

## Section 1.0 – No Runners on Base

### 1.1 – General Positioning– Starting Position “A” *with No Runners on Base:*

#### 1.1.1 – Base Umpire (BU) Proper Stance Characteristics:

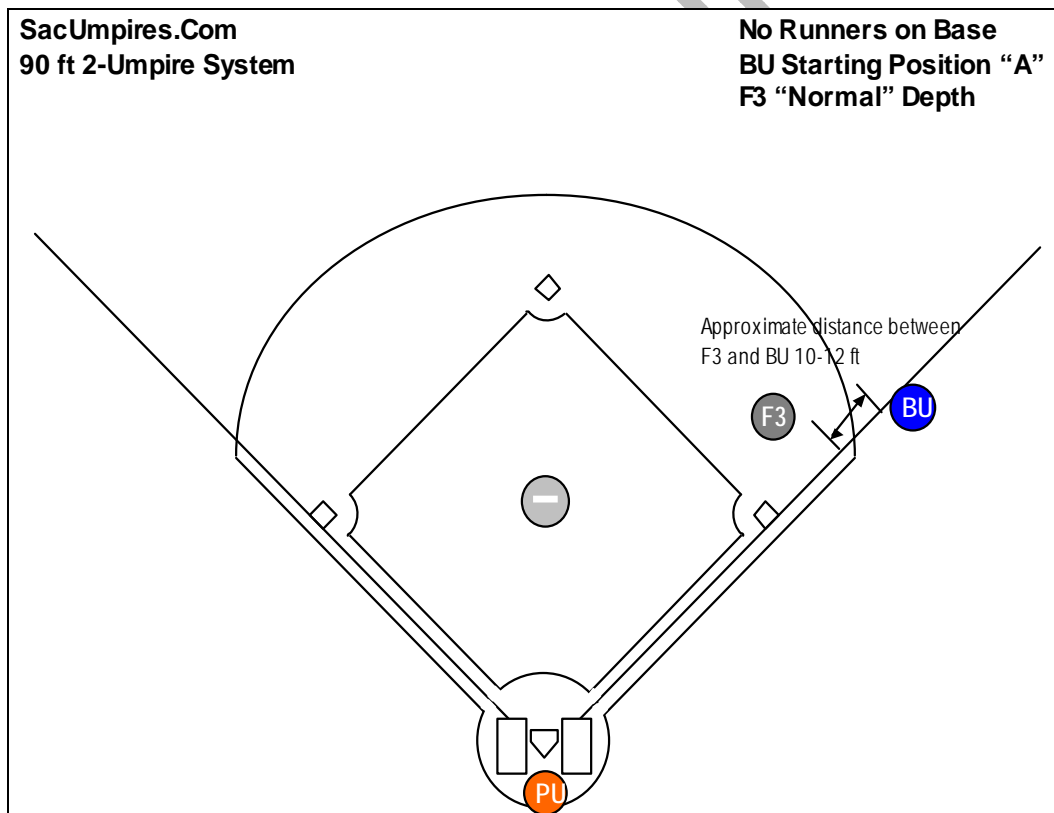
- Position with both feet in foul territory
- Right foot should be just off the foul line
- Body should be squared to home plate
- Legs should be spread just over shoulder width apart
- Should be in a “ready” position with both hands on his knees as the pitcher (F1) is preparing to deliver the ball to the batter

#### 1.1.2 – BU’s Proper Use of Eyes during Each Pitch:

- When F1 is in possession of the ball, BU must keep his eyes on F1.
- When F1 goes into his windup and is about ready to deliver the ball, BU’s head should turn towards the plate.
- Then, BU should focus on the plate area, being ready for any **check swing possibilities**.

#### 1.1.3 – Starting Position “A” and Adjustments for F3’s Movements:

- **If F3 is playing “normally”:** With F3 playing in a “normal” position, BU shall position himself approximately 10 to 12 feet behind F3 (see **Diagram below 1.1.3-a**). *This allows adequate “cushion” between F3 & BU in case F3 moves directly at BU to field a line shot over the 1<sup>st</sup> base bag or pop-up behind BU.*
- **If F3 is playing “shallow”:** When F3 is playing in (“shallow”), BU will also move up with F3. BU never comes closer than 10 to 15 feet from the 1<sup>st</sup> base bag (see **Diagram 1.1.3-b**). *BU’s first priority is to judge fair/foul. If a screaming line shot or bouncer is hit over the 1<sup>st</sup> bag, BU needs to avoid the batted ball, see the ball past the bag, process fair/foul criteria and then signal/call the result of his decision.*
- **If F3 is playing “deep”:** With F3 playing “deeper” than normal, BU will back up onto the outfield grass a bit, the 10- to 12-foot distance may be cut back to maybe 5-7 feet (see **Diagram 1.1.3-c**). *When BU positions further from the infield grass, it means longer distances to cover for BU to pivot into the infield in front of BR. Shortening the distance between F3 & BU can help, but remember shortening the “cushion” between BU and F3 increases the likelihood of collision when F3 moves directly at BU.*



**Diagram 1.1.3-a:** Base Umpire (BU) starting position with no runners on base, BU is approximately 10 to 12 feet behind the 1<sup>st</sup> baseman (F3) playing a “normal” depth.

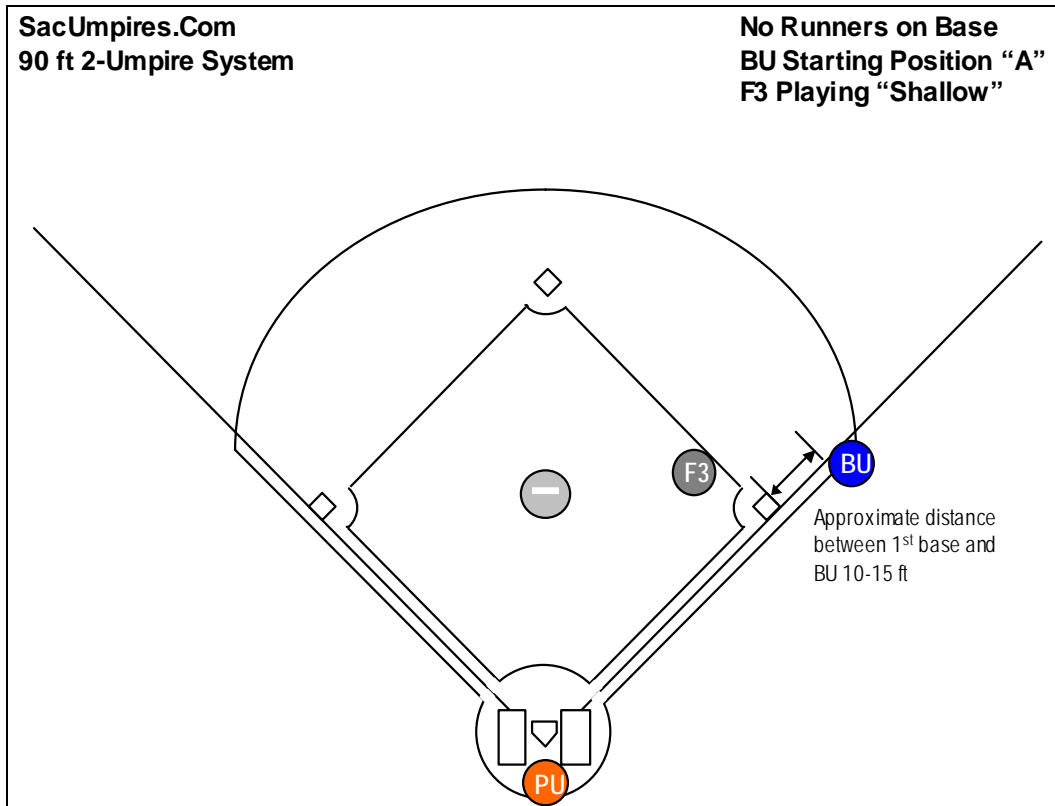


Diagram 1.1.3-b: BU starting position with no runners on base and F3 is playing "shallow" (near or on the infield grass), BU positions approximately 10-15 feet behind 1<sup>st</sup> base.

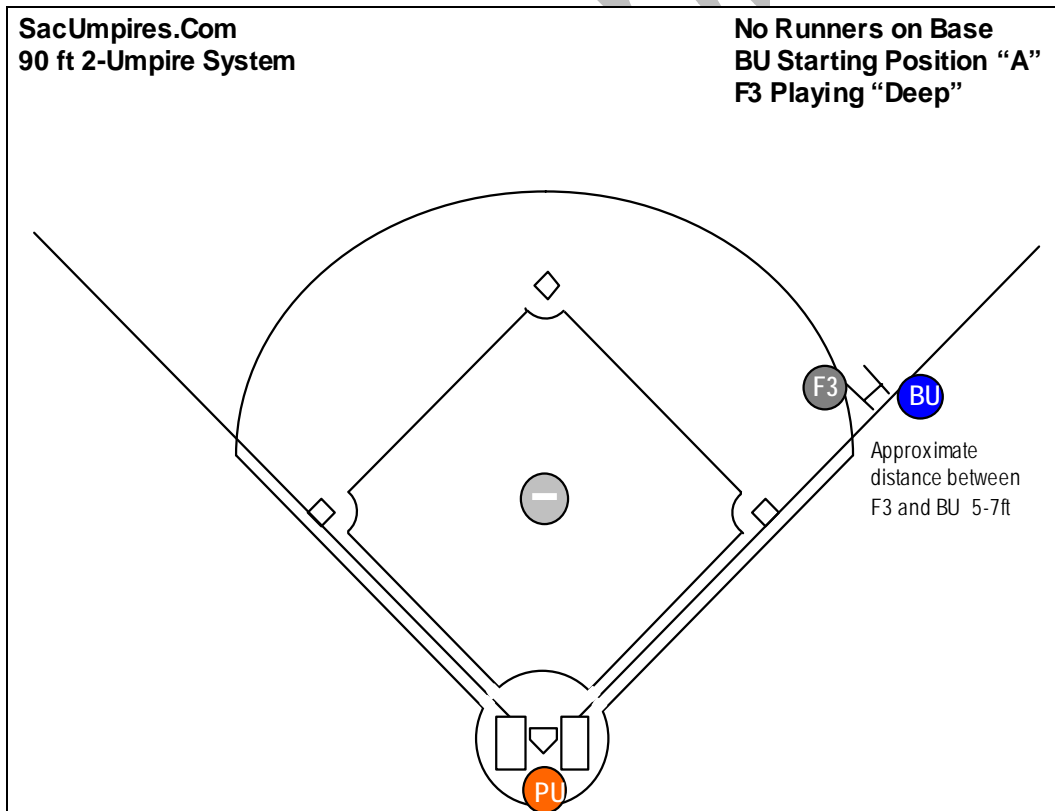


Diagram 1.1.3-c: When F3 plays "deep" (near the outfield grass), BU narrows the distance behind F3 to approximately 5-7ft.

## 1.2 – Ground Balls to the Infield – “Normal” Plays at 1<sup>st</sup> Base *with No Runners on Base*:

1.2.1 – Priority of calls: (1) Fair/foul, (2) catch/no catch, (3) plays and then (4) base touches

1.2.2 – Fair/Foul Priority: If the ground ball is hit down the 1<sup>st</sup> base line *in the vicinity of 1<sup>st</sup> base*:

- BU has fair/foul responsibility including the base and beyond 1<sup>st</sup> base (base & beyond), while PU has this responsibility up **until** the ball reaches 1<sup>st</sup> base (before the base).
- BU must stay on the line until the ball is touched (or passes 1<sup>st</sup> base)
- If BU must point the ball fair (as on ball fielded by F3 behind the bag but near the line), he would first indicate that the ball is fair by pointing
- BU then moves off the line into fair territory to make the call at 1<sup>st</sup> base.

1.2.3 – Primary/Secondary Responsibilities: There are three reasons for having PU come up the line with no one on base:

- 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.

1.2.4 – Angle – Distance: With no runners on base on a ground ball to the infield, BU will move from his position on the foul line and set up for the play at 1<sup>st</sup> base:

- BU moves to a position approximately 15 to 20 feet from the base
- On ground balls to the “imaginary box” or left side, BU develops a *right angle* to the throw from the infielder (see **Diagram 1-24-a**).
- On balls to the right side, BU generally takes two (2) steps fair (see **Diagram 1-24-b&c**) unless a “pressure” play develops (discussed later in this section) (see **Diagram 1-33-c&d**).

1.2.5 – “Play Cycle” Checklist: When BU comes in to set up for the play at 1<sup>st</sup> base:

- BU should come off the foul line while **facing the batted ball**.
- As the batted ball is about to reach the fielder, BU should **square his body towards 1<sup>st</sup> base** - with proper distance and angle to the base
- BU should continue to **watch the ball** by keeping his head turned towards the fielder.
- During the time period between the fielder’s release and the throw’s travel halfway across the infield, BU should evaluate and **determine the quality of the throw**. (Will the throw be fielded around 1<sup>st</sup> base, fly into the stands or is it right at BU?)
- If BU sees that the **throw is “true”**, he will come to a set position (hands on knees or standing set), (BU’s “play position”)
- BU should then turn his head towards the base, and **focus on the 1<sup>st</sup> base bag**.
- BU should **read F3’s feet and watch for BR’s base touch**.
- BU then **listens for the sound of the ball hitting F3’s glove** (This is the “**snap-thud**” play evaluation technique).
- PU will come out from behind home plate by coming around the left side and then proceed to jog (not sprint) down the 1<sup>st</sup> base line (straddling the foul line), going *no farther than the 45-foot line*.
- PU should be virtually stopped when the play occurs at 1<sup>st</sup> base.

1.2.6 – Positioning Goal: BU Should Stay in *Fair Territory* as Much as Possible. This would include all ground balls hit to F5, F6, back to F1, and to F4’s right or directly at F4.

1.2.7 – Signal and Call:

- BU should call the play at 1<sup>st</sup> base using a crisp, clear, visible mechanic.
- If the play is strictly a “routine” out, then it is permissible for BU not to voice with the mechanic. If BU does choose to use a voice with the “routine” out mechanic (which is also acceptable), then BU should make sure that he is not overly loud on the “routine” out call so as not to draw unnecessary attention.
- As the play gets closer, BU should **vary the intensity of his signal and voice** based on the closeness of the play - the closer the play, the louder the umpire’s voice and the stronger his signal, so that he is using his loudest voice and strongest signal on “bangers.”

1.2.8 – After the Play Prepare for the Next Starting Position:

- After calling BR out at 1<sup>st</sup> base, BU will return to his original position on the 1<sup>st</sup> base foul line. He may either jog back to that position or walk **briskly**; either method is acceptable.

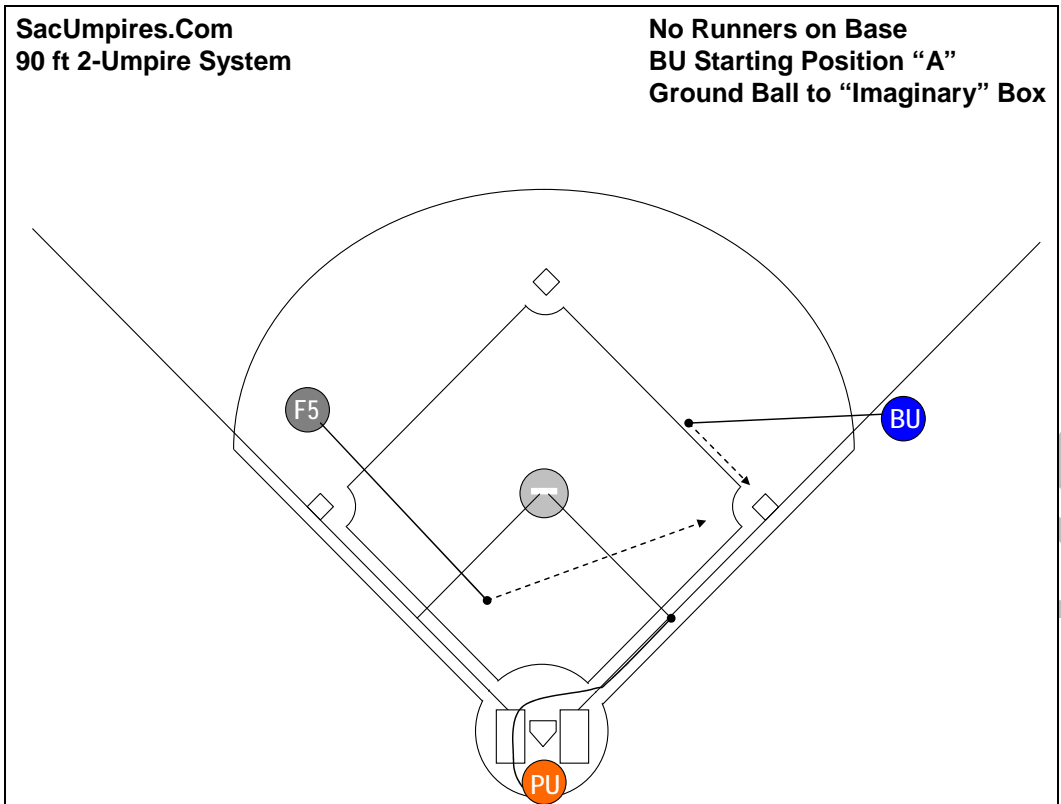


Diagram 1.2.4-a: BU's positioning with a ground ball to F5 in the "imaginary box" with no runners on base. The batted ball fielded in the "imaginary box" could also be by F1, F2, or F3 in front of home plate.

