



WBSC

WORLD
BASEBALL SOFTBALL
CONFEDERATION

Game Time!

Blind Baseball Rulebook

31st August 2024

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1. Definition of terms (listed in alphabetical order)

Assistants: During games both teams are supported by assistants.

The offensive team has three assistants, two of which (**SA** second base assistant and **TA** third base assistant) are provided with clappers and positioned near second and third base, allow the runners to identify the bases and attempt to earn them consequently. The other positions himself/herself behind home plate (**hpA**) assisting both the runner coming from third base and the batter in the batter's box (**Diag.3**).

The defensive team is supported by only one assistant (**MA** mound assistant), who, after each phase of the game, gives indications to reposition fielders so they can be ready to play the next batted ball. Usually she/he positions herself/himself in the internal right foul zone by the mound (**Diag.3**).

Bad Throw: A Bad Throw is a throw (see Throw) that the **SDP** does not manage to catch with an ordinary effort. A Bad Throw shall also be considered the throw which is stopped or deflected by another visually impaired fielder or a short throw. The fielder, who made the Bad Throw, or his/her teammate, is allowed to recover the ball and throw it to the **SDP**. The Bad Throw is equivalent to the catching error of the Sighted Defense Player.

Ball In Play: A ball put in play by the "Fair" call made by the **hpU**, thanks to which the ball can be fielded.

Bases: Bases have different thicknesses and, according to their use, are hereinafter called:

- a) **Defensive:** related to the Sighted Defense Player (SDP)
- b) **Offensive:** related to the Batter-Runner and to the Runners
- c) **Sound:** which must indicate its own position
- d) **Transit:** because the base is not be earned
- e) **Passing:** because the base is to be completely surpassed

Batter (B): The Batter is the offensive team player who comes into the batting box or in the designated area wearing the blindfold properly (see **3.05**) and holding a legal bat (see **3.02**).

Batter-Runner (BR): The Batter-Runner is the offensive team player from the moment in which she/he hits the ball to her/his elimination or until she/he gets to second base. Should she/he attempt to reach an extra base during the action in which she/he became a Batter-Runner, she/he will be called a Runner.

Batting Order (Lineup): The batting order must be followed during all games unless a player is substituted; in this case, the substitute will take his/ her place in the batting order. Should a player need to be substituted and there are not enough players available for the substitution, the game continues regularly with a player missing from the lineup. Each time the missing player's turn at bat comes around, an out is counted against the team at bat. This rule counts also when a team, at the beginning of a game, lines up only four players. The arrival of a new substitute, missing at the time the hpU took attendance of players but listed in the players list, allows the team to complete the lineup and all penalties are removed.

Boy: A boy is a male player who is under 15 years of age.

Catch: The act whereby a fielder, using the hand or the glove, catches a ground or thrown ball and shows solid possession is a catch. The ball is **caught** when:

- a) The **SDP** catches the throw by a visually impaired fielder and, holding the ball with the glove or the hand, touches the second defensive base with any part of her/his body or with the glove.
- b) The **SDP**, while maintaining foot contact with the second defensive base, fields a ball, which has been unintentionally deflected by a visually impaired fielder.
- c) The **SDP**, while maintaining foot contact with the second defensive base, catches a legally batted ball.
- d) A visually impaired fielder fields a legally batted ball and she/he is ready to throw it to the **SDP** in order to eliminate the runner.
- e) The **SDP**, following a Bad Throw by a visually impaired fielder, retrieves the ball and picks it up from the ground.

Circles of rubber on the ground: Rubber circles with a diameter of **10cm** and a thickness of **0,5cm**. They identify:

- a) The limits of the home plate target line (**Diag. 6-12**)
- b) The hitting position for women, boys and girls (**Diag.6**)
- c) First base for women, boys and girls (**Diag. 6-11**)
- d) The limit for the second base assistant (**SA**) to indicate the position of second base during the "**Play ball**" routine (**Diag.4**)

Dead Ball: It is a ball no longer in play

- a) After any "Time out", "Foul Ball" or "No pitch" call.
- b) Anytime there is a danger situation which is stopped by the «Stop Offense!» or «Stop Defense!»
- c) Because of a bad throw, the ball stopped in the **B** and **C** safety zones within the string.
- d) After every play.
- e) Because after a Bad Throw, the ball has been retrieved by the **SDP** with runners standing on the base reached after the hit (see **Catch** paragraph e).

Approved Ruling: *In situation c), the **BR**, who is still between home plate and first base or has properly turned first base, and the runner, who is running towards the next base, will immediately be judged safe. While the **BR**, who has failed to turn first base, and the runner, who has failed to cross the home plate target line, will be called out.*

Defense Only (DO): The player on the defensive team who doesn't come to bat because his/her place in the lineup is taken by the **DH** is the **DO**.

Defensive Interference: Defensive interference is the action made by any member of the defensive team who, even if accidentally, obstacles, interferes and/or disturbs the opposing team on offense, keeping it from hearing the sound of the sound base and/or the clappers assistants and deviating or intentionally blocking the batted ball (see rules from **6.08** to **6.11**).

Designated Hitter (DH): The offensive team player who comes to bat for one of his/her teammates who plays only defense (**DO**, Defense Only) is the **DH**.

Double-Inning: Because of the need to reduce the time required to change field positions at the end of every inning improving safety and reducing time lost, the team, which is playing defense remains on the field for two consecutive innings. When the first inning is over the same team goes to bat and stays at bat for another consecutive inning (see **4.04**). At the end of the first offensive inning of a double-inning any runner who remains on base must leave off the field and return to the dugout

Elimination (out): It is one of the three plays needed in order to end the offensive team's turn at bat. Should a defensive play produce more than three outs, these will be considered valid but useful only for the scorer and statistics. This does not bring any modification in the batting order (not even between the two innings of the double-inning). The first batter of the following inning will be the one who follows, in the Line-up, the batter who concluded the previous inning.

Extra Base: An offensive play in which, following a Bad Throw towards the **SDP** (see definition), a runner attempts to reach the next base to the one previously reached after the base hit.

Note: *During extra base attempts, assistants are allowed to give runners either verbal or physical assistance, they are not allowed to give other assistants any verbal or gestural indication (for example: "Let the runner go," "Clap the clappers"). Moreover, the **hpA** and any other member of the offensive team who is sitting on the bench are prohibited from giving indications to the **SA** or the **TA**.*

Penalty: *The ball is dead, the runner who maintains foot contact with the base stays on base, and the runner who left base in order to reach the next base is called **Out**.*

Exception: *the **BR**, immediately after leaving second base, is allowed to ask either verbally or by gesture to ask the **TA** to clap the clappers in the case the **TA** has not yet done so (see **4.08d**).*

Fair: The **U3** or **U2** call "Fair" makes a regularly hit ball defensible.

Fair Ball: A regularly batted ball which goes beyond the string marker after it has bounced at least one time in the infield foul zone is a **Fair Ball**.

Fly Ball: The **Fly Ball** alert call by the **U3** who is obliged to make this call when a ball legally batted is not a bouncing ball but a high fly ball which may hit a visually impaired fielder. The same hit can later turn into (**Diag. 9**):

- a) **Fair:** if the ball first bounces in the infield foul zone or directly on the string.
- b) **Foul:** if the ball first bounces in the infield foul zone but later the ball stops, still in the foul zone, without having been called **Fair**.
- c) **No Pitch:** if the ball:
 - 1) Hits the runner on third base or is stopped by the umpire or the assistant (see **No Pitch** section **b**) in order to prevent the runner from getting hit.
 - 2) Hits the **SDP** second base after having been bounced in the internal foul zone.
 - 3) After being judged **Fair** the ball is rebounded back unintentionally by the defense into the infield foul zone.
 - 4) The ball is hit before the umpire has called **Play Ball**.
- d) **Out:**
 - 1) if the first bounce of the ball occurs in fair territory or in the outfield foul zone (the **SDP** base is entirely in to the fair zone).
 - 2) If it is caught directly by the **SDP** without bouncing on the dirt after the string marker or it hits a blind fielder.

Foul Ball: It is the term that identifies a batted ball when:

- a) It stops in the foul zone, after it has bounced at least one time in the infield foul zone, without having been judged Fair.
- b) It is unintentionally stopped by the Third Base Assistant.
- c) It is stopped by the Mound Assistant to protect him/herself
- d) It hits the runner which is in contact with the second base.

Girl: A "girl" is a female player who is under 15 years of age.

Home Plate Target Line (or runner's home plate): The home plate is an imaginary line 3.96 meters long. The center of this line corresponds to the tip of home plate and from here it continues towards the right side along the first base foul line for 1.98 m, towards the left side along the whole foul zone line for 1.98 m. The two extremities are marked with circles

of rubber on the ground (**Diag. 6**).

Illegal Hit: Batter has to bat with both feet in to the batter's box or, in case of woman/boy/girl, with the rubber circle in between his/her feet or under one foot, using a bat approved by WBSC and hitting the ball below his/her head with one hand.

If one or more of the above-mentioned conditions are not met, the hit is considered illegal (see **Strike**).

No Pitch: The umpire calls "No Pitch" to invalidate a hit and its consequences. The batter goes back to the batter's box maintaining the same count that she/he had before the hit. "No Pitch" is called when:

- a) A batter hits the ball before **Play ball** has been called.
- b) A batter hits immediately after the elimination of a runner who left the base too early or due to an unfair action by the pertinent assistant.
- c) An umpire or assistant stops a batted ball, either on the ground or a pop fly, which may hit the runner on third base.
- d) A legally batted ball hits the runner on third base or the **SDP** cushion after having bounced at least one time in to the internal foul zone (**Diag. 8**).
- e) The **TA** uses the clappers before the **U3** calls **Fair** (see **5.04j**).
- f) The ball or sound first base stops functioning during a game play (see **3.01** and **2.08d**).
- g) The runner on second and/or third base dangerously deviates from the runner's lane, putting himself/herself and also fielders at risk.
- h) A fielder accidentally rebounds into the infield foul zone a legally batted ball which has been judged **Fair** (**Diag.10**).
- i) A runner tamper with the mask and the **BR** gets safe on second base.
- j) An external noise (plane, train, car, crowd noise) precludes the visually impaired players, during their plays, from hearing the ball or the sound on first base or the assistant's clappers.
- k) An unforeseen situation not provided by the **Rulebook** occurs.

Note to h): Should a fielder, under discretion of the umpire, intentionally send a legally batted ball back in to the infield foul zone, Rule **6.08b** shall apply.

Note to f): *This point applies only if the hit has been judged Fair. Should the hit be judged Foul, point f) won't apply and a strike will be counted against the batter. Should the hit be the third strike, batter will be out. Should the ball, called Fair, lose one or more bells and be played by the defense, the play will be considered as if the ball is still undamaged.*

Comment: *If a batted ball hits an offensive base cushion, the mound and/or the pitching rubber, it will be judged as if it hit a natural element of the ground.*

Offensive Interference: Offensive interference is the action made by any member of the offensive team who, even if accidentally, obstructs, interferes and/or disturbs the opposing team on defense, keeping it from hearing the sound of the sound base and/or the Sighted Defense Player's instructions and deviating or intentionally stopping the batted ball (see rules from **6.01** to **6.07**).

Pass: A visually impaired fielder, with runners standing on earned bases, can pass the ball back to the **SDP** or the **MA** or the **SDP** can pass the ball to the **MA**. In case of error, no pass can be considered a Bad Throw.

Play Ball: The **hpU** calls **Play Ball** to inform the defense that batter is about to start batting. This call rules the ball in play. In case any hit is made before this call, the hit is immediately called **No Pitch** and ball is dead.

Players List (Roster): The Roster is given to the head umpire in order for him to take attendance of the players. It includes all the players available for the manager and the list of all various people on the field. If a player and/or an assistant listed in the roster gets to the field behind schedule, she/he is entitled to be added to the line-up even if the game has already started only after the **hpU** has identified him/her.

Run: A run is achieved by an offensive player who runs inside the home plate target line on the first attempt before the **SDP** in contact with second base has solid possession of the ball.

Runner (R): A runner is an offensive player who runs towards any base or she/he is on the base. The runner on third base who is hit by a regularly batted ball, whether on the ground or in the air, while she/he is on base, has to be considered integral part of the base and the hit will be judged as a **No Pitch**. The rule is applicable even if the batted ball is stopped by the umpire or by the assistant in order to protect the runner from being hit by the ball.

Runner Leaving Early: The Runner Leaving Early situation occurs when a runner on second and/or third base loses contact with the base before the umpire's call on a legally batted ball (see **5.04a** and **5.05a**). It may occur:

- a) **Before the hpU Play ball call:** the ball is still dead therefore no out is possible; the runner returns to the base.
- b) **After the Play ball call but before the hit:** the **Play ball** call makes the ball alive, therefore the runner will be immediately called **Out** and the batter will not be allowed to hit. Should the batter hit, the **Hpu** will declare the hit a **No Pitch**.
- c) **After the hit but before the umpire's call:** The **U2** or **U3** umpire shall call the runner who made the infraction **Out**, according to the rules Comments **5.04a** and **5.05a**.

Note to point c): *The ball is still in play, therefore the hit will be judged as if the infraction had never occurred. The play proceeds and runners may be eliminated, even if subsequently the hit is judged a **Foul Ball**, a **No Pitch** or a **Homerun**.*

Approved Ruling: *When the runner is eliminated for leaving early as described in **b)** and **c)** and there is a third out, the hit is invalidated and the hitter will come to bat again in the next inning starting with a 0-0 count.*

Sighted Defense Player (SDP): The Sighted Defense Player is the defensive player who positions herself/himself on the defensive second base and catches the throws of the visually impaired fielders so to eliminate runners. She/he is not allowed to bat (**Diag.3**).

Strike: A strike is called by the home base umpire (**hpU**) when:

- a) The batter swings the bat and doesn't hit the ball.
- b) A hit is judged foul (even with a two strike count).
- c) The **Fly Ball** is later called **Fly Ball Foul**.
- d) The batter hits the ball illegally.

Comment to point a: *It will not be considered a batting attempt to release the ball without a swing of the bat; the batter will not be counted a strike on the count.*

Approved Ruling: *The batter is allowed to bat a bouncing ball. Such batting will be judged normally.*

String Marker: String markers indicate field zones. There are two:

- a) The **string marker** starts from the left angle, facing first base, of the defensive second base and being perpendicular to it, goes to the third base foul zone (**Diag.1-5**). The string marker indicates the line between the infield foul zone and fair territory while its theoretical extensions separate the infield foul zone from the outfield foul zone (**Diag.2**). The string itself and its theoretical extensions belong to the infield foul zone.
- b) The **second base string** define the three safety zones between the defensive second base of the **SDP** and the offensive second base. (**Diag.4**).

Throw: A throw is an act whereby a visually impaired fielder, with the hand or the glove, directs the ball, either in the air or on the ground, towards the Sighted Defense Player, to eliminate an offensive player. An unintentional deviation of the ball towards the **SDP** or a Pass is not considered a "Throw."

Tie Break: The tie break rule applies to all games, with the exception of the final game of any competition where everything continues as usual.

In case of a tie game at the end of the regulatory innings, the following rule applies:

- a) Each team, starting from the first extra-inning (and every subsequent necessary inning) will start with runners on second and third base, 0 (zero) out.
- b) The batting order of each subsequent inning (including the first tie break inning) will be established depending on how the previous inning ended.

Example: *if the last batter of the last inning was n.2 in the Lineup, the tie break shall start with n.3 batter, while n.2 batter shall be positioned on second base and n.1 on third base.*

Tie Game: A tie is not allowed as the final result of a game.

Umpires: The task of umpires is to control the game and if necessary to assist players who risk putting themselves in physical danger. Usually there are 4 or 5 as follows (**Diag.3**):

- a) Head umpire or home plate umpire (**hpU**)
- b) First base umpire (**U1**)
- c) Second base umpire (**U2**)
- d) Third base umpire (**U3**)
- e) Homerun umpire (**hrU**)

Woman A woman is a female player who has already turned 15.

2. The playing field

The first objective of baseball for the visually impaired is the safety of the players by creating conditions to avoid any collisions during the game. The areas of play, starting from a normal baseball field, restrict the infield (diamond) to the offense and part of the outfield to the defense.

2.01 The Field

The playing field is a traditional baseball field slightly modified (see **Diag.1**). Any possible field irregularity must be reported to the umpire before the start of the game (before the HPU calls "**Play Ball**"). Subsequent reports may not be taken into account.

