

District 19 Umpire Orientation



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Housekeeping

- Check In
- Cell Phones to Silent
- NBTB – Need a Break, Take a Break
- District 19 Website:
www.salittleleague.com
 - Umpire's Corner
- Alamo Area Umpires:
www.AlamoAreaUmpires.com
- Umpire Registry:
www.littleleagueumpire.org
 - Free
 - Newsletters, tips, videos, etc.
 - Online Background Check
- Little League Rulebook Application
 - Free (Apple store or Google Play)
 - Future Updates – no cost
- Little League Abuse Training



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Agenda

- What it takes to be an Umpire – Off the field
- Uniforms
- Field Mechanics
- Field Positioning (A, B, C)
- Home Plate (The Slot, Hard 45)
- Regular Season Playing Rules
- 2025 Rule Changes
- Difference from Softball and Baseball Rules



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Intro's and Staff

- **Matthew Gonzales** - UIC for D19, GHLL, and NSLL (Alamo Area Umpires)
- **Paul Brand** – Staff Umpire, Bulverde LL
- **Bill Spulak** – Staff Umpire, Alamo Area Umpires, Bulverde LL
- **Mario Canales** – Staff Umpire, UIC for NWLL
- **Pat Williams** – Staff Umpire, McAllister Park LL
- **Steven Rodriguez** – Staff Umpire, Alamo Area Umpires
- **Mike Pirtle** – Staff Umpire, Alamo Area Umpires
- **Brain Hankinson** – Staff Umpire, Alamo Area Umpires
- **Dave Cofield** – Staff Umpire



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Umpiring – What it takes... off the field

Brian Hankinson

District Staff and Alamo Area Umpire Instructor



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Umpiring – What it takes

- Equipment
 - Plate Gear, Mask, Indicator, Ball Bag
- Uniforms
 - Cap, Shirt, Pants, Belt, Plate Shoes, Base Shoes
- Communications
- Scheduling
- Regular Season Assignments
- Post-Season and All-Star Assignments



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Uniforms

- Hat
- Shirt
- Belt
- Pants
- Socks
- Shoes
- Sunglasses



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Equipment

- Plate
 - Mask
 - Chest Protector
 - Shin Guards
 - Indicator
 - Ball Bag & Brush
 - Plate Shoes
- Bases
 - Hat



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Umpire Pre-Game

- Fair-Foul Coverage
 - Who has what and where
- Tag ups and base touches
- Fly balls to the outfield
- Fly balls to the infield
- Coverage of 3rd base
 - (Two-man system)
- Live Ball
 - Restarting game after foul/dead ball
- Uncaught 3rd Strike
 - Major, Intermediate (50/70), Junior and Senior baseball; Major, Junior, and Senior Softball
- Batted ball hits batter while in batter's box
- Half Swing (check swing)
- Umpire positioning on the field
- Signals



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Plate Meeting

- Introductions
- Managers
- Exchange Lineups
- Time out/appeals
- Ground Rules
 - Time & run limits
 - Dead ball areas
- Questions
 - Not a rules clinic



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Umpires Do's & Don'ts

Do's

- Be
 - Consistent & Confident
 - Professional
 - On field 10 min. before start time
- Time management
- Talking to players
- Leave it on the field
- Improve each game



Don'ts

- Be late
 - Your early – on time (30 minutes)
 - On time – late
- Cell phones on field
- Look bored
- Quote rule numbers
- Criticize anyone
- Hold grudges