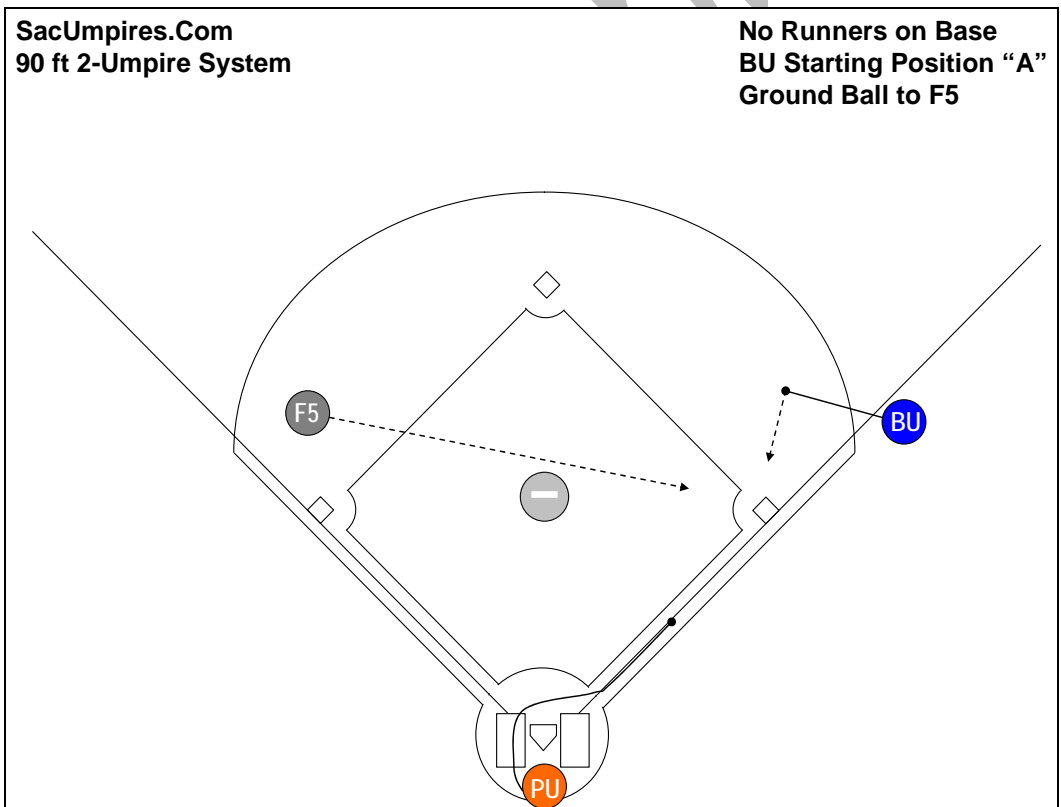


Diagram 1.2.4-b: Ground ball to F5 with no runners on base

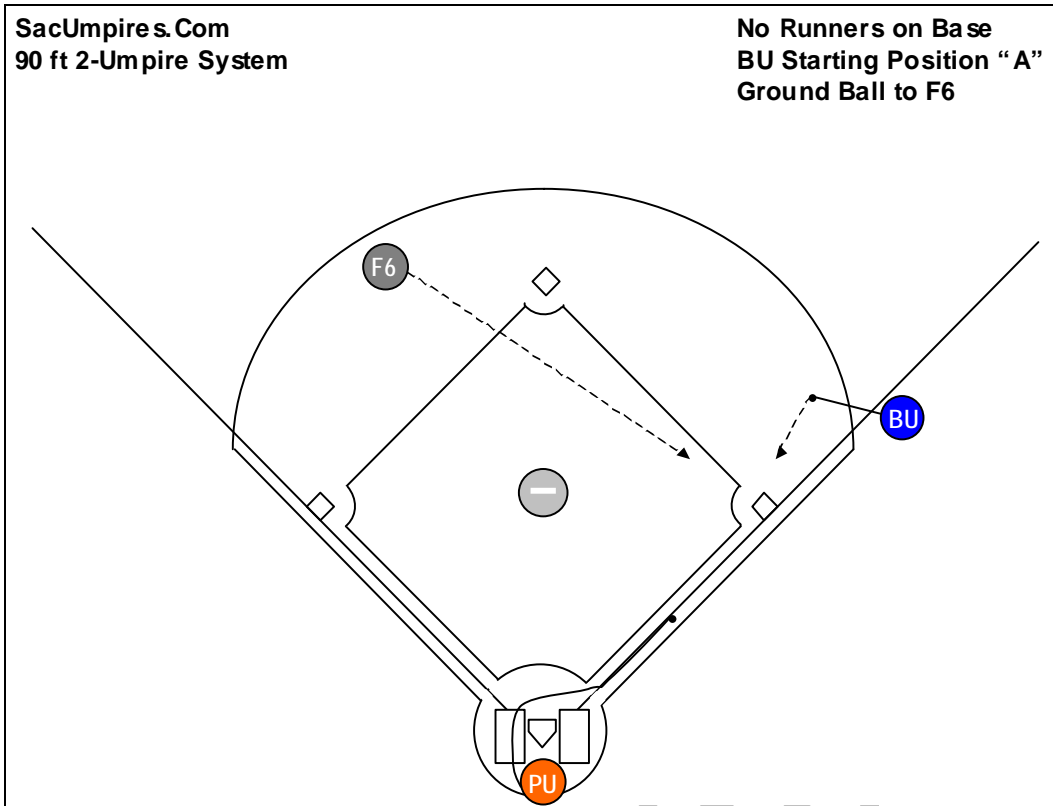


Diagram 1.2.4-c: Ground ball to F6 with no runners on base

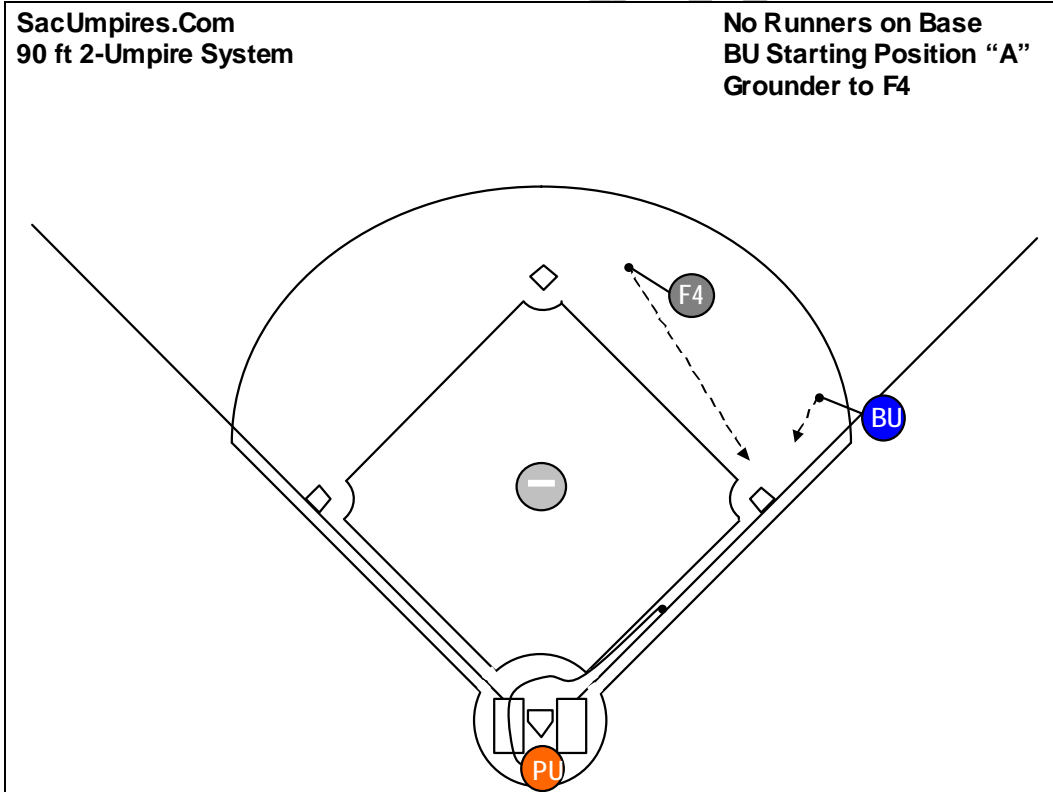


Diagram 1.2.4-d: "Normal" grounder to F4's right with no runners on base.

### 1.3 – Ground Balls to the Infield – “Special” Plays at 1<sup>st</sup> Base *with No Runners on Base:*

1.3.1 – F1 Covers 1<sup>st</sup> Base: On plays where the F1 will be covering at 1<sup>st</sup> base (see Diagram 1.3.1) (below):

- BU should try to take the play in fair territory.
- BU should move *approximately two steps* off the foul line into fair territory and position himself approximately 20 feet from the 1<sup>st</sup> base bag.
- BU *is* in very good position to see F1 touch the inside edge of the base.
- This positioning also allows BU to be out of the way for both F1 covering the bag and BR overrunning 1<sup>st</sup> base.

1.3.2 – F3 Covers 1<sup>st</sup> Base Unassisted: On plays where the F3 will be covering at 1<sup>st</sup> base unassisted (see Diagrams 1.3.2-a & 1.3.2-b):

- BU should try to take the play in fair territory (unless “pressured” by F3).
- BU should move *approximately two steps* off the foul line into fair territory and position himself approximately 20 feet from the 1<sup>st</sup> base bag.
- BU *is* in very good position to see F3 touch the inside edge of the base.
- This positioning also allows BU to be out of the way for BR overrunning 1<sup>st</sup> base.

1.3.3 – “Pressure” Concept: If the ground ball is hit to F4’s left (see Diagram 1.3.3):

- BU should again try to move into fair territory to make the call (his angle would be cut back from the 90-degree angle in this case).
- If BU feels “pressure” from F4 moving to his left (or from F3), BU should move into *foul territory* to take this type of play, keeping in mind the concepts of proper distance and angle to the play. (Key: If positioning fair will in anyway interfere with the throw to 1<sup>st</sup> or your evaluation of it, then BU should go into foul territory.)
- Some examples of “pressure” are: F4 will collide with BU, F4’s throw will hit BU or BU’s head movement is so great that tracking the throw to 1<sup>st</sup> base causes blurred images of the play.
- Should the ball be overthrown at 1<sup>st</sup> base, BU must be ready to swing around in front of the cutout at 1<sup>st</sup> base and then get a wide angle so as to be “ahead” of BR for any play at 2<sup>nd</sup> base.

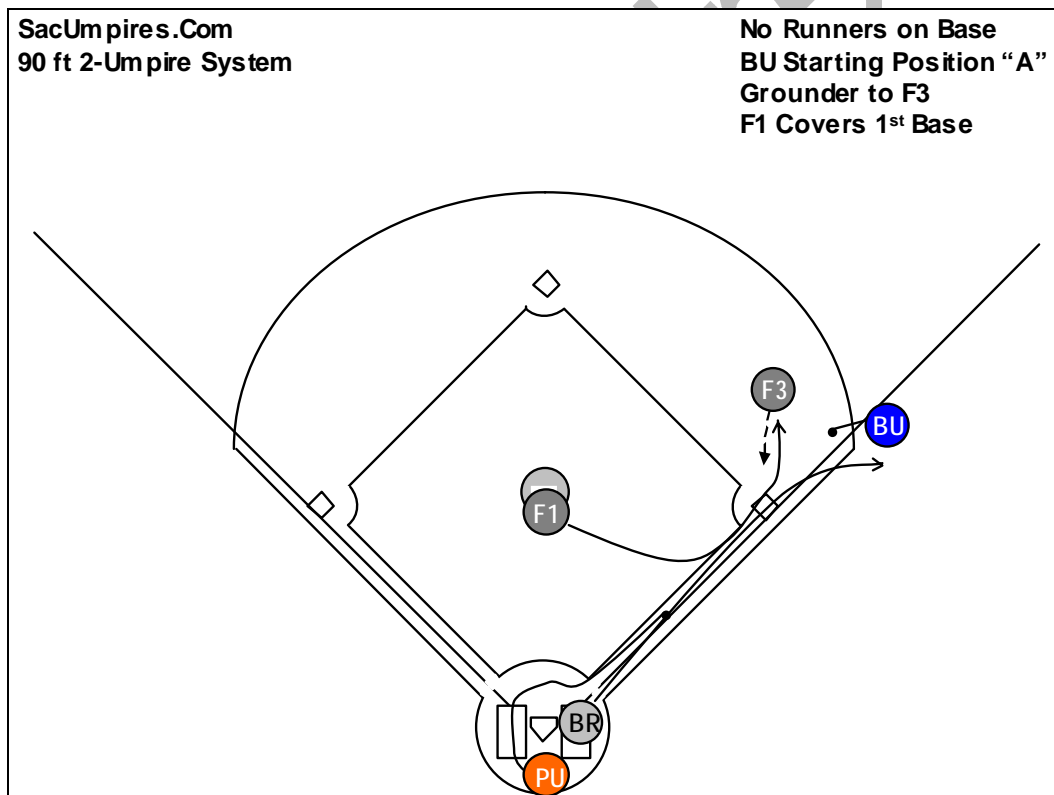


Diagram 1.3.1: When a ball is grounded to F3 and F1 moves to cover 1<sup>st</sup> base, BU moves two steps into fair territory and positions in the opening that forms by F1 rounding into fair territory and BR rounding into foul territory. This position allows BU an area to view the base touches by both F1 and BR with minimal chance of collision.

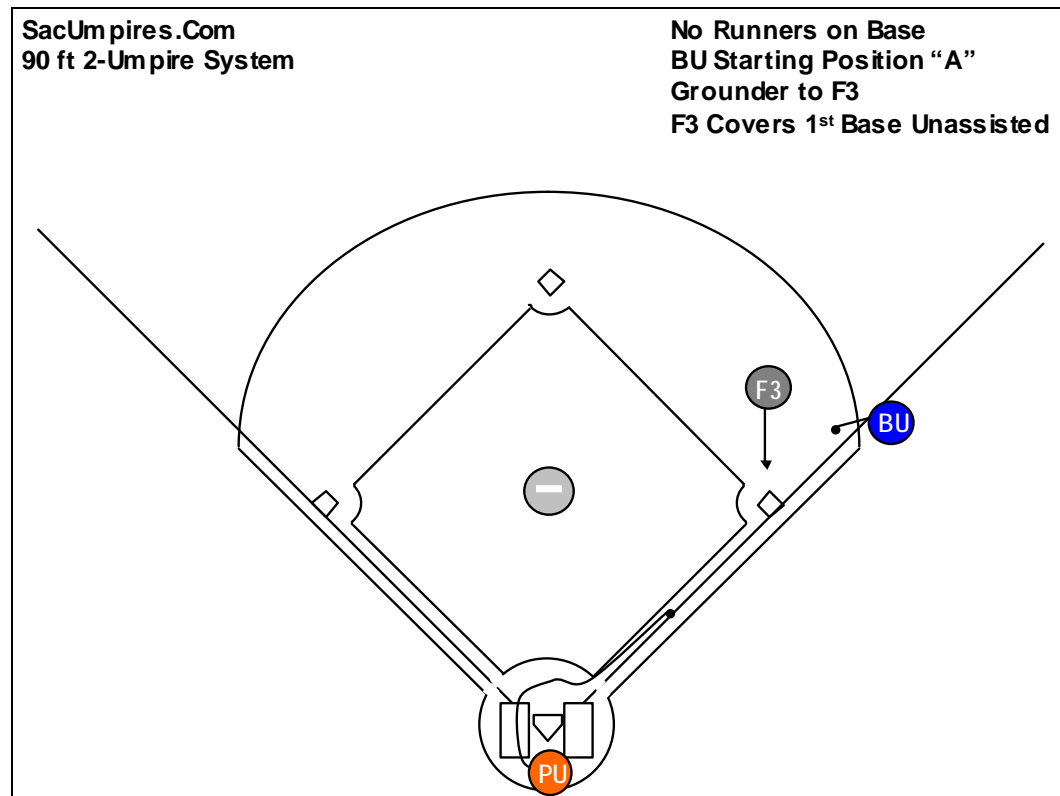


Diagram 1.3.2-a: F3 covering at 1<sup>st</sup> base unassisted on grounder with no runners on base without "pressuring" BU.

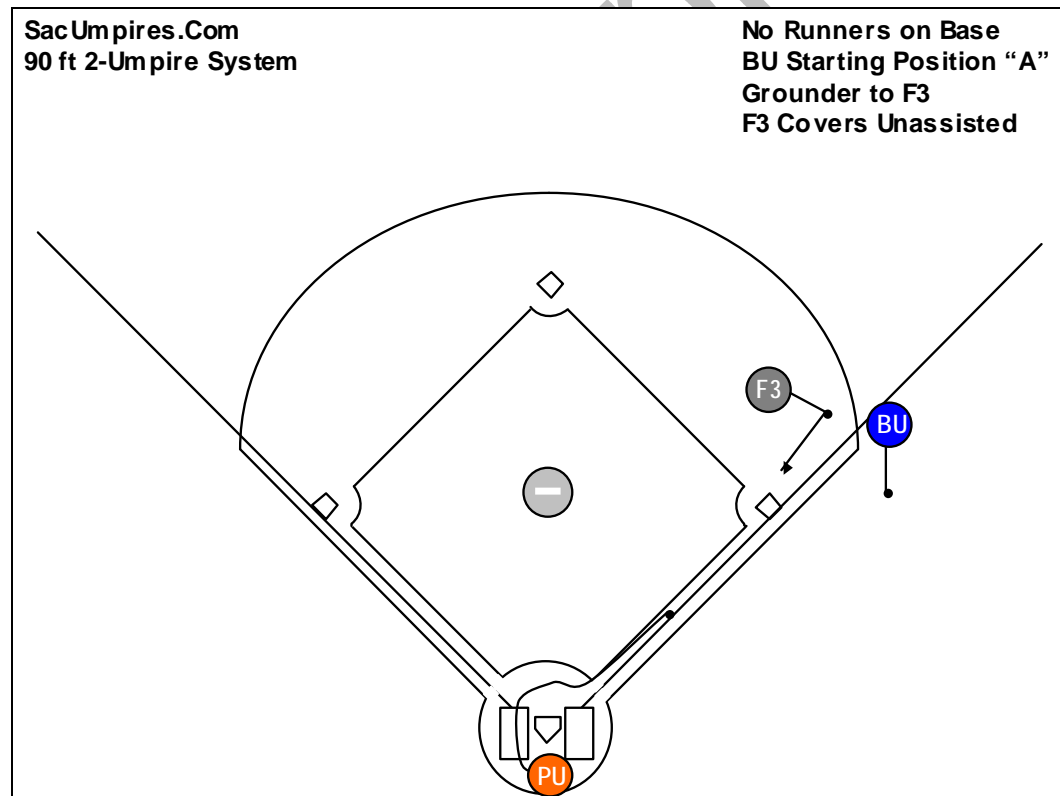
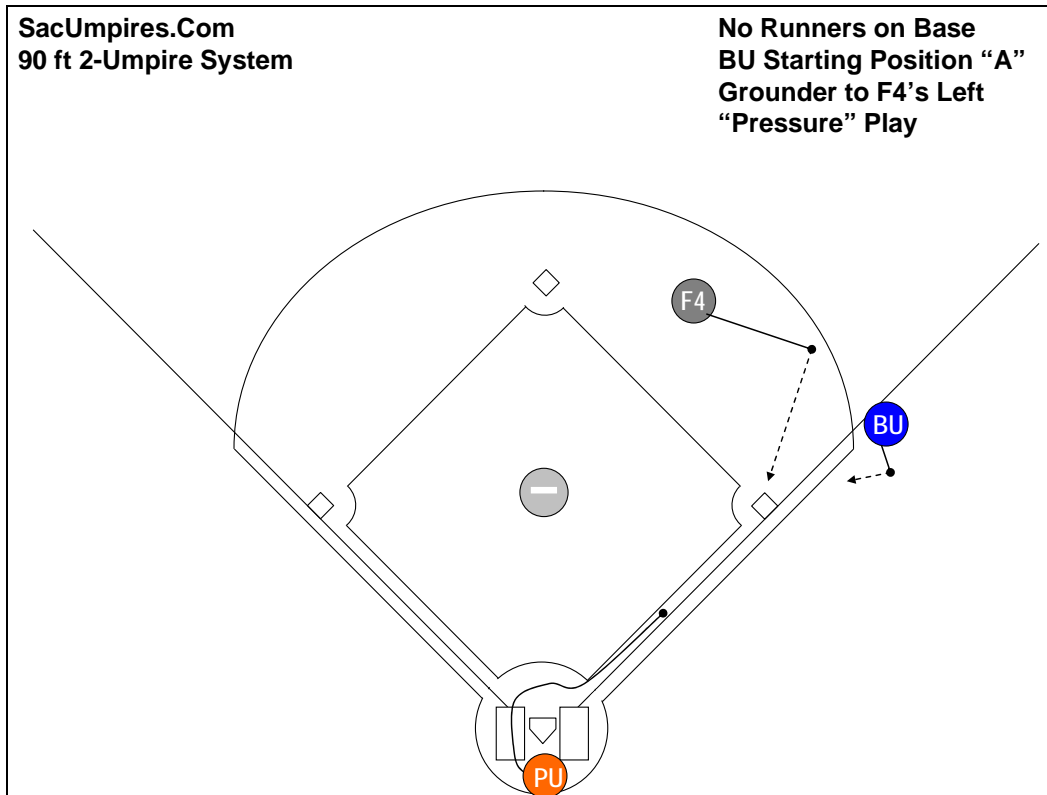


Diagram 1.3.2-b: F3 covering at 1<sup>st</sup> base unassisted on grounder with no runners on base and "pressuring" BU.