2.02 Fair Territory

Fair territory is restricted to the defense and it is limited:

- a) on the left side, by the foul line which starts 3,96 m after the original third base continuing for 35,61 m towards the homerun line.
- b) on the right side, by the line (not marked) which starts from the right corner on the side towards first base of the **SDP** second base and which is parallel to the bisector of the field; the line is 2,67 m away from the bisector and it extends to the homerun line (**Diag.1**).
- c) in the outfield by the arc with a radius of 68,60 m (225 feet) which is marked by cones and defines the homerun line.
- d) in the infield by the string marker which, from the left corner on the side towards first

base of the **SDP** second base, extends to the third base foul line 3.96 m distant from the cushion. The string marker is not part of fair territory.

2.03 Foul Territory

Foul territory is the remaining area of the field, outside fair territory, with the exception of the homerun area. Foul territory is divided into an **infield foul zone** (before the string marker and its extensions) and an **outfield foul zone** (after the string and its extensions). The bisector of the field divides the infield foul zone on the **Right** (towards first base) and on the **Left** (towards third base).

2.04 The string marker between foul territory and fair territory

The string marker starts from the left corner on the side towards first base of the **SDP** second base cushion and it extends to the third base foul line. It divides the field between fair territory and the infield foul zone while its extensions (not marked) divide foul territory between the infield foul zone (in front of the string) and the outfield foul zone (beyond the string) (**Diag. 1-2-4-5-8**).

- a) The string is considered foul (**Diag. 8-9**).
- b) A legally hit ground ball which stops on the string or touches the string and comes back into the infield foul zone is a **Foul Ball** (**Diag. 8**).
- c) A legally ground ball which goes beyond the string and comes back into the infield foul zone is a **Fair** hit that turns into a **No Pitch** (**Diag. 10**).
- d) A legally hit ground ball which totally stops beyond the string is **Fair** (**Diag. 8**).
- e) A legally hit **Fly Ball** which first touches the ground then touches the string becomes a **Fair Fly Ball** (**Diag. 9**).
- f) Any visually impaired fielder (including the **SDP**) who, trying to find or catch the Fair ground ball, unintentionally, pushes it back over the string into foul territory, turns it into a **No Pitch** (**Diag. 10**).

2.05 Homerun Area

The homerun area is the whole field area starting from the arc with a radius of **68,60 m** (225 feet) measured from the tip of home plate and marked by the out-of-bounds cones (**Diag. 7**).

2.06 The Diamond

The diamond corresponds to a traditional baseball field. All of the diamond is foul territory. The only base where the defense is allowed to throw to make a play is the **SDP** second base. The original bases are replaced by AIBxC flat bases. Home plate for scoring runs is identified by the home plate target line (**Diag. 1**).

2.07 Home Plate (for the batter)

Home plate for the batter is the original home plate. The batter's positioning varies whether she/he is a man, a woman, a boy or a girl (**Diag. 6**).

- a) The male batter is positioned by the umpire in the batter's box next to the regular home plate
- b) For woman players and boys the home plate is indicated on the ground by a rubber circle, which is placed on the third base foul line, **3,96 m** towards third base. She/he can elect to give up this benefit batting from the male position. The runner's path around first base will depend on the choice made by the batter.
- c) For girls the home plate is indicated on the ground by a rubber circle, which is placed on the third base foul line, **7,92 m** towards third base. She/he can elect to give up this benefit batting either from the woman/boy position or the male position. The runner's path around first base will depend on the choice made by the batter.

Approved Ruling: *Woman players, boys or girls can choose where to stand at each and every subsequent attempt at bat.*

2.08 First Base

The first base is not used as a base to be earned but is used as a transit base. First base is a rubber-covered metallic square with a regulation size of 38x38 cm. It is attached to the ground in its original position and it can have an electronic signal sound inside (**Diag. 6-11-14**).

- a) The male batter uses first base in its original position.
- b) For woman players or boys, first base is indicated on the ground by a rubber circle which is placed **3,96 m** towards second base.
- c) For girls first base is indicated on the ground by a rubber circle, which is placed **7,92 m** towards second base.

d) **Malfunctioning first base:** if first base is not functioning for whatever reason before the **BR** has turned towards second base, the following rules shall be applied:

1. Only the **BR** can ask the **U1** to turn the sound base on.
2. Should his/her request not be promptly fulfilled (due to umpire distraction or malfunctioning base) the **BR** must stop immediately.
3. It is absolutely forbidden for sighted people on the field to ask **U1** to turn on the sound base (interference).
4. The **HpU** and the **U1** umpire shall not call "**No Pitch!**", they shall wait for the **BR**'s request.
5. If following the malfunction of the first sound base the **BR** put her/his safety in danger, the umpires shall yell "**Stop Offence!**" and thereafter apply the "**No Pitch!**" rules.
6. The **BR** is allowed to advance to second base at her/his own risk. If she/he does not stop immediately and pass first base, he will be judged normally.
7. The "**Malfunctioning first sound base**" rules apply only in the case where the hit has been judged "**Fair!**".

Note 1: *The woman player, boy or girl who hits from the male batter's position, must use first base in its original position (see 2.07b).*

Note 2: *In the case the sound first base is damaged or malfunctions, the first base umpire (**U1**) may use a whistle or a portable sound equipment to indicate the position of first base (see 9.04d).*

2.09 Distances between bases

- a) Home base - second base (man) 54,86 m.
- b) Home base - second base (woman or boy) 50,90 m.
- c) Home base - second base (girl) 46,94 m.
- d) Second base - third base 27,43 m.
- e) Third base - home base target line 27,43 m

2.10 Offensive Second Base

The offensive second base is a padded rubber square fitted with tapered edges and with a regulation size of 38x38 cm and a maximum height of 2,5 cm. It's placed on the ground in the same position of the baseball original second base.

2.11 Defensive Second Base

Defensive second base is placed **4,15 m** from the defensive second base in a projection of 1st to 2nd baseline towards the outfield. Defensive second base dimensions correspond to those of the baseball original second base (**Diag.4-5**).

2.12 Second base safety zone

It comes from the need to delimitate the movement areas of the **SDP** and the **BR**, which merge in the same zone after every hit in a normal play. The area, marked by a string, between the defensive second base and the offensive second base is the second base safety zone, which is divided into 4 zones that starting from the defensive second base to the offensive one are **A**, **B**, **C**, and **D**; the string is part of the safety zone. See **Diag. 4** for measurements and shape.

- a) **Zone A** is a trapezoidal area; it is reserved for plays by the **SDP**.
- b) **Zone B** is a rectangular area; it may not be entered by either the **SDP** or the **BR**.
- c) **Zone C** is a rectangular area; it may only be entered by the **BR** and the **SA**.
- d) **Zone D** is a rectangular area; it is the runner's lane between first base and offensive second base. It may only be entered by the **BR**.

2.13 Offensive Third Base

The offensive third base is a padded rubber square fitted with tapered edges and with a regulation size of 38x38 cm and a maximum height of 2,5 cm. It's placed on the ground in the same position of the baseball original second base

2.14 Home Plate Target Line (or runner's home plate)

The home plate target line or runner's home plate is an imaginary line **3,96 m** long. The center of this line corresponds to the tip of home plate and continues perpendicularly to the third base foul line towards first base **1,98 m** and perpendicularly as a projection of the first base foul line into foul territory **1,98 m**. The two ends of the home plate target line are marked by rubber circles (**Diag. 1-6-12**).

3. Equipment

3.01 Ball

The official ball is a "Rubber Pro.A Ball," properly modified with five holes of 16 mm and one hole of 18 mm, placed eccentrically and containing two nickel-plated brass bells 24 x 21 mm (**Diag. 13**). Balls are available at the AIBxC headquarters.

Malfunctioning ball: if the ball loses its original properties for whatever reason, the umpire shall interrupt play by calling **No Pitch**. However if the defense can make an out play continues as if the malfunctioning never occurred. The damaged ball must be removed from the game at the end of the play.

3.02 Bat

Any baseball or softball wood, aluminum or composite bat approved by WBSC can be used.

3.03 Uniforms

All players and assistants of a team must wear identical uniforms regarding the colour, cut and style, and there must be a unique identification number for each player and assistant on the back of the jersey. The use of a hat is mandatory. Women and girls are allowed to use a visor.

3.04 Gloves

Any kind of glove (shape, colour and dimension) is acceptable as long as it is within baseball and softball specifications for fielders. Their use is mandatory (see **7.04e**).

3.05 Mask / Eyeglasses / Blindfolds

In these rules this equipment will always be specified by the term **mask**.

- a) The official mask is issued by AIBxC. Should a player use another type, umpires must ascertain that it conforms to regular type.
- b) The mask must be properly worn by the batter when she/he is called by the head umpire into the batter's box or in the designated area and by the fielders before the **Hpu** umpire calls **Play Ball**.
- c) The mask cannot be tampered at all. The umpire who detects any tampering, even partial, must eject the player and warn the team manager.

d) Under no circumstances may the mask be worn improperly. The umpire who detects improper use shall apply the following:

1. **Defensive violation:** dead ball, **BR** earns second base and all the other runners advance one base and a warning for the fielder who commits the infraction. In the case of a repeated violation after a warning has been already issued, the fielder will be expelled.
2. **Offensive violation:** dead ball. The runners may not advance. The player, who made the infraction gets a warning and is called **Out**. She/he will be expelled if he repeats the violation.
 - **Should this be the BR:** should the runner get safe, she/he will be brought back to the base she left while the runner, who got out on second or because she/he failed the home plate target line, she/he will remain same.
 - **Should this be a runner:** should the other potential runner got safe, she/he will be brought to the base she/he left, should she/he be out on second or because she/he failed the home plate target line, she/he will remain same. Should the **BR** get safe on second, his/her hit will be declared "**No Pitch**", should she/he be out, she/he will remain same.

Checking on mask wearing

- *At the beginning of the game and at each start of all subsequent innings, the umpires will check the masks of all players who will be an active part of the game (all players on defense and all players called into the batting box). They will also make such a check to the substitutes before they take up their position on the field, either defensively or offensively. From this point on, the manager of the team will be solely responsible for the proper use of their player's mask.*
- *At the beginning of the second inning of the double inning, fielders who maintain their position on the field may be excluded from the mask check.*
- *During the game, any umpire may unquestionably check the mask to players whether they are on offense or defense.*
- *The request for a control check of the mask can also be requested discretely and properly by the manager of the opposing team to the **hpU**, who will directly check the batter or will appoint the umpire closest to the player (fielder or runner). During the same game, including tie break innings and any extra innings in finals games, the manager may make this request only twice.*

- *In any case, the umpire must warn the player before checking the mask.*

Appendix to Rule 3.05

- *Batters must wear the mask when they are called by the head umpire into the batter's box or in the designated area and are allowed to take off the mask after their elimination or after crossing of the home plate target line.*
- *Fielders must wear the mask when they are on the field, and, always before the head umpire starts the **Play Ball** routine. They shall take it off only at the end of the inning.*
- *In case of mask tampering, the umpire must eject the player and warn the manager of the team.*
- *In case of misuse of the mask, the umpire must warn the player and eject him/her in case of a repeat violation.*
- *Should an athlete have the need to take the mask off while she/he is on the field, she/he has to ask one of the umpires for permission, after the umpire has called a Time Out. Should this be the batter, she/he will have to turn towards the backstop, should she/he be a runner or a fielder, she/he will have to turn towards the outfield.*
- **Exception:** *during a homerun action all athletes on the field are allowed to take the mask off.*

3.06 Clappers

Clappers can be wooden or plastic and a size of a hand. In order to diversify sounds, both clappers used on third base must be provided with a felt lining. The clappers used on second base must have only one clapper with a felt lining.

- a) The **SA** is allowed to use clappers only once the **BR** has passed first base (see **6.03a**).
- b) The **TA** is allowed to use clappers only with a runner leaving from second base and only after the umpire has called **Fair** (see **6.05a** and **6.05b**).
- c) In case of a possible extra base attempt, any offensive sighted player or assistant is forbidden to ask, by voice or gesture, the **TA** to use clappers (see **6.07b** and **Exception 6.07**).
- d) In case of an extra base attempt, the **TA** is allowed to use clappers only after the **BR** has left second base (see **6.05c**).

The assistant, who manages to use clappers without felts inside, must be warned. When we say managing to use we refer to the act of wearing them. Should an assistant use clappers

without felts, she/he will cause the elimination of the runner, in this case runners are not allowed to advance.

- a) Should the infraction be committed by the **SA**, the **BR** will be called out and the ball will still be in play; should potential runners get safe to the next base, they will be brought back to the base they left; should they be judged "Out", they will remain same.
- b) Should the infraction be committed by the **TA**, the runner, who has left from second, will be out and the ball will still be in play; should potential runners get safe to the next base, the hit will be declared No Pitch and the runner, who has left from third base, will be brought back to the base; should the **BR** and/or the potential runner be judged "Out", they will remain same.

3.07 Whistle or any alternative sound system

A whistle or any other alternative sound system can be used only in case of a malfunctioning or missing audible equipped sound first base.

3.08 Audibly Equipped Sound First Base

It is available at the AIBxC headquarters (**Diag. 14**). **Malfunctioning audible equipped sound first base:** See **2.08d**, its ***Exception and note to point f*** of the ***No Pitch*** definition.

4. Game Play

4.01 Baseball for the Visually impaired (Blind Baseball)

Baseball for the visually impaired is a game between two teams of visually impaired players under the direction of a manager played in an enclosed field and marked according to these rules under the jurisdiction of various umpires.

4.02 Goal of Each Team

The goal of each team is to win by scoring more runs than the opponent team. In some competitions, a tie game is allowed.

4.03 Runs Scored in One Inning

A part of the inning will end when the fielding team will have completed 3 outs or the offensive team will have scored 5 runs. All runs scored in the last game action are acceptable; therefore, 7 runs at maximum can be scored.

Example 1: *Bases loaded, the offensive team has scored 4 runs; the batter hits towards left field. The runner on third scores the 5th run and the left field misses the throw towards the SDP. The runner on second reaches third base and succeeds in getting an extra base, scoring the 6th run of the inning for his/her team.*

Example 2: *Bases loaded, the offensive team has scored 3 runs; the batter hits a homerun. This allows his/her team to score 3 runs that added to the other 3 come out to a total of 6 runs in the same inning.*

Example 3: *Bases loaded, the offensive team has scored 4 runs; the batter hits a homerun. This allows his/her team to score 3 runs that added to the other 4 come out to a total of 7 runs in the same inning.*

4.04 Game Duration

WBSC is entitled to choose the duration of games before the competitions start. Games are normally played in 7 or 9 innings. When two games are played on the same day, the duration may be limited to 5 or 7 innings.

a) 9 inning game

1. The first 6 innings are played according to the double-inning system.
2. Where a tie score is not authorized each extra inning shall be played singularly (no double-inning) according to the Tie Break Rule.
3. If at the end of the 7th inning a team leads by 10 runs, it will win the game applying the Mercy Rule.
4. The final score of a nine-inning game suspended due to playing field conditions shall be considered valid when at the end of the top of the 5th inning the home team is leading.
5. The final score of a nine-inning game suspended due to playing field conditions shall be considered valid when at the end of the 5th inning the visiting team is leading.
6. The final score of a nine-inning game suspended due to playing field conditions shall

be considered valid when at the end of the 5th inning a tie score has been reached.

Note to the a1: *Under uncertain weather conditions, the head umpire may decide to apply the double-inning to the first 4 innings so as to execute what is described in paragraphs a4, a5, a6.*

Comment: *Such an unchallengeable decision may be made by the head umpire even while the game is in progress. Similarly, should the weather conditions improve, the head umpire may unquestionably decide to return to double-inning until the sixth inning.*

b) 7 inning game

1. The first 4 innings are played according to the double-inning system.
2. Where a tie score is not authorized each extra inning shall be played singularly (no double-inning) according to the Tie Break Rule.
3. If at the end of the 5th inning a team leads by 8 runs, it will win the game applying the Mercy Rule.
4. The final score of a seven-inning game suspended due to playing field conditions shall be considered valid when at the end of the top of the 5th inning the home team is leading.
5. The final score of a seven-inning game suspended due to playing field conditions shall be considered valid when at the end of the 5th inning the visiting team is leading.
6. The final score of a seven-inning game suspended due to playing field conditions shall be considered valid when at the end of the 5th inning a tie score has been reached.

c) 5 inning game

1. The first two innings are played according to the double-inning system.
2. Where a tie score is not authorized each extra inning shall be played singularly (no double-inning) according to the Tie Break Rule.
3. If at the end of the 3rd inning a team leads by 6 runs, it will win the game applying the Mercy Rule.
4. The final score of a five-inning game suspended due to playing field conditions shall be considered valid when at the end of the top of the 4th inning the home team is leading.
5. The final score of a five-inning game suspended due to playing field conditions shall

be considered valid when at the end of the 4th inning the visiting team is leading.