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Mechanics

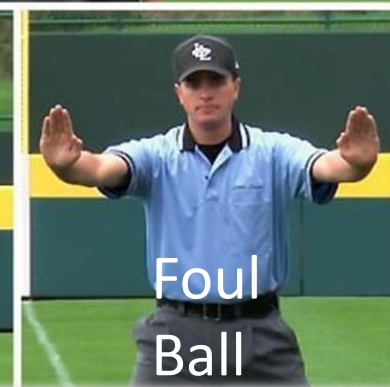
Set, Stand Tall, Make the Call



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Base Signals – Basic Six



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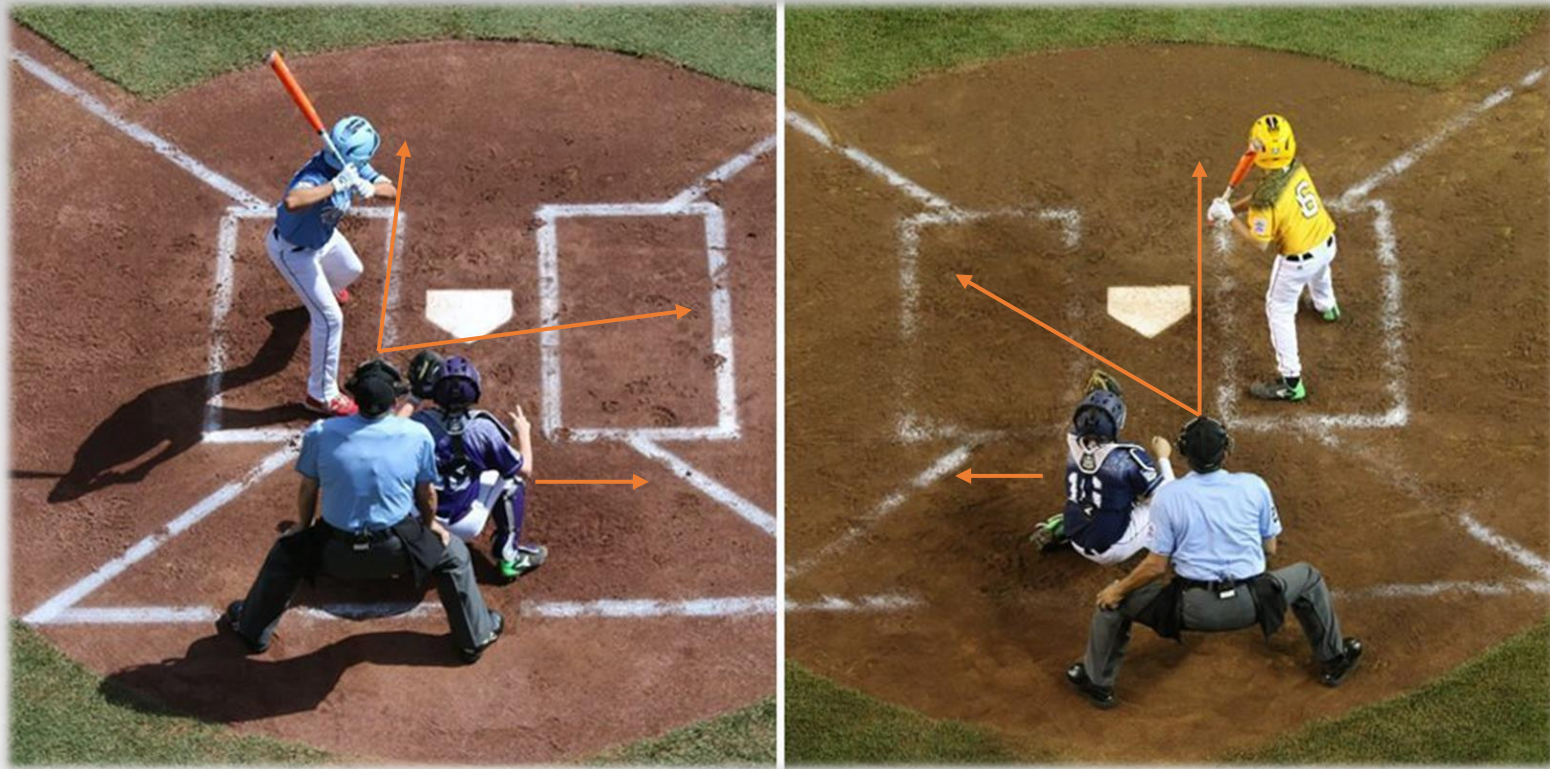
Plate Mechanics

- Feet are even
- Hands on top of knees
- Elbows locked
- Shoulders forward
- Head straight



