

# **SOFTBALL CANADA UMPIRE CASEBOOK**



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# INTRODUCTION

To become a well-rounded umpire, one requires a partnership of all officiating components. One component is the certification program, Levels I-IV, which strongly emphasize preventative officiating techniques; psychology; communication and evaluation skills; mental preparation; two, three, and four umpire mechanics; and rule knowledge.

A casebook is another component of the Softball Canada - National Officials Program. A thorough knowledge of the Softball Canada playing rules will strengthen an official's' umpiring skills and enhance personal confidence on the field. The primary focus and effort of this component publication is to promote consistency in rule interpretations by describing situations and addressing their rulings as interpreted by the Officiating Development Committee of Softball Canada.

Please note that the Softball Canada umpire Casebook is the copyright property of Softball Canada and any use without the expressed written consent of Softball Canada is strictly prohibited.

This casebook shall be updated on a continual basis by providing amended or new rule interpretations. If you have any special situation that requires a ruling, please send the case to any member of the Officiating Development Committee or Softball Canada, and an interpretation will be forwarded to you.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This manual is compiled by umpire members across Canada and edited by members of the Officiating Development Committee of Softball Canada in an effort to assist softball umpires to better understand and interpret the rules of softball.

Softball Canada and the authors would like to acknowledge the individuals, institutions and publications for their assistance in the preparation of this casebook.



# Key To Terms and Abbreviations

1st - first base

3rd - third base

R2 - the runner at second (2nd) base

BR - batter-runner

FLEX – Flexible Player (Fast Pitch)

OPO – Offensive Player Only (Fast Pitch)

2nd - second base

R1 - the runner at first (1st) base

R3 - the runner at third (3rd) base

DP - designated player (Fast Pitch)

EP - extra player (Slo-Pitch)



## Fair Play Code for Officials

1. I will make sure that every athlete has a reasonable opportunity to perform to the best of his or her ability within the limits of the rules.
2. I will avoid or put an end to any situation that threatens the safety of the athletes.
3. I will maintain a healthy atmosphere and environment for competition.
4. I will not permit the intimidation of any athlete either by word or by action. I will not tolerate unacceptable conduct toward myself, other officials, athletes or spectators.
5. I will be consistent and objective in calling all infractions, regardless of my personal feelings toward a team or individual athlete.
6. I will handle all conflicts firmly but with dignity.
7. I accept my role as a teacher and role model for fair play, especially with young participants.
8. I will be open to discussion and contact with the athletes before and after the game.
9. I will remain open to constructive criticism and show respect and consideration for different points of view.
10. I will obtain proper training and continue to upgrade my officiating skills.

# RULE 1 - DEFINITIONS

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## Altered Bat: for more situations see Rule 3 - Equipment

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1. The batter uses a rubber cone grip attachment on an aluminum bat. She says that it helps improve her grip on the bat. The defensive team appeals that the bat is illegal after the batter enters the batter's box. What does the umpire rule?

**RULING:** The batter is out and ejected for using an altered bat. This is not considered an appeal by the defence but rather a notification.

Even though the defence said illegal, the umpire must impose the correct interpretation and ruling. Umpires are cautioned not to confuse a cone grip with the rubber donut ("O" ring) which may be legally used to reduce bat vibration.

Any player found using an altered bat would be called out and ejected, if noticed, between the time the batter begins a turn at bat and before the first pitch, legal or illegal, to the next batter.

The umpire(s) must visually inspect all bats before the game and prohibit the use of any altered bats in the game by informing the team manager which bats are not to be used and why.

**CLARIFICATION:** The plate umpire need not wait for an appeal should he/she notice an altered bat being used. If the umpire notices the bat before the batter enters the box, after a legal or illegal pitch to the next batter, or between innings, the umpire will simply remove the bat from play, with no penalty to the offence.

**NOTE:** A bat is altered when (a) the handle of a metal bat is replaced with a wooden or other type of handle, (b) material is inserted inside the bat, (c) excessive tape is applied - more than two layers - to the grip, (d) a bat is painted other than for identification at the top or bottom, and (e) a flare or cone grip attachment is used on the bat.

A bat engraved for identification purposes on the knob end is not considered an altered but it is considered altered if engraved on the barrel end of the bat. This is due to the rough edge that engraving can cause. Laser identification anywhere on the bat for ID purposes is not considered altering the bat. A bat not found on the USA Softball or WBSC approved lists is treated as an altered bat.

SP only: All bats must be listed on the current USA Softball (2000 or 2004 certification stamps only) or WBSC. Approved

Bat lists, or must have a new USSSA certification stamp and not be on the USSSA withdrawn/non-complaint list.

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## **Appeal Plays: for more situations see Rule 7 - Batting and Rule 8 – Batter-runner and runner**

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Appeals must be made before the next legal or illegal pitch (there are some exceptions to this, e.g. illegal substitutions, illegal re-entry...), before the pitcher and all fielders have clearly vacated their normal fielding positions and have left fair territory on their way to the bench or dugout area, and on the last play of the game, an appeal may not be made if the umpires have left the field of play.

2. There is a runner on 1st. The batter hits a double. R1 goes to 3rd but fails to touch 2nd. The umpire observes his action but the defensive team does not appeal. The pitcher delivers a pitch to the next batter, Does the play stand?

**RULING:** Yes. The defence must appeal the act of the runner missing 2nd. Failure to appeal before a pitch (legal or illegal) to the next batter would mean the runner's act of missing 2nd is legal.

3. There is a runner on 2nd. The batter hits a fly ball to the outfield. R2 leaves 2nd before the batted ball is first touched by the outfielder. Does the base umpire call the runner out for leaving early?

**RULING:** The umpire does not call a runner out for leaving a base before a caught fly ball is first touched.

The defence must appeal a runner leaving a base early.

**EMPHASIS:** If a runner leaves a base too soon on a caught fly ball and returns in an attempt to retag, this is considered a time play and not a force out. If a successful appeal is a third out, all runs scored by runners in advance of the appealed runner and scored ahead of the legal appeal would count.

4. Batter "B" follows batter "A" in the batting order. However, in the third inning batter "A" singles and is followed by batter "C", who steps into the batter's box. The umpire notices this is a batting out of order. Should the umpire rule that: batter "B" bat, or batter "C" is out?

**RULING:** None of the above. Only the defence can appeal a "Batting Out of Order."

The type of penalty applied would depend on when the defence appealed.

5. The bases are loaded. The batter receives ball four. R3 fails to touch home plate and enters the dugout area. Can the defence appeal this play?

**RULING:** Yes, as long as the appeal is made before the next pitch, legal or illegal, to the next batter.

When R3 entered the team area, out of play, R3 forfeited the chance to legally return and touch home plate. R3 is safe and the run counts, unless the defensive team appeals R3 for missing the plate. If the defence appeals before the next pitch, R3 is out and the run does not count.

6. On a batted ball, the runner from 1st misses 2nd on her way to 3rd. The ball is returned to the pitcher. The umpires grant time to the second baseman. The second baseman tells the pitcher to make a verbal appeal on R1 at 3rd for missing 2nd. The base umpire rules R1 out.

**RULING:** The dead ball appeal mechanic was properly followed by the defence. The umpire did not have to wait for the pitcher to make the appeal. Any defensive player on the infield, with or without the ball may make a verbal appeal on a runner missing a base or failing to tag up on a caught fly ball.

**EMPHASIS:** A dead ball appeal may be made once time has been granted. Any defensive player on the infield, with or without the ball, may make a verbal appeal on a runner missing a base or leaving a base too soon on a caught fly ball. If time out is requested for an appeal, the umpire should grant time and runners may not advance until the next pitch (FP) or hit (FP/SP).

**NOTE:** When handling a dead ball appeal, the proper umpire shall make the call, and runners may not advance. If the defence appeals to the wrong umpire, that umpire should step forward, point at and call the name of the proper umpire.