**Diagram 1.3.3:** Ground ball to F4's left with no runners on base resulting in a "pressure" play. "Pressure" plays also can occur when F3 fields a ground ball.

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## 1.4 – Ground Balls to the Infield – “Swipe Tags” at 1<sup>st</sup> Base *with No Runners on Base*:

1.4.1 – “Swipe Tags” at 1<sup>st</sup> Base: When BU moves in to take his position for plays at 1<sup>st</sup> base (play position), BU should remember that he is not “cemented” to the ground at that spot (see Diagram 1.4.1).

- Like normal plays to 1<sup>st</sup> base, BU watches the infielder field the ground ball with his head turned towards the ball and his body already squared to the base.
- BU watches the throw released by the infielder and evaluates the quality of the throw going to 1<sup>st</sup> base.
- If BU sees the throw is not “true” and anticipates a high or wide throw at 1<sup>st</sup> base, then BU must adjust for a possible “swipe tag” at 1<sup>st</sup> base.
- To be in position for the “swipe tag”, BU must step around to his left or right – depending where the throw is – in order to see the “swipe tag”.

1.4.2 – Types of Signals on “Swipe Tags” at 1<sup>st</sup> Base:

- If F3 comes off 1<sup>st</sup> base bag but the fielder tags BR before he reaches the base, the mechanic by BU would be an emphatic, “On the tag!” (while pointing at the play with his left arm) and then followed by “He’s out!” (while giving the out signal).
- Should the throw pull F3 off the bag and the “swipe tag” misses BR, the terminology by BU would be, “Safe! You missed the tag! Safe!” or “Safe! No tag! Safe!”
- Should the throw pull F3 off the bag but no tag attempt is made, then the mechanic by BU would be, “Safe!” (giving safe mechanic); followed by “He’s off the bag!” (giving a sweeping motion away the bag with both arms).

All of these types of mechanics need to be given *very forcefully and emphatically* by BU.

1.4.3 – “Swipe Tag” by F1 Along the 1<sup>st</sup> Base Line: If the batter hits a ground ball up the 1<sup>st</sup> base line with F1 fielding it and F1 tags or attempts to tag BR, the responsibility for the tag is based upon the field location of where BR is tagged.

- If the tag (or attempted tag) is made *before* the 45-foot line, the responsibility belongs to the **plate umpire (PU)**.
- If the tag is made *past* the 45-foot line, the responsibility belongs to the **base umpire (BU)**.
- This would be one occasion when a “swipe-tag” appeal could be legitimately used. (For example, BU could ask for help if he doesn’t see a “swipe tag” made just past the 45-foot line.) Otherwise, as mentioned earlier in this manual, the “swipe-tag” appeal is rarely used.
- PU will come up the foul line and be responsible for the fair/foul decision (provided the ball becomes fair or foul before reaching 1<sup>st</sup> base).
- PU will also be responsible for the three items listed in Section 1.9 (interference out of the lane, overthrows, and help with “swipe tags”).

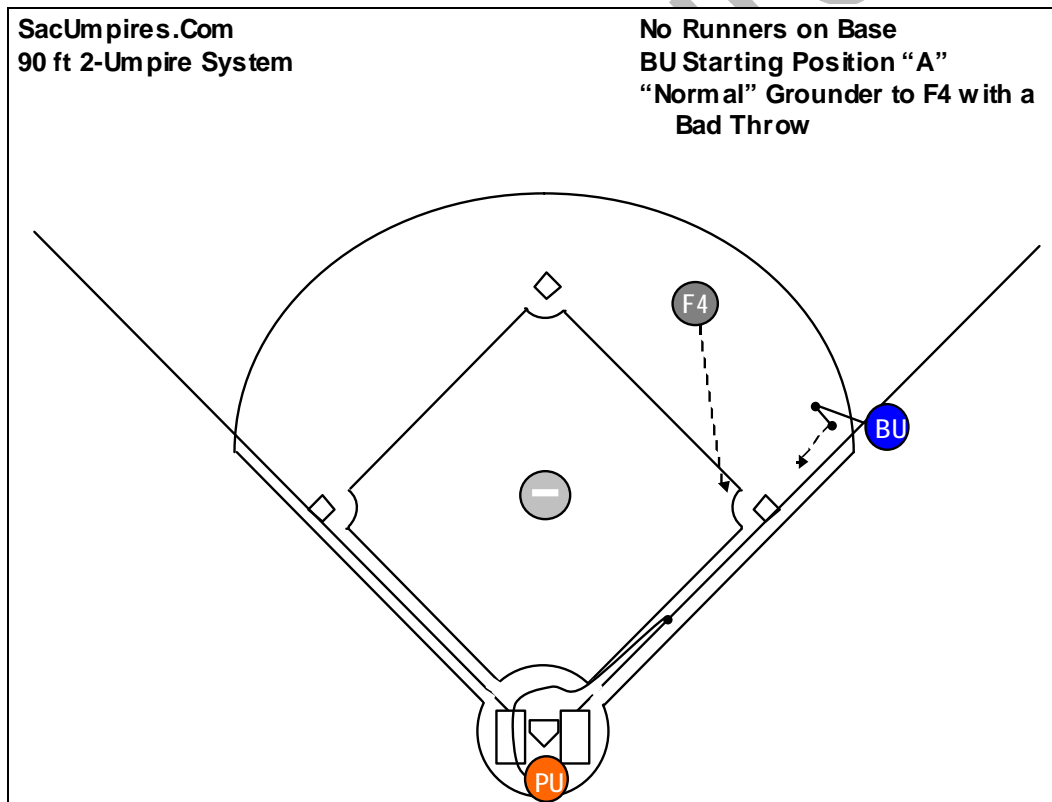
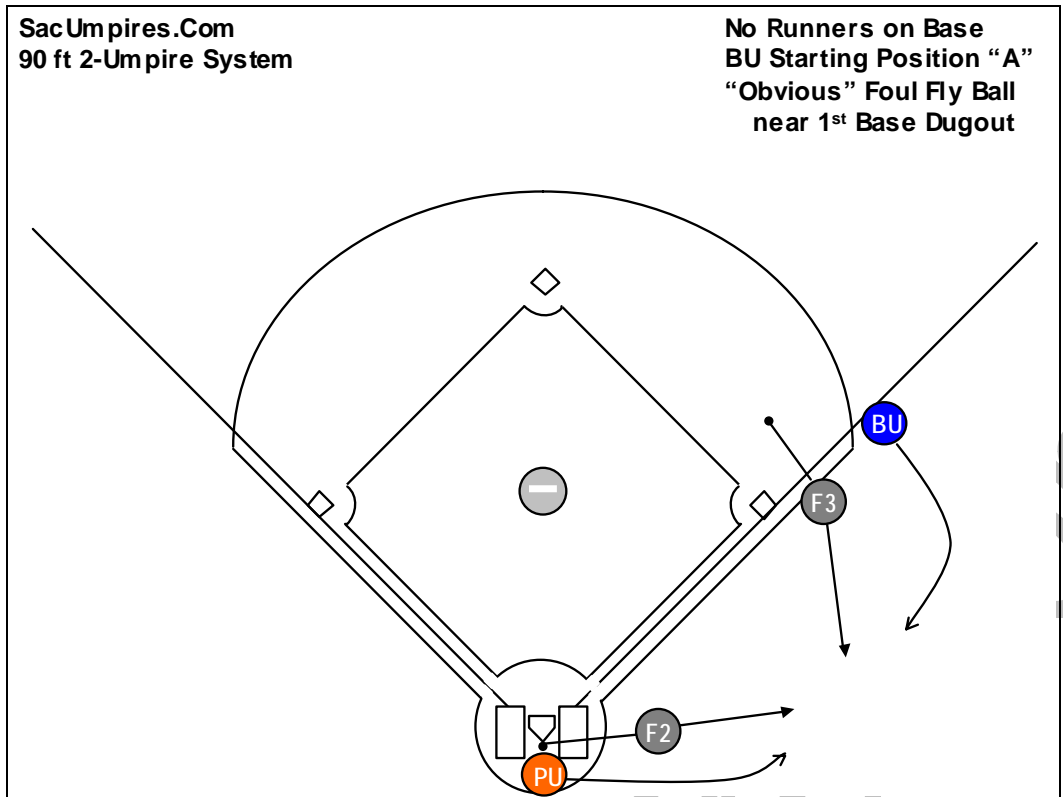


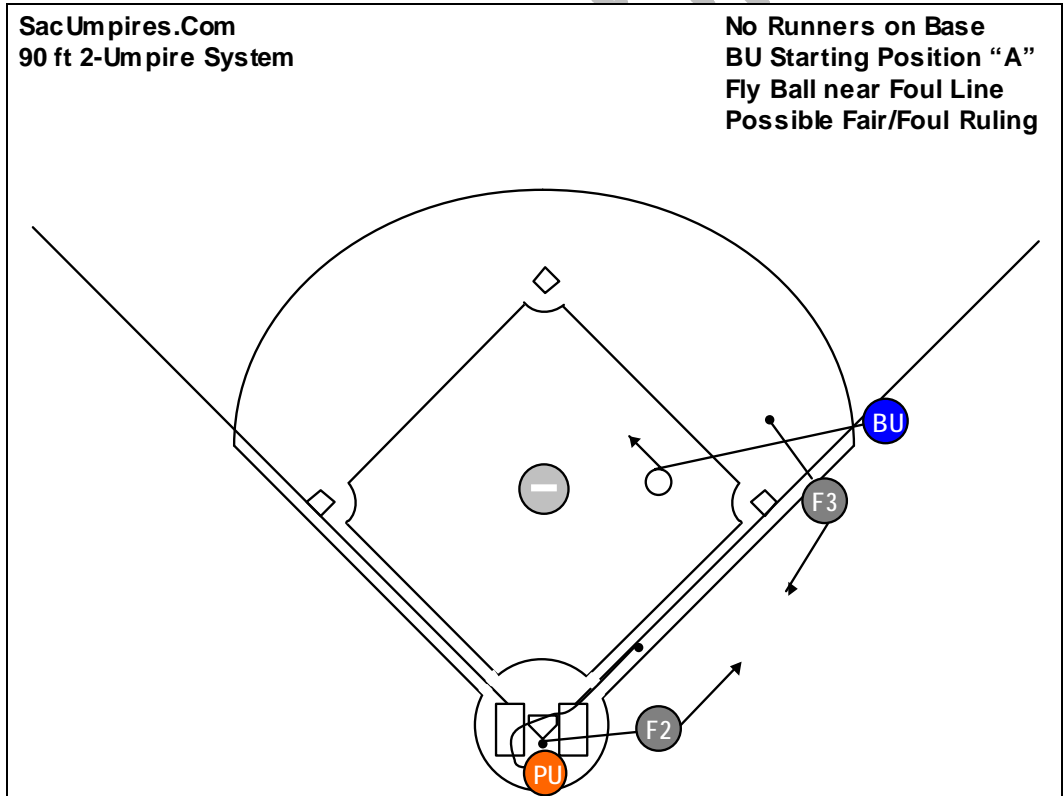
Diagram 1.4.1: BU positions two steps fair in a standing set position for the developing play at 1<sup>st</sup> base. BU reads a “poor quality” throw and moves back towards the foul line for a possible “swipe tag” by F3 on BR.

## 1.5 – Foul Pop-Ups *with No Runners on Base*:

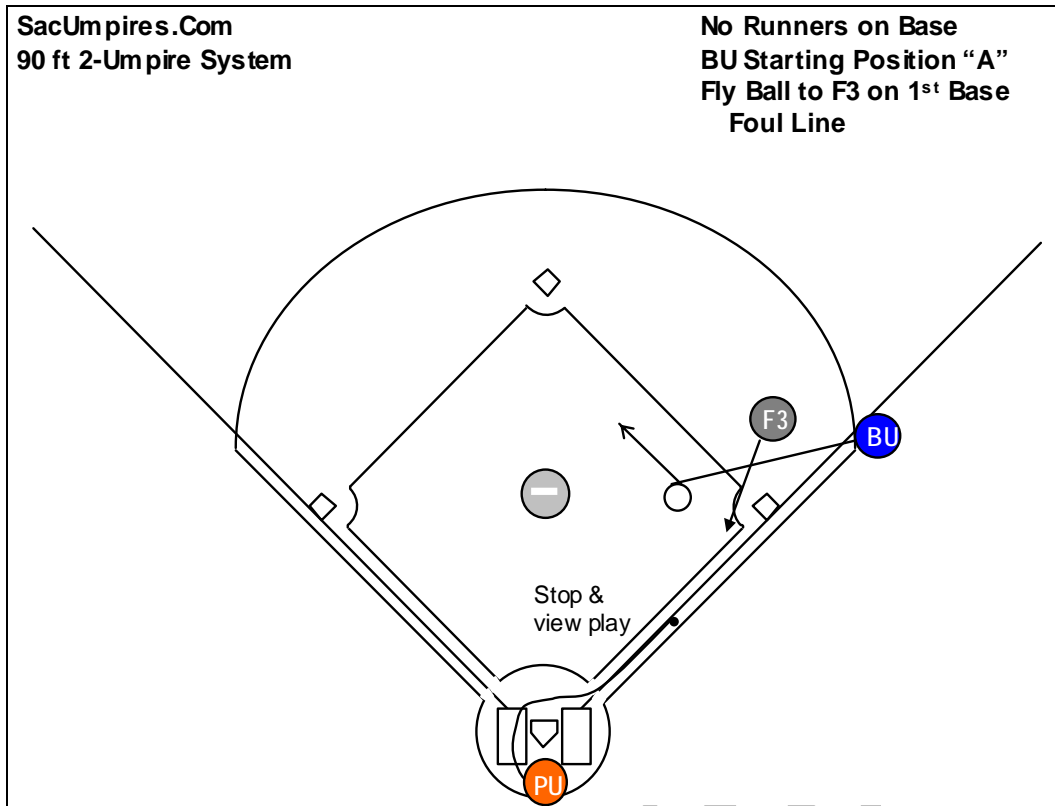
- 1.5.1 – Foul Fly Coverage between 1<sup>st</sup> & Home Plate near the Dugout:** With no one on base, if the batter hits a pop-up between 1<sup>st</sup> and home which is “*obviously*” going to be foul and has *no chance* of becoming fair (for example, a pop-up in front of the 1<sup>st</sup> base dugout or in of the 1<sup>st</sup> base stands:
- If F2 and F3 **both** attempt to catch the ball, PU and BU will **both** move into position to judge the catch (see Diagram 1.5.1-a).
  - If the catch is made facing BU, then it is his call (no matter who catches the ball).
  - If the catch is made facing PU, it becomes his call (again, no matter who catches the ball).
  - If the fielder is facing neither umpire, the catch/no catch belongs to the umpire who is closer.
  - However, if there is *any chance whatever* of such a pop-up becoming fair, BU should pivot, and PU should take responsibility of fair/foul and catch/no catch (see Diagrams 1.5.1-b & 1.5.1-c).
- 1.5.2 – Foul Fly Coverage between 1<sup>st</sup> & Home Plate** (i.e., well onto foul territory *past* 1<sup>st</sup> base): If the foul pop-up will be fielded by F3 in foul territory near the 1<sup>st</sup> base stands (see Diagram 1.5.2):
- BU should take the ball.
  - BU will let F3 clear in front of him (pivoting out of the way if necessary).
  - BU should then break in front of F3 and obtain a proper angle to judge the catch/no catch.
  - PU would remain at home on this play since only F3 is attempting to make the catch (i.e., there is no need for PU to follow the play since the call belongs solely to BU).
- 1.5.3 – Fly Ball in the *General Vicinity* of BU:** If the pop-up is hit *in front of or immediately behind BU* (or in the *general vicinity* of BU) and has a possibility of becoming a fair/foul decision:
- BU will come in to the cutout area and either pivot or simply turn towards 1<sup>st</sup> base (see Diagram 1.5.3-a).
  - PU will take the ball by moving up the 1<sup>st</sup> base line (as far as necessary to make the call) and straddling the foul line.
  - If the pop-up is *beyond* BU:
    - **Communicate:** BU communicates to PU that he is going out by shouting at his partner, “Going out!” or “I’m going out!” – even though he may merely turn around or only move out a step or two in order to judge the ball.
    - **Go out:** BU then gets the best possible distance and angle for the play.
    - **Slow & virtually stop for the play:** BU should slow his run down to a virtual stop as he feels the play is about to occur.
    - **Be completely stopped on fair/foul:** If the ball requires a fair/foul decision behind BU, BU must make sure he is completely stopped and set for this particular call.
    - **Always signal fair/foul first; then catch/no catch:** On a fly ball or line drive fielded near the foul line, BU should indicate fair or foul by pointing in the appropriate direction *the moment the ball is touched* by the fielder. Then BU will wait for the catch or no catch to occur and signal that (when needed).
    - **PU’s responsibilities:** If the batted ball has any chance of being fair, PU will immediately come out from behind home plate and pick up the responsibility of BR all the way around the base paths – (plays back into 1<sup>st</sup> base, plays at 2<sup>nd</sup> or even conceivably 3<sup>rd</sup> base, or plays at the plate – unless BU has come back into the infield and assumed a position at home plate).
- 1.5.4 – Foul Fly Coverage Past the 1<sup>st</sup> Base and near the 1<sup>st</sup> Base Stands:** On such a foul pop-up:
- If *only* F3 goes for the ball (for example, past the 1<sup>st</sup> base dugout or near the 1<sup>st</sup> base stands), then *only* BU should go with the ball.
  - If *only* F2 be attempting to catch such a foul pop-up, then *only* PU will go with the ball. In this case BU will remain at his position provided there is *no chance* of the ball becoming fair (and if there is a chance of the ball becoming fair, he should come in and pivot).
- 1.5.5 – Foul Fly Coverage on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Base Side:** With no one on base, any pop-up in foul territory on the 3<sup>rd</sup> base side of the infield:
- PU is responsible for this alone.
  - If there is a chance the ball will become fair, BU should come in and pivot.
  - If there is not chance the ball will become fair, BU would remain at his position.
  - If such a foul pop-up on the 3<sup>rd</sup> base side is close to the foul line, PU should straddle the line to make the call, indicating (by pointing) fair or foul *the moment the ball is touched*. BU will be pivoting any pop-up near the 3<sup>rd</sup> base foul line.
  - If the foul pop-up on the 3<sup>rd</sup> base side of the field has no chance of becoming fair, PU will take the ball and get as close as he can to the play. PU should not come off the line until he is convinced that the ball will be well onto foul territory and will have no chance of coming back near the line. Unless BU is absolutely sure there is no chance the ball could be fair, he should come in and pivot.