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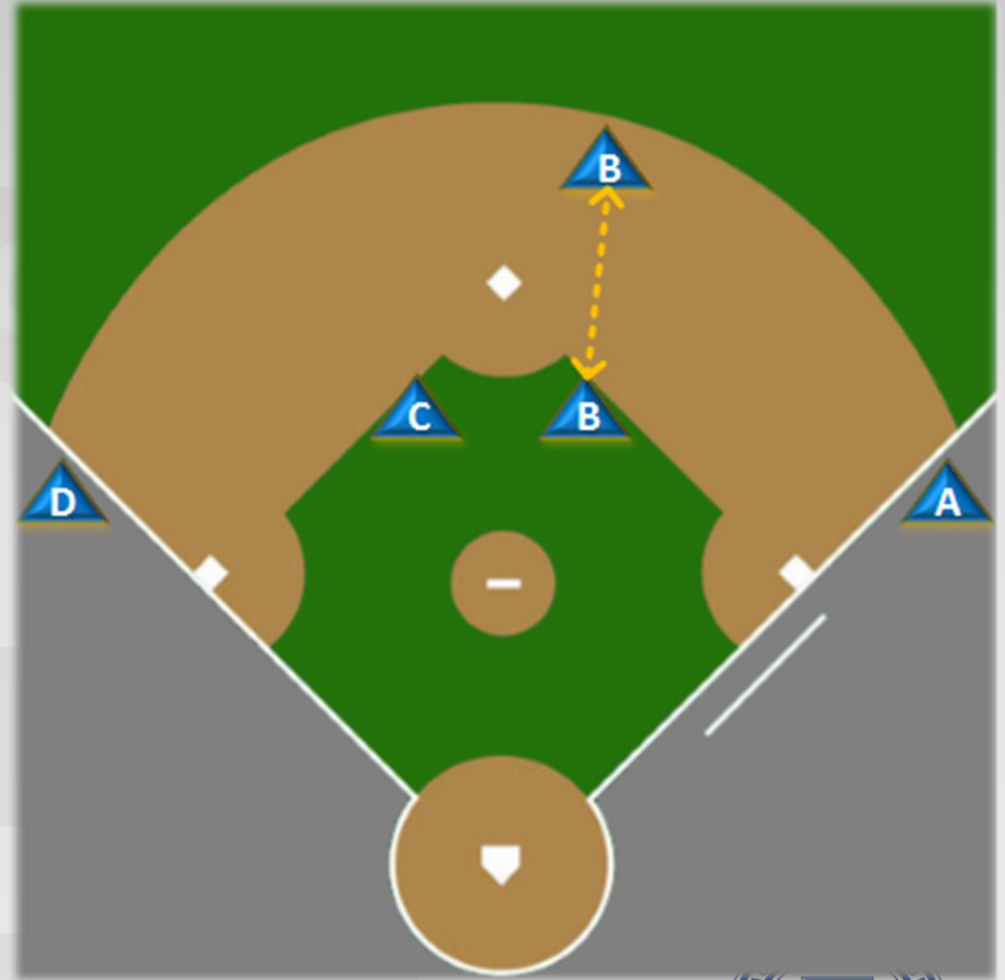
Plate Slot Position



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Base Mechanics

- Positions
 - 2 Man – A, B, C
 - 3-4 Man – A, B, C, D
- Stay 1 Base in front of the runner. (Box runners in)
- Ball is In, You're Out
- Ball is Out, You're In (the working area)
- B & C behind infielder
- Check outfield positions
- Give up Distance for Angle



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Field Differences

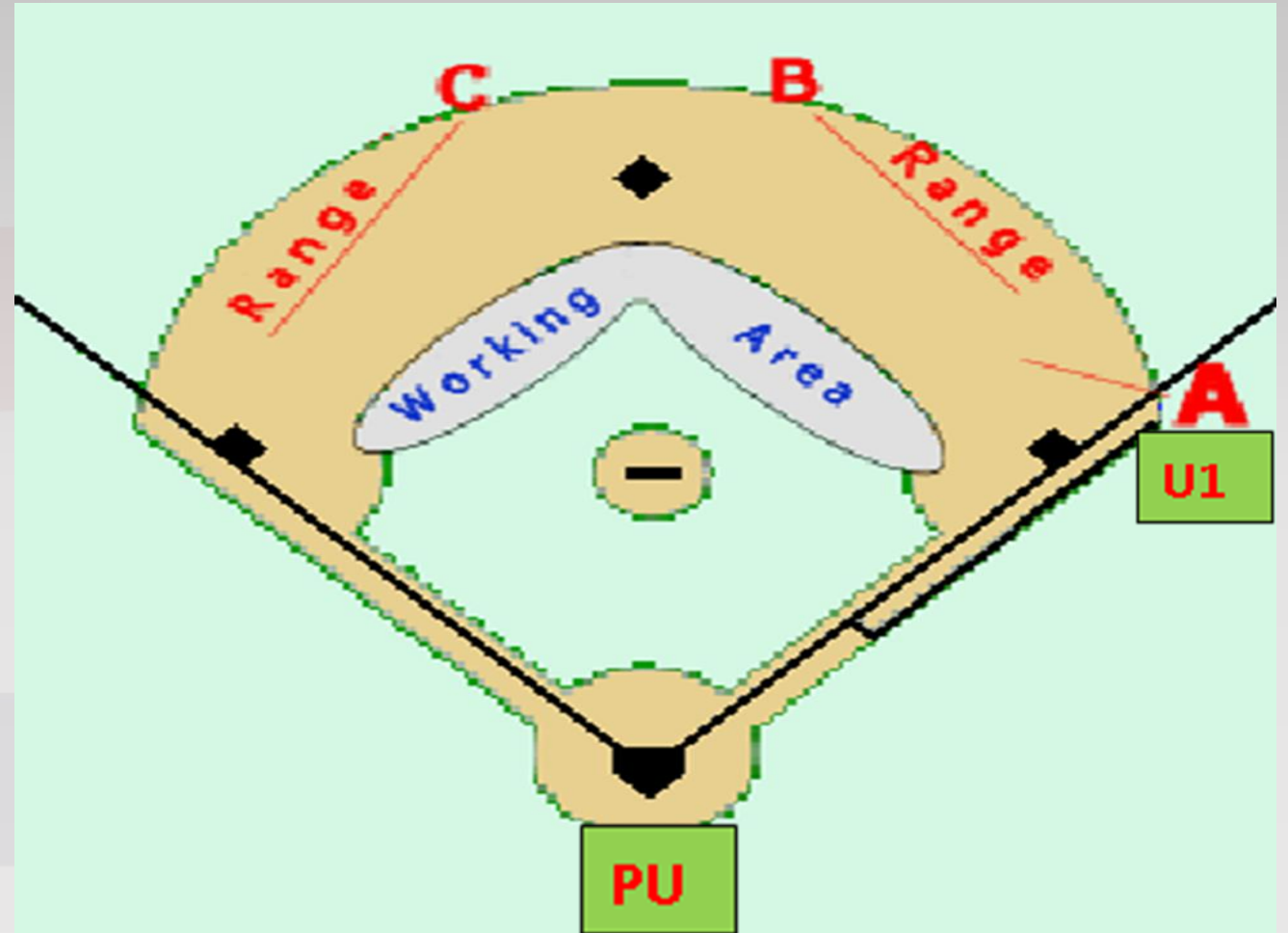
- Softball
 - All fields have the same base distances of 60 feet apart with the average outfield fence being 200 feet from home plate.
 - Pitchers Plate Distances
 - Minors 35 Feet
 - Majors 40 Feet
 - Junior / Seniors 43 Feet
- Baseball
 - Field Dimensions Vary depending on Division
 - Minors and Majors
 - 60-foot basepaths with 200-foot fence line
 - Pitchers Plate 46 feet from Home Plate
 - 50/70 (Intermediate)
 - 50 feet distance from Pitchers Plate to Home Plate.
 - 70 feet basepaths
 - Minimum 200-foot fence line but can be larger.
 - Junior / Senior (High School, NCAA, MiLB, MLB)
 - 60 feet and 6 inches from Pitchers Plate to Home Plate
 - 90 feet basepaths