A coach cannot make a dead ball appeal from the dugout. Advise the player nearest you the appeal must be made by the player on the infield. If "Time" is called and the coach enters the field and asks for an appeal for a player missing a base or leaving a base too soon grant the appeal.

7. There are runners at 2nd and 3rd with two outs. The batter hits the pitched ball for a triple, scoring both runners. However, R2 misses 3<sup>rd</sup>. The ball is thrown to the short stop and on a live ball appeal attempt at 3rd, the ball is thrown away and into the stands. The batter-runner standing at 3rd is awarded two bases and scores. The third baseman retrieves another ball from the plate umpire, after the batter-runner touches home plate, and makes a dead ball appeal at 3rd.

**RULING:** The appeal stands and R2 is declared "Out". The throw to 3rd must be an unmistakable appeal attempt. Otherwise the throw could be interpreted as a play on the runner. The run scored by the batter-runner would not count.

8. (FP) The batter hits a double but misses 1st. The pitcher receives the live ball and throws to 1st while standing on the pitcher's rubber in an attempt to appeal R2 missing 1st.

**RULING:** An illegal pitch. The ball is dead and the appeal is no longer allowed because of the illegal pitch.



R2 is awarded 3rd. The batter is granted a ball.

NOTE: In cases where all play has ceased and it is obvious the defensive team is about to make an appeal, the umpires are strongly encouraged to call and signal "Time". Avoiding the confusion created by acts such as illegal pitches is preventative umpiring.

Where all play has not ceased, and the ball remains live, appeals must be made directly with the ball to the base missed or base left too soon, or by tagging the runner committing the violation if the runner is still on the playing field. The ball does not have to go to the pitcher or pitcher's circle prior to the appeal. Runners may advance during a live ball appeal.

(FP) Any runner may leave their base when the ball is live (a) after the ball leaves the pitcher's hand on a throw, (b) on a fake throw, (c) after the pitcher leaves the pitcher's circle with the ball in possession, (d) whenever the pitcher no longer has the ball, and (e) as soon as the defensive team makes known their intent to make an appeal play.

Making known their intent can be done by throwing a ball to a base, advising the umpire verbally prior to the throw, faking a throw, or leaving the pitcher's plate with the ball.

9. There is a runner at 3rd. The batter hits a pitched ball to the outfield. The fly ball is caught by F7. R3 tags and advances home. F7 throws to F5 who steps on 3<sup>rd</sup> base and makes a live ball appeal for R3 leaving early.

RULING: The live ball appeal would be allowed and ruled on.

10. The batter hits a pitched ball for a triple but misses 2nd. The defensive team attempts to make a live ball appeal on the BR. The BR runs back to 2nd successfully, before the ball is thrown to 2nd or the BR is touched with the ball.

RULING: A runner can return to touch a missed base or one left too soon during a live ball appeal. If the ball becomes dead he may return to touch missed bases or a base left too soon. He must be running in the direction of the base to which he is returning before the ball became dead.

11. A lone runner is attempting to score after an uncaught fly ball. The catcher misses the runner with the ball and the runner misses home plate. The runner then proceeds toward the dugout, closely followed by the catcher.

RULING: The runner would be "Out" if the catcher tags the runner while the ball is live.

CLARIFICATION: An appeal could be the act of a catcher attempting to tag a runner who has missed home plate. If all runners are on their respective bases then the plate umpire should call "Time" and rule on the catcher's appeal.

This type of positive preventative umpiring could potentially defuse a difficult situation and ruling if the catcher followed the runner into the dugout during a live ball.

EMPHASIS: A runner may not return to touch a missed base or one left too soon on a caught fly ball if the runner has left the field of play, or a following runner has scored.

12. R1 and R2 none out. BR hits the ball to right field. F9 fields the ball as R2 scores and R1 is heading to 3<sup>rd</sup>. R1 missed second base on his way to 3<sup>rd</sup>. R1 is safe at 3<sup>rd</sup> and BR advances to 2<sup>nd</sup> base. The ball is returned to the pitcher. The coach requests and is granted time and goes to the base umpire to appeal R1 missing second base. Is this legal?

Ruling: Yes. The coach can appeal a play as long as they have requested time and come onto the field.

Emphasis Coaches must come out of the dugout and onto the field in order to appeal.

13. R1 and R2, one out. Offensive coach requests and is granted time. The batter and both base runners meet with the coach. When the runners go back to their bases, R1 goes to 2nd base and R2 goes to first base. The next pitch is wild and both base runners advance. At this point, the defence notices the runners are on the wrong bases. They appeal to the plate umpire. Is this allowed?

Ruling: Yes, the appeal must be made before all the affected runners are in the dugout or the half inning is over.

Emphasis: This clarifies the time frame for the appeal.

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### **Base On Balls: for more situations see Rule 8 – Batter-runner and Runner**

**Note: A “Walk” or a “Base on Balls” is a live ball situation where the pitcher has delivered 4 pitches or more to the batter vs. an “Intentional Walk” which is a dead ball and fewer than 4 balls have been called on the batter. Batter has been awarded 1st. base.**

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14. There are no runners on base, with one out. The batter receives a base on balls and walks toward 1st. The batter-runner steps on 1st and;
- (a) in a continuous motion steps off to the side of the base into foul territory, or
  - (b) in a continuous motion steps on and past 1st toward the outfield, or
  - (c) in a continuous motion makes one step toward second and stops, or
  - (d) stops and then steps off 1st in any direction.

The catcher throws the ball to the first baseman, who tags the batter-runner.

**RULING:** The catcher may throw the ball to 1st because the batter is now a batter-runner, as soon as he is awarded four balls.

In (a, b) the batter-runner is “Safe” because her motion was continuous (did not stop at 1st before stepping off base) and she made no motion toward 2nd.

In (c, d) the batter-runner is “Out” because in (c) her step toward 2nd is considered an attempt to advance, and in (d) she attained 1st and stayed there momentarily before stepping off base.

(SP) The ball is dead as soon as the BR receives ball four. The BR is safe at 1st and may not advance past 1st.

**FPINTERPRETATION:** A batter-runner is allowed to overrun and, over walk and is “Safe” if tagged while off 1st, as long as the runner made no attempt to go to 2nd.

15. The batter has a count of three balls with (a) a runner at 2nd or (b) no runners on base. The next pitched ball is ball four and the ball gets away from the catcher and rolls out of play.

**RULING:** (FP) In both situations the ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, and the batter is only entitled to 1st. In (a) R2 is awarded 3rd.

(SP) In both situations the ball is dead after every pitch and the batter is only entitled to 1st. In (a) R2 remains at 2nd.

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**Base Path: for more situations see  
Rule 8 – Batter-runner and Runner**

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16. On a hit to the outfield, the batter-runner takes an unusually wide turn while rounding 1st on her way to 2nd. The outfielder retrieves the ground ball and throws it to the second baseman. The infielder makes a futile attempt at tagging the batter-runner, who is sliding head first into 2nd from the outfield side of the base. The base umpire rules the batter-runner safe. The defence argues that the BR should be out for being outside the imaginary three-foot base path.

**RULING:** The base umpire’s judgment and ruling are correct.

The base path is established by the runner and is an imaginary direct line from the runner to the base to which they are advancing.

**INTERPRETATION:** In the event of a play on a runner, the base path is established as soon as the fielder receives the ball and begins the attempt to tag the runner.

**TIP:** A runner jockeying back and forth between two bases, in an attempt to avoid being tagged, will establish a new base path every time the runner changes direction.

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**Batted Ball: for more situations see Rule 7 - Batting**

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17. A pitched ball is inside on the batter. The batter does or does not move and the ball hits the knob of the bat, causing the ball to roll fair or foul, where it is picked up by the defence. What is the call?

