

Training Meeting # 5, February 23, 2026
Location: West Valley HS, Library

Working with a Partner

- **Pre-Game**
 - **24 hours prior:**
 1. Confirm plate/base responsibilities (But be ready and have gear to do both.)
 2. Confirm uniform color (i.e., black or blue)
 3. Confirm pre-game meeting time & location
 - **Pre-Game Umpire Meeting:** (30-45 minutes prior to game start), See Handout:
- **Post-Game**
 - **Exiting the field:**
 1. Leave the baseballs on the field.
 2. Don't wait around for appreciation. (Sometimes you will get thanks from the teams, but don't go looking for it.)
 3. Retrieve your gear (water bottles, sunglasses, etc.)
 4. Exit together and stay together all the way to your vehicles.
 - **Post-Game Debriefing:**
 1. What went well? (Note positive actions by your partner.)
 2. What could we have done better as a team?
 3. What suggestions do you have for me?
 4. What rules were we unsure about?
 5. Thank each other.
 - **File Post-Game Report:** Scores. Also include ejections*, concussions* (*contact assignor) and car-pooling (who drove) if done.
- **Touches/Tag Ups Responsibilities** (be clear who owns what & when.) **Umpire Classroom Video (4:39)**

Rules:

- **Runner's Lane Interference** (PU primary) **Video:**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cStX-EfCXRI> (1:32):
 - **Rule 8.4.1g:** The batter-runner is out when the batter-runner is outside the three-foot running lane (last half of the distance from home plate to first base) while the ball is being fielded or thrown to first base. Note:
 1. This infraction is ignored if it is to avoid a fielder who is attempting to field a batted ball or if the act does not interfere with a fielder or a throw.
 2. The batter runner is considered outside the running lane if either foot is outside either line.
 - See attached "Plays You Gotta Get Right" Graphics, pages 4 & 5.
- **Catcher's Obstruction/Interference:** **Video**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OwACCuUWGDs> (14.29)
 - **Rule 8.1.1.e:** "(If) the catcher or any other player obstructs the batter, the coach or captain of the team at bat, after being informed by the umpire-in-chief of the

obstruction, shall indicate whether or not the team elects to decline the obstruction penalty and accept the resulting play. Such election shall be made before the next pitch (legal or illegal), before the award of an intentional base on balls, or before the infielders leave the diamond. Obstruction of the batter is ignored if the batter-runner reaches first and all other runners advance at least one base.

1. Any runner attempting to advance (i.e., steal or squeeze) on a catcher's obstruction of the batter shall be awarded the base the runner is attempting. If a runner is not attempting to advance on the catcher's obstruction, the runner shall not be entitled to the next base, if not forced to advance because of the batter being awarded first base. If obstruction is enforced, all other runners on the play will return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch. The batter is awarded first base, if the runner did not reach the base safely.
 2. If obstruction is not enforced, all other runners advance at their own risk.
- **Examples of catcher's obstruction:**
 - Stepping on or in front of home plate
 - Pushing the batter to reach the pitch
 - Touching the bat during the batter's swing, i.e., the swung bat strikes the catcher's glove.
 - **Mechanics:**
 - Point at the catcher and say "That's obstruction."
 - It is always a delayed dead ball. Wait for the play to complete. Then call time. Indicate the violation using the same mechanic as for a foul tip and then pointing at the catcher.
 - **Enforcement:**
 - **If the batter swings but does not hit the pitch**, the batter is awarded 1st base. All other runners are advanced one base, **but only if forced**. If not forced, runners will be returned to the base occupied at the time of pitch.
 - **If the batter hits the ball foul**, the batter is awarded 1st base. All other runners are advanced one base, **but only if forced**. If not forced, runners will be returned to the base occupied at the time of pitch.
 - **If the batter hits the ball fair and is put out at 1st, (or an Infield Fly is called)** the batter is awarded 1st base. All other runners are advanced one base, **but only if forced**. If not forced, runners will be returned to the base occupied at the time of pitch.
 - **If the batter hits the ball fair and is safe at 1st**, and all other runners advance at least one base, the obstruction is ignored.
 - **If a runner is attempting to advance (steal)** at the time of the obstruction, the runner will be awarded the base that was being attempted. (Note: This enforcement may move preceding runners to the next base if this is part of the enforcement.)
 - **If obstruction is not enforced**, all other runners advance at their own risk.
 - **Enforcement Optional:** The coach or captain of the team at bat, after being informed of the obstruction, may choose to **decline** the obstruction penalty and take the results of the play. This option must be exercised

prior to the first pitch to the next batter, an intentional walk, or the defense leaves the field. .