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Field Differences – Starting Points

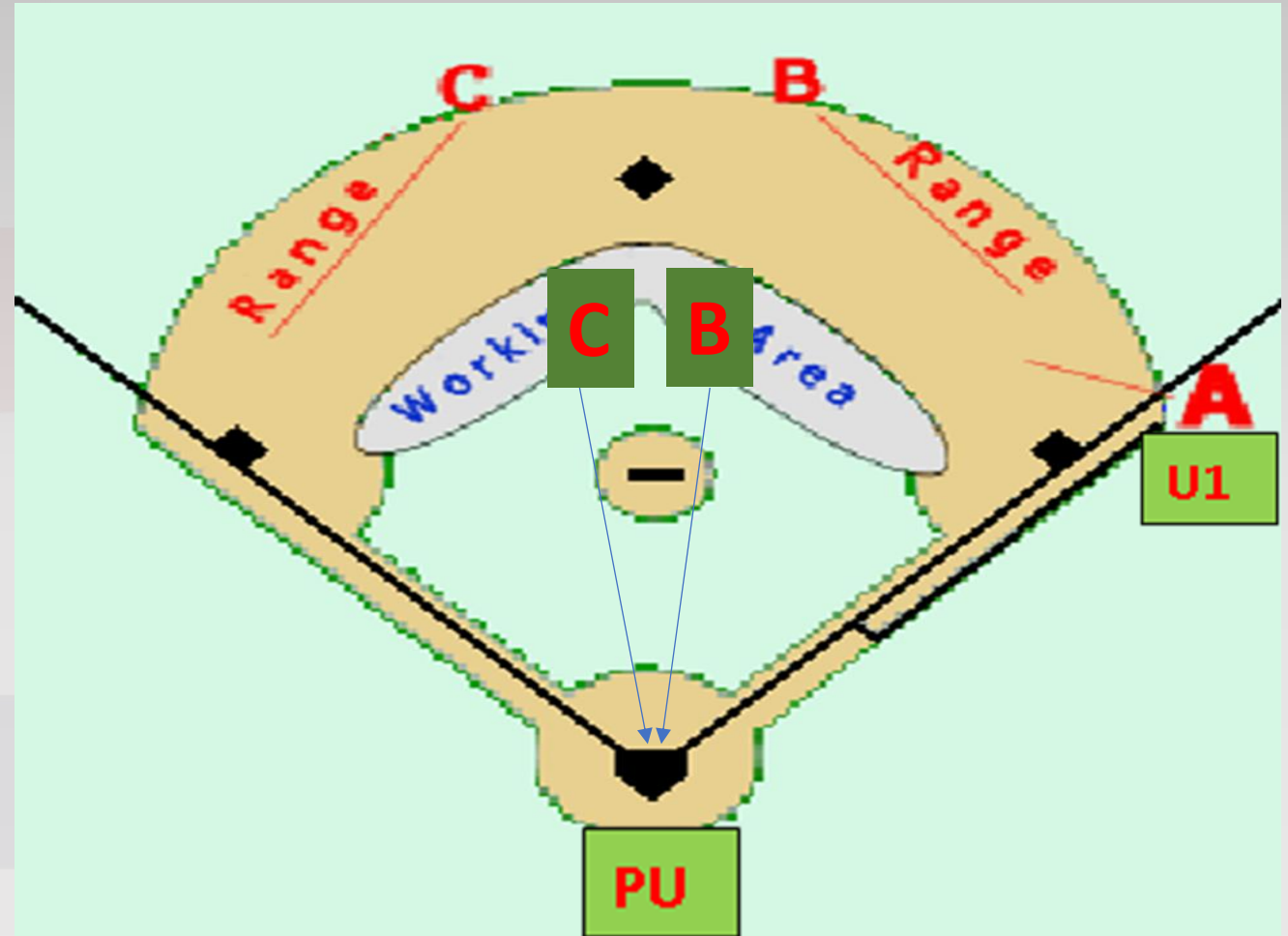
- Plate and A will always remain the same starting positions with no runners on. (2-Man Mechanics)
- Starting Positions changes when Runners are on base.
- When:
 - R1 – Start in B
 - R2, R3, Bases Loaded – Start in C
- All of Softball, Baseball Majors and below, B and C will start on the outside of the infield.



