

TWO ADVANCED MECHANICS

Umpire crews (2,3, or 4 man) are authorized and encouraged to use the following two mechanics. While recommended, these are optional mechanics and if used, should be discussed by the crew in the pregame meeting.

VOLUNTARY STRIKE

In a situation where a batter is permitted, by rule, to advance to first base on a dropped third strike, the base umpire in a two man crew, or the appropriate umpire in a three or four man crew, may immediately and voluntarily, make a strike call IF the base umpire intended to reverse the plate umpire if the plate umpire had asked. This mechanic gives the batter an immediate opportunity to run.

EXAMPLE: With first base unoccupied and a 3-2 count, the batter checks his swing and the ball eludes the catcher. If the first base umpire intended to call a strike on appeal from the plate umpire, the first base umpire may make the call immediately.

The mechanic is for the base umpire to raise his right arm above his head, fist closed, and loudly and emphatically announce “The batter went, the batter went.”

ALL EYES ON THE BALL

On any fly ball down a foul line which has a chance to leave the field or any fly ball which may bounce over an outfield fence, all umpires on the crew are to watch the flight of the ball. Many times, the non-calling umpire(s) have a better look at the flight of the ball than the umpire responsible for making the call. On this type of play, the watching of runners touching bases is secondary.

In the event of a possible error by the calling umpire, the non-calling umpire is not to get involved in the play UNLESS there is a protest by either team. If there is a protest by either team, the umpiring crew should then get together and discuss what it saw. If the calling umpire is sure he got a good look at the play, his call will stand.

With chain link fences, and short foul poles, it is often very difficult for an umpire to determine if the ball left the field in flight or bounced over a fence, or left the field in fair or foul territory. The “all eyes” concept will often be of great help in getting this tough play correct.