will NOT be able to take the usual R1 from 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> coverage. This makes it very difficult for BU on the occasions when the play is made at 1<sup>st</sup> with a following (and usually very close) play at 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- Also note that this same mechanic (i.e., PU staying with the ball and remaining on the 1<sup>st</sup> base line to watch for interference out of the three-foot lane, overthrows, etc.) would also be used on a ground ball fielded *in the general vicinity of home plate* with R1 on 1<sup>st</sup> base only in addition to those hit up the 1<sup>st</sup> base line.
- BU will step up and turn with the ball, facing the fielder as he is fielding the ball. With less than two out, the double play is in order, and BU must react with good anticipation as to how the play will develop. If BU reads that a double-play attempt will occur, BU would use the double-play mechanic described next.

**Instruction Notes – Simplified Content:**

**No R1 to 3<sup>rd</sup> base coverage on infield plays: Ball to the infield (not rolling up either foul line)**

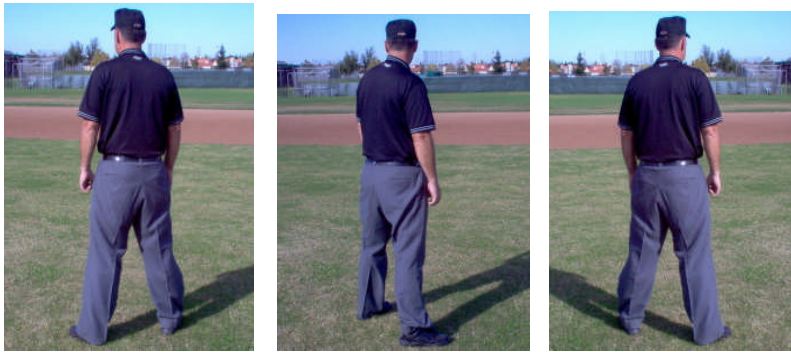
**Instruction Notes – Simplified Content:**

**BU’s mechanics with a ground ball to the infield:**

- **Ball to the infield with R1 and R3 on bases (not a double play)**
- **Double plays (simplified – just spin from behind the hill – take both plays from the “working area”)**

**(Concept #73) Ground Ball on the Infield – “Working Area” Concept**

- **Reading & Anticipating the Play Location and Positioning in the “Working Area”**



After “stepping up, turning and facing the ball” you will be reading the play from a location similar to this. The closer you get behind pitcher’s mound, the more you will be outside of any fielder’s throwing lane. Get as deep as you can – 15 to 20 feet behind pitcher’s mound is ideal. Get to this spot quickly.



If F6 goes into the “6 hole” or F5 fields the ball, “anticipate” his play as his body language reveals his intentions. If he shows you a throw to 1<sup>st</sup> base, read the fielder’s eyes. If he is looking “directly through” you, then you are in his throwing lane. Immediately jump step out of the throwing lane.



Then begin “cross-stepping” toward 1<sup>st</sup> base while staying out of his “throwing lane.” You should be able to get on the 1<sup>st</sup> base side of pitcher’s mound and achieve a 45 degree angle to 1<sup>st</sup> base (lined up with the diagonal corners of 1<sup>st</sup> base).



This will give you a great “play position” and look for the play at 1<sup>st</sup> base.

**(Concept #74) Ground Ball on the Infield – “Working Area” Concept**

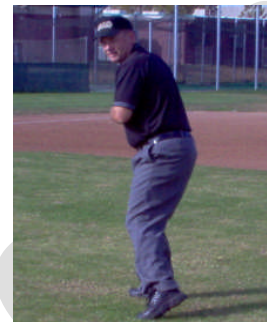
- Seeing the Play and “Bouncing” Back Across the “Working Area” for Additional Play Action



Staying in your great “play position” for 1<sup>st</sup> base is not a good idea if another play is about to happen behind you. The game doesn't stop just because you had a call. Keep umpiring and be aware of additional plays that could occur elsewhere within your responsibility area.



When runners are behind you, you must “anticipate” additional plays and begin “bouncing” back across the infield. In this case, a play just occurred at 1<sup>st</sup> base and you are on the 1<sup>st</sup> base side of the “working area”. As soon as you have seen the play and judged it in your mind, begin “bouncing” back across the “working area” to the 3<sup>rd</sup> base side while reading F3's body language in preparing to throw.



Start “cross-stepping” while keeping your eye on the ball. Maneuver to stay out of the “throwing lane”.



Continue “cross-stepping” toward 3<sup>rd</sup> base as far as the play allows or until the defense gives up. The “bounce” technique will keep you from making a call at 3<sup>rd</sup> base from the 1<sup>st</sup> base side of the infield on a close play (a long distance call) and a tough position to defend to the coaching staffs. It gives everyone the appearance of great hustle and build credibility for you calls.

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