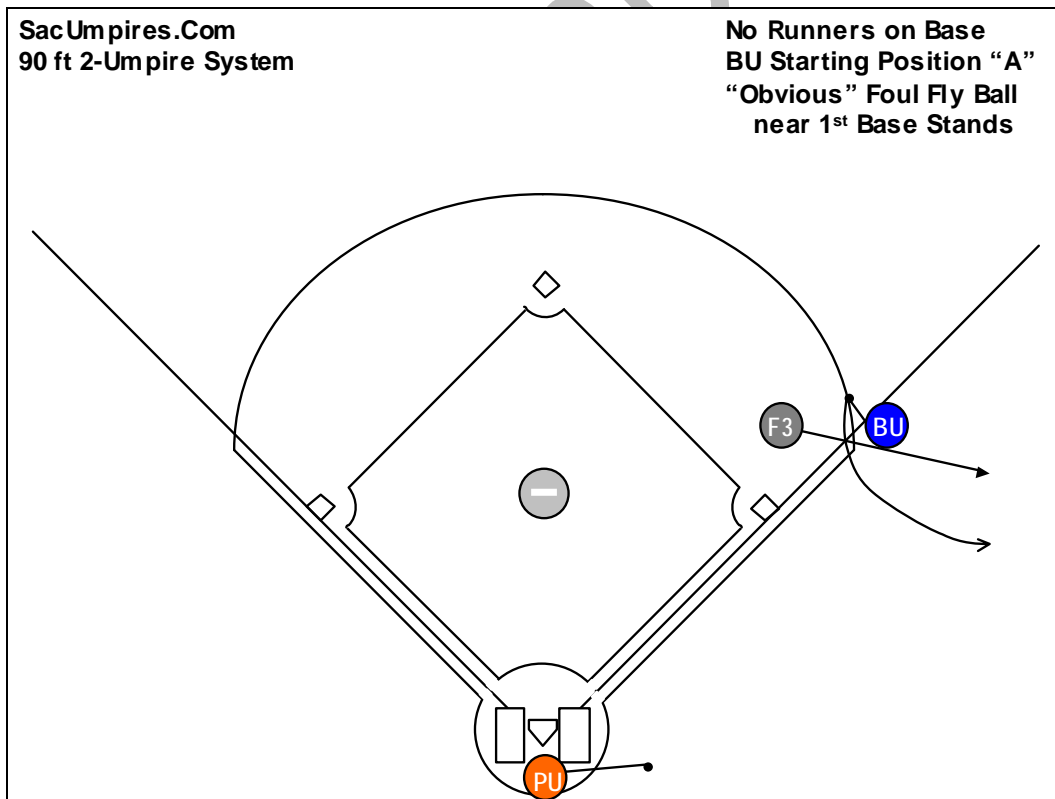
**Diagram 1.5.1-a:** On an obvious foul fly ball near the 1<sup>st</sup> base dugout, PU & BU both approach the play from their respective sides and "box" the play



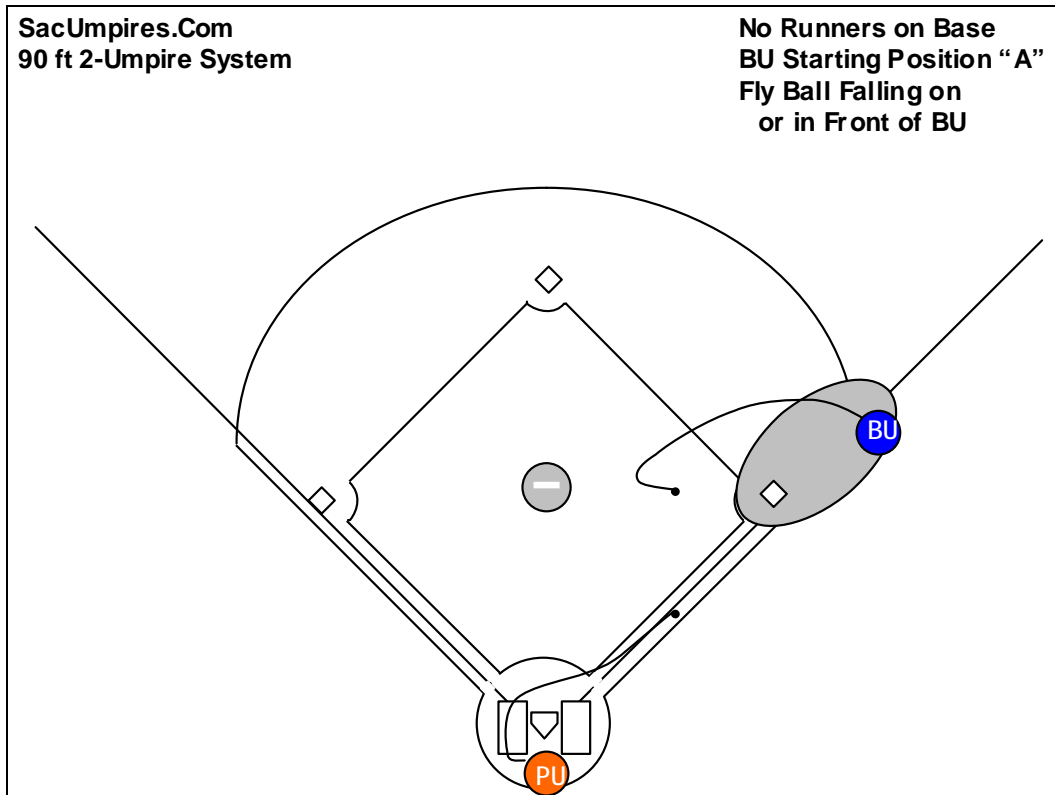
**Diagram 1.5.1-b:** On a foul fly ball near the 1<sup>st</sup> base foul line, BU will pivot into the infield and PU will stay on the line if there is any chance whatsoever of a possible fair/foul ruling.



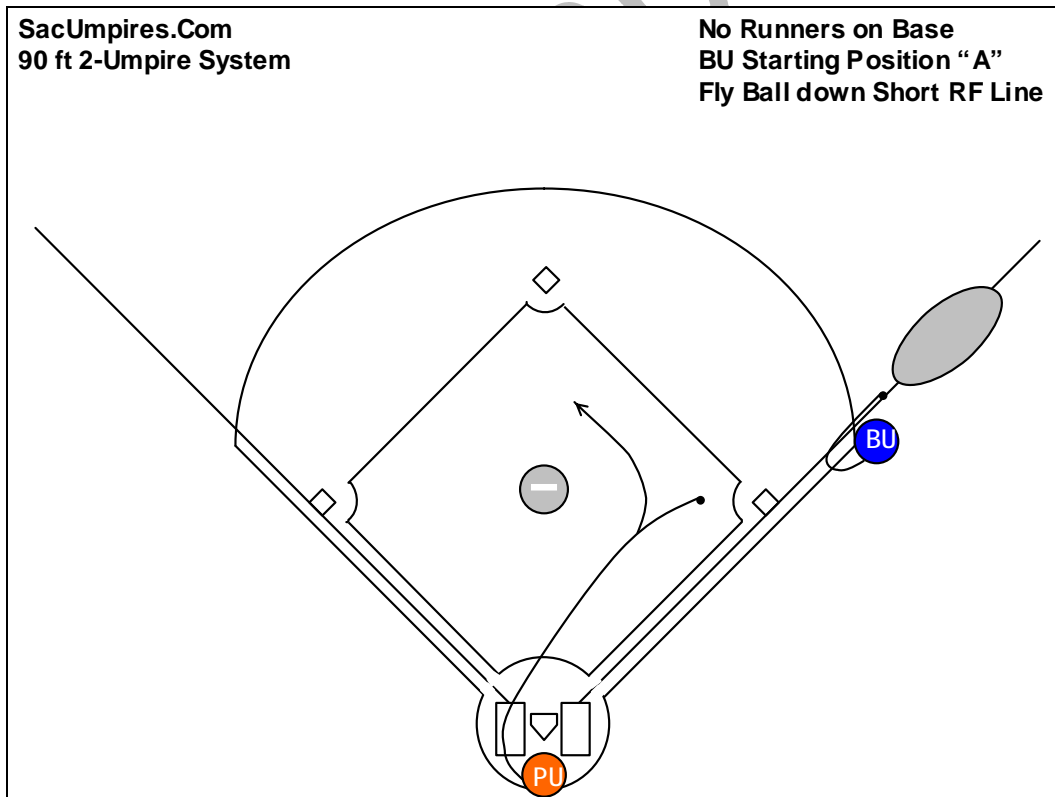
**Diagram 1.5.1-c:** On a fly ball in front of 1<sup>st</sup> base and on the foul line, PU straddles the foul line for fair/foul, catch/no catch and interference calls while BU pivots into the infield for BR's possible advancement.



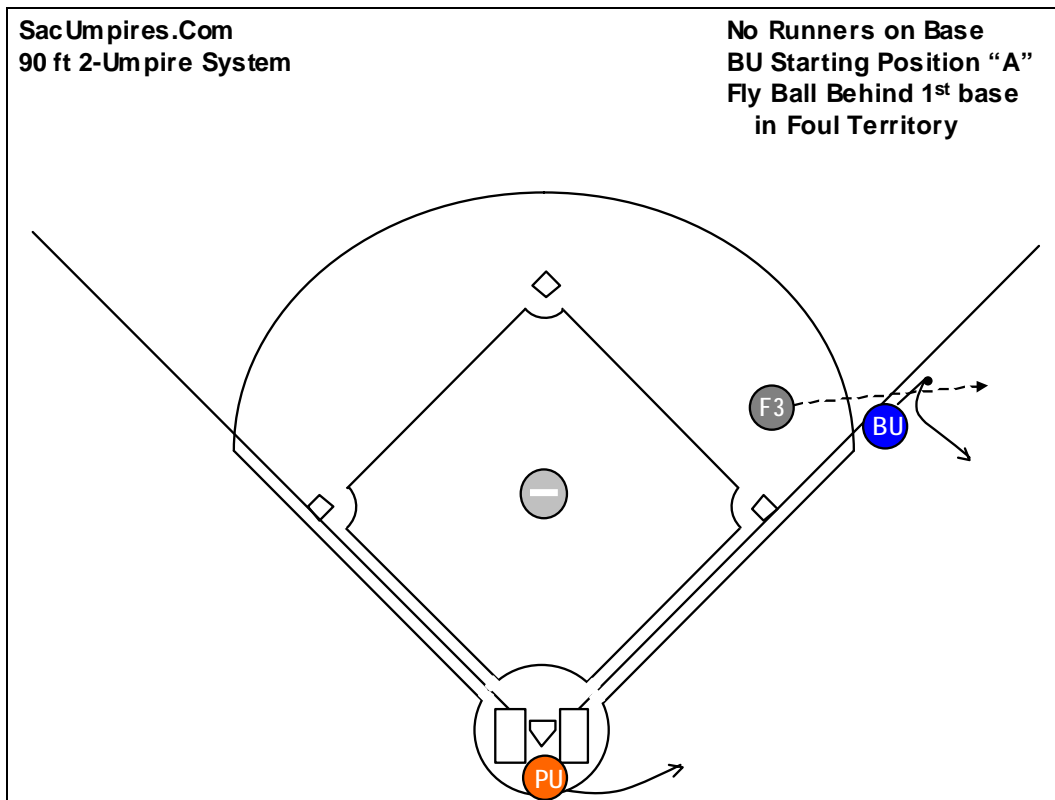
**Diagram 1.5.2:** On a foul fly ball near the 1<sup>st</sup> base stands, BU "clear" F3, let him pass & move towards the stands to view the play.



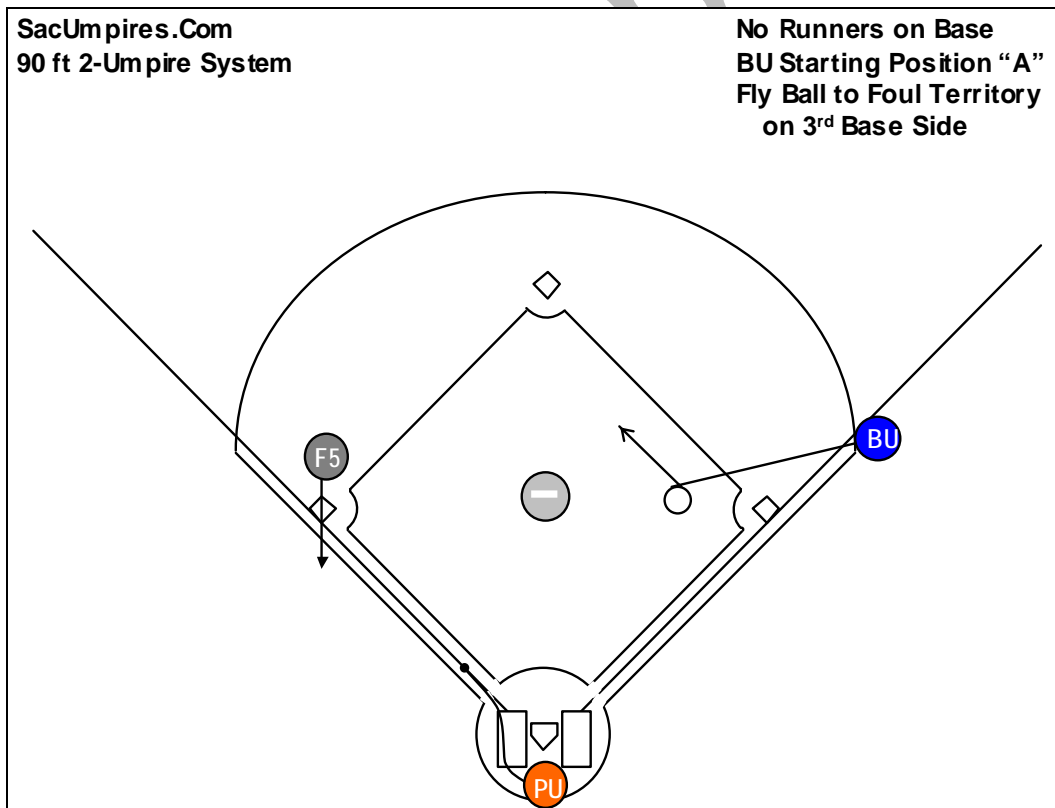
**Diagram 1.5.3-a:** With a fly ball falling on or in front BU in starting position "A", BU moves inside the infield and PU positions for fair/foul and catch/no catch even though the ball is beyond 1<sup>st</sup> base (this is an exception to the normal fair/foul responsibilities).



**Diagram 1.5.3-b:** When a fly ball is falling just behind BU on the right-field foul line, BU "steps up, turns & faces the ball" and reads the fielders. If BU "goes out" like a "trouble" ball, then PU positions and covers plays on BR at the bases.



**Diagram 1.5.4:** BU lets F3 clear (in this case BU moves back for F3 to go by) and then swings forward in front of F3 and moves perpendicular to the fence, dugout or out of play line to develop a good look at the flight of the ball, the catch and the release of the ball



**Diagram 1.5.5:** PU positions for foul fly on the 3<sup>rd</sup> base side as BU pivots into the infield for BR's possible advancement

## 1.6 – Fly Balls and Line Drives to the Infield *with No Runners on Base*:

1.6.1 – Fly Ball Coverage on the Infield: On any fair fly ball hit to the infield with no runners on base (see Diagram 1.6.1):

- The responsibility for all *fair fly balls* hit to *all* infield positions belongs to the **plate umpire** (unless BU goes out).
- PU will come out in front of the plate in the direction the ball is hit. (On “routine” pop-ups, PU will probably no farther than midway to the pitcher’s mound. If the pop-up turned out to be a “difficult” catch for the infielder, PU would come out farther.)
- BU will come in and **pivot** on these plays and be responsible for all decisions on BR if the ball is dropped.
- On pop-ups hit to the left side of the infield, if the ball is dropped, BU pivots and a play attempted on BR after he has rounded 1<sup>st</sup> base, BU must be aware not to position himself between the ball and BR in the area sometimes referred to as the “throwing” lane.
- If the pop-up is a “routine” catch, it is not necessary for PU to make a call (other than possibly to inform his partner that the ball was caught by communicating, “That’s a catch, Bill”).
- If the ball is dropped, PU will signal and call, “No catch, no catch!”