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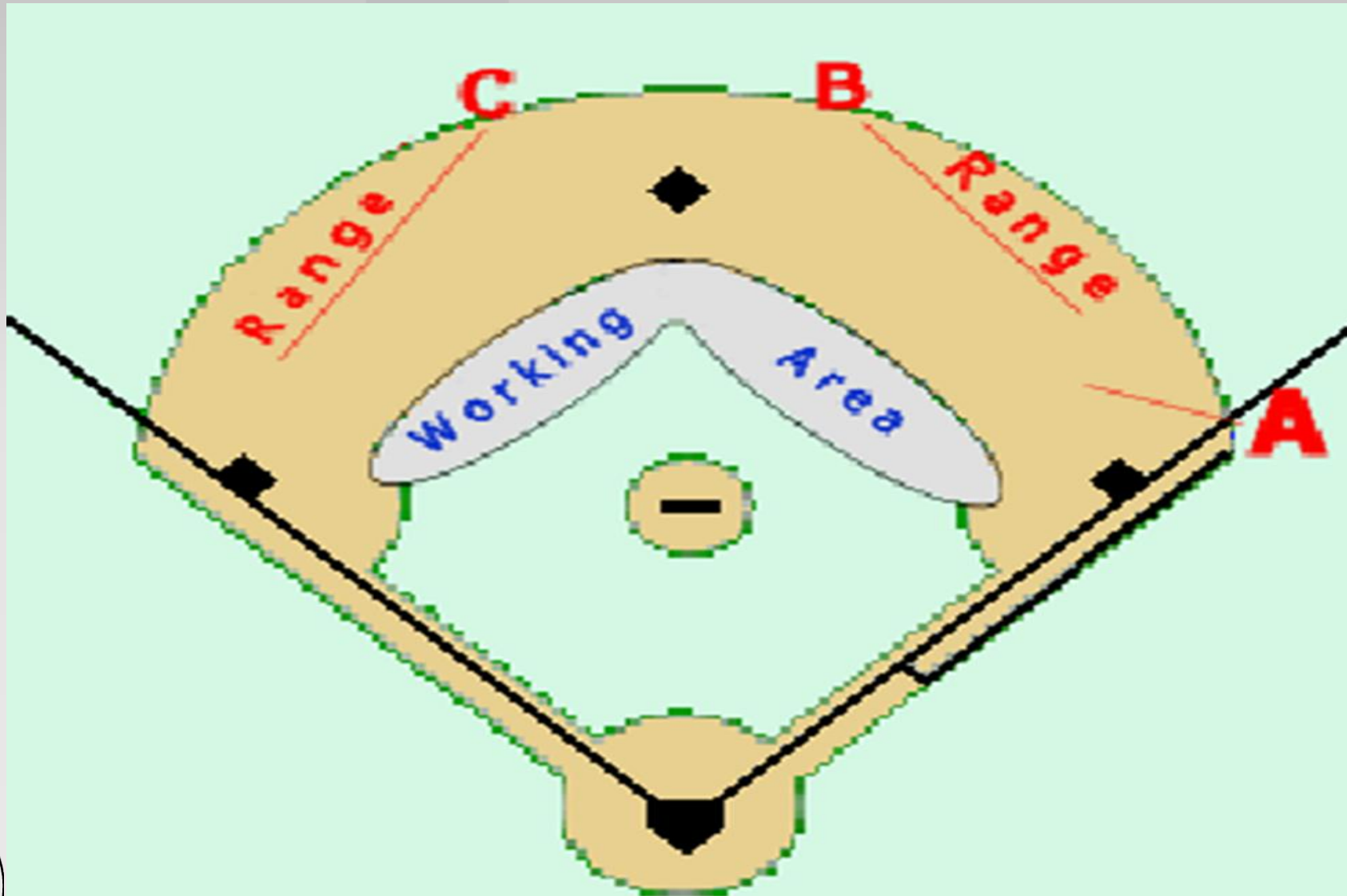
Field Differences – Big Diamond Starting Points