**RULING:** If the ball is touched by the fielder in fair territory, it is a fair-batted ball and the runners are in jeopardy.

If the ball is touched by the fielder in foul territory, it is a foul ball and a strike on the batter.

Any ball that hits the bat, or is hit by the bat, and lands in fair or foul territory, is considered a batted ball. No intention to hit the ball is necessary.

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**Batter's Box: for more situations see  
Rule 2 - The Playing Field and Rule 7 - Batting**

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18. The batter is standing with part of her foot on the line and part outside the line prior to the start of the pitch. Is this legal?

**RULING:** No, this is not a legal batting position.

Even though the lines of the batter's box are considered inside, the batter cannot start with any part of the foot outside the line before the pitcher delivers the ball.

The umpire must give the pitcher the "no pitch signal" and advise the batter to alter her foot position. If the batter does not react to the Play Ball request within 10 seconds, then call a "Strike".

**NOTE:** The "Strike" penalty may be enforced if the batter does not respond to "Play Ball" within 10 seconds.

**TIP:** The batter's foot may be partially in contact with the batter's box during or after the pitch (the lines are considered part of the batter's box). If the bat makes contact with the ball while the batter's foot is in contact with the ground while completely outside the lines of the batter's box, the batter is out").

19. The batter legally starts with his back foot on the back line of the batter's box.
- (a) Before the pitcher starts any motion to pitch, the batter wiggles his feet until the back foot is completely out of the box; or,
  - (b) The batter's back foot is entirely out of the box, after the pitcher motions to start pitching, or the pitched ball is on the way.

- RULING: In (a) if the pitch has not started, the umpire could hold up play and instruct the batter to put the foot back into the box.
- (b) If the batter leaves the batter's box when the pitch is on the way then the batter is "Out" if the batter makes contact with the ball even if the batter's feet are back in the batter's box. If the batter does not make contact, there is no penalty. In FP, the ball is live and in SP the ball is dead.

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**Batting Order: for more situations see Rule 7 - Batting**

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20. Prior to the start of a Co-Ed Slo-Pitch game, the plate umpire notices that the home team's line-up card has five male players listed in the top five positions of the batting order.

RULING: The batting order is illegal. The plate umpire shall request the home team manager change the batting order such that male and female batters alternate in the batting order.

It is not an appeal play when two players of the same sex bat back to back. The umpire will enforce the penalty when a pitch is thrown. It is the player who did not come to bat who is declared out.

21. There is a runner at 1st. The eighth batter incorrectly takes the place of the proper batter, number seven, in the batter's box. The error is discovered by the opposing team and is reported to the plate umpire;

- (a) after two strikes, or
- (b) after he hits for a fly out, or safely hits, advancing R1 before the next pitch.
- (c) after a pitch to the number nine batter.

RULING: In (a) the number eight batter is replaced by the number seven batter, who assumes the count (two strikes). Any runs scored or bases advanced while the incorrect batter was at bat shall be legal.

(b) The "Out" stands, which is the #8 batter. The proper batter #7 is "Out". The next batter is #9 because #8 batted and was put "Out". If the #8 batter safely hit advancing R1 remove #8 batter from first and nullify the turn at bat. The proper batter #7 is out and the #8 batter will come to bat. R1 returns to first base.

(c) The turn at bat of the incorrect batter is legal. The runs scored, and bases run are legal and the next batter shall be the player who follows the incorrect batter. No one is called out and player(s) who have not batted simply miss their turn at bat.

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**BLOCKED BALL: various other blocked ball situations appear throughout this casebook**

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22. The batter hits a ground ball to the shortstop. The infielder overthrows 1st and the ball rolls up against the feet of a player standing in the dugout gate opening. Is the ball live and in play?

**RULING:** No. The umpire calls “Dead Ball” and awards the appropriate bases.

A blocked ball is a batted or thrown or pitched (FP) ball that is touched, stopped or handled by a person not engaged in the game, or touches any object which is not part of the official equipment or official playing field.

23. The batter hits a ground ball to the shortstop. The infielder overthrows 1st and the ball is fielded by the catcher who has one foot on the ground in out of play territory. Is the ball live and in play?

**RULING:** No. The umpire calls “Dead Ball” and awards the appropriate bases.

A batted or thrown or pitched (FP) ball that is touched by a defensive player who is in contact with the ground that is not part of the playing area is considered a blocked ball.

24. The batter hits a fly ball to the outfield near out of play territory. The outfielder attempts to make the catch but a spectator touches the ball in flight, while . . .

- (a) the ball is within the boundaries of the playing field, or  
(b) the ball is outside the boundaries of the playing field.

**RULING:** (a) Fan interference, the ball is dead “Dead Ball” the batter is out, if the fielder could have made the catch. Runners may be awarded the base or bases the umpire feels they would have achieved had there been no spectator interference.

Situation (a) would be considered a dead ball, foul ball, if the umpire felt the fielder could not make the catch, regardless of the spectator interference. Runners would return to the base held at the time of the pitch.

**NOTE:** When a spectator causes interference both the defensive and offensive team can be affected. The umpire may award runners bases he feels the runners could achieve had there been no interference. If no bases are awarded the runners return to the last base touched at the time of the interference.

(b) No spectator interference, regardless if the fielder could make the catch or not. Foul ball, “Dead Ball.” Runners return to last base touched at time of pitch and batter bats again with an additional strike.

In Slo-pitch the batter is “Out” if the foul ball is a third strike.

25. (a) A pitched ball, or (b) thrown ball, becomes unplayable because the ball gets caught up in the umpire’s uniform.

RULING: In both (a, b) the ball is dead, “Dead Ball”.

(FP) (a) runners are awarded one base from the time of the pitch.

(SP) (a) runners are not awarded a base.

(b) runners are advanced to the base or bases they would have reached, in the umpire’s judgment, had the ball not been lodged.

NOTE: An umpire should try to get the ball dislodged from his equipment and allow the defensive team to play the ball. If the defensive team flips the umpire the ball and he catches it and immediately throws it to the ground, the ball remains live.

26. A ball that has been batted makes contact with another ball which has rolled onto the playing field. The additional ball does not belong to either team.

RULING: The batted ball is a blocked ball and the ball is dead “Dead Ball”. The umpire shall award or not award the batter and other runners the base(s) they would have attained had the batted ball not been blocked. If there is a potential play on the BR then the BR would be out. If there is no potential play on the BR and the hit was a clear single, then the BR would be awarded 1st. If the BR would have attained more than one base on the batted ball then he would be awarded 2nd, 3rd or home.

CLARIFICATION: If the additional ball belonged to the offensive team and there was no potential play on the BR, the BR would be awarded 1<sup>st</sup> and all other runners would return to the last base occupied at the time of the dead ball declaration (unless forced to advance by the BR). If the additional ball belonged to the defensive team then it is a blocked ball and all runners are awarded two bases from the time of the pitch because the ball was a batted ball.

27. There is a runner at 1st with one out. The batter strikes out on the next pitched ball. The catcher, thinking there were three out, flips the ball to the plate umpire and starts to walk off the field. The plate umpire catches the ball and then immediately drops the ball to the ground. The offensive coach requests time and asks for a ruling.

RULING: (FP) The ball is live and runners may advance with liability to be put out. The umpire should not grant “Time” until the action is over. The umpire cannot cause interference in this situation. He did the right thing by putting the ball back into play.

If the umpire picked a ball up without the defensive team flipping it to him, the ball is dead. The offensive runners are advanced to the base the umpire feels they would have attained.

(SP) The batter is “Out” and the ball is dead after every pitched ball that is not hit.

NOTE: Umpires should get into the habit of never catching a ball thrown in their direction, even if there are truly three out. Gently slap the ball to the ground or let the ball fall to the ground untouched.