6. The final score of a five-inning game suspended due to playing field conditions shall be considered valid when at the end of the 3rd inning a tie score has been reached.

d) Impossible comeback: the game shall be declared ended due to an impossible comeback when:

1. The home team at the end of the top of the 8th inning is leading by eight runs.
2. The home team during the bottom of the 8th inning scores the run that takes it to an eight run lead.
3. The visiting team at the end of the 8th inning is leading by eight runs.
4. The visiting team during the top of the last inning scores the run that takes it to an eight run lead.
5. One team is leading by at least (7 x innings left to play + 1) runs.

e) Impossible comeback on the Mercy Rule: Some tie situations make it unnecessary to play the whole 7th inning.

1. The visiting team at the end of the 6th inning is leading at least by 17 runs.
2. The visiting team during the top of the 7th inning scores the run that takes it to a 17 run lead.
3. The home team at the end of the top of the 6th inning is leading at least by 17 runs.
4. The home team during the bottom of the 6th inning scores the run that takes it to a 17 run lead.

4.05 Teams (standard components)

Teams are composed of a total of six fielders: one sighted player (**SDP**) who plays at second base (**4**) and five visually impaired players who play respectively at third base (**5**), shortstop (**6**), left field (**7**) center field (**8**) and right field (**9**). The defensive mound assistant (**MA**) completes the fielding team.

When the team goes to bat, only the five visually impaired players will hit (a **DH** can be used. She/he hits for one of the visually impaired fielders according to the **4.11** and **4.12** rules), helped by three sighted assistants, one at second base (**SA**) whose task is to help the **BR** to reach second base, one at third base (**TA**) whose task is to help the runner to

reach third base and the assistant behind home plate (**hpA**) whose task is to give indications to the batter and to stop the runner after she/he has passed the home plate target line (**Diag. 3**).

4.06 Teams (legal number)

- a) The legal number of players to start a game consists of five visually impaired fielders and one sighted player.
- b) Should a team begin the game with only four visually impaired players on the field a penalty will apply whenever it is the absent fifth batter's turn to bat (see **5.01d**).
- c) No team is allowed to play with only four players when there are more available on the list.
- d) Should a team fail to line up four visually impaired players on the field during the game, it may use a fourth sighted player equipped with a blindfold as a visually impaired player. The fourth batter will go to bat, and the penalty will apply only to the missing fifth batter (see **5.01d**).

Note: *Should a team fail to line up four visually impaired players to begin a game or three visually impaired players during the game, it shall lose by default with a score of zero for the planned number of innings (X-0). Should neither team be able to line up four players, both teams will be considered defeated by the (X-0 / 0-X) rule.*

Exception: *Should the home team lead the game in the last defensive inning, it may play even if it has fewer than four defensive players on the field. Should the visiting team tie or lead the game in the last inning, it will win the game and the home team will not go to bat. Should the visiting team tie the game, the loss will be with a score of zero for the planned inning (X-0), should it lead, the final score will be the one obtained at the end of the inning.*

4.07 Earning Bases and Scoring Runs

An attempt to reach the bases can be made by the batter only after a **Fair** hit. The runners can earn the following base if they are not forced out.

- a) **First base** is not used in terms of a base to be earned but is a transit base. In order for the transit to be valid, the **BR** can either touch or run around the base. Moreover the transit is valid if the chest of the **BR** passes over an imaginary line projected upwards

from the base itself; it is not valid if the **BR** passes with outstretched arms distant from the body or with the chest bent towards the base. In the case of a non-valid transit, no other attempt can be made (**Diag. 11**). The same rule applies also to the transit on the category base dedicated to the woman, girl or boy **BR**.

b) Second base is the first goal for the **BR** to reach. After having hit a **Fair Ball** and having regularly transited first base, the runner gains second base if she/he is capable of touching it with any part of his/her body before the **SDP**, while holding the ball, touches the second defensive base cushion. Should the **BR** leave the base for whatever reason, she/he is not considered out.

Exception: see **5.03d** and **6.01b**

c) Third base is earned by the runner who, after having regularly left second base following a **Fair** hit made by his/her teammate, is able to touch the offensive third base with any part of his/her body before the **SDP**, while holding the ball, touches the second defensive base cushion. Should the runner leave the base for whatever reason, she/he is not considered out.

d) Home base target line is earned by the runner who, after having regularly left third base following a **Fair** hit made by his/her teammate, crosses the home plate line with a normal running position before the ball is received by the **SDP**, who while holding the ball, touches the second defensive base cushion. The transit is considered valid if made with the chest touching an imaginary line projected upwards from the rubber circle projection, which defines the target; it is not considered valid if the runner touches it with outstretched arms distant from the body or with the chest bent towards the rubber circle. In case of a non-valid transit, no other attempt can be made (**Diag. 12**).

4.08 Earning an Extra Base

Earning an extra base (the base reached after the hit) is allowed only after a fielder, after having caught the ball hit by the batter, makes a Bad Throw to the Sighted Defense Player. The time used by the **SDP** to get the ball and to return to the base, establishes the time runners can use in order to earn an extra base. The only runners who can benefit from this are the **BR**, who manages in just one play to reach third base after his/her hit, and the runner at second base, who manages to score a run. In these situations, runners, once they reach their regular base, without interruption, are then redirected towards the extra

base. The rule states that:

- a) The second base **SA** and third base **TA** assistants may give verbal indications or physical adjustments to their runners only in the phase of leaving towards the extra base.
- b) All offensive assistants (**SA, TA, hpA**) including the one in the dugout cannot give each other any indications, either verbal nor gestural (see **6.07b**).
- c) The **TA** can regularly clap clappers for the **BR** only after this person has left the base in order to reach third base (see **3.06d** and **6.05c**).
- d) The **BR** as long as she/he leaves second base is allowed to ask, by voice or signs, the **TA** to clap clappers whenever this person has not done it yet.
- e) The runner on third, after having been redirected by the **TA** towards home plate, is not allowed to receive any other type of indication.
- f) The runner, who starts to run toward an extra base can only advance otherwise she/he will be call out for giving up.
- g) Should two runners attempt to earn an extra base and the defense get the **BR** out on third after the run has been scored, even if she/he is the third out, the run is valid because it is not a force play.
- h) The **SDP**, in order to eliminate runners from earning an extra base, must recover the Bad Throw and get back to the defensive second base before runners earn the pertinent extra bases.
- i) Runners can earn an extra base only if they leave the base reached after the hit before the **SDP** recovers the ball (see **Catch** paragraph **e**).

Approved Ruling: Should the **BR** leave the base to reach third base while the runner on third is still standing on the base, the **U3** must give the **TA** some time to allow him/her to make his/her runner go and clap clappers for the **BR**. Should the umpire, with his/her final decision, believe a potential collision between two runners or between the **BR** and a fielder is imminent, she/he must stop the game with his/her **Stop Offence** call. The **BR** will be called **Out**, the ball will be dead, runner on third stays on base and **SA** and **TA** assistants will be warned.

4.09 Homerun

A homerun is a regulation **Fair** hit, which touches or goes beyond the arc located at a minimum distance of **68,60 m** (225 feet) from the tip of home plate, as well as in the Foul Zone, has to be considered a homerun (**Diag. 1-7**). This measurement may be modified only by the Technical Commission (**TC**) after the end of the season.

- a) The homerun line is an internal tangent between plastic cones (**Diag. 7**).
- b) Should a **Fair Ball**, still on the move, be sent by a fielder into the homerun zone, it has to be considered a homerun. Should the **Fair Ball** stop and later be sent by the fielder into the homerun zone, it has to be considered in play and it can be played by the defense.
- c) Should the **SDP**, not maintaining foot contact with the base, intercept or touch, even if not intentionally, a regulation hit batted in fair territory which, according to the umpire's unquestionable judgment, could have ended its movement over the homerun line, the umpire will call homerun due to interference.
- d) No elimination is possible during a homerun.

Note: *There is no possibility of an appeal play during a homerun. Running is only a choreographic thing. The **BR** and all the runners are allowed to be helped either physically or verbally by assistants, but they must run all the bases and cross the home plate target line.*

Exception to 4.09d: *Should a runner break the Runner Leaving Early Rule, she/he will be called **Out** (see **Runner Leaving Early** point c). Should this be the third out, the homerun will be cancelled and the batter will go back to bat the following inning.*

4.10 Batting out of turn

When a batter does not bat missing his/her proper line-up position, the batting out of order situation occurs and the official game scorer must note the irregularity and notify the umpire. The following procedures will apply:

- a) **The irregular batter has not completed his/her turn at bat yet:** the batter is removed with no penalty and substituted by the regular batter who starts his/her turn at bat with a zero strike count.
- b) **The irregular batter has completed his/her turn at bat turning into a runner or being eliminated:** the whole action is cancelled (outs, scored runs, etc.) and the regular

batter goes to bat with a zero strike count.

- c) **There have been other batters after the irregular one:** once the irregularity has been noted, all plays (outs, scored runs, etc.) are cancelled from the time the irregular batter went to bat. The play resumes with the regular batter at bat with a zero strike count. The batter who bats out of turn is legalized when:
 - a) **Top of the double-inning second inning:** the double-inning second inning starts when the head umpire calls the first batter.
 - b) **Bottom of the double-inning second inning and end of a single inning:** the double-inning second inning or a single inning ends when the whole team on defense walks out from the field fair zone.

4.11 Designated Hitter (DH)

Each team may benefit from the Designated Hitter Rule (**DH**). Its use is not mandatory.

- a) The **DH** cannot be placed once the game has started but she/he must be listed in the lineup given to the home plate umpire during the exchange of lineups at home plate.
- b) Each team can place one or two **DH** and one or two **DO** accordingly.
- c) The two **DH** and two **DO** are connected together, the **DH1** hits for the **DO1** and the **DH2** hits for the **DO2**.
- d) The lineup is made up of seven players, where the **DH** is included in one of the first five batting positions, leaving the sixth and seventh position to the **DO**.
- e) Should a team use only one **DH**, it will have to leave the seventh spot of the lineup empty; should a team not use any **DH**, it will have to leave both sixth and seventh spots empty.

4.12 Substitution of the Designated Hitter

- a) The **DH** can be substituted by any player that has not entered the game yet, with the exclusion of the **DO**.
- b) The **DH** and the **DO** may exchange roles just once during the game (this is considered an internal substitution).
- c) The **DH** can take a position in defensive play in substitution of the **DO**, who leaves the game definitively.
- d) The **DH** can take a position in defensive play (with the exclusion of the **DO**) for any

- other player who will immediately be out of the game once substituted. The DO from the sixth or seventh position in the line-up goes to bat replacing the substituted batter.
- e) The **DO** can replace the DH on offense as batter. The substituted **DH** will definitively be out of the game.
- f) The **DO** can replace any batter (with the exclusion of the **DH**), who will automatically be out of the game. In this case, either the DH or a new substitute must take a position in defensive play for the substitute player.

Note: According to Rules **4.12 a)** and **4.12 b)** the **DH** remains in the game, while according to Rules **4.12 c)**, **4.12 d)**, **4.12 e)**, **4.12 f)**, the team loses the possibility of using a **DH** and it remains with five or six players.

Players list: Aldo, Bruno, Carla, Dario, Eva, Felice, Giulio, Heidi, Ivo, Jack.

Line-up:	5 – Bruno	Reserves:	Aldo
	6 – Dario		Carla
	DH1 – Felice		Eva
	8 – Giulio		
	DH2 – Jack		
	7 – Ivo (DO1)		
	9 – Heidi (DO2)		

- 4.12 a) Felice or Jack is substituted by one of the reserves.
- 4.12 b) Ivo becomes DH and Felice becomes DO and/or Heidi becomes DH and Jack becomes DO.
- 4.12 c) Felice takes a position in defensive play with the position n.7 and Ivo is removed from the game and/or Jack takes a position in defensive play with the position n.9 and Heidi is removed from the game.
- 4.12 d) Felice and/or Jack takes a position in defensive play for any player between Bruno, Dario and Giulio, who is substituted in the line-up by Ivo and/or Heidi.
- 4.12 e) Ivo hits for Felice and/or Heidi hits for Jack.
- 4.12 f) Ivo and/or Heidi replaces any batter between Bruno, Dario and Giulio who, once substituted, is removed from the game. Felice and/or Jack or one of the reserves, takes a position in defensive play for the substituted player but he keeps his position in the lineup.

4.13 Substitution when the fifth player is missing

Introduction: *If a team loses its fifth player through ejection or injury, leaving it with only four players on the field and no available reserves, it may bring back a substituted player (not the ejected player) and restore the correct number of players on the field. In case the team fields one or two **DO/DH** pairs, the following rules shall be applied:*

- a) If the team, because of an ejection or injury, is left with only four players and no substitutes, it will have to waive the **DH** by deploying him to the defense in place of the ejected or injured player. The relevant **DO** will take the place of the ejected or injured player in the Line-up.
- b) If the ejected or injured player is the **DO** rule **4.12c)** shall normally apply, if the ejected or injured player is the **DH** rule **4.12e)** shall normally apply.
- c) A team, with no reserve players, fields the double **DO/DH** and replaces both of them following what is described in rule **4.12c)**. If a team loses due to ejection or injury the player who was a **DH** at the beginning of the game and who at that time has become a player who plays both the offensive and defensive phases, it may bring back only the player who had been its relative **DO** unless the relative **DO** has left due to ejection or injury. If the **DO** is replaced due to injury, the manager shall immediately inform the head umpire.
- d) If a team has players on the bench who have never entered the game and waives the **DH** following what is described in Rules **4.12c)** and/or **4.12e)**, it will not be able to bring back the replaced **DO** and/or **DH** without first bringing into the game all reserves not on the Line-up, but recorded on the roster delivered to the head umpire at the beginning of the game.

4.14 Re-entry of the substitute player

Any player included in the starting line-up, including **DH**, **DO** and **SDP**, if substituted, may re-enter the game only once (at any time during the game), but always remaining in the same position of the batting order (or line-up).

Note: *An exception to this rule is the type of re-entry for lack of substitutes provided for in the **Approved Ruling 5.01d**.*

5. Outs

5.01 Batter is out

- a) Due to a strike out when she/he accumulates three strikes before managing to hit a ball that has been called **Fair** by the umpire.
- b) For dangerous play when her/his **Fly Ball** hit is later called **Out**.
- c) When a player is injured during the game and there are no substitutes available. Each time it is the injured player's turn at bat, an out is counted against the team at bat.
- d) When the team fails to line up five batters on the field. In this case the last of the five positions in the batting order stays empty and every time it is the missing player's turn at bat, an out is counted against the team at bat.

Approved Ruling: *Should a team lose one of its five players due to an injury and not have a substitute available, a previously substituted player, who has not been expelled previously, may be re-introduced to occupy the batting position of the injured player.*

Comment to Rule 5.01d: *A regularly registered player, listed in the roster but missing when the home plate umpire took attendance of the players, may enter the field at any moment of the game replacing the empty position in the line-up restoring in this way the regular rotation.*

5.02 BR is out at first base if:

- a) While turning towards second base, she/he transits first base on the infield side of the audible equipped sound first base and avoids touching with the chest the imaginary line projected upwards from the base (**Diag. 11**).
- b) The **BR** woman, boy or girl, while turning towards second base, transits the first base rubber circle on the infield side and avoids touching with the chest the imaginary line projected upwards from the rubber circle. The first base rubber circle is positioned according to the measurements related to the category they belong to (**Diag. 11**).
- c) Deviating from the runner's lane, she/he puts himself / herself at risk. The ball is dead and runners go back to the bases they left (see **7.02a**).

Note: *The transits described in Rules **5.02a** and **5.02b** must occur on the first attempt and in a natural running position.*

Comment to Rules 5.02a/5.02b: *Should, at the moment of the violation, any runner be on base or should there already be two outs, the umpire will call the runner **Out** during*

*his/her irregular transit around first base, otherwise the umpire will point it out keeping her/his arm high as an **Out** signal until the end of the play and only at this time she/he will complete the call by announcing it verbally.*

Approved Ruling: Rule **5.02** applies only in the case where the hit has been judged "**Fair**." If the "**Stop Offense**" call occurs with batted ball in motion but still in the inside foul zone, the "**Fair**" call must be waited for Rule **7.02a** to apply.