- Plate and A will always remain the same starting positions with no runners on. (2-Man Mechanics)
- Starting Positions changes when Runners are on base.
- When:
 - R1 – Start in B
 - R2, R3, Bases Loaded – Start in C
- Baseball 50/70, Juniors and Senior Divisions always start B and C in the middle of the infield in the working area.
- Rule of Thumb – Align yourself halfway between mound and 2nd, on the outer edge of the mound, creating a line to home plate.



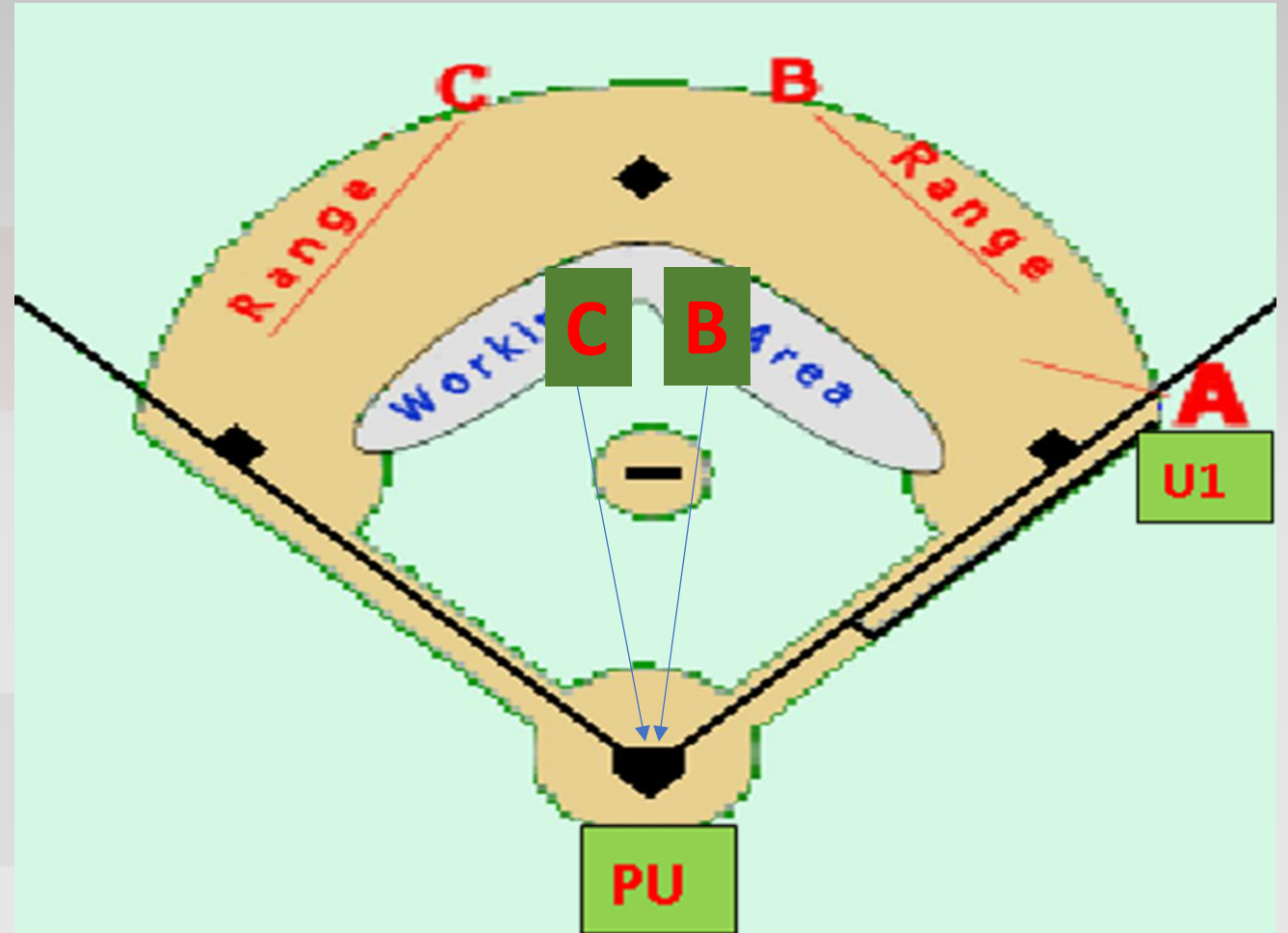
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Talk About It