28. There is a runner at 1st with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground. The infielder scoops up the ball and throws it toward 1st in time to retire the BR. The first baseman, thinking there were three out, flips the ball to the base umpire and starts to walk off the field. The base umpire catches the ball and then immediately drops the ball to the ground. The offensive coach requests time and asks for a ruling.

RULING: Same ruling as previous question. No difference whether it involved a plate or base umpire.

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**Bunt: for more situations see Rule 7 - Batting**

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29. The batter (a) taps the ball so that it rolls slowly within the infield; or, (b) swings very slowly at the ball, hitting it so the ball rolls slowly within the infield.

RULING: In FP:  
(a) a bunt. The batted ball has been intentionally met with the bat.

(b) not considered a bunt.

In SP :

(a) a bunt. Bunting is not allowed in Slo-Pitch. The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, and the batter is “Out”.

(b) there is no penalty for taking a slow swing. A batter can intentionally hit a ground ball. Chopping at a pitched ball is not permitted.

30. (SP) The wind is blowing strong and the pitched ball drifts towards the batter who just stands in the batter’s box. The ball hits the bat which the batter was holding on his shoulder. The ball dribbles into fair territory. The surprised batter advances to 1st, while the shocked defence finally reacts, fields the ball but cannot throw the BR out at 1st. The defensive coach wants the BR called out for bunting the ball.

RULING: The umpire must judge whether the batter made any attempt to bunt the ball. In this situation (bat on shoulder) the batter did not exhibit any intention to bunt the ball and the play stands.



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**Catch: for more situations see Rule 8 –Batter-runner and Runner (carrying the ball out of play)**

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31. The batter hits a fly ball to the outfield or over the infield. The defensive player catches the ball in his glove or hand, but drops the ball when . . .
- (a) he falls to the ground, or
  - (b) he collides with another defensive player, or
  - (c) he collides into any fence.

**RULING:** All situations above are not considered legal catches.

These situations are not considered legal catches because defensive players would never intentionally fall to the ground, run into one another, or collide with a fence.

**INTERPRETATION:** A firm hold of the ball in either hand with absolute control of the ball and body determines a catch.

The key to whether a fielder held a ball long enough is associated with balance, and motion associated with an intended throw. When the fielder is not in control of their body, regardless of length of time with the ball, and they drop the ball before intending or planning to throw the ball, it is not a catch.

32. A line drive is caught by the outfielder who drops the ball after (a) leaving his feet on the catch and hitting the ground, or (b) colliding with another fielder.

**RULING:** No catch in both (a, b).

33. The fielder catches a fly ball or line drive in his hand(s) or glove, but drops the ball when he starts to throw the ball to another player.

**RULING:** This is a legal catch as long as the ball was in control but then dropped in a motion associated with an intended throw.

34. There is a runner at 3rd with none out. The batter hits the next pitched ball in the air to the outfield. The outfielder misjudges the fly ball and the ball hits him on the shoulder and deflects into the air towards another outfielder and is caught before it touches the ground. R3 tags up and advances as soon as the ball hit the outfielder in the shoulder but before the ball was securely held in the glove of the other outfielder.

**RULING:** This is a legal advance by R3 as he may leave base as soon as the ball is touched by a defensive player.

35. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air to right field. Two outfielders converge and the sinking line drive ball falls into the right fielder's glove just before the two collide. Both outfielders' fall to the ground and the right fielder's glove comes off his hand and falls to the ground, with the ball still firmly in the glove. The center fielder picks the ball from the glove. Is the batter out?

RULING: The batter is not out. The right fielder did not prove secure possession when the glove came off his hand.

36. Two infielders attempt to field a fly ball. The ball hits one of the fielders on the foot and, while still in the air, is caught by the other fielder.

RULING: The batter-runner is “Out”. This is a legal catch because the ball was caught before it touched the ground, or before it touched any object, other than a fielder.

37. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground toward the shortstop. The shortstop scoops up the batted ball and throws it toward 1st. The infielder at 1st reaches for a low throw from the shortstop and ends up squeezing the ball between his arm and body. The batter reaches 1st, after the ball is clamped in this manner, but before the fielder gets the ball in his hand or glove. Is the batter out at 1st?

RULING: The batter-runner is “Safe” at 1st.

In force out situations, trapping the ball against your body or on the ground is not considered a legal catch or having possession of the ball.

NOTE: The ball must be in the grasp of the glove hand or bare hand to “be considered controlled”:

If the fielder quickly lifts the ball from the ground or from his body, with either hand to indicate possession, before the runner touches the base, then he would be ruled “Out” by the umpire.

38. The batter hits a fly ball to the outfield. The outfielder touches the ball momentarily and the ball bounces against her body, where she eventually grabs it in her hand or glove before it hits the ground. Is the batter out?

RULING: Yes, the batter is “Out”. The batter would be declared “Out” as soon as the outfielder has a firm grasp (possession) of the ball and has control of her body. Runners are entitled to advance on the first touch of the ball.

39. The batter hits a long fly ball to the outfield fence. The outfielder leaps to make the catch and falls over the fence into the stands. Is the batter out?

RULING: The batter is “Out” if, in the umpire’s judgment, the outfielder (a) first touched the fly ball while any part of her body was still in playable territory; and, (b) made the catch (possession) before she contacted any part of the area beyond the fence.

The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, and any runners shall be awarded one base from the last base touched at the time the fielder entered dead ball territory.

40. While attempting to catch a fly ball near the dead ball line, the fielder (a) makes the catch with one foot in playable territory and one partially on the

dead ball line, or (b) makes the catch with either foot touching the ground entirely in dead ball territory.

**RULING:** In (a) a good catch, because the fielder has not completely entered dead ball territory.

(b) no catch should be ruled when one foot is touching the ground entirely in dead ball territory.

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**Catcher's Box: for more situations see Rule 2 - The Playing Field and Rule 7 - Batting**

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41. The catcher is in position to receive a pitch. Prior to the pitch, one of the catcher's feet is inside the catcher's box. Part of the other foot is touching the line and part is extended outside the line.

**RULING:** The foot, partially outside the line, is considered to be within the lines of the catcher's box.

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**Charged Conference: for more situations see Rule 5 (offence, defence) - The Game**

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42. The defence asks for and is granted "Time" by the umpire. The coach enters the playing field to talk with the shortstop. Is this a charged conference?

**RULING:** Yes!

A charged defensive conference occurs when the defensive team requests time for any reason and a representative from the dugout enters the playing field and gives a message to any defensive player or a player goes to the dugout for instruction. In the latter situation, "Time" does not have to be called.

**NOTE:** In SP, a defensive conference will also be charged if 1 or more players leave their position to meet and delay the resumption of play.

43. A coach from the dugout requests and is granted time. He crosses the foul line and confers with F1. In the same half inning the coach again calls time and proceeds to the pitcher's circle to confer with F1. After the coach has returned to the dugout, the umpire approaches the coach and informs him that due to the second conference charged against this pitcher, the pitcher must be removed from the pitching position.

**RULING:** The umpire has not ruled correctly.

(FP) During the first seven innings of a game, the coach is entitled to have three defensive conferences (5 in U14) to speak to any defensive player. After each subsequent conference, the current pitcher will be declared an illegal pitcher and is removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.

(SP) A team is allowed three defensive conferences charged against each pitcher during the game. A fourth charged conference against a pitcher will result in him/her being declared an illegal pitcher and removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.

44. The offence requests and is granted “time” by the umpire. The third base coach yells at the runner on second to run hard for home if the batter gets a single. Is this a charged conference?

**RULING:** The offensive coach is charged with having a conference because the offensive representative requested time to convey a message (confer) with the runner.

**NOTE:** It is not a charged offensive conference when (a) the team rep confers with a batter and/or runner(s) during a defensive charged conference and is ready to play when the defence is, and (b) the pitcher is putting on a warm-up jacket.