5.03 BR is out at second base when:

- a) The **SDP** catches the throw by a visually impaired fielder while securely maintaining foot contact with the defensive second base, before the batter-runner touches the offensive second base.
- b) The **SDP**, while securely maintaining foot contact with the defensive second base, catches a ball sent unintentionally towards him by a visually impaired fielder, before the batter-runner touches the offensive second base.
- c) His/her fair hit is caught directly by the **SDP** who maintains foot contact with the defensive second base before the batter-runner touches the offensive second base cushion. The ball is dead. All the runners on base at the time of the hit return to the base they left.
- d) Managing to touch the offensive second base or after having touched it, violates the safety zones **A, A1, A2** or **B, B1, B2** (see **6.01b**).
- e) Running towards second base, she/he disturbs the defense with shouting and/or noises not allowed by the rules.
- f) While touching the offensive second base cushion, the batter-runner is helped physically or verbally by the **SA**.
- g) The **SA** commits offensive interference when she/he confuses or obstructs in any way the regular play of the **SDP** and/or the defense.
- h) The **SA** uses the clappers before the batter-runner has passed first base (see **6.03a**).
- i) The **TA** uses the clappers with no runner on second base (see **6.05b**).

5.04 RUNNER is out at third base when:

- a) She/he violates the **Runner Leaving Early** Rule at second base.
- b) The **SDP** receives the ball from a visually impaired fielder while in contact with the defensive second base before the runner leaving offensive second base touches the offensive third base.
- c) The **SDP**, while in contact with the defensive second base, controls the ball firmly that has been sent back unintentionally by a visually impaired fielder before the runner leaving offensive second base touches the offensive third base.
- d) The **SDP** recovers a Bad Throw by a visually impaired fielder and touches the defensive second base, before the runner, who is trying to earn an extra base, touches the offensive third base.
- e) The runner leaves offensive second base regularly but does not continue to offensive third base, but returns to offensive second base.
- f) Running towards offensive third base, she/he enters or threatens to enter fair territory. The hit is called **No Pitch** and any runner on third returns to offensive third base (see **7.02c**).
- g) Running towards third base, she/he disturbs the defense with shouting and/or noises not allowed by the rules.
- h) After the **Fair** call of the umpire, runner does not leave second base for third. The hit is called **No Pitch** and any runner on third returns to offensive third base (see **7.02c**).
- i) The **SA** gives the runner verbal indications after the **Play Ball** call.
- j) The **TA** uses the clappers before the **Fair** call.
- k) The **TA** helps the runner physically or verbally to touch the offensive third base.
- l) During an extra base attempt, the **TA** uses clappers before the batter-runner leaves second base.
- m) After having left the base during an extra base attempt, if any sighted player or assistant of the offensive team asks the **TA**, by words or signs, to use clappers.
- n) She/he leaves from the second offensive base to reach an extra base while the runner on third does not leave for home base. The **SA** and the **TA** must be warned.

Comment to Rule 5.04a: *with less than two outs the **U3** will indicate the runner has left irregularly by keeping the arm high to indicate the **Out** signal until the play is over, and only at that time she/he will complete the call verbally. With two **Outs** both the sign and*

the verbal call may be made at the same time.

Comment to Rule 5.04h: *the **SA** and/or the **U2** must give the runner some time in order for him/her to leave the base. They can wait until the **BR** transits on first base.*

5.05 Runner is out at home plate when:

- a) She/he violates the **Runner Leaving Early** Rule at third base.
- b) The **SDP** receives the ball from a visually impaired fielder while in contact with the defensive second base before the runner leaving offensive third base crosses the home plate line regularly.
- c) The **SDP** retrieves a ball sent unintentionally by a visually impaired fielder while in contact with the defensive second base before the runner leaving offensive third base crosses the home plate line regularly.
- d) The runner leaves third base regularly but does not continue to the home plate line and returns to offensive third base.
- e) The **TA** gives her/him verbal indications after the Play Ball call (see **Exception**).
- f) Running normally she/he does not cross the home plate line at the first attempt but she/he passes on the outside of it (**Diag. 12**).
- g) She/he crosses the home plate line with the chest outside the rubber circles and/or with the arms spread open and/or with the chest bent to the exterior (**Diag. 12**).
- h) Running towards home plate, she/he disturbs the defense with shouting and/or noises not allowed by the rules.
- i) In the attempt of a runner to earn an extra base, the **SDP** recovers a bad throw by a visually impaired fielder and touches the defensive second base before the runner leaving the offensive third base crosses the home plate line regularly.
- j) After having earned offensive third base and in an attempt to earn an extra base, any member of his/her team assists him/her to cross the home plate line.
- k) While running towards the home plate line, she/he deviates from the runner's lane and puts him/her self at risk. The hit is called **No Pitch** and any additional runner on second returns to the base (see **7.02e**).
- l) In case of a force play, after the umpire's **Fair** call, runner does not leave for home base. The hit is called **No Pitch** and runner who left second base goes back to the base.
- m) While being in contact with the third offensive base, she/he gets intentionally hit by a

batted ball with a little movement.

Comment to Rule 5.05a: *With less than two outs the **U3** umpire will indicate that the runner has left irregularly by keeping the arm high as the **Out** signal until the play is over and only at that time she/he will complete the call verbally. With two **Outs** both the sign and the verbal call may be made at the same time.*

Comment to Rule 5.05b: *Should the runner, in his/her normal running position, touch with his/her chest the imaginary line projected upwards from the rubber circle, his/her run counts (**Diag. 12**).*

Exception to Rule 5.05e: *The **TA** is allowed to say **Stay** to a runner who is not forced to run home only if the **TA** does so before the **U3** or **U2** has made the **Fair call** and provided the **TA** does not interfere with the defense.*

5.06 Missing Substitute

The batter or the runner is out:

- a) When after an ejection or absence a team cannot line up five batters, every time it is the ejected or absent batter's turn at bat, an out is counted against his/her team.
- b) Should a runner earn a base and consequently abandon it for whatever reason, in case no substitute is available the runner is called out for leaving the base (**see 5.01 Approved Ruling**).

6. Interferences

There are three types of interferences, offensive, defensive and related to factors external to the game. An out due to offensive interference is always considered a force out, therefore should it be the third out, no run scored will be valid.

*Usually in a situation of a defensive interference, the umpire sends the **BR** to second base and gives any other runner the following base to the one previously reached. Runner on third can be eliminated if, at the time of the interference, both offensive and defensive, she/he has already missed the home plate target line.*

*Should interference occur due to external sudden noises or spectators who, after the Play **Ball** call, disturb play, the umpire calls **No Pitch** and stops any kind of action*

6.01 Batter-Runner Interference

An interference is committed by the batter-runner when:

- a) She/he collides with the **SDP** within his/her competence zone.
- b) While managing to touch or after having touched the second offensive base, violates safety zones **A, A1, A2** or **B, B1, B2** (**Diagr.4**).

Penalty: the **BR** is called out and runners return to the bases they left.

Approved Ruling: The runner on third base who is called **Safe** at home plate will return to third; should she/he, at the time of the interference, miss home plate, she/he will be called **Out**.

6.02 Runner Interference

An interference is committed by the runner when:

- a) Managing to earn third base, she/he gets dangerously close to the string marker or enters the fair zone and/or the outfield foul zone. Anyone is allowed to block the runner with the **Stop Offence** call.

Penalty: Runner is called out, the hit is called **No Pitch**, and the runner on third returns.

Approved Ruling: Should this elimination be the third Out, the same batter will come back to bat in the following inning starting with a 0-0 count.

- b) Despite maintaining foot contact with the base, she/he manages to get hit by a legally batted ball.

Penalty: Runner is called **Out** and the hit is declared a **No Pitch**.

Approved Ruling: Should this elimination be the third Out, the same batter will come back to bat in the following inning starting with a 0-0 count.

- c) Running towards the base she/he has to earn, she/he disturbs the defense with shouting and/or noises not allowed by the rules. The following **Penalties** will apply.
 1. If the perpetrator of the interference is the Batter-Runner, she/he will be declared eliminated and the runners will be brought back the base they left.
 2. If the perpetrator of the interference is a runner, she/he will be declared out, the other possible runner will be brought back to the base she/he left and the hit will be declared **"No Pitch."**
 3. Should the same runner repeat the interference in the same game, she/he will be ejected.

Note: *The game play shall be ended normally. If the defending team succeeds in making more than one elimination, the play shall proceed as if the interference had not occurred. The runner will be warned and, should the offence be repeated, ejected.*

6.03 Second base assistant interference

An interference is committed by the second base assistant when:

- a) She/he uses clappers before the **BR** has passed first base.
- b) Even if accidentally, she/he interferes with, obstructs or gets in the way of the SDP's play at second base, including when the SDP saves a Bad Throw within the side areas of the competence zone (**A1, B1, C1** and **A2, B2, C2**).
- c) After having physically (legally) blocked the **BR** on his arrival on second base, before the BR enters the safety area (**A, A1, A2** and **B, B1, B2**), she/he helps the **BR** get to the second offensive base either by pushing or by giving him vocal signals.
- d) She/he touches or violates, even if accidentally, **A, A1** and **A2** zones.

Penalty: ***BR** is called out, even if she/he was previously judged safe, ball is still in play. Should any other runner get safe to the next base, they will return to the base they left. Should they, on the contrary, be called out, they will remain so.*

6.04 Second base and/or third base assistant interference

An interference is committed by the second and/or third base assistant when:

- a) After the Umpire has called **Play Ball**, she/he does not stay at least one meter from the runner who is attempting to leave the base and/or gives verbal or noise signals to the runner.

Penalty: *The runner involved in the interference is called out, any other runner stays on base and the ball is dead at the time of the interference. Should the batter hit the ball, the **Hpu** immediately calls **No Pitch**.*

Approved Ruling: *Should this be the third Out, the same batter will come back to bat in the following inning starting with a 0-0 count.*

- b) She/he touches a ball that is legally batted in fair territory or a ball that is legally batted in infield foul territory, which, according to the **U2** and/or the **U3**, might have been judged **Fair**.

Penalty: *the **BR** is out, the ball is dead, and runners stay on base.*

- c) While attempting to get an extra base one gives both verbal and gestural indications to the other.

Penalty: *Ball is dead, the runner still in contact with the base stays on base, the runner left for the following base is declared Out.*

6.05 Third base assistant interference

An interference is committed by the third base assistant when:

- a) She/he uses clappers before the **Fair** call with runner on second base.

Penalty: *the runner on second base is called out, the hit is considered a **No Pitch** and the runner on third stays on base.*

Approved Ruling: *Should this be the third Out, the same batter will come back to bat in the following inning starting with a 0-0 count.*

- b) She/he uses clappers when there is no runner on second base.

Penalty: *the **BR** is called out, the ball is still in play. Should a potential runner gets safe at home plate, she/he will be brought back to third. Should she/he be eliminated, his/her elimination will be confirmed.*

- c) She/he uses clappers before the **BR** leaves second base in an attempt to earn an extra base.

Penalty: *the **BR** is called **Out** and the runner who left third base returns.*

Note: *the runner who left from third base after the hit will be normally judged.*

- d) She/he touches the runner that is going to third base and/or gives him/her vocal signals, helping him/her to find the base.

Penalty: *the runner that is attempting to go to third base is called out, the ball is still in play.*

- e) She/he gives the **Stay** verbal indication to the runner who is not forced, after the umpire has called **Fair Ball**.

Penalty: *the runner is called out and the ball is still in play.*

6.06 Home plate assistant interference

An interference is committed by the home plate assistant (**hpA**) when:

- a) She/he keeps giving indications to the batter after the **Play Ball** call.

Penalty: *Batter is out, ball is dead.*

- b) She/he helps the Runner to cross the home plate target line.

Penalty: *The runner is called **Out**, the ball is still in play and the other runner and the Batter-Runner will be normally judged.*

6.07 Interference by offensive team members

An interference is committed by any member of the offensive team when:

- a) She/he gives direct signals to the runners or disturbs the defensive players by making any type of noise or interfering with the sound signal of the ground ball.

Penalty: *the **BR** is called out, the ball is dead and runners return. Should any other runner get safe to the next base, they will return to the base they left. Should they, on the contrary, be called out, they will remain so.*

- b) She/he asks, verbally or by gesture, the **TA** to use clappers during an extra base attempt.

Penalty: *Ball is dead, the runner still in contact with the base stays on base, the runner left for the next base is called Out.*

Note: *the runner who left from third base after the hit will be normally judged.*

Exception to Rule 6.07: *runners are allowed to ask their assistant to use clappers when this has not yet been done.*

6.08 Visually impaired player interference

An interference is committed by a visually impaired player when:

- a) While attempting to retrieve a ground ball, she/he touches or enters the infield foul zone, going over the string marker with any part of the body, glove included.

- b) She/he **intentionally** sends a **Fair** hit into the infield foul zone.

Penalty: *the **BR** is granted second base and additional runners are granted the base following the one they had reached at the time of the hit.*

Approved Ruling: *When the runner leaving third base at the time of the interference has already missed the home plate target line, she/he will be declared **Out**.*

Comment to Rule 6.08a: *Rules says "**Hit**" not "**Fair Hit**", therefore the interference occurs*

even if the hit, in its path, will be judged "Foul Ball" or "No Pitch".

6.09 Sighted defense player interference

An interference is committed by a sighted defense player if:

- a) She/he gives indications to the fielders regarding their positions on the field, before the ball has been hit but after the umpire has called "**Play Ball**".

Penalty: *Runners are given a base. With no runners on base, the **SDP** must be warned.*

- b) She/he touches with any part of the body or the glove the ball that has not yet passed over the string marker.
- c) Without maintaining foot contact with the 2nd base bag, she/he touches or catches a ground ball.

Penalty: *the **BR** is granted second base and additional runners are granted the base following the one they had reached at the time of the hit. Should the umpire judge the hit as a possible homerun, she/he will accord the homerun to the batter.*

- d) After the hit, she/he gives a verbal indication to the defense, other than the words "**two, two,...**" to signal second base to the visually impaired defensive players or "mine, mine,..." to avoid collisions.
- e) Without maintaining foot contact with the 2nd base bag, she/he retrieves a ball sent unintentionally by a visually impaired fielder.
- f) She/he gives the "**two, two,**" verbal indication before a visually impaired fielder has retrieved the ball and/or without being in contact with the defensive second base.
- g) After giving the "**two two,...**" verbal indication to help to locate the base, she/he doesn't remain in contact with the base until the fielder, who is trying to eliminate the runner, has released the ball.
- h) Without maintaining foot contact with the 2nd base bag and while managing to get a throw or after having caught it, she/he enters the **A** safety zone even after making the out.

- i) While maintaining foot contact with the 2nd base bag and managing to get a throw or after having caught it, she/he enters safety zones **B** and **C** even after making the out.

Penalty: *the **BR** is granted second base and additional runners are granted the base following the one they had reached at the time of the hit.*

Approved Ruling: *When the runner has left third base at the time of the interference and*

*has already missed the home plate target line, she/he will be declared **Out**.*

j) While managing to catch a bad throw she/he enters safety zones **A**, **B** and **C**.

k) After a Bad Throw made by the defense or after his/her own catching error, she/he enters safety zone **D** without passing behind the **BR** while trying to recover the ball.

Penalty: *the **BR** is granted third base and the runner on second is granted the run. Should the runner left from third base, at the time of interference, miss the home plate target line, his/her elimination will be confirmed.*

Note to Rule 6.09g: *Should the visually impaired fielder lose the ball she/he caught, the **SDP** must immediately end the “two, two...” call. She/he can restart the call only after the fielder has retrieved the ball again (see **point f**).*

6.10 Mound assistant interference

An interference is committed by the Mound Assistant (**MA**) if:

a) She/he does not move into the infield right foul zone before the **Play Ball** call.

b) She/he gives directions to the defense after the **Play Ball** call.

Penalty: *Runners on base are granted the base following the one they had reached at the time of interference. The **MA** must be warned with empty bases.*

c) She/he enters fair territory or the infield left foul zone before a play has finished.

d) She/he intervenes in the play by touching a legally hit moving ball, which could have been judged **Fair** by the umpire, in to the infield foul zone.

e) She/he gives directions to the defense during the play.

Penalty: *the **BR** is granted second base and additional runners are granted the base following the one they had reached at the time of the hit.*

Approved Ruling: *When the runner has left third base at the time of the interference and has already missed the home plate target line, she/he will be declared **Out**.*

f) She/he touches a ball following a Bad Throw towards the **SDP**.

Penalty: *the **BR** is granted third base, the runner leaving from second base is granted the run.*

Approved Ruling: *When the runner has left third base at the time of the interference and has already missed the home plate target line, she/he will be declared **Out**.*

6.11 Interference by defensive team members

An interference is committed by any member of the defensive team when:

a) She/he gives indications to her/his teammates between the **Play Ball** call and the hit.

Penalty: *Runners on base are granted the base following the one they had reached at the time of interference. The manager of the team must be warned with empty bases.*

b) She/he gives indications regarding the path of the ground ball.

c) She/he gives indications regarding the position of a ball that has stopped and which has been judged **Fair** and is still in play.

