With the Yankees leading the Red Sox, 9-6, in the top of the ninth inning on May 9, Boston right fielder J.D. Martinez slapped a base hit down the first-base line into the right-field corner. But as he rounded first base and turned toward second, he collided with Yankees closer Aroldis Chapman and crumbled to the infield dirt.

The Red Sox hoped that first-base umpire Stu Scheurwater would call obstruction on Chapman and award Martinez second base. But according to the MLB Rulebook, it is the umpire’s judgment whether to award a base or not.

Rule 6.01 (h) (1) If a play is being made on the obstructed runner, or if the batter-runner is obstructed before he touches first base, the ball is dead and all runners shall advance, without liability to be put out, to the bases they would have reached, in the umpire’s judgment, if there had been no obstruction.

Scheurwater saw that Yankees right fielder Aaron Judge – who has a terrific arm – had fielded the ball cleanly and was ready to fire the ball to second long before Martinez would have arrived there, even if he hadn’t collided with Chapman. Thus, Martinez was ordered to stay put at first.