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**Chopped Ball (SP): for more situations see Rule 7 - Batting**

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45. The batter chops downward on a pitched ball. Is this legal?

**RULING:** The batter’s swing is not legal. The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, and the batter is “Out”. All runners return to last base touched at time of pitch.

The motion of the bat determines if the ball is being chopped. It is not the motion of the ball (i.e. ball bounces high into the air after striking the ground, or ball goes directly into the air, as in a pop-up or fly ball) that determines chopping.

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**Coach: for more situations see Rule 4 – Coaches, Players & Substitutes and Rule 8 – Batter-runner and Runner**

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46. The manager of the batting team would normally be coaching the team from the third base coach’s box but is busy carrying out first aid on one of the players. The team statistician takes her place in the third base coach’s box with a pen, scorebook and counter in hand. Is this legal?

**RULING:** Yes. A coach is a member of the team at bat who takes a position within the lines of the coach’s box, on the field, to direct the players running the bases. Possessions such as a pen/pencil, scorebook, and counter are permitted.

**TIP:** The use of a counter, by a coach on the field, does not give the coach the right to dispute apparent differences between their count and the plate umpire’s count. The plate umpire is the only official count on the field. Only the plate umpire, in consultation with partners, could change apparent errors.

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**Commitment Line (Co-Ed Slo-Pitch): for more situations see Rule 2 - The Playing Field**

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47. There is a runner on 2nd. The batter hits a pitched ball for a single. R2 is attempting to score and hustles around 3rd, touching the base, and crosses the commitment line. The outfielder's throw is caught by a defensive player, who is in contact with home plate, before R2 can cross home plate or the safe line.

**RULING:** R2 is "Out". The defensive player is not required to tag R2.

The commitment line is drawn perpendicular to the third base foul line and is twenty-one feet from home plate. A runner has committed their motion toward home as soon as they have one foot completely over the line and in contact with the ground.

**INTERPRETATION:** Runners who have (a) not crossed the line, or (b) runners who cross the line but must still tag up on a caught fly ball, or (c) runners who cross the line but must still touch 3rd, may return to 3rd without liability to be put out at home.

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**Crow Hop (Fast Pitch and Orthodox)**

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48. (Orthodox, Male FP U14 and under, Female FP U16 and under) The pitcher legally pushes off the pitcher's rubber and drags the pivot foot in his/her motion to pitch. The pivot or pushing foot is replanted, the pitcher pushes again with the pivot foot, and subsequently delivers the ball.

**RULING:** The pitcher has committed an illegal act and the umpires should call an "Illegal Pitch" and signal a "Delayed Dead Ball". Replanting or establishing a second starting point for the pivot foot is a "Crow Hop".

49. (Male FP U16 and over, Female FP U19 and over) Pitcher legally leaps from the rubber, lands, and with a continuous motion releases the ball. As part of the continuous motion, the pitcher's pivot foot follows through. Is this a crow hop?

**RULING:** This is not a crow hop. When the pitcher leaps, the continuous motion of the pitch will often cause the pivot foot to follow through after landing.

**EMPHASIS:** A crow hop is when a pitcher lands then pushes off from the pivot foot to begin the pitch.

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**Dead Ball: for more situations see Rule 9 - Dead Ball or Ball In Play**

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50. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground toward the second baseman. The infielder scoops up the ball and throws it wildly toward 1st. The thrown ball goes out of play.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, and the batter-runner is awarded two bases from the time of the throw.

**COMMENT:** There are numerous situations in the casebook which involve the ball becoming dead and not in play. They involve cases such as “no pitch”, a ball outside established playing area, a blocked ball, time being granted, illegally batted ball, foul ball not caught, bunting or chopping the ball in Slo-Pitch, batted ball hitting a batter or runner, various types of interference, leaving a base too soon, obstructed runner being declared out, and coach’s assistance.

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**Delayed Dead Ball: for more situations see Rule 9 - Dead Ball or Ball In Play**

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51. The catcher obstructs the batter’s swing at a pitched ball. The batter manages to hit the pitched ball, on the ground, to the outfield. The batter-runner advances to and remains at 1st.

**RULING:** Delayed dead ball signal, verbal “Obstruction” call by the plate umpire, and the ball remains live. The obstruction is nullified as the BR obtained first base.

**NOTE:** There are situations in Fast pitch and Slo-pitch when a violation of a rule occurs, and the ball remains live until the conclusion of the play. These are: (a) an illegal pitch, (b) catcher’s obstruction, (c) plate umpire interference, (d) obstruction, and (e) batted or thrown ball hit with detached equipment.

Once the entire play is completed in a), c) and e), the proper enforcement should be made. In b) catcher’s obstruction, and d) obstruction the play continues until the obstructed runner is put out or the play is complete.

Plate Umpire Interference is only applicable in FP.

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**Dislodged Base: for more situations see Rule 8 – Batter-runner and Runners**

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52. There is a runner at 1st. The batter gets an infield hit, advancing R1 to 2nd. R1 slides into 2nd, dislodging the base and sending it six feet from the peg. The infielder now tags the runner who is scrambling toward the dislodged base. Is the runner out?

**RULING:** The runner is not out and the ball remains live. Since R1 had already obtained 2nd safely (not tagged until after the base became dislodged) then the scrambling action of R1, toward the dislodged base, should not be considered as an attempt to advance to the next base, but merely an attempt to remain safe.

**RULE:** When a runner dislodges a base, from its proper position, he and succeeding runners are not compelled to follow a base unreasonably out of position. A sliding runner or succeeding runner may simply remain or touch the proper location of where the base should be in order to be considered safe.

Should a runner decide to go out of his way and stand or touch a base, dislodged from its proper position, then this is acceptable as well.

The movements of the runner will determine whether, in the umpire's judgment, the runner is attempting to advance to the next base or whether he is merely attempting to find the proper location. Timing of the tag will determine if a runner is "Safe" or "Out".

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**Ejection: for more situations see Rule 4 - Players and Substitutes**

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53. The plate umpire is notified by the offended team that an opposition player is an illegal re-entry.

**RULING:** The illegally re-entered player and the manager are ejected from the game and ruled ineligible to participate.

**CLARIFICATION:** An illegal substitute is not ejected from the game, but rather removed and ruled ineligible.

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**Fair Ball: for more situations see Rule 7 - Batting**

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54. The batter swings at the pitched ball, hitting the underside of it. The ball lands in fair or foul territory, between home and third base, and spins backward toward home plate. The catcher lets the ball roll untouched, believing it will spin foul. The ball comes to rest on home plate.

**RULING:** A batted ball coming to rest on home plate is a fair ball. The ball is live and in play.

The ball landing in fair or foul territory has no significance in this situation, because it landed between home and 3rd, and not beyond third base.

55. A batter hits a pop fly ball between 1B and 2B, and it falls untouched to the ground about six feet beyond the base line. The ball has backspin and rolls across the foul line about ten feet from home plate, where F3 is the first to touch it. The batter advances to 2B on the play.

**Ruling:** This is a fair ball, as it first hit the ground beyond the bases in fair territory. Leave the batter at 2B with a double.

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**Fake Tag: for more situations see Rule 8 – Batter-runner and Runner**

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56. There is a runner on 2nd when the batter hits a pitched ball for a single to the outfield. R2 advances quickly to 3rd, but hears the third baseman slap

his glove, and slows up going into 3rd. After all play has ceased, R2 notices that the ball is not in the fielder's glove, but rather in the possession of the pitcher, and the umpire has called "Obstruction".

**NOTE:** This is a fake tag (slapping of the glove with the hand or pounding glove on the ground) and is a form of obstruction. A warning should be given to both teams' coaches/ managers about the next fake tag. The third baseman would be ejected if the runner is injured while sliding due to the fake tag.