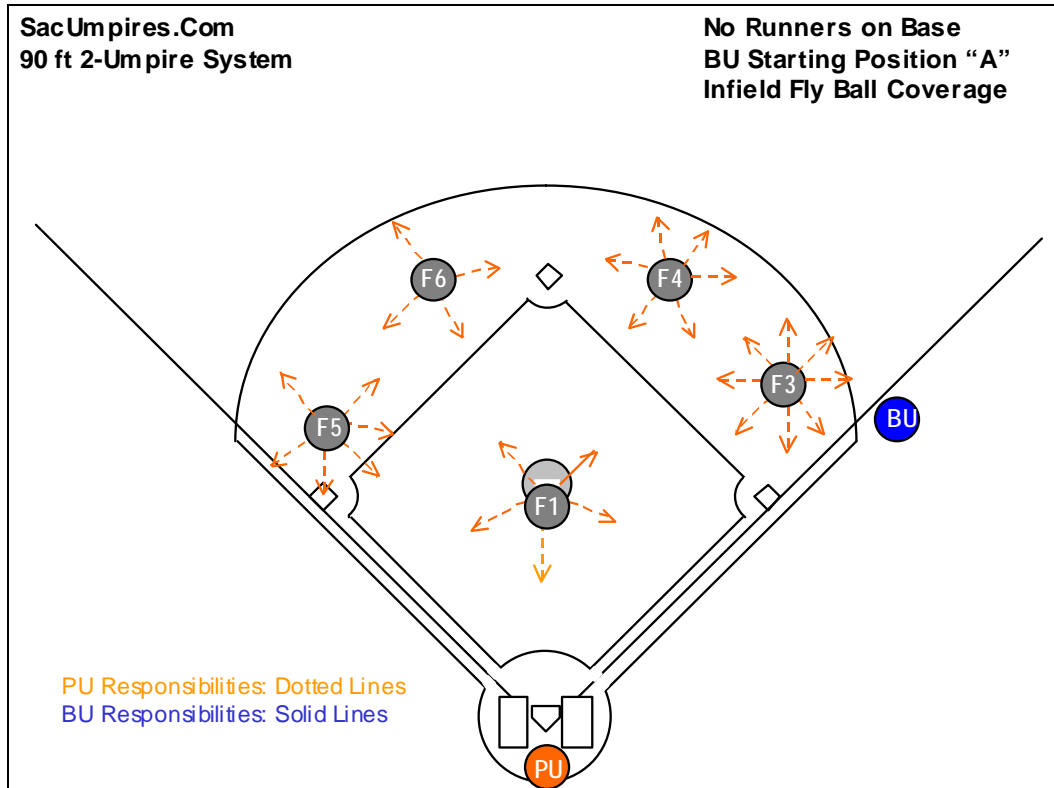


Diagram 1.6.1: Infield fly ball coverage with no runners on base and BU in starting position “A”

1.6.2 – Line Drive Coverage on the Infield: With no runners on base (see Diagram 1.6.2):

- All *line drives* to F1, F5, F6, F4 diving to his *right*, and F3 diving to his *right* belong to the **plate umpire (PU)**.
- All line drives to F3 and F4 coming *straight in* or to their *left* belong to the **base umpire (BU)**.

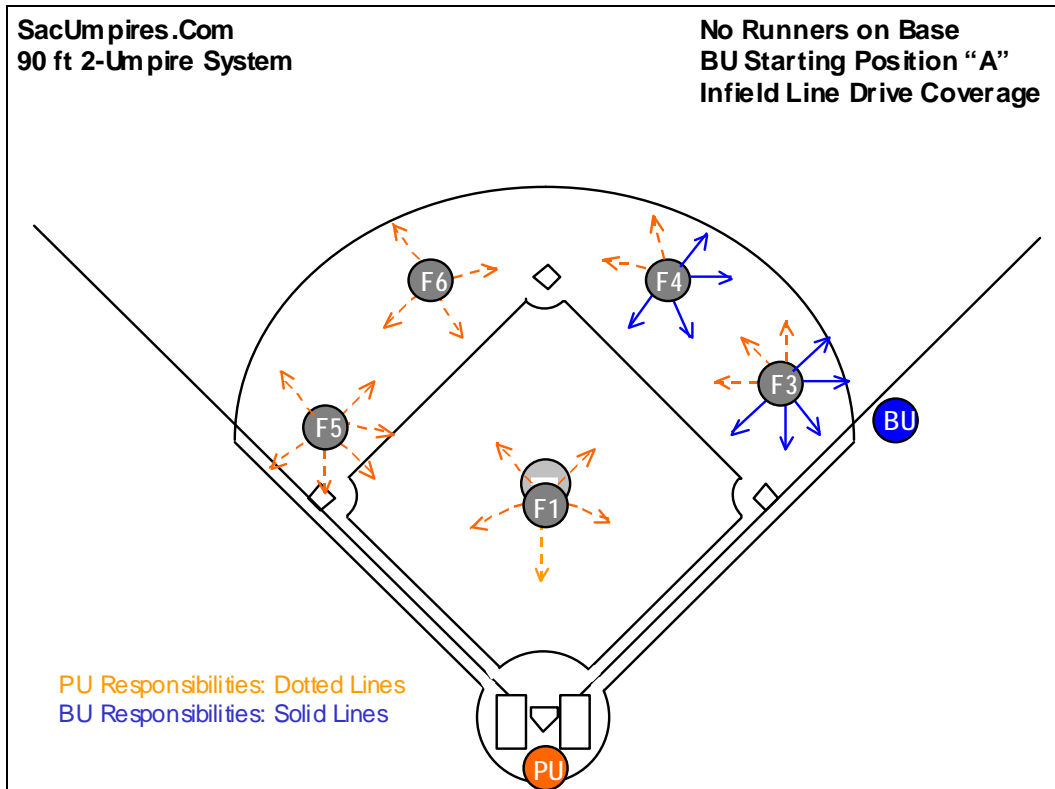
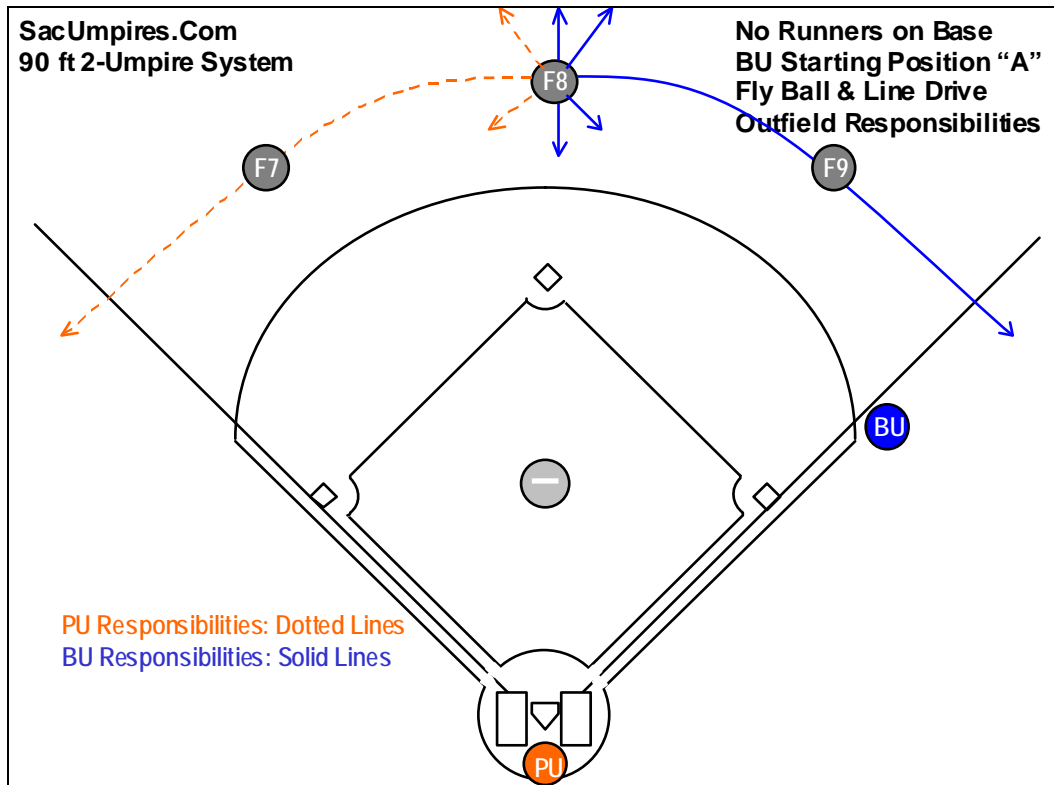


Diagram 1.6.2: Infield line drive coverage with no runners on base and BU in starting position "A"

## 1.7 – Fly Balls and Line Drives to the Outfield *with No Runners on Base*:

### 1.7.1 – Outfield Fly Ball and Line Drive Coverage – Responsibilities:

- Fly balls (or line drives) from F8 moving any distance towards the left-field line – *his right* – all the way to the left field line always belong to the **plate umpire (PU)**. (See Diagram 1.7.1 – Below)
- Fly balls (or line drives) from the center fielder *straight in* (or turning toward BU and going straight back) all the way to the right field foul line belong to the **base umpire (BU)** (if he decides to go out on the ball). (See Diagram 1.7.1 – Below)
- Should BU decide *not* to go out on such a fly ball or line drive, the responsibility of the ball reverts to the **PU**; and PU must then move into proper position to observe the play if BU does not go out (see Section 1.7.6).



**Diagram 1.7.1:** Outfield fly ball and line drive responsibilities with no runners: BU should watch batted balls to his area carefully. BU will go out on "difficult" or "trouble" fly balls while pivoting into the infield on "routine" flies to his outfield area.

### 1.7.2 – "Trouble" Ball Concept – What is it & how should BU read it?

- **What is a "trouble" play?** The list below contains examples of "trouble" plays:
  - Fair/foul decisions down the right field line
  - Home runs
  - Balls off the outfield wall
  - Diving catches by the outfielder
  - Catches at the warning track or at the wall
  - Catches made by the outfielder with his back towards the infield
  - Catches made by the outfielder below his waist on a full run
  - Three players converging on a fly ball, etc.
- **"Trouble" Ball Actions or Cues to Key Off:** BU cannot wait until the "trouble" ball occurs to go out on it. It's important to make this determination while the play is developing. "Trouble" balls are preceded by any of the following outfielder reactions and indicate that BU should go out on the play:
  - **The outfielder is running hard in towards the infield** as though he is going to make the catch on a dead run or as though he will dive to make the catch. (In addition to this, the infielders will usually be yelling "In, in, in!" on such a play.)
  - **The outfielder has turned his back to the infield and is running towards the outfield wall** with his back to the infield.
  - **Three fielders are all converging on the ball** (for example, the center fielder, right fielder, and 2<sup>nd</sup> baseman), and it appears that any one of the three might catch the ball.
  - **The right fielder is running towards the right field line** (i.e., towards his left), and it appears that a fair/foul decision may have to be made on the line. (Note that a decision should be made any time the ball drops or is initially touched-within approximately 20 feet of the foul line.)

### 1.7.3 – Should BU Go Out? – BU’s Criteria for Deciding Whether to Go Out on Fly Balls & Line Drives:

BU uses the following criteria in determining whether or not he should go out to cover a fly ball or line drive to the outfield:

- **If an only if both conditions above are met**, BU will go out to rule on fair/foul, catch/no catch and ground rulings on the play:
  - **Batted Ball to BU’s Area:** BU must determine if the ball is to BU’s area as detailed in **Diagram 1.7.1**.
  - **“Trouble” Ball:** BU needs to determine whether the play will be a “trouble” play.

### 1.7.4 – BU’s Mechanics for Reading an Outfield Fly Ball or Line Drive:

- BU will watch the fly ball or line drive while using the “step-up, turn & face the ball” technique
- BU will determine if the ball is to BU’s area (the ball is batted to BU’s outfield coverage area)
- BU will focus on the fielders in the vicinity of the ball by the **“pause-read-react”** technique to allow the play to develop and reveal enough information to determine whether the play is a “trouble” play or not:
  - **“Pause”** (*hesitate momentarily to gather information about the developing play*)
  - **“Read”** (*focus his attention on the reactions of the outfielder(s) by taking his eye off the ball, zeroing in on the of the outfielders movements, “keying” off the outfielders reactions, and watching for—and determining if the outfielder’s reactions reflect “trouble” or reflect “trouble” cues.*)
  - **“React”** (*pivot into the infield on “routine” outfielder reactions or go out on “trouble” reactions to the ball*). If there is any doubt about whether a play is “trouble” or not, BU should go out.

### 1.7.5 – BU’s Mechanics for Going Out on an Outfield “Trouble” Ball:

- **If BU Goes Out on a “Trouble” Ball to the Outfield (see Diagrams 1.7.5-a thru 1.7.5-b):**
  - **Communicate:** BU communicates to PU that he is going out by shouting at his partner, “Going out!” or “I’m going out!”
  - **Go out:** BU then runs to the outfield, gets the best possible distance and angle for the play.
  - **Slow & virtually stop for the play:** BU should slow his run down to a virtual stop as he feels the play is about to occur.
  - **Be completely stopped on fair/foul, home runs or “pole benders”:** If the ball requires a fair/foul decision down the right field line, BU must make sure he is completely stopped and set for this particular call. (The same would be true for a home run decision, particularly if it is a home run call close to the right field foul pole.)
  - **Always signal fair/foul first; then catch/no catch:** On a fly ball or line drive fielded near the foul line, BU should indicate fair or foul by pointing in the appropriate direction *the moment the ball is touched* by the fielder. Then BU will wait for the catch or no catch to occur and signal that (when needed).
  - **Play action determines coverage:** After BU has ruled on the play, he must make a decision whether or not he should stay with a “problem” ball or begin running back towards home plate in foul territory for a possible play at home on BR.
  - **PU’s responsibilities:** PU will immediately come out from behind home plate and pick up the responsibility of BR all the way around the base paths - plays back into 1<sup>st</sup> base, plays at 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base, or plays at the plate (unless BU has come back into the infield and assumed a position at home plate).
- **If BU Determines “Problems” Will Develop with the Ball and Continues Reading the Playing Action:**
  - **Examples of “problem” balls:** If the batted ball is hooking towards the bullpen, approaching an out-of-play line, will go out-of-play, go under or through a fence or spectator interference will be possible; etc.
  - **If a “problem” ball develops**, then BU should **stay with the ball and not come home**. (In this case, PU would take BR all the way around the bases and into home plate, keeping on the *inside* of the diamond all the way.)
  - **PU assumes plate coverage until called off by BU:** Until the time PU is called off by BU, PU should assume that any play at the plate is his responsibility, and PU should continue to take BR around the base paths (in fair territory) all the way to home plate, if necessary.
  - **Responsibility shift after the end of the play:** If PU ends up with BR when this type of play is over, PU should remain with BR until BU comes back into the infield and assumes this responsibility. Verbal communication would be used at this point (for example: “I’ve got it, Bill” or “I’ve got him, Bill”).
- **If BU Determines No “Problems” Will Develop with the Ball and Breaks Towards Home (see Diagrams 1.7.5-c thru 1.7.5-g):**
  - **Not a “problem” ball:** If the outfield area is *completely enclosed* and BU determines that there is *no possibility* of the ball becoming a “problem”, then BU should turn, watching the ball (in order to see how the play is developing) as well as where he is going and hustle home in foul territory as soon as possible. (BU should break towards home when he determines there will be no “problems” with the ball.)
  - **PU assumes plate coverage until called off by BU:** Until the time PU is called off by BU, PU should assume that any play at the plate is his responsibility, and PU should continue to take BR around the base paths (in fair territory) all the way to home plate, if necessary.
  - **Responsibility shift at home plate during playing action:** When BU reaches home plate and is actually in position where BU can make a call, then, and only then, BU should inform his partner that BU is home by communicating, “I’m home; I’m home!” or “I’ve got the plate, Bill; I’ve got the plate!” BU then assumes becomes responsibility for plays at the plate on BR.

### 1.7.6 – Outfield Fly Ball or Line Drive Responsibility Reverts to PU:

- If a fly ball or line drive is hit into BU's area (from F8 straight in all the way to the right field line) and BU (using the "pause-read-react" technique outlined in Section 1.7.4) decides NOT to go out (see Diagrams 1.7.6-a thru 1.7.6-b)
  - BU "pivots" into the infield (see Section 1.8) with BR.
  - BU will make all decisions at 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> on BR.
  - The responsibility of any fly ball or line drive to the outfield reverts back to PU (the plate umpire).
  
- If BU does not go out and the play results in a "difficult" play (for example: a diving catch, a home run, a ball hit off the wall, a fair/foul decision, a catch at the wall, etc.) (see Diagrams 1.7.6-c thru 1.7.6-d):
  - PU should come out in front of the plate in the direction the ball is hit and go as far as he can towards the ball to make his decision.
  - PU should be virtually stopped to make such a call.
  - If the play results in a "tough" catch (shoestring catch, diving catch, catch after which the fielder falls down, etc.), PU should call and signal (and sell), "That's a catch! That's a catch!" (Signaling the catch should be done with the right arm extended upward and right hand in a fist.)
  - If this play results in a "tough" no catch, PU should sell the call, "No catch! No catch!"
  - As soon as he has made the call, PU should retreat in a straight line back towards home plate for any possible play there.

### 1.7.7 – PU Positioning on Outfield Fly Balls: PU will come out from behind the plate in the direction the ball is hit and will make all catch/no catch and fair/foul decisions on the ball. If the ball is a "routine" fly ball:

- PU will go no farther than an imaginary line between 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> to observe the play (see Diagrams 1.7.6-a and 1.7.6-b).
- PU should be virtually stopped for these decisions.
- PU will make no signal but should audibly inform his partner, "That's a catch, Bill," so that his partner is aware the ball has been caught.
- If the ball is dropped, PU should call and signal, "No catch! No catch!"