Penalty Rules 6.11b and 6.11c: *the **BR** is granted second base and additional runners are granted the base following the one they had reached at the time of the hit.*

Approved Ruling: *When the runner leaving from third base at the time of the interference has already missed the home plate target line, she/he will be declared **Out**.*

Exception to Rule 6.11: *visually impaired players can give each other information at any time and also when a ball is still in play*

6.12 Bad throw to the SDP

a) When the **SDP**, after a Bad Throw made by a fielder, has to retrieve the ball in the infield foul zone between bases, she/he has free access to **zones A1** and **B1**, she/he is allowed to cross **zones C1** and **D1** only after the runner at second base has passed by on his/her way to third. Should the **BR** manage to earn an extra base, the SDP, while returning to the base, is allowed to cross the **zones D1** and **C1** after the runner has passed by.

Penalty: *The **BR** is granted third base, the runner leaving from second base is granted the run. The runner leaving from third base must cross the home plate line regularly and she/he can be eliminated.*

b) When, managing to get the ball after a Bad Throw, the **SDP** hits or bumps into the SA, she/he must be warned and, should the offence be repeated, expelled. When, for the same reason, the **SDP** hits or bumps into the **BR**, she/he must be immediately expelled.

Penalty: *In both cases **BR** gains third base and additional runners are granted the run.*

Approved Ruling: *No elimination can be made during the situations described in point b). Therefore, the runner on third who at the moment of the collision has been called **Out** for missing the home plate line, is granted the run and his/her elimination is cancelled.*

- c) The **SDP** who, in case of a Bad Throw, crosses safety zones **A**, **B** or **C** within the string marker, commits defensive interference (see **6.09j**). She/he is allowed to cross zone **D** only if she/he passes behind the **BR** (see **6.09k**).

Penalty: The **BR** earns third base and the runner leaving second base will earn a run. If the runner on third at the time of the interference has already missed the home plate line, she/he shall be declared **Out**. Should she/he be the third out, no run is valid.

Note: Should the **SDP intentionally** commit the infraction described at point **c**), she/he must be warned; should the offence be repeated, she/he must be expelled for bad conduct.

7. Warning signals and safety on the field

On the field dangerous situations may occur for one or more players due to collisions. In this case, the umpire or the assistants **must** immediately interrupt play. Dangerous situations occur when a runner is about to collide with an obstacle on the field or with a fielder, or when a fielder is about to bump into his/her teammate or the runner.

In potentially dangerous situations, the umpire must give a warning signal loudly and repeat it until the people involved stop.

The calls to be made are:

7.01 Stop Defense!

- When two or more fielders, while managing to field the ball, may collide.
- When a fielder, while attempting to field the ball, enters the infield foul zone restricted to the runner.

Penalty: The ball is dead, **BR** earns second base and potential runners earn the base following the one they were on at the moment of the hit. The third base runner who is not forced to go and to whom the **TA** has given the regular **Stay** signal, stays on third. When the runner on third has already missed the home plate line at the moment of the warning signal, she/he will be called **Out**.

7.02 Stop Offence!

The **Stop Offence** warning must be given by anyone when the **BR** and/or the runners leave their runner's lane and put themselves or fielders at risk. Different situations may occur, depending on the offensive player. The Stop Offence warning must be given when:

a) With batted ball judged "Fair" the **BR** runs towards the dugout or the net.

Penalty: the **BR** is called out and runners return to the bases they left.

b) The **runner on second base** enters or attempts to enter fair territory and/or the outfield foul zone.

Approved Ruling: If the runner commits such interference after being eliminated, the play proceeds as if the interference had not occurred.

c) After the umpire has called "Fair", the **runner on second base** does not leave for third base and the **BR** has already passed first base.

Penalty: the hit is declared **No Pitch**, the **BR** returns to the batting box with the same count, the runner on second base is called out, and any runner on third base returns.

d) **Runner on third** runs towards the dugout or the net.

e) **Runner on third who is force** to run toward home plate does not leave after the umpire has called "Fair".

Penalty: the hit is declared **No Pitch**, the **BR** returns to the batting box with the same count, the runner on third base is called out, and any runner on second base returns.

Approved Ruling: the **No Pitch** call on the hit renders the turn at bat incomplete. Should the elimination described in the above mentioned paragraphs be the third Out, the batter will return to bat in the following inning starting with a 0-0 count.

f) **Runner on third** does not leave for the extra base after the runner on second has left.

Penalty: the runner left from second base is called out, the runner who got to third following the hit stays on base, the **SA** and **TA** must be warned.

Note: If a member of the team makes a warning signal, the umpire must judge the validity of the call and apply the respective rules. Should the call not be considered valid, the umpire, by using the interference rule, applies those sanctions that, according to his unquestionable judgement, repair the play as if the call had never been made.

7.03 Competence zones of the safety area

Only the **SDP**, the **BR** and the **SA** are allowed to enter the safety area (see 2.12).

a) Sighted Defense Player (SDP)

- 1) In order to retrieve a throw, the SDP is allowed to enter **Zone A** only by maintaining foot contact with the second base bag (the catch is valid even if the projection, on the ground, of the hand or the glove that gets the ball is located in **B** or **C** zones).
- 2) The SDP is not allowed to enter **Zone B** or **C**, not even after she/he has made an out.

Penalty: see 6.09h.

- 3) In order to retrieve a Bad Throw, the SDP can freely access to zones **A1** and **B1**, she/he is allowed to cross **C1** and **D1** as described in 6.12; she/he is allowed to cross **Zone D** only after the passage of the **BR**; the SDP has free access to zones **A2**, **B2**, **C2** and **D2** if she/he does it without interfering with the normal play of the **SA** and the **BR**.

b) Batter-Runner (BR). The BR coming from first base:

- 1) Is allowed to move freely into **Zones D, D1, D2** and **C, C1, C2**.
- 2) Must not enter into **Zones B, B1, B2** and **A, A1, A2** (see 5.03d and 6.01b).

Approved Ruling: the **BR**, who bumps into the **SDP** while attempting to earn second base, will be called out and warned. Should the offence be reiterated, she/he will be expelled from the game.

c) Second Base Assistant (SA)

The SA's role is to lead or stop (in case of danger) the **BR** on the line between **Zones C, C1, C2** and **B, B1, B2**. The SA is allowed to enter **Zones B, B1, B2** only to stop, by any means, the **BR** but she/he must not enter **Zones A, A1, A2** or interfere in any manner with the normal play of the **SDP**. The SA is not allowed to give verbal indications under any circumstances, except when the **BR**, while leaving the base, attempts to earn an extra-base.

Penalty: In case of interference with the **SDP**, or verbal indications and/or signs, the umpire calls interference and eliminates the **BR**. The ball is dead and potential runners return.

Exception: The third base runner who arrived at home plate missing the home plate target line remains **Out**.

Note: String markers between the safety area internal zones belong to both the areas.

7.04 Safety on the field

The **Rulebook** has been elaborated in order to guarantee total safety for athletes at every moment of the game:

- a) To the **batter** who tosses the ball himself/herself since there is no one pitching.
- b) To the **Batter-Runner** who, running from home base to second base, finds a level and unhindered path as first base is flat. The arrival on second base is facilitated by the SA.
- c) To the **Runner on Second Base** who, running towards third base, finds a level and unhindered path. The only restriction is the string marker positioned on his/her right at 3,5 m from his/her runner's lane. There is no chance that the runner will come in contact with the ball. His/her run starts when the umpire calls **Fair** and this occurs when the ball goes over the string marker. The **TA** shall help the runner attain third base.
- d) To the **Runner on Third Base** who, running towards the home plate target line, finds a level and unhindered path. When she/he is positioned on third base, there is no danger of being hit by the ball, as the **U3** wears a glove and she/he is in charge of stopping the batted ball when could hit the runner. The crossing of the home plate target line is facilitated by the call of the **Hpu** who shall judge if the scored run is valid or not. Should she/he continue to run, she/he will be physically stopped by the **Hpa** in order to avoid a potential collision with the backstop.
- e) To the **Fielders** who, in case they may be hit by a Fly Ball, are promptly advised by the umpire's **Fly Ball** call, allowing them to bend and/or protect their face or head with the glove.

8. Sighted on the field

*The sighted on the field, within fixed time periods, are in charge of leading their own players by giving them physical and verbal indications and with sound signals. Head coach, coaches, team manager and assistants must be sighted. There are two sighted on defense: Mound Assistant (**MA**) and the Sighted Defense Player (**SDP**). While in offense there are three sighted: Second Base Assistant (**SA**), Third Base Assistant (**TA**) and Assistant behind home plate (**hpA**).*

In any case, the number of sighted persons recorded on the player list must be a minimum of five and a maximum of seven individuals. If the team has more than seven sighted

persons, the umpire will invite those in surplus to leave the field of play.

Comment: The game shall not be started if a team has fewer than four sighted persons in the dugout. The umpire will stop the game if, for any reason, a team is left with fewer than four sighted persons during the game.

Approved Ruling: The **SDP** does not count as part of the maximum number of sighted people because she/he is a player while she/he is part of the minimum number.

8.01 Mound Assistant (MA)

The Mound Assistant is the only assistant on the field for the defensive team and she/he positions himself/herself in the infield right foul zone (**Diag.3**). She/he helps the fielders take their positions when their turn at bat has ended and after each play she/he is allowed to give indications in order to reposition the fielders until the **hpU** has called **Play ball**. She/he manages two balls on the field, by giving one to the **hpU** right after the defensive play has ended, and by retrieving the other one that has just been put in play or sent into the foul zone. She/he is allowed to stop players in order to prevent them from colliding during the play in the field by using the **Stop Defense** call.

The MA commits defensive interference if she/he intervenes in the play, both verbally and physically, with ball still in play. See Rule 6.10 for penalties.

8.02 Sighted Defense Player (SDP)

The Sighted Defense Player's task is to catch the throws made by the visually impaired players in order to eliminate the runners. While maintaining foot contact with the base she/he is allowed to:

- a) Enter **A zone**
- b) Directly field the fair hits. In this case, the **SDP** eliminates only the **BR**. At the time of the elimination, ball becomes dead and any other runner from second and third base return.
- c) Retrieve the balls sent, even if unintentionally, by a visually impaired player. The play continues normally (there is a chance of double or triple play).

Approved Ruling: in the play described in rule **8.02b** the **SDP** may call "**mine, mine...**" in order to avoid collisions.

Approved Ruling: If, in the action described in **8.02b**, the **SDP** were to lose the ball,

*she/he can recover it only by maintaining contact with the defensive second base. The elimination of the **BR** will be confirmed.*

8.03 Second Base Assistant (SA)

The SA is a member of the offensive team who directs the **BR** throughout his/her attempt to attain second base. The SA must use clappers with one felt, in the form and according to the time determined by Rule **3.06**. The SA positions her/himself behind the offensive second base in order to provide an audible indication for the location of the base. When the runner is about to start running from second base to third, the SA must stay at least one meter away from the runner after the **Play Ball** call has been made. During a play on an extra base attempt, the SA is allowed to physically and verbally direct the runner towards third base at the moment she/he is leaving the base.

8.04 Third Base Assistant (TA)

The TA is a member of the offensive team, who leads the Runner in his/her attempt to reach third base. The TA must use clappers containing two felts inside within times and means regulated as per Rule **3.06**. The TA positions her/himself behind third base in order to provide audible indications for the location of the base. The TA is allowed to:

- a) On an extra base action, physically and verbally direct the runner towards the home plate target line, only when the runner is leaving the base (see **4.08a**).
- b) Stop the batted ball that may hit the runner on base (see **Fly Ball c1** and **No Pitch b**).
- c) Before the **Fair** call, suggest to the runner who is not forced to remain on base by saying **Stay** (see **Exception to Rule 5.05d**).

8.05 Home Plate Assistant (hpA)

The hpA is a member of the offensive team, who stays behind home plate on the third base-home base line and she/he is in charge of stopping the runner after she/he has crossed the home base target line. The hpA can position him/herself at any time during his/her team's offensive inning (it is compulsory with runner on second base) and she/he is allowed to give indications to the batter before the **Play Ball** call. During a play, the hpA commits offensive interference if she/he gives verbal indications (see **6.06**). She/he absolutely may not interfere with the **hpU**'s judgement.

Penalty: Warning and Expulsion should the offence be repeated.

9. Umpires

*The Event Organizer must appoint four or more umpires in order to direct the game. The umpires are responsible for the direction of the game that must occur in compliance with the baseball RTG as modified by the current RTI, to maintain order and discipline on the playing field during the game. Should umpires observe irregularities in the field and/or the equipment, they must report them to the manager of the home team or the event organizer in order to restore the proper situation. Each umpire represents **WBSC** and she/he is obliged to comply with all the rules.*

Note: The **Play Ball** and **Fair** calls are structural and integral parts of the game. Should any play occur without any of the above mentioned calls being made, the play is considered invalid and the play continues from the previous situation (**No Pitch**).

9.01 Head Or Home Plate Umpire (hpU)

The hpU must wear a baseball glove and must position a few meters behind home plate in a direct line with the third base foul line. After exchange of the Lineup at home plate the hpU is totally in control of the game. The hpU tasks are:

- a) To take full supervision and responsibility for the regular direction of the game; announcing at her/his discretion any type of special ground rule; ruling the playing field unfit for use.
- b) To call the batter, giving him/her the ball and positioning him/her in the batter's box.
- c) To request the base assistants to use clappers in sequence to aid the batter to locate the bases.
- d) To call **Play ball**.
- e) To call and count **Strikes**.
- f) To call and announce **Foul Balls**.
- g) To call arrivals at home plate either **Out at Home Plate** or **Run Scored**.
- h) To sign the umpire's report and the two Lineups.

Note: Should there be more than one game on the same day, before the exchange of Lineups the **hpU** from the previous game shall rule the playing field unfit for use (the hpU

of the first game shall rule the playing field unfit for use for the second game, the hpU for the second game shall decide for the third game, etc.).

9.02 Second Base Umpire (U2)

The U2 can position her/himself either in the infield or outfield according to the safety zone. The tasks of the U2 are:

- a) To check the runner leaving at second base.
- b) To check that **SA** acts accordingly to the rules (see **6.03** and **6.04**).
- c) To judge the arrival of the **BR** at second base.
- d) To check the correct management of the safety zone at second base.
- e) To judge if the **SDP** maintains foot contact with the defensive second base bag. In the case the **SDP** touches or catches the balls hit towards second base, the U2 must also check that the ball has crossed the string marker.
- f) To judge whether the hit that goes near second base is **Fair** or **Foul**.
- g) To check homeruns with runner on second base and bases loaded (when there is no **Hru**).
- h) To update the scoreboard (**ROC**) if positioned between second base and centerfield.

9.03 Third Base Umpire (U3)

The U3 must wear a baseball glove and must stay in the foul zone a few meters in front of the intersection between the string marker and the third base foul line. The U3 tasks are:

- a) To protect the runner from potential balls that could hit him/her.
- b) To call **Fair Ball**.
- c) To judge if a hit is: **Foul Ball, No Pitch, Fly Ball, Fly Ball Out**.
- d) To check the runner leaving third base.
- e) To check that the **TA** does not make any illegal action (see **6.04** and **6.05**).
- f) To judge arrivals at third base.
- g) To check the homeruns (in the case **hrU** is absent) with empty bases or with runner on third base.
- h) If necessary, update the scoreboard if placed between second base and centerfield.

9.04 First Base Umpire (U1)

The tasks of the U1 are:

- a) To activate the 1st base acoustic device as soon as the batter hits the ball.
- b) To switch the 1st base acoustic device off once the **BR** has passed the base.
- c) To judge the passage of 1st base.
- d) To signal if the first base acoustic device is out of order or malfunctioning.
- e) To judge the **BR** arrival at second base, in case the second base umpire moves away to check a hit close to the homerun line (see **9.02g**).
- f) To update when necessary the scoreboard (**ROC**) if positioned at first base.

9.05 Homerun Umpire (Hru)

The tasks of the Hru are:

- a) To check whether the batted ball touches or crosses the homerun line.
- b) To signal dangerous situations to the fielders that position themselves to field a ball close to the homerun line.

9.06 Call Timing

The umpire is obliged to give the safe/out call immediately. If after the **Out** call, the **SDP** loses control of the ball and the runner is near the base or the home plate target line, the umpire must call **Safe** and give the base to the runner.