A fielder, who does not have the ball, shall not impede the progress of an advancing or returning runner to a base. The runner does not have to stop or slide. Slowing down when a fake tag is administered (carried out) constitutes obstruction.

**NOTE:** A fake tag occurs when a fielder, without the ball, deceives the runner by impeding his progress (i.e., causing him to slide, slow down or stop running). Obstruction is called when a fake tag is made. The umpire shall give a delayed dead ball signal and let the play continue to its completion. The obstructed runner and each runner affected by the obstruction will be awarded a base or bases he would have reached if there had not been any obstruction. At the completion of the play a fake tag should always result in a warning to both teams. Continued fake tags will result in an ejection. In flagrant cases where the sliding player is hurt, the offending player can be ejected without warning.

If a fielder fakes a tag but the runner continues on to the next base without sliding or breaking stride, there is not a rule violation. In this case, the progress was not impeded. A warning should still be given.

57. There is a runner at 1st when the batter hits a pitched ball for a single to right field. R1 attempts to go to 3rd. The catcher backs up the play at 3rd. The third baseman fakes a tag on R1 coming into 3rd causing her to slide. The catcher retrieves the throw from F9 and tags R1 while she is off base.

**RULING:** "Obstruction" is called and signalled (delayed dead ball) by the umpire when the third baseman fakes the tag. The ball is dead "Dead Ball" as soon as R1 is called out. R1 is awarded 3rd because she would not have made it home safely. Warn both coaches/managers that the next fake tag will result in an ejection. The third baseman would be ejected if the runner is injured while sliding due to the fake tag.

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### **Force Out: for more situations see Rule 8 – Batter Runner and Runner**

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58. There is a runner on 1st with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground toward the infielder at first. The fielder scoops up the ball and tags R1, who is still on the base, and then steps on the bag.



RULING: This is a double play. R1 and the batter-runner are out.

R1 was forced to go to 2nd (lost his right to 1st) because the batter became a batter-runner.

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**Foul Ball: for more situations see Rule 7 - Batting**

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59. A batted ball lands fair between 1st and home. The ball spins into foul territory where it is touched by the infielder.

RULING: The batted ball is a “Foul Ball” because the ball did not pass 1<sup>st</sup> and was initially touched by the infielder in foul territory.

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**Foul Tip: for more situations see Rule 7 - Batting**

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60. The batter has a count of one strike. The batter makes contact with the next pitched ball. The ball goes directly from the bat to the catcher’s glove or hand and not higher than the batter’s head.

RULING: (FP) A foul tip and strike two on the batter. The ball remains live and in play.

The ball went directly from the bat to the catcher’s hand(s), not higher than the batter’s head and was legally caught.

(SP) The ball is dead and strike two on the batter.

NOTE: A batted ball is not a foul tip unless the ball first touched the catcher’s hand or glove.

61. A batted ball goes directly from the bat, and (a) touches the catcher’s glove or hand and deflects into the catcher or his equipment, or (b) deflects off the catcher and makes contact with the umpire. In both situations the ball is eventually held in the hand or glove of the catcher before it touches the ground.

RULING: (FP) in (a) a foul tip and a strike on the batter. The ball remains live and in play.

(b) a foul ball and a strike on the batter. The ball is dead and not in play.

(SP) In both (a, b) the ball is dead and a strike on the batter. Runners may not advance.

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**Helmet: for more situations see Rule 3 - Equipment**

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62. The catcher asks the plate umpire if it is legal to wear a helmet that does not have either a peak or ear flaps (a skull cap).

RULING: The helmet is legal for the catcher but not legal for the batters. The batters must wear a helmet that has two ear flaps and shall be the type which has safety features equal to or greater than those provided by the full plastic cap with padding on the inside.

A damaged helmet is illegal equipment and must be removed.

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**Illegal Bat: for more situations see Rule 3 - Equipment,  
Rule 7 - Batting**

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63. The batter is using a bat (a) weighing 39 ounces, or (b) that is metal with a wooden handle or (c) does not meet the Softball Canada standards or d) is on the USA Softball banned bat list and is not WBSC approved.

**RULING:** In situations (a), (b) and (c) the batter is using an illegal bat.

Any player found using an illegal bat would be called out, if noticed by the umpire or the defensive team, if noticed during her turn at bat and before the next batter takes their first pitch, legal or illegal.

In situation (d) the bat is treated as an “altered bat” and the batter would also be ejected from the game.

**NOTE:** The umpire(s) must visually inspect all bats before the game, and prohibit the use of any illegal bats in the game by informing the team manager specific bats are not to be used and why. Damage to bats, such as a torn hand grip, that is quickly fixed, may be repaired and used as long as the bat meets the specifications of a legal bat.

Continued use of a bat after it has been removed by the umpire, would mean the player would be out and ejected.

Umpires would automatically rule a batter out, and the bat removed from play, if the umpire notices an illegal bat being used by the batter when the batter is in the batter’s box. In all other cases (i.e. before the batter enters the box, after a legal or illegal pitch to the next batter, or in between innings), the plate umpire will simply remove the bat from play, with no penalty to the offence.

**CLARIFICATION:** Bats must conform to the Softball Canada standards and they must be on either the USA Softball approved bat list or the WBSC approved bat list. Go to [www.usasoftball.org](http://www.usasoftball.org) for the approved USA Softball bat list and to the WBSC web site for the WBSC list.

SP only: All bats must be listed on the current USA Softball (2000 or 2004 certification stamps only) or WBSC. Approved Bat lists, or must have a new USSSA certification stamp and not be on the USSSA withdrawn/non-compliant list.

Rock resin and pine tar may be legally applied to the bat handle.

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**Illegal Batted Ball: for more situations see Rule 3 - Equipment and Rule 7 - Batting**

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64. The batter's bat makes contact with a pitched ball while her entire foot is out of the batter's box and in contact with the ground. The batted ball goes fair or foul.

RULING: The ball is dead, "Dead Ball", and the batter is "Out" for illegally batting the ball. It does not matter whether the ball goes fair or foul.

65. The batter is standing in the batter's box and steps on home plate to avoid being hit by the pitch. The pitched ball accidentally strikes the bat of the batter while his foot is on home plate.

RULING: The ball is dead "Dead Ball" and the batter is "Out" for making contact with a pitched ball while standing outside the batter's box. No intent to hit the ball is necessary.

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**Illegal Caught Ball: for more situations see Rule 8 Batter Runner and Runner**

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66. The batter hits a pitched ball to the outfield. The fielder removes his cap and controls the ball with his cap before the ball touches the ground in fair territory.

RULING: Considered an illegally caught ball and the ball remains live with the umpire calling "No Catch!". This is a delayed dead ball and once the play has ended the batter is awarded three bases from the time of the pitch unless he has attained home.

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**Illegal Pitcher: for more situations see Rule 6 - Pitching Regulations (SP, FP, Orthodox)**

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67. (FP, Orthodox only) The pitcher is removed from the pitching position in the fourth inning after four defensive charged conferences. The same pitcher returns to pitch in the sixth inning. The offensive team protests to the plate umpire after the batter grounds out to the first baseman.

RULING: The pitcher is an illegal pitcher. The player is ejected and ruled ineligible to participate. The offensive coach would be given the option of taking the result of the play or having the batter bat again with the last pitch nullified. Note that the entire turn at bat is not nullified.

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**Illegal Player: for more situations see Rule 4 – Coaches, Players and Substitutes**

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68. A player enters the game to run, bat, or play defence. The coach or player does not report the change to the plate umpire. The offended team

appeals the substitution to the plate umpire after one pitch is thrown to the batter.

**RULING:** The substitution is an illegal player. The player is removed from the game by the umpire and ruled ineligible to participate as a player.

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### **Ineligible Player: for more situations see Rule 4 –Coaches, Players and Substitutes**

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69. (FP only) A substitute who has already been legally in the game re-enters the game. The offended team appeals to the plate umpire that the player is an illegal re-entry.