Primary and Secondary Responsibilities

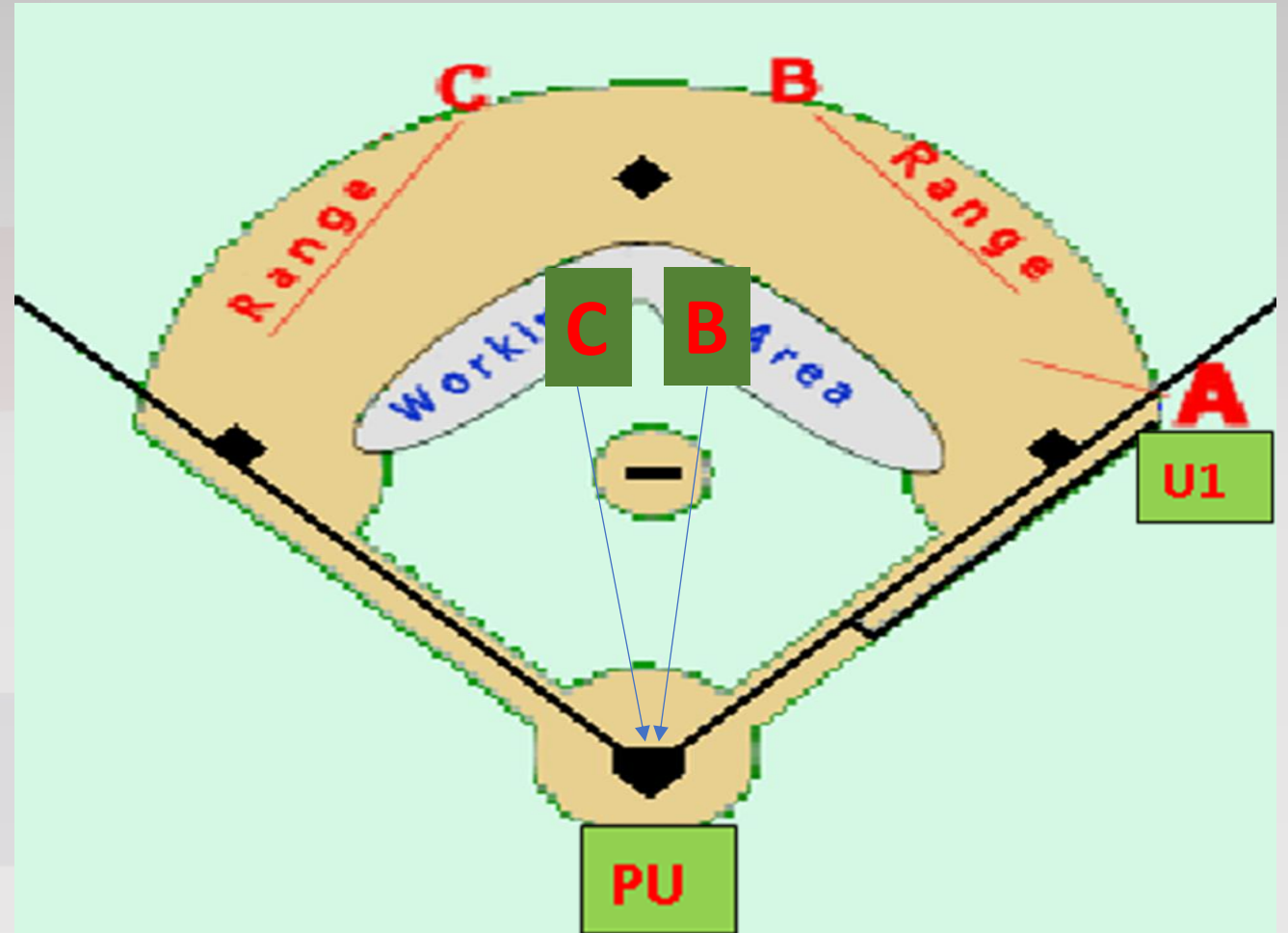
- Fair/Foul, Catch/No Catch, Safe/Out
 - Position yourself with these priorities in mind
- Home Plate Umpire
 - Safe/Out only at Home (or 3rd if in rotation)
 - Secondary responsibilities:
 - Pulled Foot
 - Swiped tag
 - Runner Lane Interference
 - Interference at 2nd on a Double play