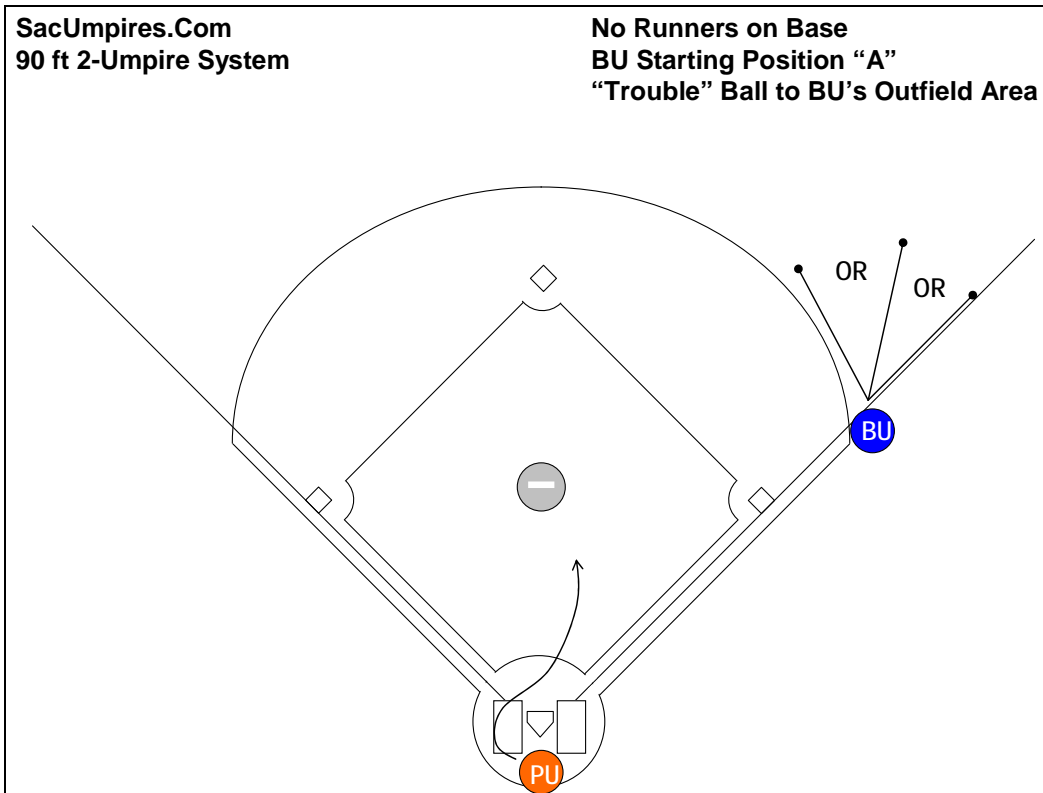


Diagram 1.7.5-a: BU goes out on a "trouble" fly ball. PU moves to cover plays on the BR.

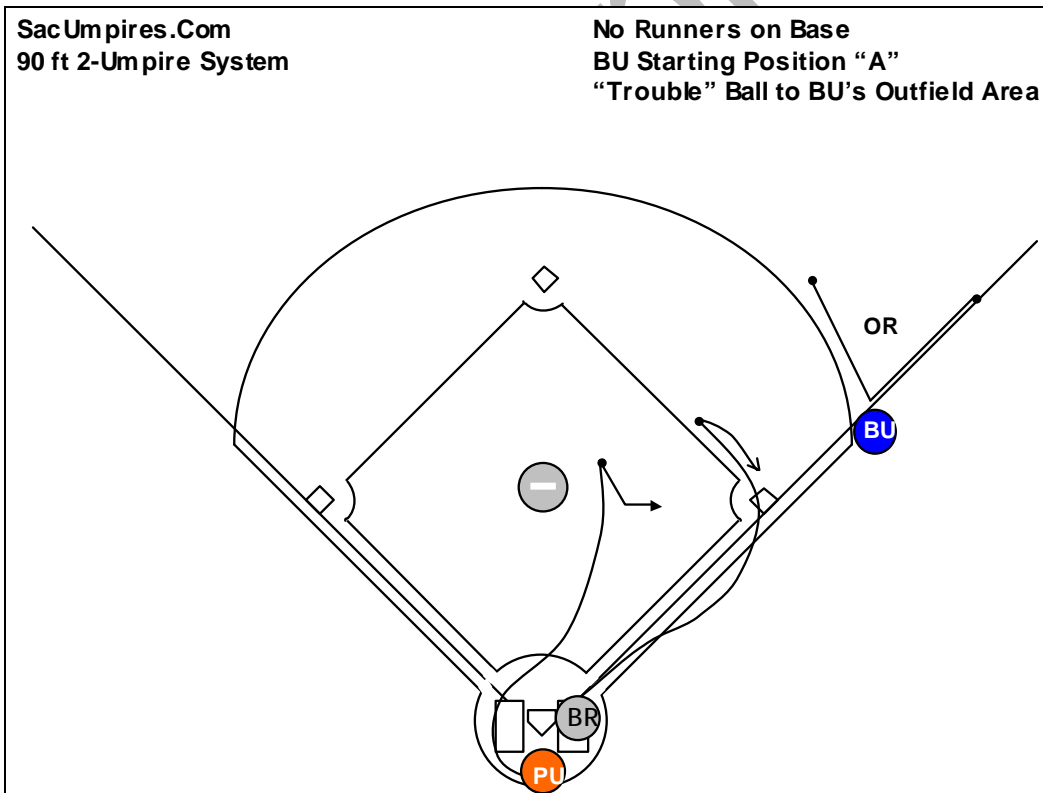
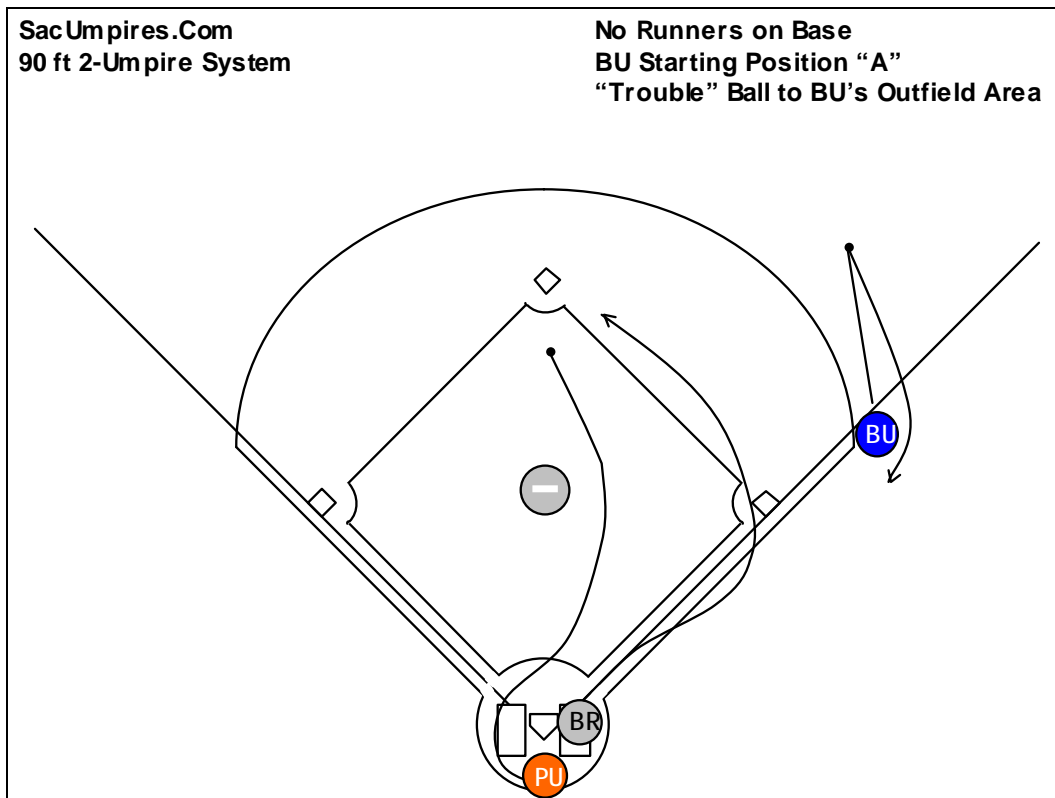
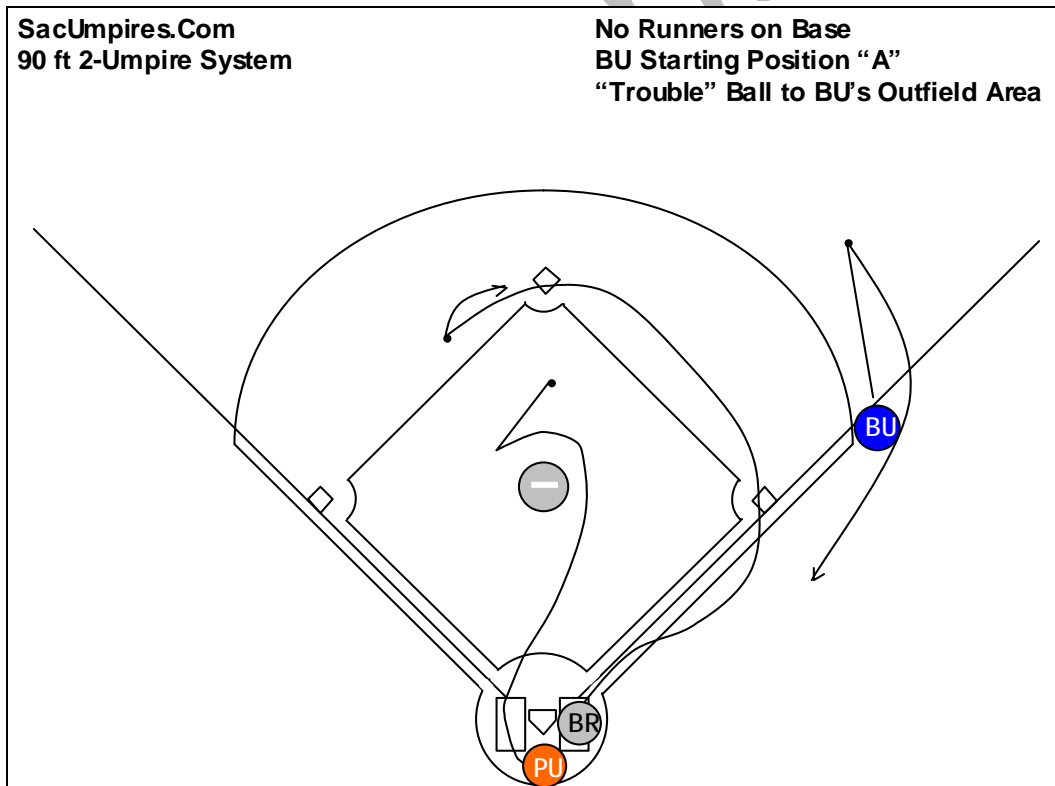


Diagram 1.7.5-b: BU goes out on "trouble" fly ball PU takes any play on BR back into 1<sup>st</sup> base as BR rounds 1<sup>st</sup> base and holds.



**Diagram 1.7.5-c:** BU goes out on a "trouble" fly ball to his area. When the ball is returned to the infield, BU begins moving back around the infield in foul territory. PU takes any play on BR into 2<sup>nd</sup> base.



**Diagram 1.7.5-d:** BU goes out and then returns around the infield in foul territory to move toward the plate area for any potential play at home; PU anticipates BR's advance to 3<sup>rd</sup> base, but still has any play back to 2<sup>nd</sup> on BR.

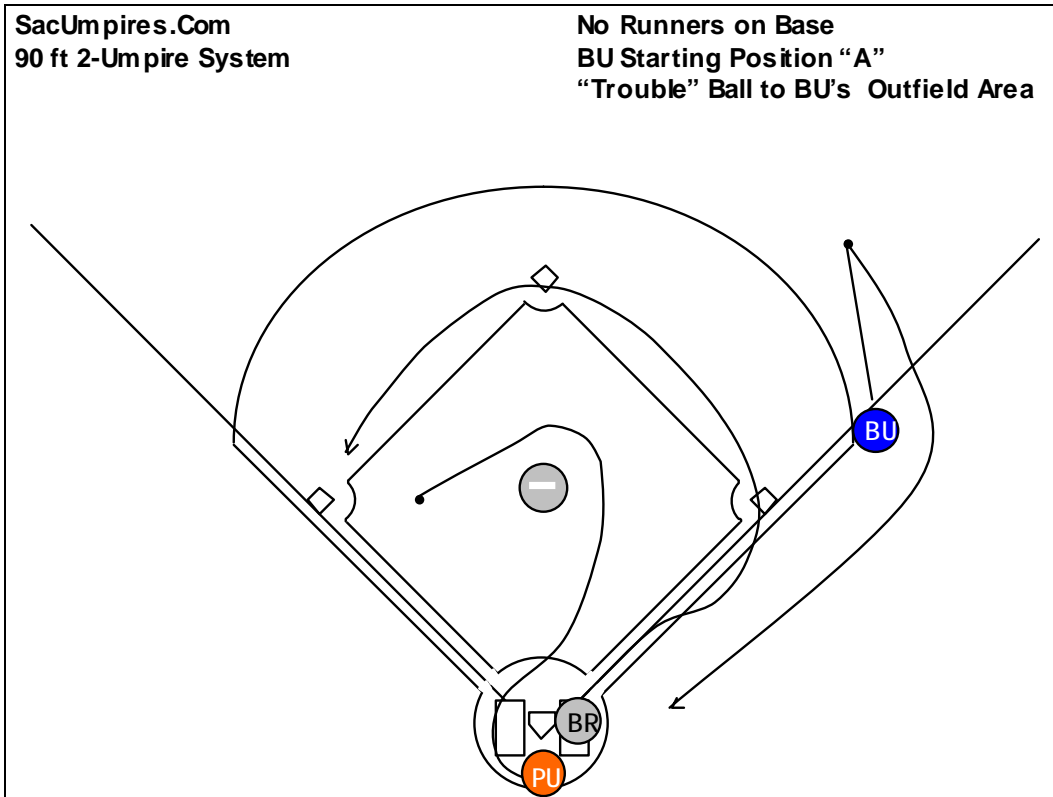


Diagram 1.7.5-e: BU goes out and then returns toward the plate area in foul territory. PU is responsible for any plays on BR through home plate until BU communicates he is taking plays on BR at the plate.

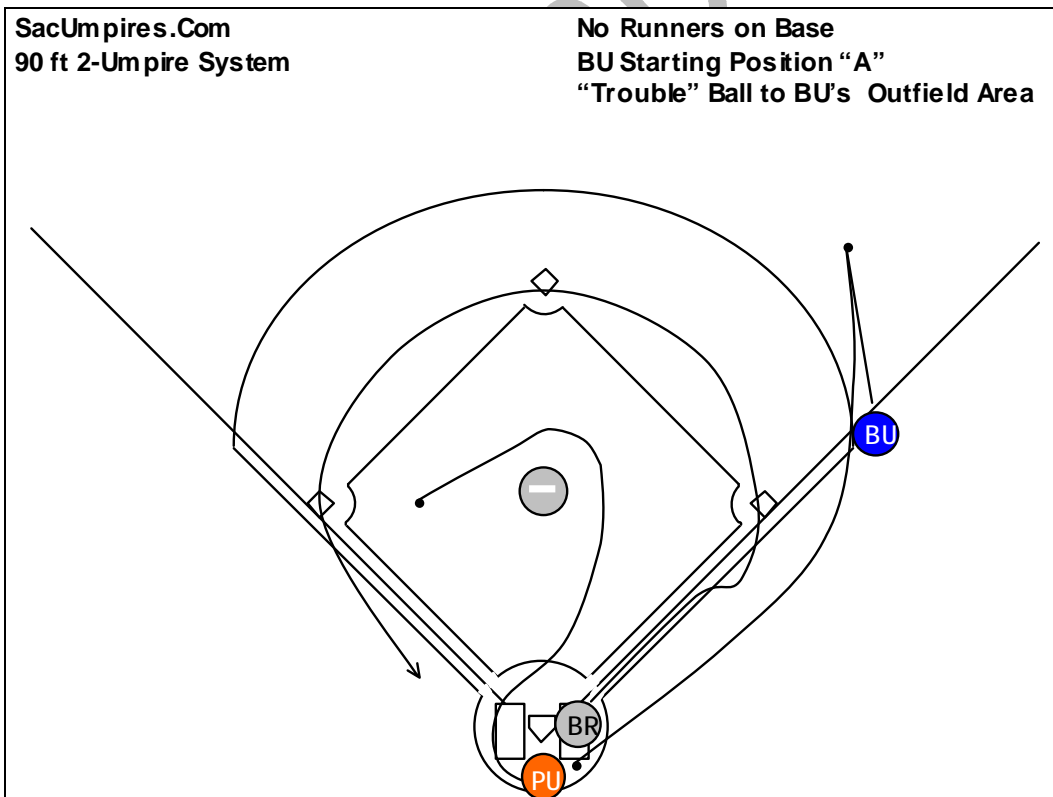
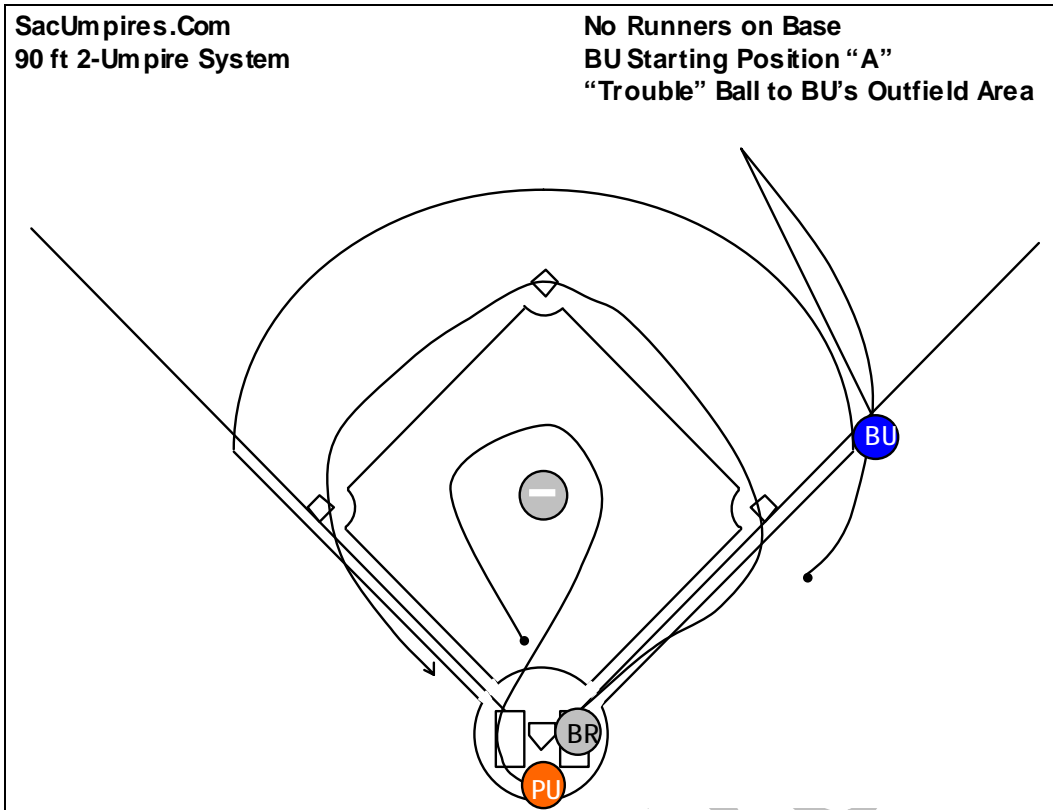
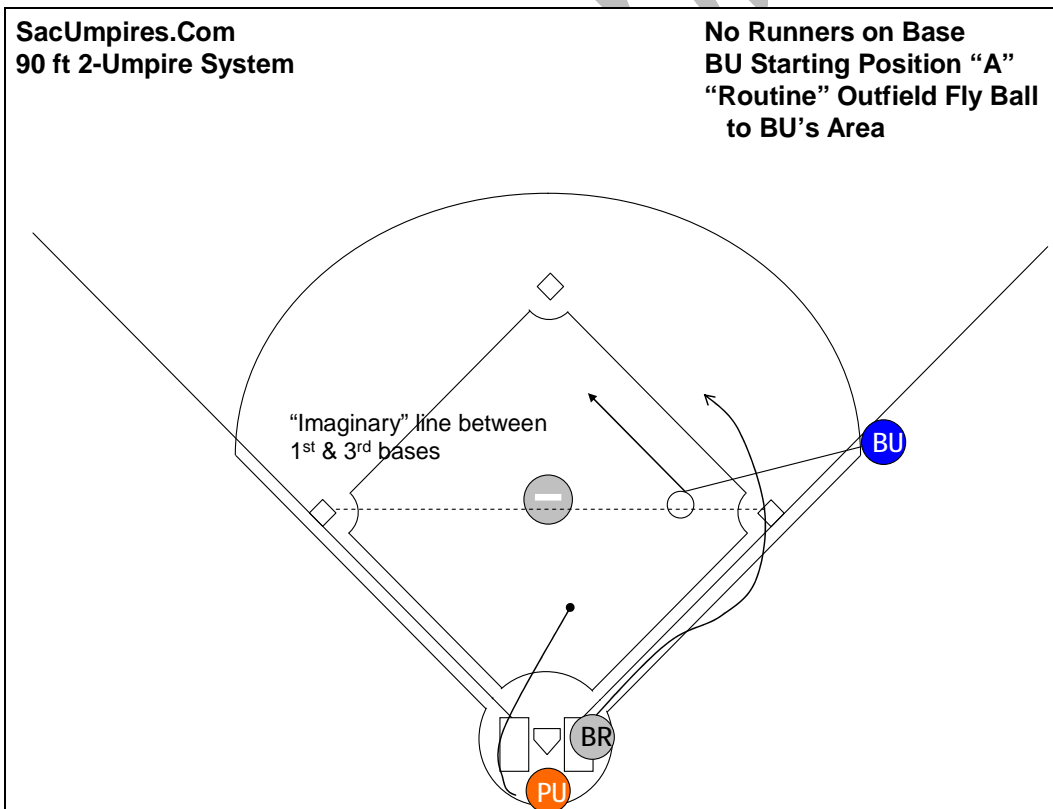