The player and manager are ejected from the game by the umpire and ruled ineligible to participate as a player or coach.

**RULING:** Other team members previously removed from the game by the umpire also fall under the heading of ineligible participants.

**RULE:** The use of an ineligible participant or player will create a forfeited game.

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### **Infield Fly: for more situations see Rule 7 - Batting**

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70. There are runners on 1st and 2nd with none out when the batter hits a pop fly above the infield. The infielder catches the ball and the runners remain at their respective bases.

**RULING:** The plate or base umpire should rule the batted ball an infield fly.

**RULE:** The infield fly rule is in effect when:

- (a) There are runners at 1st and 2nd, or 1st, 2nd, and 3rd.
  - (b) There are less than two out.
  - (c) The batted ball is a fair fly ball - not including a bunt or line drive.
  - (d) The fly ball may be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort.
  - (e) An outfielder positions themselves in the infield and catches the ball with ordinary effort.
71. The umpire calls, "Infield fly, the batter is out if fair", but the ball curves over to foul territory.

**RULING:** The batter is not "Out", unless the foul ball is caught. This is not an infield fly but an ordinary foul.

If the ball falls untouched onto foul territory and then rolls "Fair", where it comes to rest or is touched, then the batted ball is judged an infield fly and the batter is "Out" on the

infield fly rule. Also, if the ball is judged to be fair and the batter-runner is out on the infield fly, runners may advance at their own risk.

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**Inning: for more situations see Rule 5 - The Game**

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72. The home team scores the winning run in the bottom of the last inning. R2 scored the winning run, but failed to touch 3rd. All defensive players have left the field, when the shortstop returns,
- (a) and asks for the ball from the umpire, or
  - (b) retrieves the ball from the ground, and appeals R2 missed 3rd.

**RULING:** Too late for the appeal in both (a) and (b) as all defensive players had left fair territory.

**CLARIFICATION:** If teams are still on the field, umpires should not leave the field too quickly to receive any possible appeals.

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**Interference: for more interference situations see Rule 7 - Batting and Rule 8 – Batter-runner and Runner**

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Interference is the act of an offensive player or team member that impedes, hinders or confuses a defensive player attempting to execute a play. It may be in the form of physical contact, verbal distraction, or any type of distraction that would hinder a fielder in the execution of the play. Defensive players must be given the opportunity to field the ball anywhere on the playing field or throw the ball without being hindered.

- A. Runner interference includes a runner or batter-runner that interferes with a fielder; a runner or batter-runner who is hit by a fair untouched batted ball; and a thrown ball which contacts any illegal loose equipment, detached part of a uniform or miscellaneous item left in playable territory by the offensive team.
- 1. When a runner interferes with a fielder, the umpire must determine if the interference occurred before or after the runner who interfered was put out and then apply the proper rule.
  - 2. When a runner is hit by a fair batted ball, it is interference if it occurred before the ball passed an infielder (excluding the pitcher) or after the ball passed an infielder (if another fielder had a chance to make an out), and provided the runner was not in contact with the base. It is not interference if the batted ball touched or was touched by a player before it hit a runner, or if the runner was standing in foul territory.
  - 3. A runner could be standing on a base and a defensive player bumps the runner while watching the flight of the ball. If the defensive player fails to make a catch on a fly ball, it is the umpire's judgment whether the interference should or should not be called. The rule provides that a runner must vacate any space needed by a fielder to make a play on a batted ball, unless the runner has contact with a legally occupied

base when the hindrance occurs. In this case, the runner should not be called out unless the hindrance is intentional.

- B. Batter interference occurs while the batter is at bat and before he hits the ball. It occurs in FP when the batter intentionally interferes with the catcher's throw on an attempted steal or when he interferes with the catcher on a play at the plate. The batter's box is not sanctuary for the batter when a play is being made at the plate. It could also occur when a batter releases his bat in such a manner that it hits the catcher and prevents him from making a play. If the batter merely drops his bat and the catcher trips over it, there is no interference.
- C. On-deck batters may be charged with interference if they interfere with a throw or a fielder's opportunity to make an out on a fly ball.
- D. Coach's interference occurs when a base coach runs toward home and draws a throw, when he interferes with a fielder attempting to catch or throw a ball, or when he helps a runner. The coach's box is not sanctuary.
- E. Spectator interference occurs when a spectator enters the field and interferes with a play or reaches onto the field from the stands and prevents a fielder from catching a fly ball in the field of play. It is not interference if the fielder reaches into the stands. The field belongs to the players and the stands to the spectators.
- F. Umpire interference occurs (FP and SP) when an umpire is hit by a fair untouched batted ball, before it passes an infielder (excluding the pitcher). It is umpire interference when the ball has passed an infielder and another fielder has a chance to make an out. The BR is awarded 1st (exception to statement that someone must be called out for interference). In FP when an umpire interferes with a catcher's attempt to put out a stealing runner, it is interference only if the runner is not put out, in which case the runner is returned to his previous base. In no other situations is umpire interference ruled.

Whenever a player or coach cause's interference, the ball is dead, someone must be called out, and each other runner must return to last base touched at the time of either the pitch or the interference.

- 73. There is a runner on 1st. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground toward the second baseman. The ball bounces off the infielder's chest, and as the second baseman reaches down to pick up the ball, R1 collides with the second baseman in the baseline.

RULING: The ball is dead, "Dead Ball", and R1 is "Out" for "Interference". The batter-runner is awarded 1st.

A defensive player has the right to play the ball anytime and anywhere within the playing field. If the base umpire rules that R1's interference is an obvious attempt to prevent a double play, then the batter-runner would also be declared "Out".

- 74. There is a runner at 1st with none out. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground toward the shortstop. The shortstop scoops up the batted ball and

throws it to the second baseman who is covering 2nd. The throw is not in time for the force out on R1. R1 grabs the second baseman preventing him from making a throw to 1st. What is the call?

**RULING:** The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, and R1 is “Out” for “Interference”. The batter-runner is awarded 1st.

75. There is a runner at 3rd. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground toward the shortstop. The shortstop scoops up the batted ball and throws it to the catcher. The throw is in time and the catcher is holding the ball and waiting to apply the tag on R3. R3 remains on his feet and deliberately, with great force crashes, into the catcher. What is the call?

**RULING:** The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, and R3 is “Out” for “Interference”. R3 is also ejected from the game for the flagrant act. The batter-runner is awarded 1st.

**NOTE:** In order to prevent a deliberate crash ruling, the runner can slide, jump over the defender holding the ball, go around the defender (watch three foot path), or return to previous base touched.

When a runner is called out for deliberately crashing into a fielder holding the ball, the ball becomes dead. Each runner must return to last base touched at the time of the interference. If the runner deliberately crashes into a fielder, before he is put out, and in the judgment of the umpire it is an attempt to break up an obvious double play, the immediate succeeding or following runner would also be declared out. If the deliberate crash occurs after the runner is called out, the runner closest to home plate will be declared out. If an obstructed runner deliberately crashes into a fielder holding the ball, the obstruction call is ignored and the runner is called out.

76. There is a runner at 2nd with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground toward the shortstop. R2 advances to 3rd and jumps over the ball to avoid being hit. The shortstop dives for the ball but makes no play and the umpire makes no call. The defensive coach questions why there was no interference call on R2. The umpires get together to have a conference.

**RULING:** Unless R2 stopped the fielder from reaching the ball it is not interference. A runner may run around, in front or behind, or jump over a ball or around a fielder to avoid hitting the fielder or the ball.

**NOTE:** Interference should never be called from a conference by an umpire if he saw the play. The call should only be reversed if he did not see the play and his partner did. When you see interference, hesitate and then loudly call “Dead Ball” and signal to sell the call. Interference must be called immediately. Do not wait for a conference.