Comment: *As soon as the runner hears the **Out** call, she/he usually desists from attaining the base; therefore, she/he earns it according to this rule.*

10. The Official Scorer

Introduction: *To classify Blind Baseball this Rule 10 (which includes the specifics and adjustments necessary for Blind Baseball) applies, supplemented to the extent not specified by Rule 9 of the Technical Rules of Baseball on the Official Scorekeeper.*

10.01 The Official Scorer (General Rules)

WBSC shall appoint an Official Scorer for each league championship or event where she/he is supposed to attend. The Official Scorer shall observe the game from a position in the press box or in a permanent assigned seating (we recommend a location near the third base dug-out, even in the foul zone of the diamond, from which we can best see the fair zone of the Blind Baseball field).

The Official Scorer shall have sole authority to make all decisions concerning application of Rule 10 that involve judgment, such as whether a batter's arrival at second base is the result of a hit or an error.

The Official Scorer shall communicate such decisions first to league Official Data Collection staff, and second to staff and media personnel in the press box and broadcasting booths by hand signals or over the press box loudspeaker system and shall advise the public address announcer of such decisions, if requested.

All persons, including Club officials and players, are prohibited from protesting to the Official Scorer regarding any such decisions.

After each game, including forfeited and called games, the Official Scorer shall prepare a report, on a form prescribed by WBCS Scorekeeper Commission listing the date of the game, where it was played, the names of the competing Clubs and the umpires, the full score of the game and all records of individual players compiled according to the system specified in this Rule 10.

a)

1. In all cases, the Official Scorer shall not make a scoring decision that is in conflict with Rule 10 or any other rule of this Rulebook or the Official Baseball Rule 9. The Official Scorer shall conform strictly to the rules of scoring set forth in this Rule 9 and 10. The Official Scorer shall not make any decision that conflicts with an umpire's decision. The Official Scorer shall have authority to rule on any point not specifically covered in these rules.

2. If the teams change sides before three men are put out, the Official Scorer shall immediately inform the head umpire of the mistake.
 3. The Official Scorer is responsible (in cooperation with the umpires) for the proper conduct of the scoring and is therefore required to report immediately (if not done by others) the reaching of a score that ends the inning or the game (see **4.03** and **4.04** of this Rulebook).
 4. Unlike baseball and softball, in Blind Baseball the Official Scorer is responsible for ensuring that the batting order of both teams is respected, with the out-of-turn batter not being sanctioned. Therefore, if a player is batting out of turn the official scorer must draw the attention of the umpires or any member of the teams and restore the regular situation, according to Rule **4.10** of this Rulebook.
 5. Similarly, the Official Scorer will be responsible for the correct application (non-sanctionable) of the rules on Designated Hitter-DH and Re-entry (see **Rules 4.11, 4.12, 4.13** and **4.14** Rulebook).
- b) The Official Scorer is a WBSC official representative who is entitled to the respect and dignity of her/his office and shall be accorded full protection by WBSC. The Official Scorer shall report to WBSC any indignity expressed by any manager, player, Club employee, Club officer, or media personnel in the course of, or as the result of, the discharge of Official Scorer duties.

10.02 The Official Scorer Report

The official scorer report prepared by the Official Scorer shall be in a form prescribed by WBSC and shall include:

- a) The following records for each batter and runner:
1. Number of times batted, except that no time at bat shall be charged when a player gets on second base due to an interference
 2. Number or runs scored
 3. Number of safe hits
 4. Number or runs batted in
 5. Home runs
 6. Number of times in which she/he gets on second base due to an interference
 7. Strikeouts

8. In Fly Outs strikeouts
- b) The following records for each fielder:
 1. Number of putouts (only for sighted players)
 2. Number of assists (only for blind and visually impaired players)
 3. Number of errors
- c) Number of runners left on base by each team. This total shall include all runners who get on base by any means and who do not score and are not put out, as well as runners called out in Rule **10.03e** game situations (left on "virtual" bases). The Official Scorer shall include in this total a batter-runner whose batted ball results in another runner being retired for the third out.
- d) The score by innings for each team.
- e) Names of umpires, listed in this order: home plate umpire, first-base umpire, second-base umpire, third-base umpire and home run umpire (if any).
- f) Name of the Official Scorer.
- g) Time required to play the game, with delays deducted for weather, light failure or technological failure not related to game action.

Comment to Rule 10.02g: *A delay to attend to the injury and/or an injury of a player, manager, coach or umpire shall be counted in the computing time of game.*

10.03 The Official Scorer Report (Additional rules)

- a) In compiling the official score report, the Official Scorer shall list each player's name, the fielding position and the uniform number, the order in which the player batted, or would have batted if the game ended before the player came to bat.
- b) A Blind Baseball team consists of 6 players (5 visually impaired and 1 sighted), so the numbering of players' field positions (reported in the in line-up) includes numbers 4 through 9, as explained by Rule **4.05**.
- c) Should a team initially field only 4 batters (as per Rule 5.01d), nothing should be written in position 5 of the batting order. To allow for a correct squaring of the report, the resulting automatic outs should, however, be counted as virtual "AB" and reported in the batting data of position 5.
- d) Unlike baseball and softball, because of the frequent shifts and/or position changes among the visually impaired fielders on the field, defensive assists must be recorded

using the players' uniform numbers rather than their defensive positions.

- e) It may occur that the defensive play, because of the timing, produces more outs than necessary to close the inning. In such cases, only the eliminations necessary to reach the third out (starting with the batter) are recorded and the other runners, which may be one or at most two, subject to unnecessary elimination, are considered LOB (left on base, albeit fictitiously).

10.04 Base Hits

A base hit is a statistic credited to a batter when such batter reaches the second base or the home plate safely, without the aid of a defensive error (in the judgment of the scorer) or defensive interference (called by the umpire).

Exception to the Baseball Rule 9.05 (b) (1): The official scorer shall credit a base hit (or possibly an error) even when a runner is forced out on another base by her/his teammate hit.

10.05 Determining value of base hits

The Official Scorer shall score a base hit as a one-base hit or home run (there are no other types of extrabase hits) when no error or putout results, as follows:

- a) It is a one-base hit if the batter stops at second base
- b) It is a home run if the batter touches all bases and scores.

10.06 Outs

An out is a statistic credited to a fielder whose action causes the out of a batter-runner or runner, that is always to the Sighted Defense Player (SDP) on second base (position 4).

- a) The Official Scorer shall credit an out to the SDP every time that:
 1. She/he directly catches a fair ball while maintaining foot contact with the defensive second base (out without assist);
 2. She/he receives a ball from a visually impaired fielder and tags the defensive second base to put out the batter-runner who is trying to reach the second base;
 3. While securely maintaining foot contact with the defensive second base, she/he catches a ball sent unintentionally towards her/him by a visually impaired fielder, before the batter-runner touches the offensive second base;

4. She/he receives the ball from a visually impaired fielder and tags the defensive second base eliminating the runner who is trying to reach the offensive third base;
5. While securely maintaining foot contact with the defensive second base, she/he catches a ball sent unintentionally towards her/him by a visually impaired fielder eliminating the runner who is trying to reach the offensive third base;
6. She/he receives a ball from a visually impaired fielder and tags the defensive second base to put out the batter-runner who is trying to reach home plate;
7. While securely maintaining foot contact with the defensive second base, she/he catches a ball sent unintentionally towards her/him by a visually impaired fielder eliminating the runner who is trying to reach home plate;
8. She/he recovers a bad throw by a visually impaired fielder and touches the defensive second base, before the batter-runner, who is trying to earn an extra base (out without assist), touches the offensive third base;
9. She/he recovers a bad throw by a visually impaired fielder and touches the defensive second base, before the runner, who is trying to earn an extra base (out without assist), crosses the home plate target line.

Comment to Rule 10.06a: *in cases of outs on assists, only the uniform number of the visually impaired defensive player who made the assist shall be recorded on the score sheet, being implicit that the out should always be given to the sighted player. This record shall be repeated for any simultaneous out, which is obtained on the other bases in the same play (counting one out and one defensive assist for each runner eliminated).*

b) The Official Scorer shall credit an automatic out to the **SDP** when:

1. A team plays with 4 players and the fifth batter is always an automatic out;
2. A batter is eliminated due to strikeout or "Fly Out."
3. A batter-runner is eliminated for turning within the first sound base;
4. A batter-runner or runner is eliminated due to any type of offensive interference;
5. A runner is eliminated for "Leaving early";
6. A runner is eliminated because she/he leaves the offensive second base regularly, but she/he does not continue and tries to return to the base she/he left
7. A runner is eliminated because she/he does not leave from second towards third base by the time the umpire calls "Fair";
8. A runner is eliminated because she/he leaves third base regularly, but she/he does

- not continue and tries to return to the base she/he left;
9. A runner is eliminated because, when forced, she/he does not leave from third towards home plate by the time the umpire calls "Fair";
 10. A runner is eliminated because she/he does not cross the home plate target line at the first attempt;
 11. A batter-runner or runner is eliminated due to any other case of out by rule.

Note: *in conclusion, all outs shall always be credited to the **SDP** (pos. 4). Therefore, in the defensive records on the roster, the "PO" column is darkened in the section reserved for visually impaired fielders.*

10.07 Assists

An assist is a statistic credited to a fielder (visually impaired) whose action contributes to a batter-runner or runner being put out.

- a) **The Official Scorer shall credit an assist** to each visually impaired fielder who throws to the Sighted Defense Player or deflects unintentionally a batted ball towards the SDP in such a way that a putout results, or would have resulted except for a subsequent error by the Sighted Defense Player. The visually impaired fielder shall be credited with a number of assists equal to the number of outs obtained at the same time during the same action on the other bases, through a single throw (or deviation).
- b) **The Official Scorer shall not credit an assist:**
 1. To a visually impaired fielder who touches the ball before the final throw (or deviation) to the sighted player. No assists can be given to more than one player on the same out;
 2. To a visually impaired fielder whose wild throw allows a runner to advance, even if the runner is later eliminated as a result of the ongoing action. A play that follows a misplay (whether or not the misplay is an error) is a new play, and the fielder making any misplay shall not be credited with an assist unless such fielder takes part in the new play. The elimination shall then be recorded as an out without an assist;
 3. To the visually impaired fielder whose wild throw allows the batter-runner to get to second safely, if in the same play a runner is thrown out on another base, because the SDP recovers the bad throw and touches the defensive second base, before the runner touches the offensive third base. A play that follows a misplay (whether or

not the misplay is an error) is a new play, and the fielder making any misplay shall not be credited with an assist unless such fielder takes part in the new play. The elimination shall then be recorded as an out without an assist. It is therefore not possible to credit a simultaneous assist to an error by the same fielder during the same play.

Note: *To facilitate the work of the Official Scorers (and the Speakers), at the end of each play (after the umpire's call) the visually impaired player who made the throw to second base shall raise one arm and turn around to show her/his uniform number, to allow the correct attribution of an Assist or Error. The fielder must hold her/his arm up for a few seconds until she/he hears the speaker announcing the recent play.*

10.08 Errors

An error is a statistic charged against a fielder (whether visually impaired or sighted) whose action has assisted the team on offense, as set forth in this Rule **10.08**. In Blind Baseball, a defensive error is credited in just six specific cases:

- a) Missing defensive elimination with ball firmly within one meter range from the fielder and reasonable time for the elimination;
- b) Missing elimination due to ball passed between the legs of the visually impaired fielder;
- c) Bad throw by the visually impaired fielder, unless the Scorer considered that the time conditions prevailed in order to be able to make the elimination;
- d) Bad throw by the visually impaired fielder, which allows an extra-base by the same batter-runner or another runner;
- e) Catching error by the sighted defense player (with or without the assist of a visually impaired player);
- f) Defensive interference (of a visually impaired fielder or the sighted defense player).

Exception to 10.08(f): *the Defensive Interference shall not be counted as a defensive error to any fielder in the cases of "Mount Assistant Interference" (see 6.10) and "Interference of Defensive Team Members" (see 6.11). In these cases (if called upon the hit), the arrival at second base shall still be accounted as "Interference" and recorded on the roster with the symbol "INT OT" (and this is not "AB").*

10.09 Strikeouts

A strikeout is a statistic charged to a batter when the umpire calls three strikes on a batter or a "Fly Out", as set forth in this Rule **10.09**.

The Official Scorer shall score a strikeout whenever a batter:

- a) is put out by a third strike swung and missed;
- b) is put out by a third strike landed in foul;
- c) is put out due to dangerous play when her/his **In fly** hit is later called Out.

Diagram 1 - Baseball Diamond (Measurements)

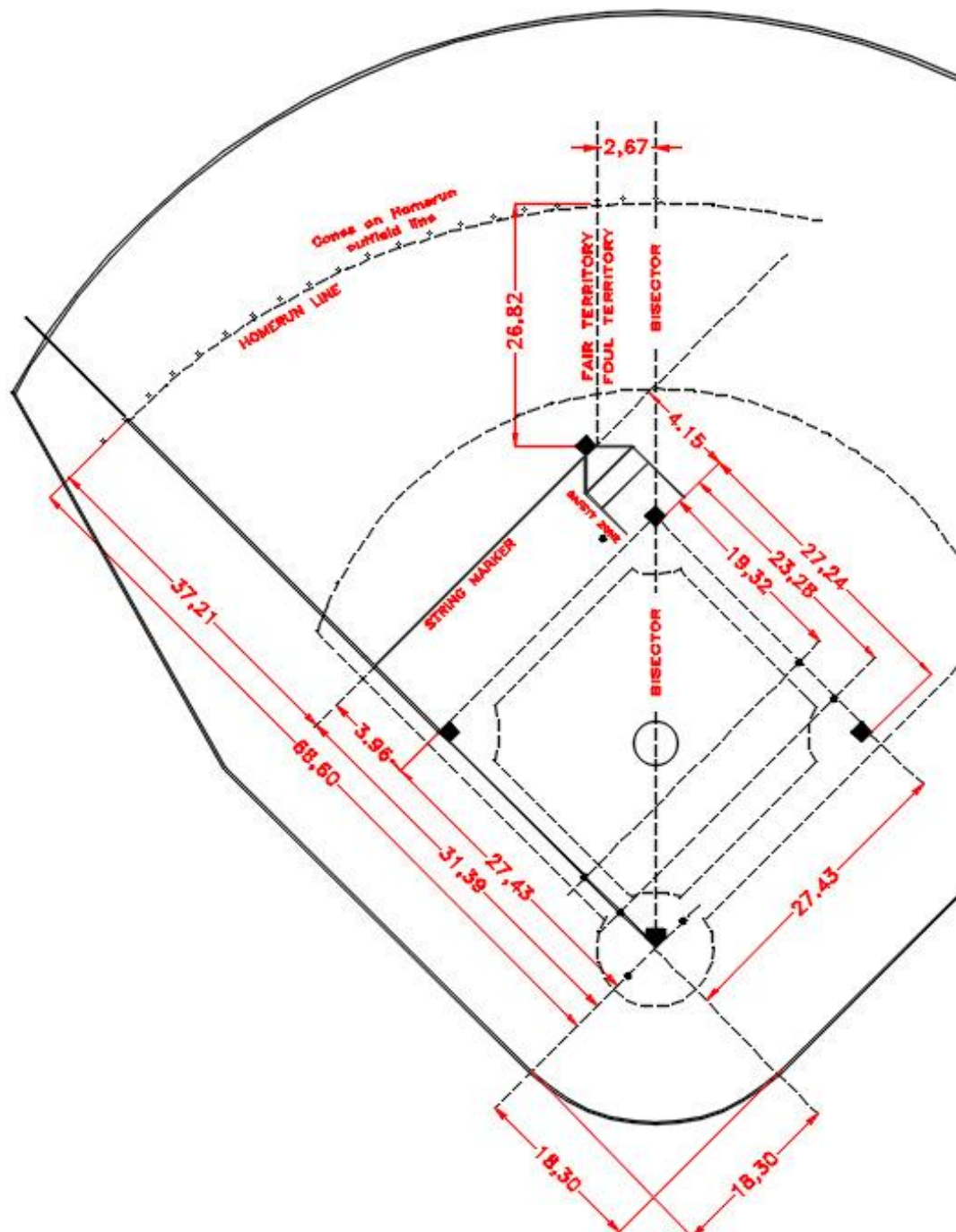


Diagram 2 - Baseball Diamond (Areas)

