

## **PLATE MECHANICS**

### **Heel to Toe Stance**

- Legs/Feet are further apart than shoulder width.
- Square shoulders to the plate.
- Slot foot should be pointed at pitcher's plate and in line with or slightly in front of an imaginary line drawn from the catcher's heels to the toe of the batter's foot.
- Non-slot foot is angled no more than 45 degrees and placed behind the center of the catcher's back.
- Your inside ear should be in line with the inside edge of the plate.
- You should make sure to see the outside corner and the batter's knees with both eyes.

### **Getting locked in before each pitch.**

Your stance should be consistent with every pitch with the only variable being the height of your eyes, which will lie at the top of each strike zone for each batter.

Setting yourself up the same way for every pitch will add to the consistency of your calls throughout the game.

Your hands should rest comfortably in front of your body. Don't place your hands on the catcher.

Your final move into the locked position is at the beginning of the pitcher's motion.

**Point of Emphasis:** Whether you are the plate or the base umpire remember to **PAUSE-READ-REACT** when evaluating every call.

### **Calling the Pitch**

- From the locked in position as the pitched ball arrives in the catcher's glove, you will pause and read the pitch.
- A pitch determined to be a ball: From the set position you will pause, and in a loud voice vocalize a "ball."
- A pitch determined to be a strike, the umpire will pause and read the pitch, then stand up and make a loud vocal call with a strong appropriate hand signal.
  1. From the set position Pause, Read, and then vocalize the strike call.

2. Then Pause, stand straight up, and proceed to give the appropriate hand signal.
3. Use only the second step when making a swinging strike call, stand up, and make the strike hand signal.
4. After calling the pitch, step back and relax before the start of your next set up.

**Plate umpire vacating on foul fly balls behind the plate.**

- Plate umpires should not immediately rip off their mask.
- Step back and pivot away from the catcher with your non-slot foot, watch and follow the catcher's movements. Avoid interference with the catcher when tracking the ball.
- Search out the ball and follow it through the completion of the play.

**Plate umpire vacating after batted ball.**

- Exit from his/her initial position in slot.
- Hustle to the infield and use your cues to get in position for a possible play that you are responsible to cover.
- Ground ball to the infield: step out to the left of the catcher and advance onto the infield towards the first base side.
- Fair fly ball to the outfield: umpire will exit the same, except move towards the fly ball on the infield to get a clear view of a catch.
- Get an angle that best allows you to separately view the base, the runner, and the ball as it approaches the glove of the defensive player. Do not get blocked from one or more of these elements.

**GOOD LUCK THIS SEASON!!!**