- **Question: If the batter hits the ball fair and another runner is put out, and the batter achieves 1st base safely. What should happen with the other runners?**

This Week's Activity/Quiz:

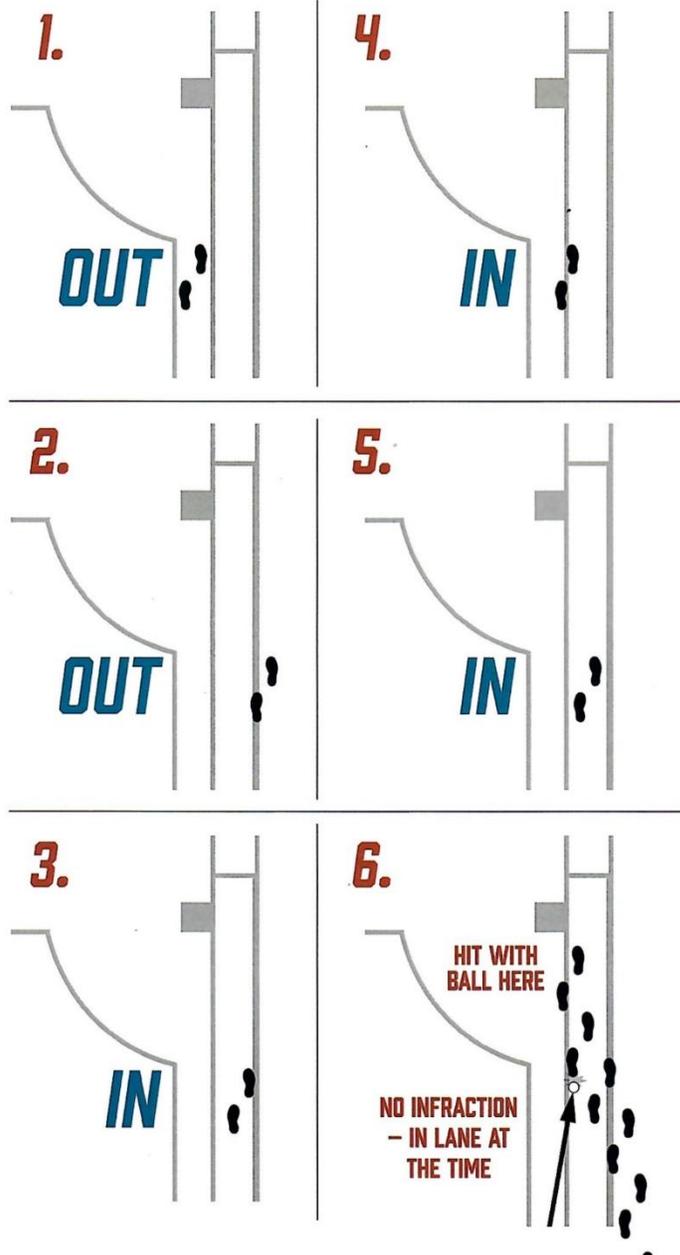
- 1. Please sit next to another umpire and conduct a pre-game confirmation text or call 24 hours prior to game time. (You have 3 minutes.) Write down what you confirmed.**

- 2. Please find a different umpire and conduct a pregame check with them using the handout on the following page. (You have 10 minutes.) Write down the topics you covered.**

- 3. Please join with a partner and simulate a conference that might occur after catcher's obstruction is called to determine the correct enforcement/base awards for the following scenarios, i.e. Who gets put where?**
 - a. R2 on second, batter hits the ball foul.**
 - b. R1 on first, batter grounds out to the shortstop and is thrown out at first.**
 - c. R2 is stealing 3rd on the pitch, batter is thrown out at first.**
 - d. R1 on first, batter grounds into a double play.**
 - e. R1 on first, batter hits to right field, R1 is thrown out attempting 3rd.**
 - f. R1 on first, R2 on 2nd, batter swings and misses the pitch.**
 - g. R1 on 2nd, batter makes it to first safely.**
 - h. R1 on 1st, R2 on 2nd, batter hits a pop-up, infield fly is called.**
 - i. R3 on 3rd, batter swings at strike three, ball is dropped by the catcher, and the batter is thrown out at first.**