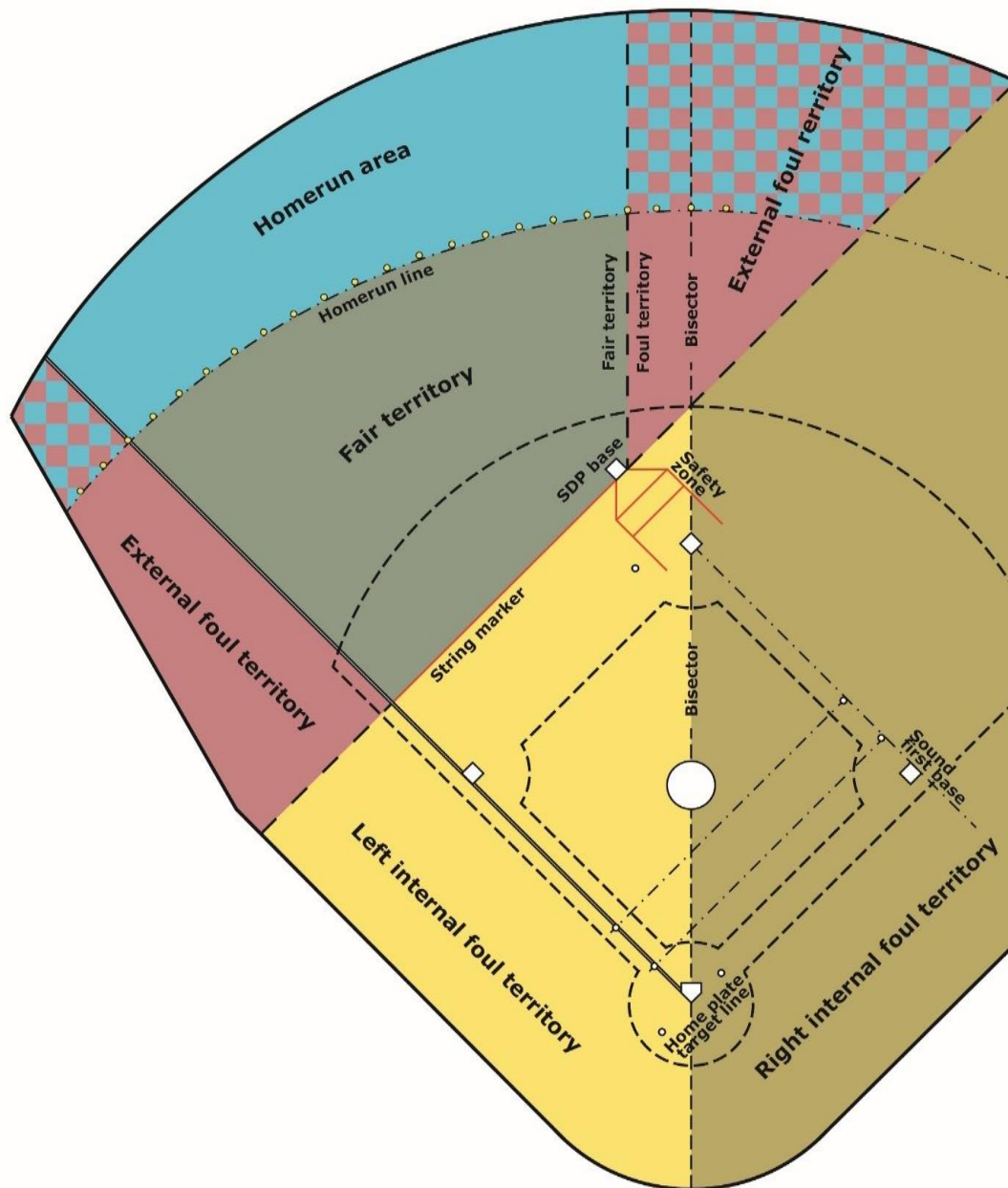
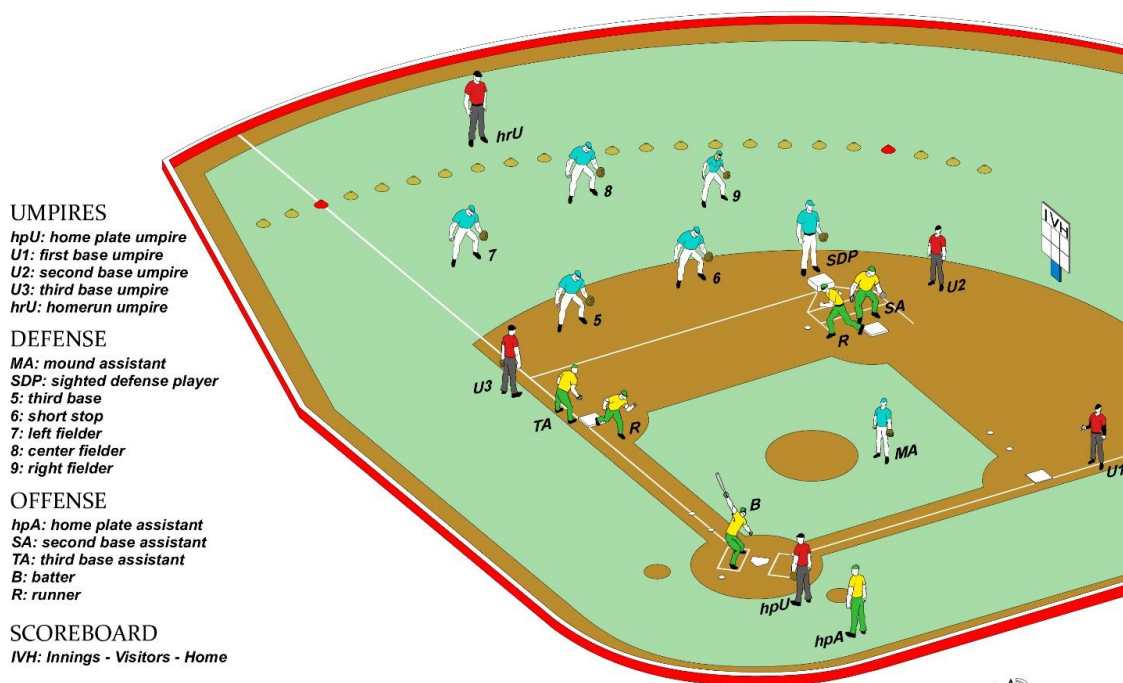


Diagram 3 - Baseball Diamond (Roles on the Field)



Andrea Pasquali 2018

DEFENSIVE ROLES

MA .Direct the defense
 .Retrieves foul balls
 .Provide the ball to to the umpire

SDP .Catches the throws and eliminate BR and Runners

5 7 .Field ground balls and throw to the SDP at 2nd base
6 8 9

OFFENSIVE ROLES

B Batter

BR Batter-Runner

R Runner

FA 1st Base assistant *

SA 2nd Base assistant

TA 3rd Base assistant

hpA Home plate assistant

* only in case of breaking or malfunctioning of sound base

UMPIRE ROLES

hpU .Hands ball to the batter
 .Orientates the batter
 .Declares "Play ball"
 .Make judgement calls at home plate

hrU .Make judgements for homerun

U1 .Assists runner
 .Make judgements calls at 1st base

U2 .Make judgements calls at 2nd base

U3 .Rules on fair ball
 .Make judgements calls at 3rd base

Diagram 4 - Second Base Safety Zone

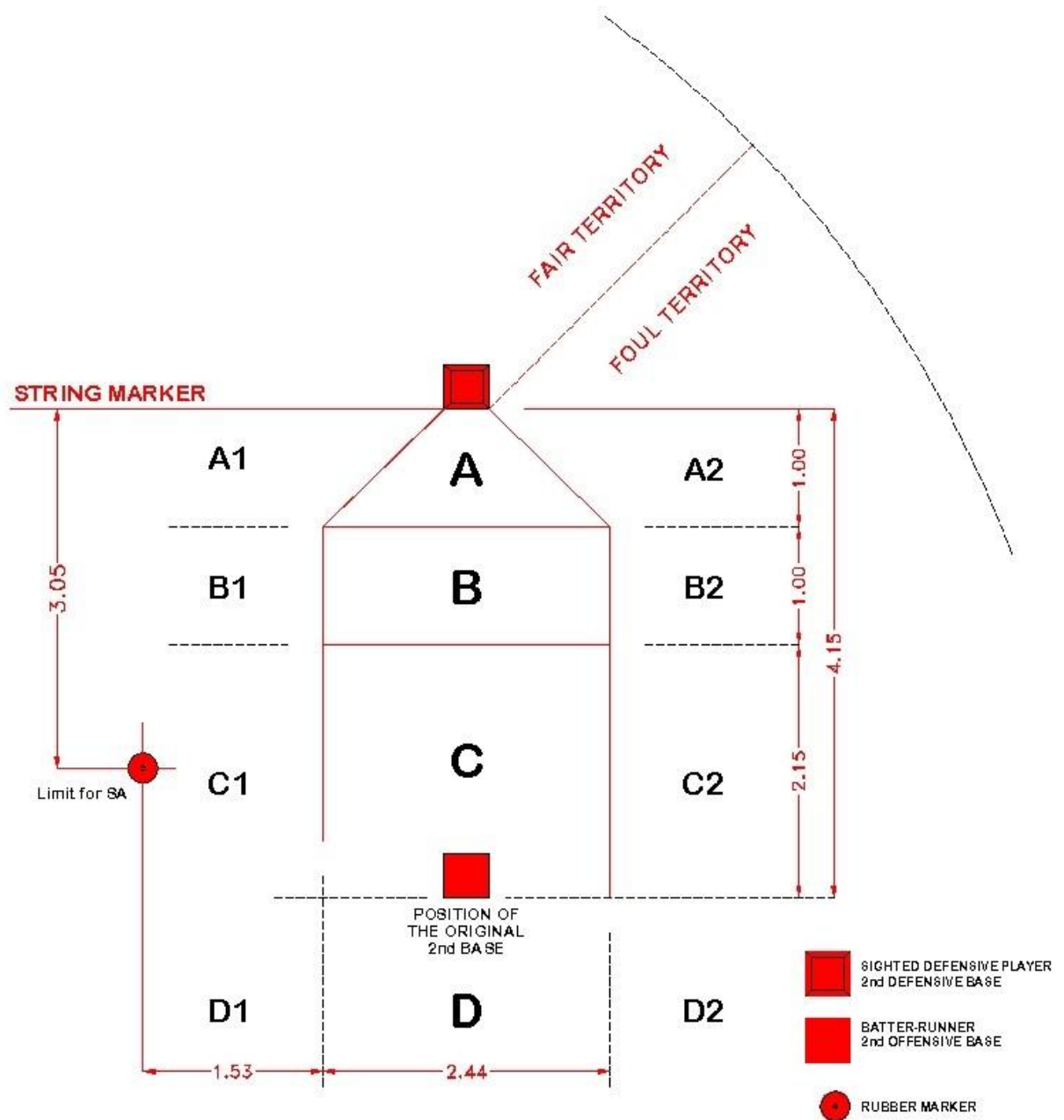


Diagram 7 – Homerun

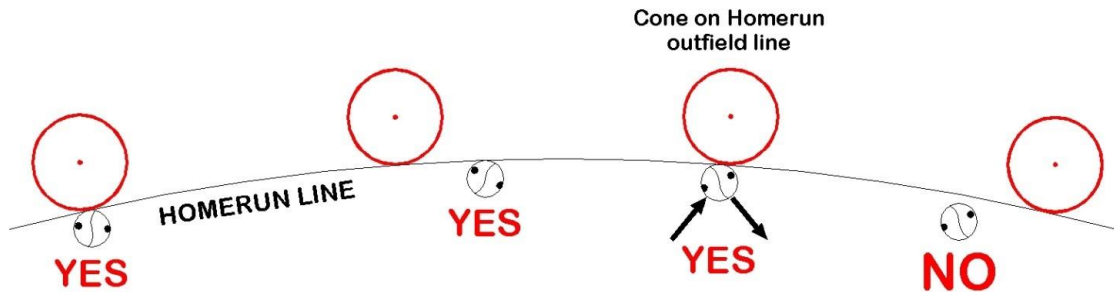
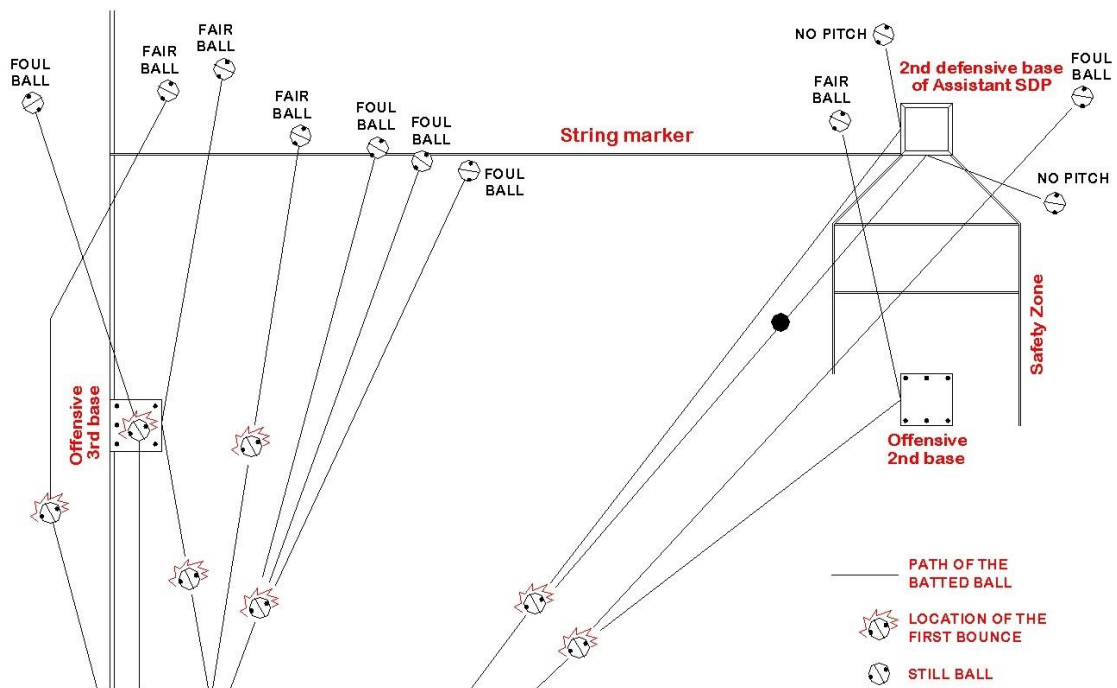
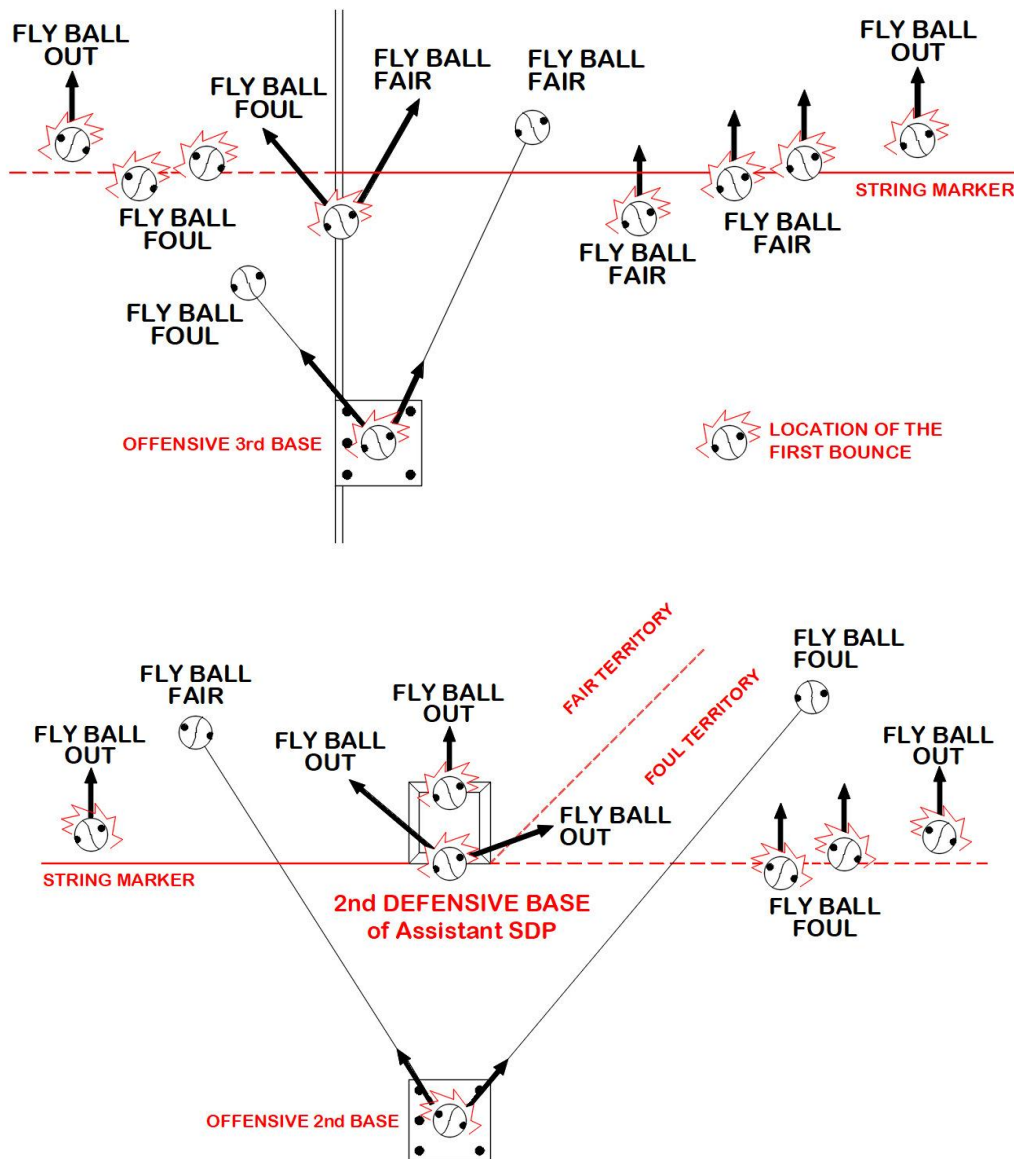


Diagram 8 - Fair Ball / Foul Ball / No Pitch



Any batted ball that hits the **SDP's** bag, after having bounced at least one time in to the internal foul zone, is always judged as a "**No Pitch**". Any batted ball that hits the Runner on third base is either stopped by the **U3** or by the **TA** (either on the ground or a pop fly) in order to prevent the runner from getting hit, is always judged as a "**No Pitch**" (see **No Pitch** definition section **a**). If a batted ball hits an offensive base cushion, the mound and/or the pitching rubber, it will be judged as if it hit a natural element of the ground (see **Comment** at the **No Pitch** definition).