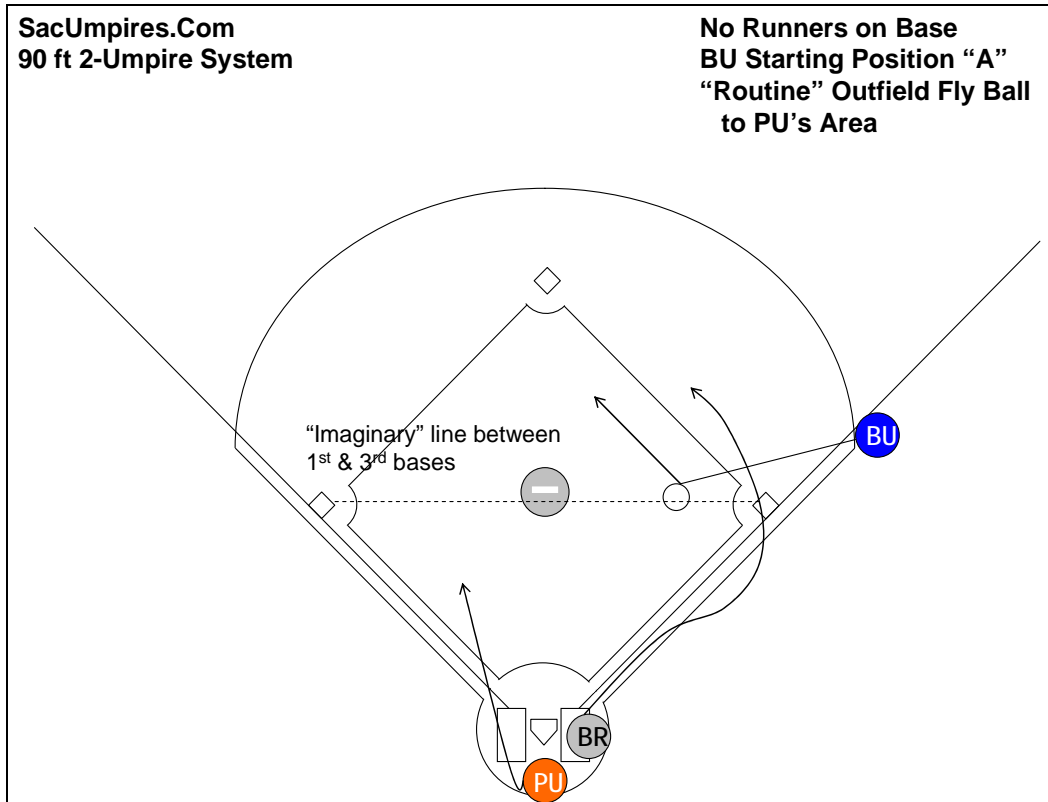
Diagram 1.7.5-f: BU goes out and then returns in time for a play on BR at the plate. PU responsibility of BR's advance home transfers to BU when BU is at the plate and voices PU, "I'm at home." "I'm at home."



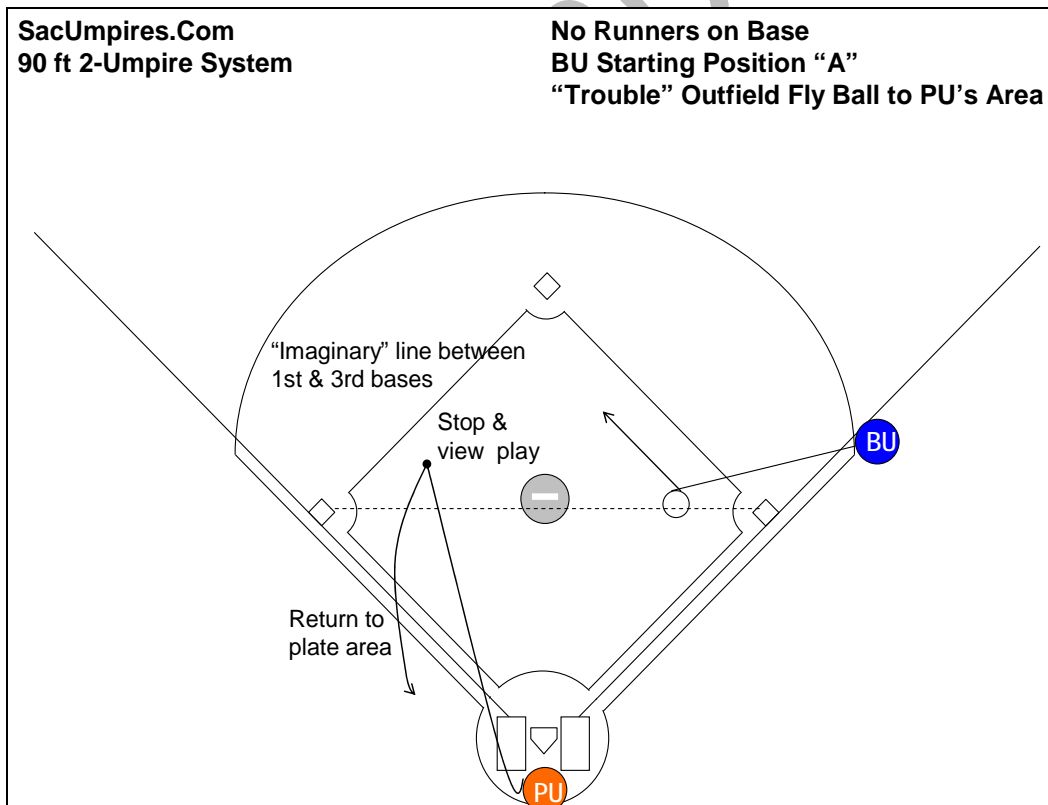
**Diagram 1.7.5-g:** If BU goes out and then cannot return in time for a play at the plate on BR, then PU remains responsible for BR's advance home and any plays resulting from his advance.



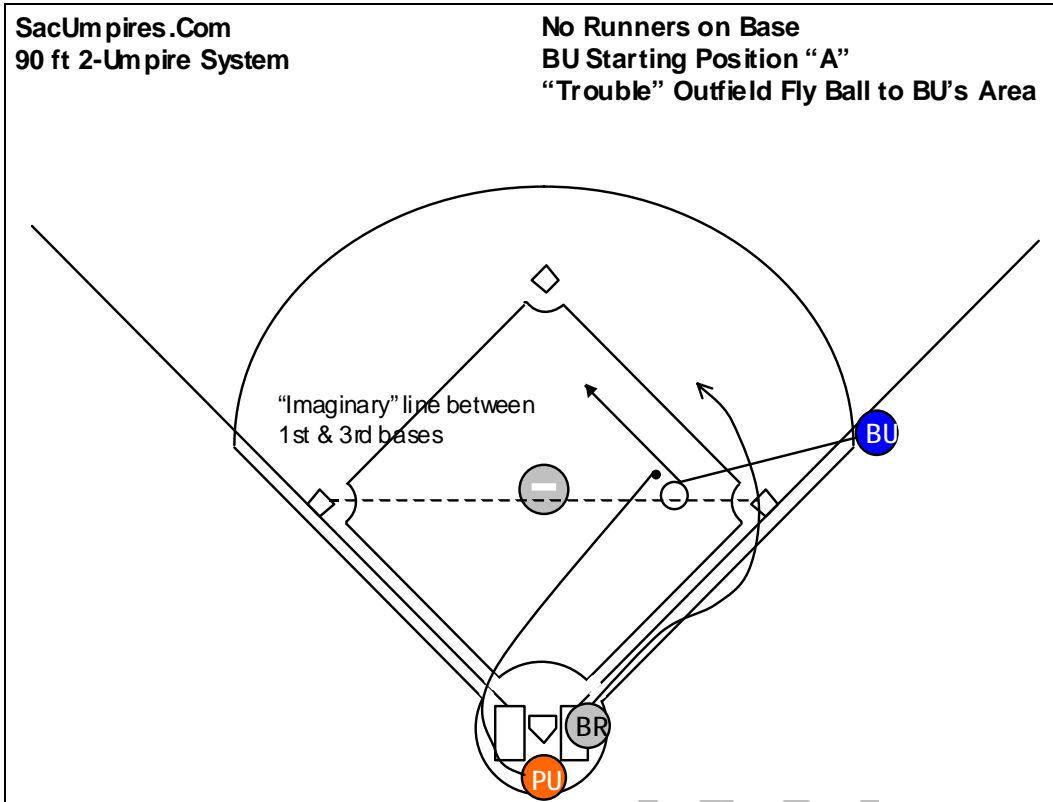
**Diagram 1.7.6-a:** When a routine fly ball is batted to BU's area, BU pivots into the infield and is responsible for plays on BR through 3<sup>rd</sup> base. PU is responsible for the (fair/foul if applicable) catch/no catch and any play which occurs on BR at home plate.



**Diagram 1.7.6-b:** When a routine fly ball is batted to PU's area, BU pivots into the infield and is responsible for plays on BR through 3<sup>rd</sup> base. PU is responsible for the (fair/foul if applicable) catch/no catch and any play which occurs on BR at home plate.



**Diagram 1.7.6-c:** With "difficult" catch/no catch or "trouble" fly balls in left-center with no runners on base, PU busts aggressively to cover the fly ball in his area. BU pivots into the infield and covers BR's advance or retreat.



**Diagram 1.7.6-d:** If BU does not go out on a "trouble" ball to his fly ball area, the fly ball coverage reverts to PU and BU is responsible for covering BR through 3<sup>rd</sup> base.

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## 1.8 – Base Hits to the Outfield *with No Runners on Base*:

### 1.8.1 – Responsibilities & Positioning on “Clean” Base Hits:

- With no one on base, on “clean” hits to the outfield (i.e., hits where there is **no possibility** of a catch/no catch or a fair/foul decision):
- BU will come in, “pivot” and take responsibility of BR at 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base.
- PU will come out from behind home plate *in the direction the ball is hit* a few feet onto the grass in front of home plate (approximately midway the home plate cutout to the front edge of the grass of the pitcher’s mound).
- PU will observe the play, watching for any possible infractions (for example, obstruction which BU might miss; ball getting past the outfielder and rolling under the outfield fence; ball being overthrown back into the infield; helping out should BR get trapped in a rundown; etc.).
- It is not necessary for PU to come out as far onto the infield grass as it would be in the case of a fly ball to the outfield (see Diagram 1.7.6-d).
- Should PU see that an inside-the-park home run is a possibility, he would retreat at that moment into foul territory and set up for any play at the plate. PU still has responsibility for any play at the plate on BR.
- If a rundown develops on BR, PU should be ready to move into position to help out with the rundown (see Section 1.9).

### 1.8.2 – Pivot Detailed Technique & Coverage – Basic Pivot Technique:

- BU should take his pivot at approximately the cutout area at 1<sup>st</sup> base, preferably two to three steps to the 2<sup>nd</sup> base side of the cutout.
- Ideally, he should time his pivot so that it occurs and is completed just before BR touches 1<sup>st</sup> base.
- BU needs to watch BR touch 1<sup>st</sup> base while cross-stepping toward 2<sup>nd</sup> base,
- BU should “pivot” so as to **stay ahead of** BR in case he should decide to try for extra bases.
- For this reason, it is best for BU to pivot two or three steps to the 2<sup>nd</sup> base side of the cutout (see Diagram 1.8.2).

### 1.8.3 – BR Stops & Returns to 1<sup>st</sup> Base: If BU determines that BR will hold up with a single (see Diagram 1.8.3):

- BU should stop, open the gate towards the 45’ mark on the 1<sup>st</sup> base line and retreat back in that direction.
- BU should retreat in such a way so that he will always be ahead of the BR should BR decide to try for 2<sup>nd</sup> base unexpectedly (for example, on a bad throw coming in from the outfield). However, should the outfielder (in many cases F9) throw *behind* BR at 1<sup>st</sup> base, BU must open a 45 degree angle to the play by moving back to between 1<sup>st</sup> base and pitcher’s mound in order to be in a good position for the play at 1<sup>st</sup> base.

### 1.8.4 – BR Attempts to Stretch a Single into a Double: If BR rounds 1<sup>st</sup> base and breaks towards 2<sup>nd</sup> base:

- BU will see this and will likewise accelerate towards the 2<sup>nd</sup> base cutout for a possible play there.
- At this point (after BR has committed), BU will again pick up the ball to determine whether a play is imminent at 2<sup>nd</sup> or whether the hit will be a possible triple - and react accordingly.
- If BU reads that there will probably be a play at 2<sup>nd</sup> base, he will rapidly move towards the cutout at 2<sup>nd</sup> and be set for the play there (see Diagram 1.8.4).

### 1.8.5 – BR Hits a Stand-Up Double and Rounds Hard Thinking of a Triple: Should BU determine that there will be no play at 2<sup>nd</sup> base, but there is the possibility of a triple:

- BU continues to take BR around the bases, staying ahead of BR, cutting his approach of 2<sup>nd</sup> base cutout short (unlike when a play at 2<sup>nd</sup> base is imminent).
- BU angles towards the “imaginary” 45’ mark on the 3<sup>rd</sup> baseline.
- As BR reaches 2<sup>nd</sup> base, BU must take his eye off the ball to *watch BR touch 2<sup>nd</sup>*
- Then BU picks up the ball again as he continues to take a couple more steps,
- BU *again* takes his eye off the ball and *looks back* in order to pick up the reactions of BR as he rounds 2<sup>nd</sup> base. (By doing so, BU will determine whether he should continue on to 3<sup>rd</sup> base for a possible play there or whether he should retreat back towards 2<sup>nd</sup> base because that is where BR will hold up (in case of a play behind him).

### 1.8.6 – “Watch the Ball, Glance at the Runner”:

- After “pivoting” BU will turn and pick up the ball.
- After BU takes a couple steps towards 2<sup>nd</sup> base, BU should again **turn back** and *pick up the reactions of BR*.

**KEY:** BU uses “watch ball ... glance at the runner” concept throughout all these plays: BU continually has his head on a swivel by glancing back and forth between the ball and BR. It is necessary during these mechanics sequences described above for BU to react as quickly as possible to the development of any of the plays to be in the best possible position for any of these plays.

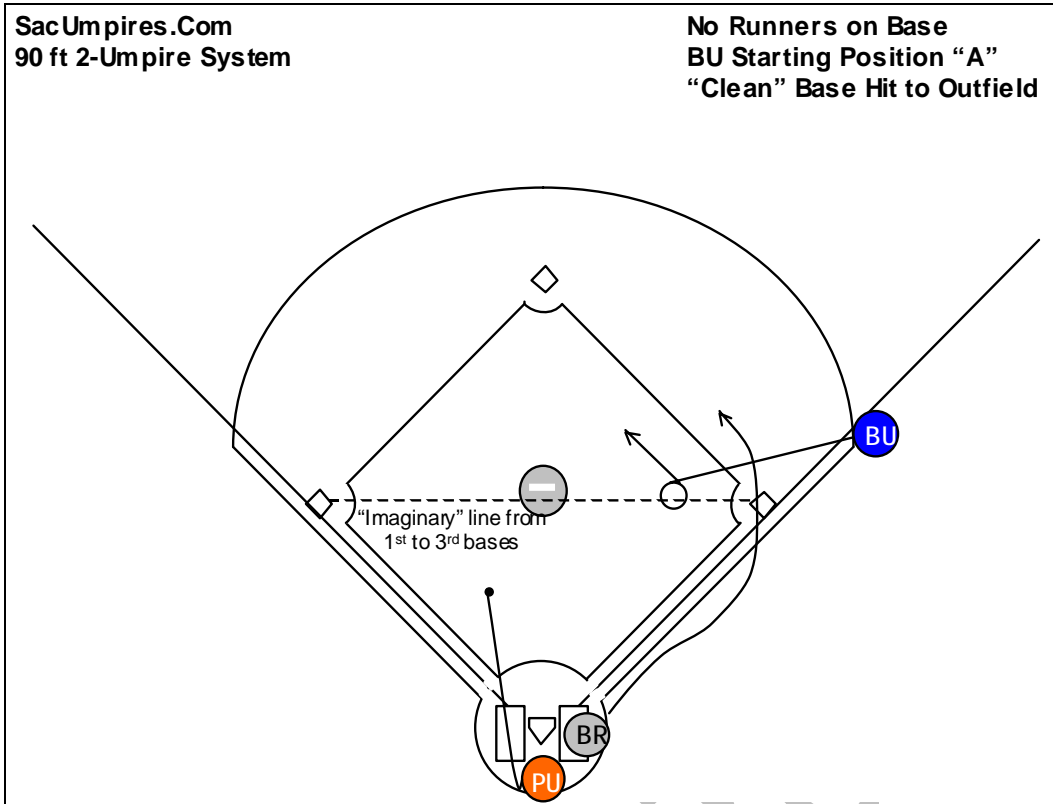


Diagram 1.8.2: Basic "pivot" technique on "clean" base hit to the outfield.