THE LANE

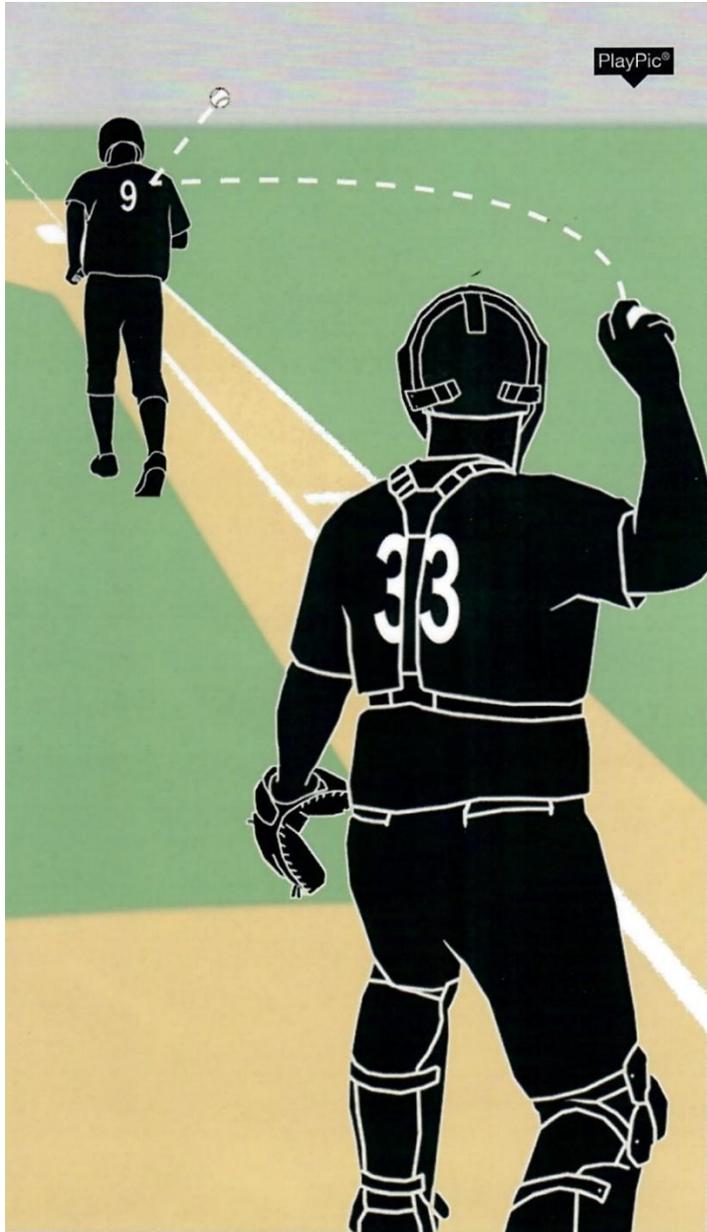
A runner is judged at the time he interferes with the play. If his most recent step was outside the boundaries of the running lane, he is in violation.



GET OUT OF THERE!

The runner may have to get out of the running lane to avoid committing interference if the batted ball is in the immediate area of the lane. A defensive player has the right to a position to make a play on a batted ball that supersedes the runner's obligation to be in the lane. If the runner is forced from the lane on that type of play, he is not guilty of running-lane interference if the throw subsequently hits him. In fact, failure to give the fielder room could cause interference of another kind.

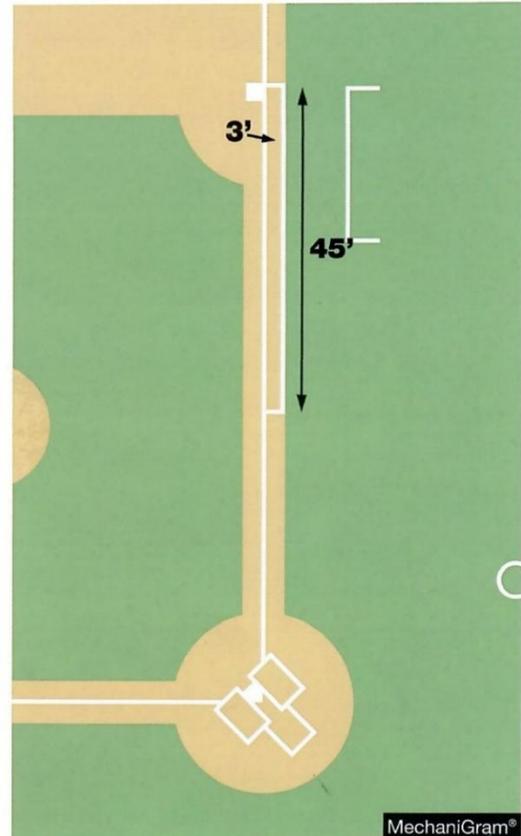
EVEN IF IT'S NOT CHALKED, THE RUNNING LANE EXISTS BY RULE. WHEN IT'S NOT MARKED, IT'S LEFT TO UMPIRE'S JUDGMENT.



