2 PERSON MECHANICS FOR SENIORS

So, I have watched videos about softball mechanics for years…during that time I have gone from red hair to grey, from flexible to stiff, and from swiftish to slowish…very slowish! Every base mechanics video I have seen, the person is concert pianist physically, and I can barely do chop sticks…if you get my point!!

On the positive side, I have seen thousands of plays and learned how, despite slowing down, the importance of watching the play happen, holding on the call, selling it only when you need to, and managing a game 98% of the time with a smile, a calm explanation, respecting coaches, dressing the part, and being on time, and trusting my partner. I have been blessed with a great partner for many year…both of us now getting up there in years.

In the last 10 years or so, I am learning how to work what I call “2 Person Mechanics for Seniors” or whatever you want to call covering the same area with fewer steps by starting from positions that require less area to cover quickly. In other words, I play the percentages and want to be in best position with fewest steps to make the highest percentage call both in terms of frequency and importance.

I am just going to bullet point them quickly and then let you respond, add your own, or…encourage me to retire!!

1. I **RIM** from 1st base with nobody on base. Any routine ball to the outfield I walk straight toward second base, look back over my shoulder to see the touch. I am already in position for the next pitch. On a ball it to the fence, I move the same way watch the runner closely, and go inside after the runner passes me if I have time. I do not try to beat her inside anymore before she rounds first. If things develop quickly, I will make the call at second from outside…my judgement if I can get inside…see side bar below!!
2. **SIDE BAR**…In 2 person mechanics is there any rational reason not to start the base umpire in B position?.......U2 does not call foul balls, can see check swing very well, will be out there anyway call force outs at first, and can easily get in position inside or out for call at second. From here, U2 has no worry now about beating the runner inside and getting caught up in play if she is really fast. In addition, U2 will not get caught in that tough spot when a line drive or fly ball is right down the line and we have often stayed on foul territory as play happened only to have to beat it to second if she takes off. Finally, this would give seniors a head start on all infield plays and, in my opinion, not sacrifice one single principal of the current system, why not??….Help me, what am I missing!!!
3. Runner on 1st. I move to the *right of the 2nd baseman*. I will have 4 potential major calls…order of importance (my opinion)

 1. Steal of second.

 2. Force out at second.

 3. Banger at first.

 4. Pickoff to first from catcher.

 I am in great position to the right of 2nd base for 1,2,3. These will be 95% of the close calls with runner on first. On a ball to the outfield, I want to be able to get inside with fewer steps if first play will be at third.

1. Runner on 2ndand 3rd, 3rd, and bases loaded…I stand to the *left of SS*, close to 2nd base bag, I am out of SS’s way with straight unencumbered look at 3rd base. I may be farther from third but have a great right angle on a pickoff. I have 5 potential big calls from here (my opinion).

1. Banger at first to end the inning.

2. Force out at 2nd

3. Interference/obstruction at SS

4. Pickoff at 3rd

5. Pickoff at 1st…In my opinion, closer to the second base bag and out of the way of any player, I have a great angle and free movement toward 1st for the big banger you want to get right…great look a 2nd for force…great angle for interference SS or 2B…straight look at 3rd for pickoff and just OK look at pick off at first, but better than out behind the SS.

1. Runner on second only. I do move a little deeper and toward 3rd. Steal of 3rd will always be a tough angle no matter what. I still want best look I can get on banger at 1st…still the most important call 95% of the time.

Well, that is my base mechanics for the older farts. For me, lots less steps over a 3-4 hour double header, and they do add up.

Stay safe…elbow bumps to all…Ted