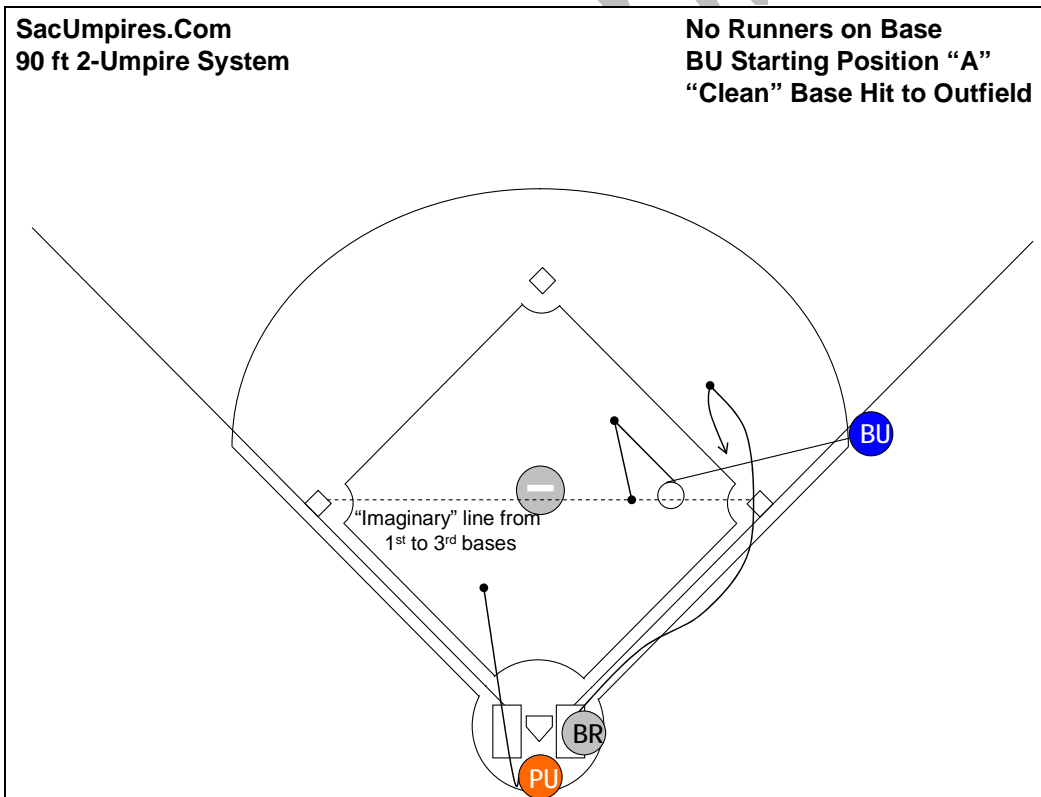


Diagram 1.8.3: BU pivoting and taking BR back into 1<sup>st</sup> base on "clean" single to left field.

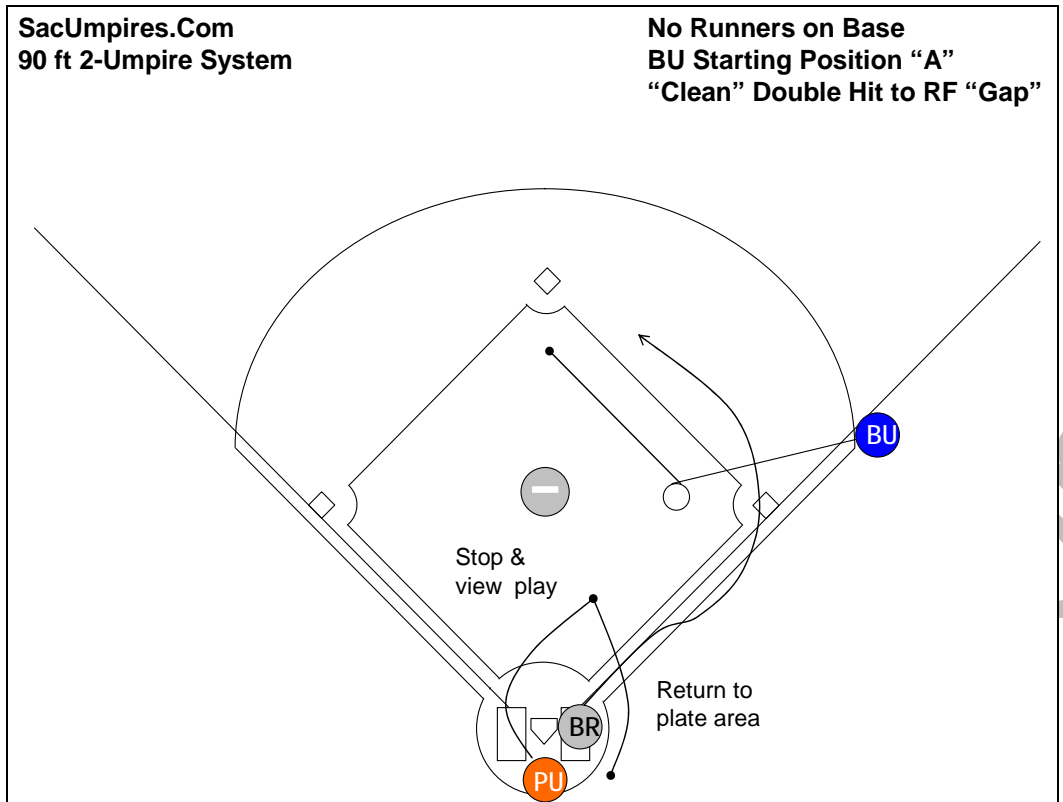


Diagram 1.8.4: BU takes BR into 2<sup>nd</sup> base on "clean" double (no fair/foul or catch/no catch decision) to the right field "gap".

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## 1.9 – Rundowns on BR *with No Runners on Base*:

On a base hit with no one on base, it would be possible for a rundown to develop on BR between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>, between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> or even 3<sup>rd</sup> and home.

### 1.9.1 – Rundown on BR between 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>:

- When these rundowns start, BU is responsible for it entirely (see **Diagram 1.9.1-a and 1.9.1-c**).
- 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 (see **Diagram 1.9.1-b and 1.9.1-d**).

### 1.9.2 – Rundown on BR between 3<sup>rd</sup> and Home Plate:

- 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!"

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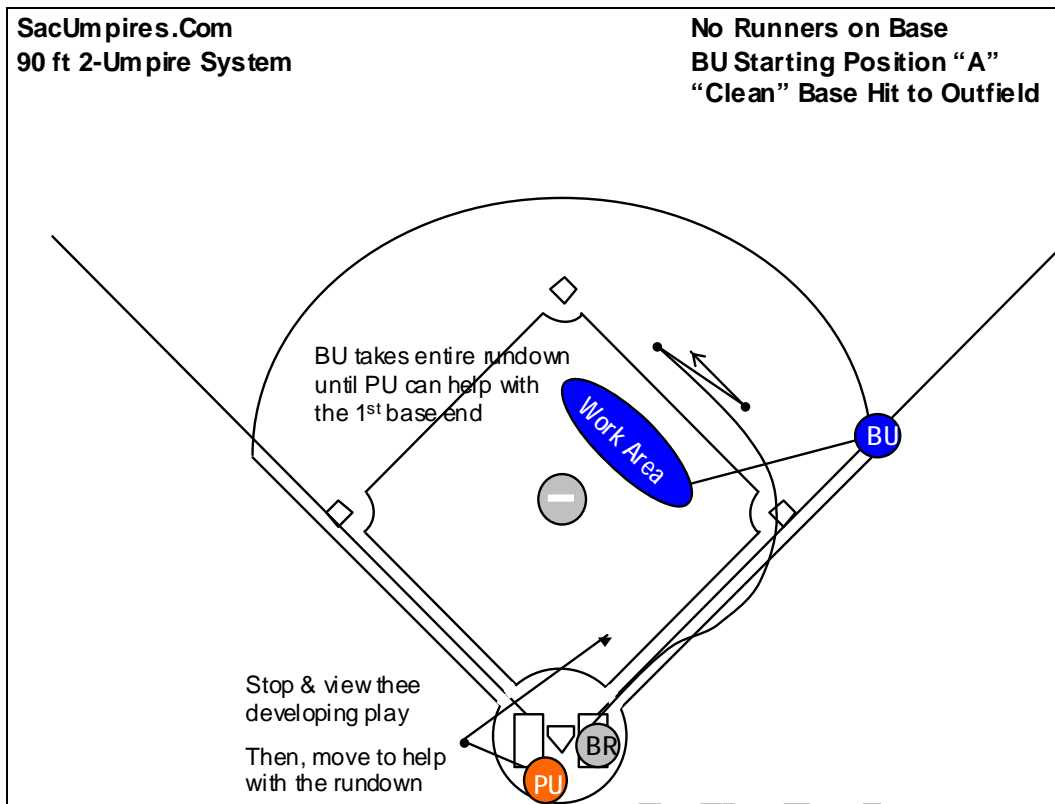


Diagram 1.9.1-a: BU pivots into the infield and BR is caught in a rundown. As the rundown on BR begins between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> bases, BU covers the entire rundown while PU moves toward a position to help out.

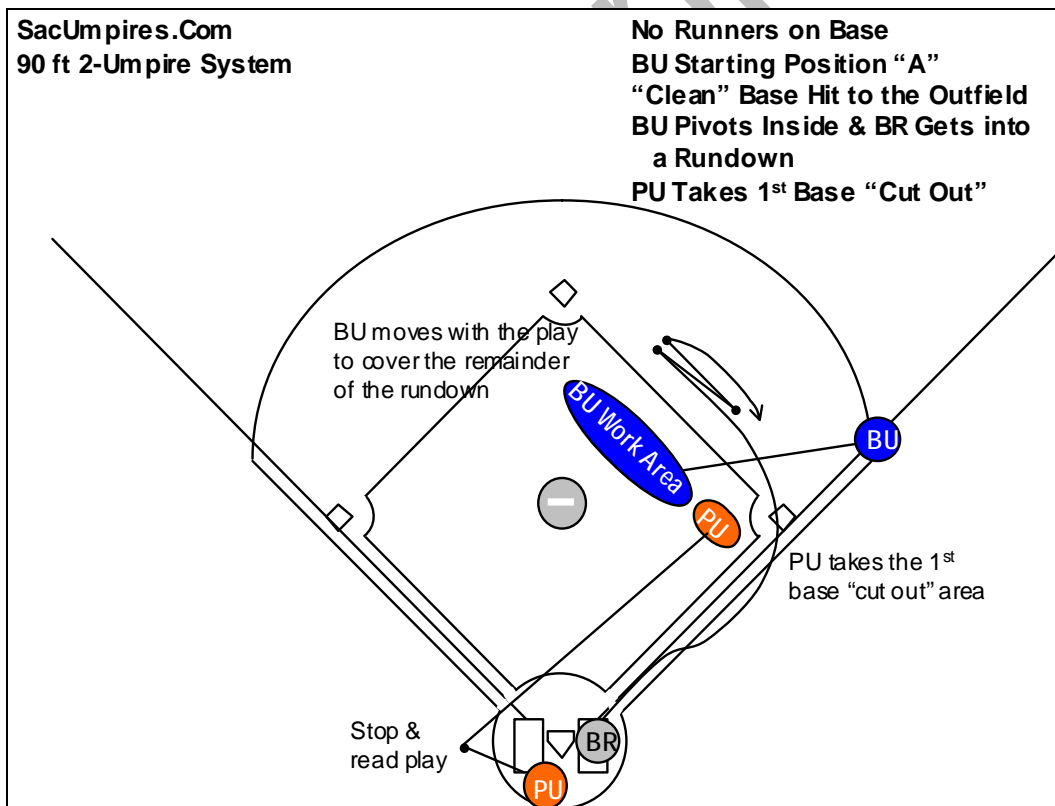
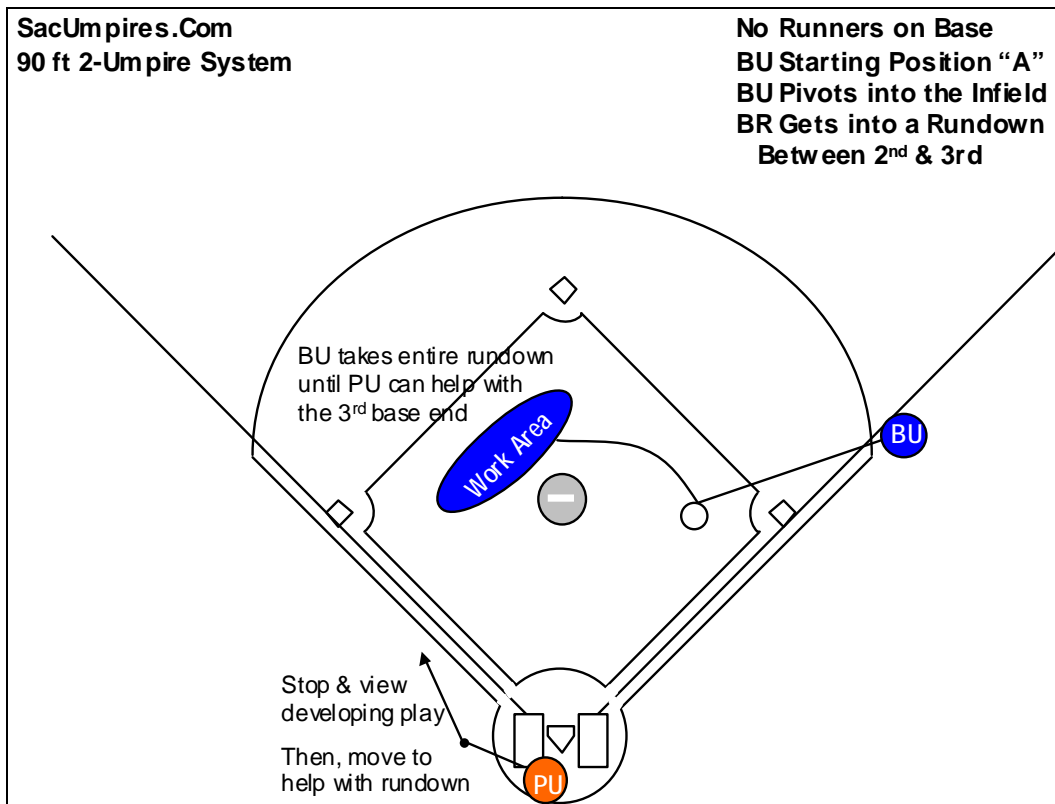
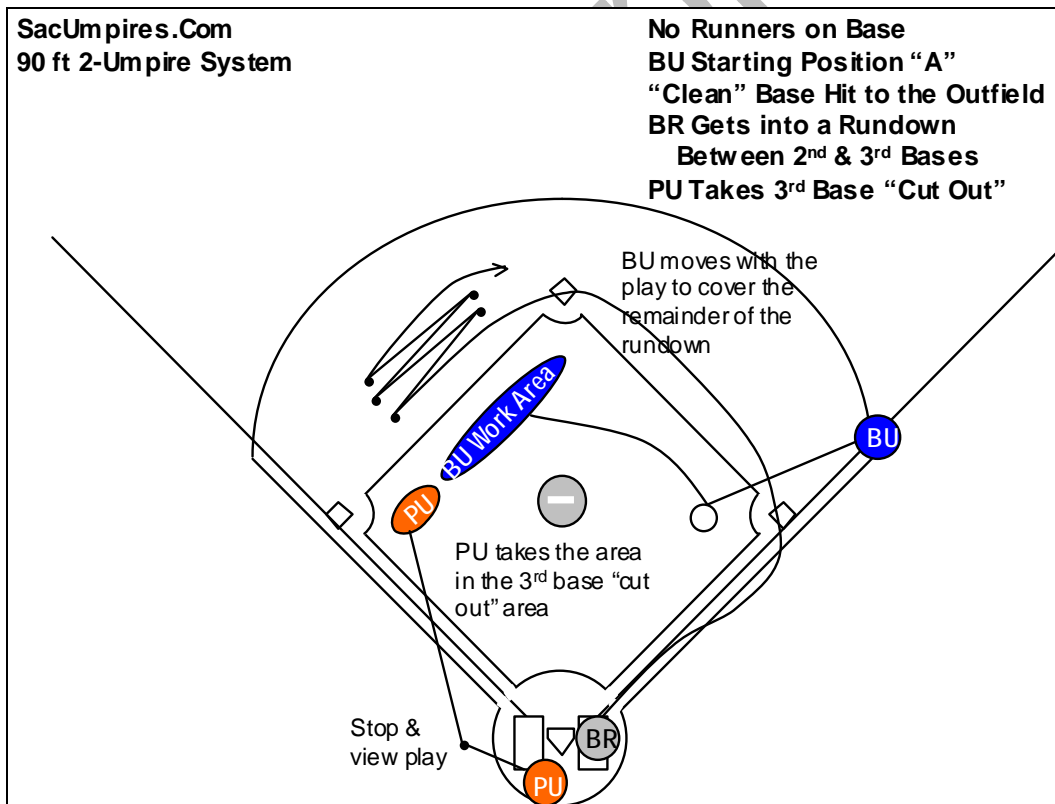


Diagram 1.9.1-b: When PU nears the cutout at 1<sup>st</sup>, PU will wait until BR is moving away from 1<sup>st</sup> base. Then, PU will move into the "cutout" at 1<sup>st</sup> and assume responsibility for plays in the cutout area when voicing BU "I've got this end".



**Diagram 1.9.1-c:** As the rundown on BR begins between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> bases, BU covers the entire rundown while PU moves toward a position to help out.



**Diagram 1.9.1-d:** When PU nears the cutout at 3<sup>rd</sup>, PU will wait until BR is moving away from 3<sup>rd</sup> base. Then, PU will move into the "cutout" at 3<sup>rd</sup> and assume responsibility for plays in the cutout area when voicing BU "I've got this end".