THE MECHANICS

The plate umpire will have primary jurisdiction for this call because he or she will be in the optimal position to observe whether the runner left the running lane. With no runners on base, the plate umpire can follow the batter-runner up the line — being careful not to get in the way of the fielder throwing the

ball to first base — to be in the best possible position to observe any infractions. In other situations, where the plate umpire has other responsibilities, he or she will still have a better vantage point to judge a violation compared to the base umpire, who must move into a position to judge the play at first. ■



THROW NO

High school rules do not require the fielder to make a quality throw to judge a running-lane violation. But there still has to be a throw in order for an umpire to rule the runner's running-lane infraction interfered with the throw or a fielder receiving the throw. The high school rule is worded differently from college and pro, which require umpires to factor in the quality of the throw, because rules-makers do not want to encourage a fielder to throw a ball and intentionally hit the runner (although a runner getting hit outside the lane makes for an easy call).

Note: The lane only starts in the last 45 feet before first base. If the catcher comes up quick and drills a runner in the back who's running in fair territory before having reached the running lane, there is no violation, unless the batter does something deliberately to knock down the throw.

SBU Two-Person Crew: Pre-Game Checklist

24 hours ahead, contact your partner to confirm: (Typically this is done by the lead umpire.)

1. Determine who will do plate or base (but bring your gear for both)
2. Determine uniform color (black or blue)
3. Set pre-game meeting time (minimum 30 minutes before, 45 minutes recommended)
4. Set pre-game meeting location (ideally somewhat away from where fans park)

45-30 Minutes ahead:

1. Arrive at the site
2. Notify coaches that the crew has arrived, confirm game start time

Pre-Game Checklist with Partner:

1. Pre-Pitch/non-verbal signals

- a. Standard Rotations
 - i. No Runners/BU in A goes out on trouble ball/foul/PU takes the runner
 - ii. Runner(s) on 1st, or 1st and 3rd, clean hit to outfield/PU has 3rd "if he comes."
 - iii. Bases empty, triple, BU has runner to 3rd
- b. Infield Fly/Double Tag
- c. Time Play (2 outs, runner at 2nd)
- d. Count, Outs & Positioning

2. Fair/Foul Responsibilities

- a. Up to the bag
- b. Past the bag
- c. No double calls-eye contact if unsure

3. Outfield Coverage

- a. BU in "A"/going out on trouble balls/fair-foul/PU has the runner, signal "I'm going out."
- b. BU in "B" or "C"/BU has the "V"/PU has the lines

4. Situations

- a. Force Play Slide Rule/PU looks for interference at 2nd
- b. Runner's Lane Interference/typically PU's call
- c. Swipe Tag/Pulled Foot/PU helps if appealed
- d. Check Swings/BU respond only to PU request
- e. Ball thrown out of play (see it, call it)
- f. Foul Ball off batter (see it, call it)
- g. Trap/Catch by catcher on 3rd strike (Fist closed-caught, open palm-uncaught)
- h. Catcher's Obstruction (Review rule)
- i. Batter's Interference (Review rule)
- j. Rundowns (1st & 2nd both BU & PU involved; 2nd & 3rd, PU up the line in fair territory in case of an overthrow)
- k. Overthrows at 1st when BU is in "A" (PU follows the runner to 2nd)

5. Base Awards

- a. Obstruction/1 base minimum-NFHS (Delayed dead ball)
- b. Ball thrown out of play/pitcher/on-off the rubber
- c. Ball thrown out of play by infielder on primary play
- d. Ball thrown out of play by infielder on secondary play
- e. Ball thrown out of play by an outfielder
- f. Lodged ball

Plate Meeting:

1. **ICLEGS:** Introductions, Concussion protocol, lineups, legally equipped, ground rules, sportsmanship/site administrator
2. PU does the talking/ BU is quiet unless asked to add anything
3. National Anthem? (Primarily at American Legion Games)