Diagram 9 - Fly Ball: "Fair", "Foul", "Out", "No Pitch"



Should any batted ball hit the SDP's bag, without having bounced at least one time in to the internal foul zone, the batter will be eliminated (In Fly Out) Any batted ball that hits the Runner on third base is either stopped by the U3 or by the TA (either on the ground or a pop fly) in order to prevent the runner from getting hit, is always judged as a "No Pitch" (see No Pitch definition section a). If a batted ball hits an offensive base cushion, the mound and/or the pitching rubber, it will be judged as if it hit a natural element of the ground (see Comment at the No Pitch definition).

Diagram 10 - Deviation of the Ball into the Foul Zone

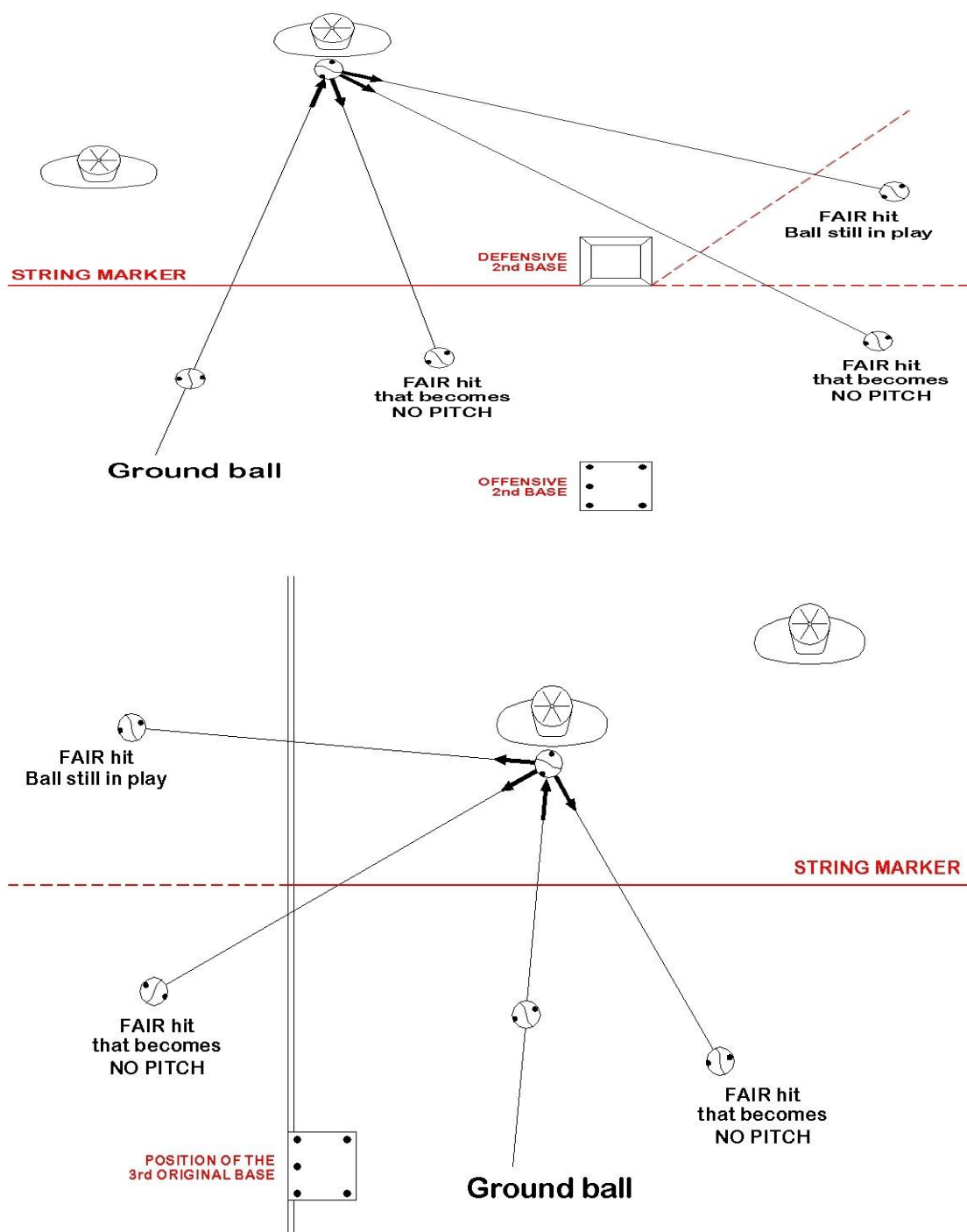
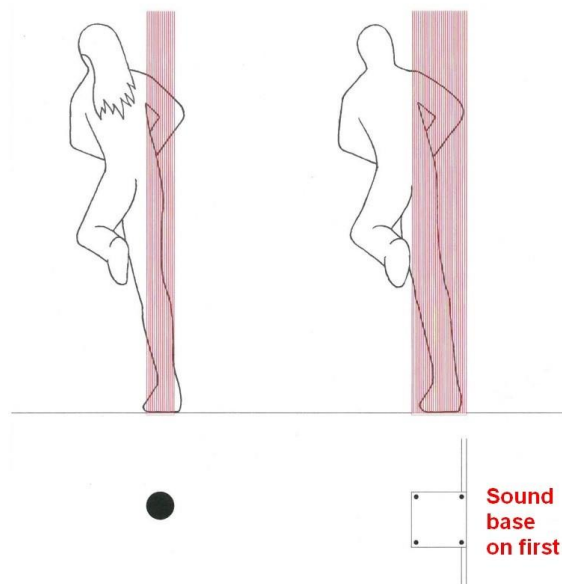
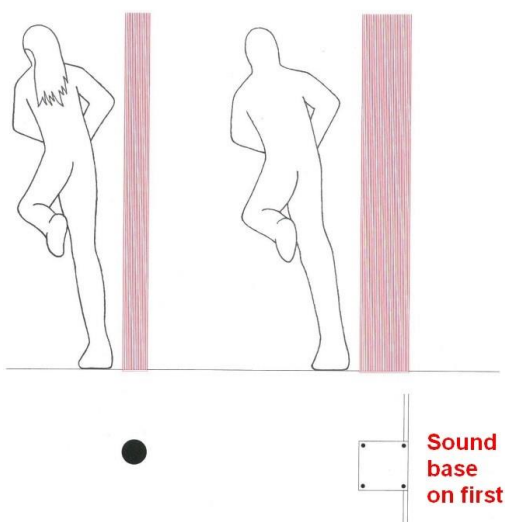


Diagram 11 - Rounding First Base



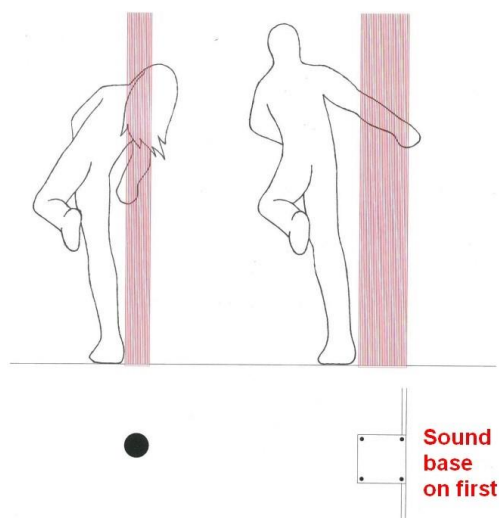
VALID PASS

OUT



Out due to passage on the left
of the pertinent first base

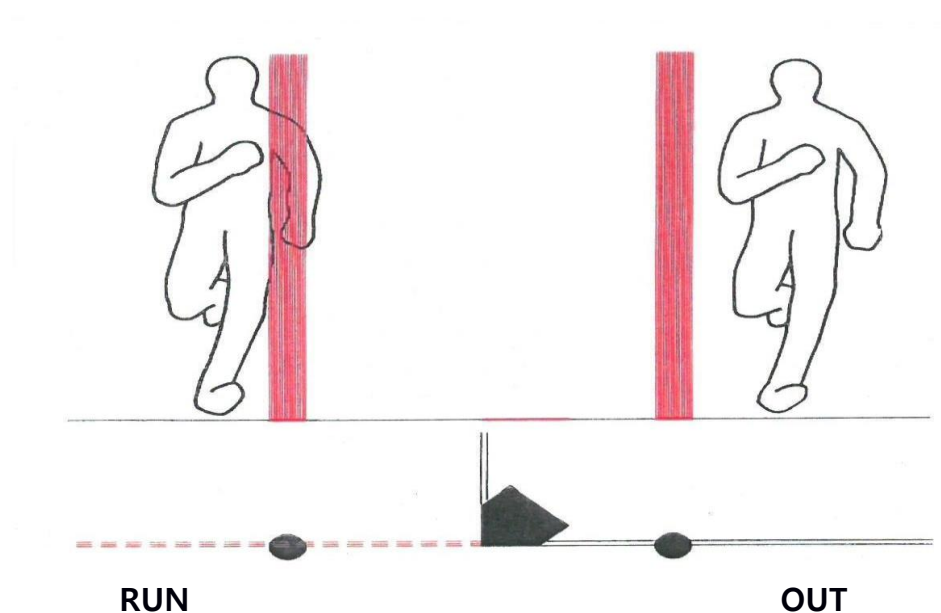
OUT



Out due to passage with an
unnatural running position

Diagram 12 - Home Plate Target Line

Natural running position



Unnatural running position

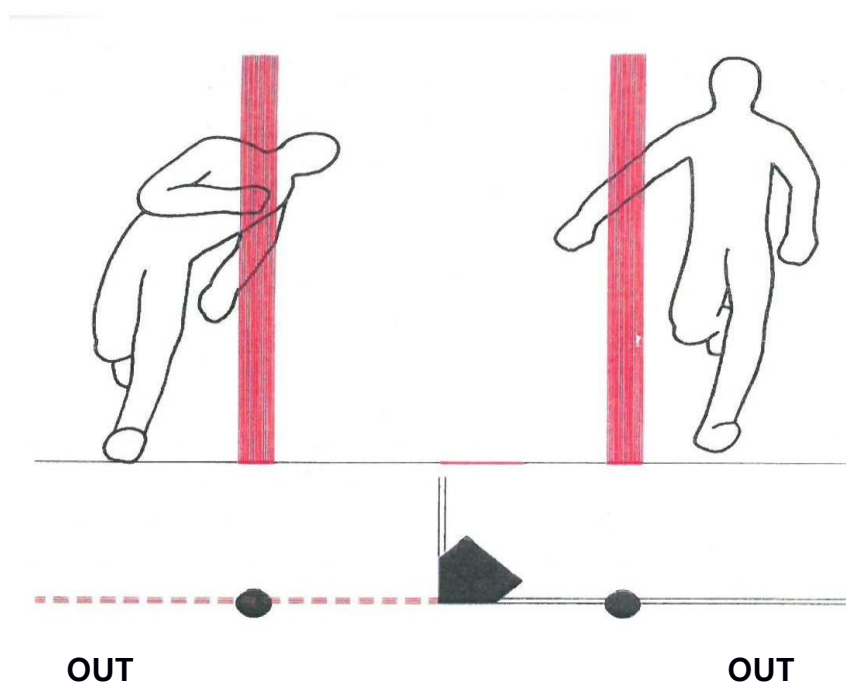
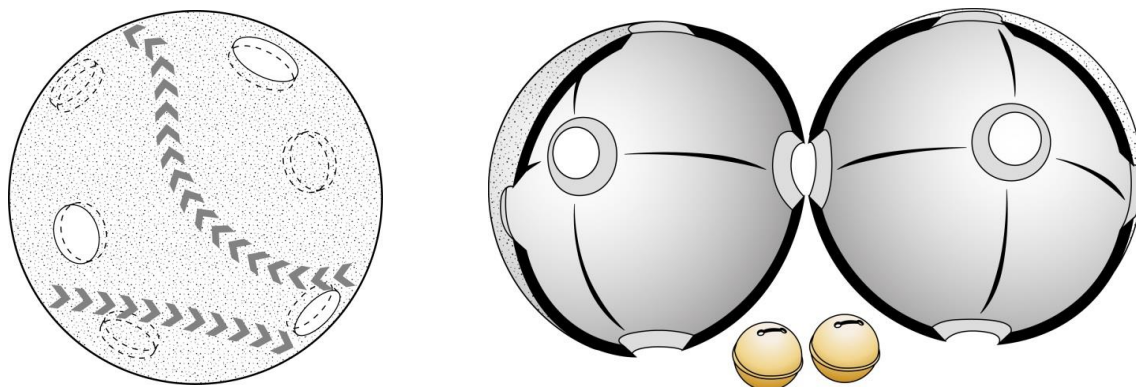


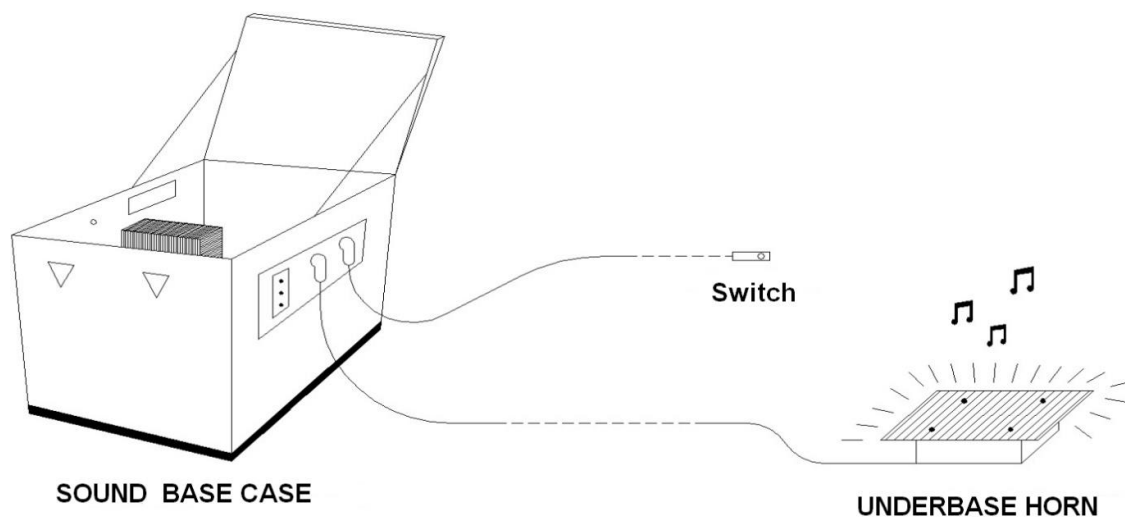
Diagram 13 – Sound Ball



Pro. A or similar – Regulation size, weight, dimpled, low bounce baseball, Saz. 9th

Hole Layout: 1 geometrically eccentric 18mm hole and 5 geometrically eccentric 16mm (45° countersink) containing two brass jingle bells (24x21mm)

Diagram 14 – Sound First Base “EP 2505237 PATENT”



Electronic scheme available at AIBXC headquarters