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Primary and Secondary Responsibilities

- Fair/Foul, Catch/No Catch, Safe/Out
 - Position yourself with these priorities in mind
- U1
 - See all touches by the runner.
 - Clear obstructions/interference.
- After pitch, ball not hit in play:
 - Ready for check swing calls
 - Helping read ball hitting batter



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Offering Help WHEN ASKED

We always work as a team. We may spot things not seen by an Umpire making the call. Let the Umpire making the do such, and only offer information when you are asked, and have 100% assurance in what you saw. Do not offer “what I think I saw”.

When changing a call on the field:

- Both Umpires will discuss situation on the field away from players and coaches.
- The Umpire who made the call will take in all information from their partner.
- The Umpire who made the call will signal to confirm the call or overturn the call after leaving the Umpire conference.

If changing a call, BE READY FOR HAPPY COACHES!



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Ejections because these never happen right?!?!

Cussing, fighting, abuse – Grounds for Immediate Ejection without warning

There is a 3-step Approach to Ejections, with step 2 being optional.

1. Issue a Warning

- You do not have to state, “That’s a Warning”.

2. Bench Restrict

- Use as a tool to de-escalate a situation that otherwise doesn’t immediately warrant an Ejection.

3. Ejection

- Umpire Partner not ejecting should move in to assist/enforce ejection



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2025 Rule Changes

- **Updates to Pregame Equipment Inspections**

- With adjustments made to both Rule 3.01 and Tournament Rule 3, the requirement for umpires to check equipment prior to the start of the game has been removed, placing responsibility for legal and proper equipment on the manager.

- If Illegal bat is caught in the game:

- No warning
- If a batter take position in the batter's box with an illegal bat:
 - The Batter is called out
 - The Batter is Ejected
 - The Manager is Ejected (Base coach is lost on the field)



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Regular Season Rule Changes

2025 Spring Season



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2025 Rule Changes

- **One-Way Electronic Devices to the Catcher**

- As technology on and off the field continues to evolve, Little League has adjusted its Rule 3.17 in both baseball and softball to add an exception that permits a coach or manager to use one-way communication to the catcher while the team is on defense for the purpose of calling pitches. However, a manager or coach is prohibited from using the device to communicate with any other team member while on defense or any team member (including a manager or coach) while on offense, and a manager or coach shall not use the device outside the dugout/bench area.



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2025 Rule Changes

- **Pitcher's Undershirt (Softball Only):** Clarifies that any part of the pitcher's undershirt or T-Shirt exposed to view cannot be the same color of the ball being used in the game.
- **Neoprene Sleeves (Baseball Only):** Permits neoprene sleeves to be worn without being covered by an undershirt, provided the neoprene sleeve is a solid color and not white or gray.
- **Approved Substances on Pitching Hand/Fingers (Softball Only):** Clarifies non-approved substances on the pitching hand or fingers versus the use of approved substances under the judgement of the umpire. (Allowing Resin)



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2025 Rule Changes

- **Mandatory Play Requirement Removed for Seniors Divisions**
 - The Mandatory Play requirement does not apply to the Senior League Baseball or Senior League Softball Divisions of play.
- **Bat Modifications/Alterations:** Clarifies that products, such as, but not limited to, choke-knobs, choke-up assists, or thumb protectors are considered alterations to the bat and are not permitted.
- **Jewelry: Removes Rule 1.11(j)** to remove the requirement that jewelry, other than medical alert, should be removed, **permitting jewelry to be worn.**
- **Items Worn on Hands/Wrists:** Clarifies that a pitcher may wear items on the glove hand, wrist, or arm (non-pitching arm) of a solid single color, provided it is not the same color as the ball being used in the game.
- **Helmet Stickers:** Permits the use of helmet stickers or decals, provided that such usage is not excessive, is not offensive, and does not make inappropriate references, such as that to drugs or alcohol.



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LL Rules vs Ground Rules vs Tournament Rules



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In Review

- Read Rulebook
- Take care of uniform & equip
- Clean shoes every game
- Responsibilities on the field
- Don't look for trouble
- Game & time management
- Safety, safety, safety
- Umpire section on website
- D19 Umpire Newsletter
- Electronic Rulebook
- Umpire Registry
- Little League University
- Abuse Awareness Training



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Questions & Answers



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