

Awarding Bases - Overthrows

Blue Notes



The Rule

In the Official Rules of Baseball, Section 7.05(g) deals with the awarding of bases on overthrows. It has become common practice to use two specific terms when dealing with this section, “*time of pitch*” and “*time of throw*”. In this edition we’ll look to define these two terms as well as their application.

“**Time of Pitch**” is defined as the moment the pitcher’s actions commit him to delivering the ball to the batter.



•From the wind-up position, it’s the moment the pitcher begins her natural movement associated with her delivery to the batter.

•From the set position, it’s the moment the pitcher begins her natural movement associated with her delivery to the batter **after** she has come to a set position with both hands in front of her body. This does not include the pitcher’s initial motion known as the stretch.



“**Time of Throw**” is defined as the moment the throw actually leaves the fielder’s hand and **not** when the thrown ball bounces, deflects off, or passes a fielder, or goes out of play.

KEY POINTS

When awarding bases on balls that are thrown out of play, think of the following:

- If the throw is the first play made by an infielder, and all runners including the batter runner have not advanced one base, the award is two bases from the “*time of pitch*”
- If the throw is the first play made by an infielder, and all runners including the batter runner have advanced at least one base when the throw is made, the award is two bases from the “*time of throw*”
- If the throw is not the first play made by an infielder or the throw is made by an outfielder, the award is two base from the “*time of throw*”

UMPIRE RESPONSIBILITIES

It’s important that all umpires are continually watching the ball while watching runners as well as their other responsibilities. As a crew you must always know the position of runners at the “*time of pitch*” and “*time of throw*”. The umpire responsible for the ball going out of play (generally the plate umpire) is also the umpire who initiates the resulting awarding of bases. If that umpire is not sure of a runner’s location, then another umpire must step up and indicate the award. Do not award bases from near an out of play area. With “*Time*” called, hold your mechanic and take the time to get back closer to the field of play; then aggressively award bases where everyone can see you. If there are any questions as to the position of the runners and the proper award, this is a situation where umpires should confer.

Photos courtesy of Baseball Canada and CJ LaFrance respectively.