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**Leaping: for more situations see Rule 6 - Pitching Regulations (FP, SP, Orthodox)**

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77. In the pitching motion, the pitcher hops off the pitcher's plate in such a manner that the pivot foot is not level with the ground but instead is airborne.

NEW RULING: The leap is not legal in all FP Minor up to and including U14, Orthodox FP and Slo-Pitch. The pitcher may push off from the pitcher's plate but do so in a dragging motion. The leap is legal in all FP U16 and above.

(SP) The pitcher must stay within the pitching chute until the ball is released

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**Legal Touch: for more situations see Rule 8 – Batter-runner and Runner**

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78. There is a runner at 1st with none out. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground toward the second baseman. The infielder scoops up the ball and (a) tags the advancing runner with the glove while the ball is in his bare hand, or (b) tags 2nd with his bare hand while the ball is in the glove hand and prior to R1 reaching 2nd.

RULING: In (a) R1 is "Safe", (b) R1 is "Out" on the force out.

RULE: To make an "Out" on a runner . . .

- (a) The fielder, with the ball in the glove or hand, must touch the runner with the hand which holds the ball.
- (b) The fielder, with the ball in the glove or hand, may touch the base with any part of their body when making a force out.

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**Line Drive**

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79. The batter hits a pitched ball sharply, pointedly, quickly, briskly and/or directly into the playing field.

RULING: The batter has hit a line drive fly ball. Depending on the distance the hit ball travels, a line drive fly ball will take less time to reach the ground than a normal or routine fly ball.

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**Obstruction: for more situations see Rule 8 Batter Runner and Runner -**

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Obstruction is the act of a fielder not in possession of the ball or not in the act of fielding a batted ball that impedes the progress of a BR or runner who is legally running the bases.

When obstruction occurs, whether a play is being made on a runner or not, the umpire will declare obstruction and signal a delayed dead ball. The ball will remain live and if the obstructed runner is put out prior to reaching the base he would have reached had there not been obstruction, a "Dead



Ball” is called and the obstructed runner, and each other runner affected by the obstruction, will be awarded the base(s) he would have reached, in the umpire’s judgment, had there not been obstruction.

If a preceding runner is on the base the obstructed runner would have made, then the obstructed runner will be awarded that base and the runner occupying it will be entitled to the next base without liability to be put out.

An obstructed runner may never be called out between the two bases where he/she is obstructed. If tagged between the same two bases, the obstructed runner would either be awarded the forward base or returned to the last base touched.

“A player cannot be called out between the two bases he is obstructed,” does not pertain in three circumstances.

1. If the obstructed runner is put out for another violation between the two bases.

Examples are: a player who is called out on appeal for missing a base, leaving a base too early on a caught fly ball. In the case of a player who is obstructed returning to tag up or retouch a base left too soon or a base missed, the runner is not obligated to touch the base due to the obstruction.

2. A player that causes interference after the obstruction. The obstruction is ignored and the player is out on the interference call.
3. An obstructed runner who returns to a base after being obstructed and who is put out after a play is made on another runner.

If an obstructed runner is put out after passing the base he would have reached had there not been obstruction, he is running at his own risk and, if tagged, would be called out. The ball remains live. When a runner is obstructed during a rundown, a delayed dead ball is called. If the runner is tagged out after being obstructed, the ball is dead, and he is awarded the base (in the direction) he is running to when he was obstructed. If the ball is overthrown after the obstruction, the runner may advance.

The rule of thumb for placement of other runners is; if the runner has advanced over half way, he is allowed to advance to the next base. Likewise, if the runner has not reached half way, he must return to the previous base.

Catcher obstruction is a delayed dead ball call. If the batter hits the ball and becomes a runner and all other runners advance at least one base, the obstruction is nullified. If the batter does not reach 1st or if one other runner does not advance at least one base, the manager of the offensive team has the option of taking the result of the play or awarding the batter 1st and advancing other runners only if they are forced because of the award to the BR.

80. The catcher obstructs the batter's swing at a pitched ball. The batted ball is grounded toward the shortstop, who throws the batter-runner out at 1st.

RULING: "Obstruction" is called and a delayed dead ball signalled by the plate umpire. Since the batter-runner did not advance one base safely, the coach has the option of having the obstruction penalty enforced (BR is awarded 1st) or taking the result of the play (the BR is out).

81. There is a runner at 2nd. The batter hits a pitched ball for a single. R2 touches 3rd and then is impeded by the third baseman. R2 is thrown out on a close play at home plate.

RULING: "Obstruction" is called and signalled (delayed dead ball) by the umpire. As soon as R2 is played on (tagged) the umpire calls "Dead Ball", and awards R2 home plate.

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**On Deck Batter: for more situations see Rule 7 - Batting and Rule 8 – Batter-Runner and Runner**

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82. The number six hitter in the batting order or line-up is starting his turn at bat. The number eight hitter wishes to get in some extra practice swings and moves into the on deck circle. Is this allowed?

RULING: The number eight batter would not be allowed to use the on deck circle. The only offensive player allowed to use the on deck circle would be the batter whose name follows the name of the batter taking their turn at bat. In this case the on deck batter is the number seven player in the order.

83. The on deck batter goes to the other team's on-deck circle area to take his practice swings.

RULING: This is legal for all SP and FP.

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**Outfield: for more situations see Rule 2 - The Playing Field**

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84. The batter hits a pitched ball over the infield. The batted ball lands untouched mid-way and slightly beyond the direct line between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base. The spinning ball rolls into foul territory between home and 3rd. The catcher picks the ball up while it is in foul territory.

RULING: The batted ball is a fair ball. The ball landed untouched to the ground beyond the baseline and between the foul lines.

RULE: For the purpose of a fair or foul ball, the outfield is defined as the portion of the field which is outside the diamond formed by the baselines and within the foul lines beyond 1st and 3rd, and the boundaries of the grounds.

85. There are runners at 1st and 2nd with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air above fair territory. The fly ball is just beyond the reach of the second baseman, who has to back pedal rapidly to have any attempt

at the catch. The infielder (a) misses the ball or (b) the outfielder makes the catch.

**RULING:** The batter-runner is (a) safe, or (b) out. This situation is not an infield fly because the ball was hit to the outfield and the infielder could not catch the batted ball with ordinary effort.

**RULE:** For the purpose of an infield fly, the outfield is defined as the area of the field not normally covered by an infielder which is outside the diamond formed by the baselines and within the foul lines beyond 1st and 3rd, and the boundaries of the grounds.

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**Over slide: for more situations see Rule 8 – Batter Runner and Runner**

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86. (FP) R1 attempts to steal 2nd and loses contact with the bag because his momentum carried him beyond the base. R1 is then tagged with the ball while off the base.

**RULING:** R2 is “Out”. Losing contact with a base causes a runner to be in jeopardy.

A batter-runner may over slide 1st on their principal attempt without being in jeopardy of being put out if they immediately return to 1st and do not make any motion or attempt to advance toward 2nd.

**INTERPRETATION:** A runner is considered attempting to continue to 2nd when the runner makes a motion to go to 2nd, steps in the direction of 2nd, or makes any motion which is meant to deceive the defence or draw a throw. After over-running 1st, the batter-runner may turn left or right to go back to 1st.

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**Overthrow: for more situations see Rule 8 – Batter-runner and Runner**

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87. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground toward the third baseman. The infielder scoops up the batted ball and throws it wildly toward 1st. The thrown ball (a) lands in foul territory and rolls out of play, (b) lands in the bleachers, or (c) makes contact with the manager who is standing at the opening of the bench area.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, and the batter-runner is awarded 2nd.

The play is described as an overthrow, because the ball is thrown from one fielder to another, in an effort to retire a runner who has not yet reached base or is off base, and the ball goes beyond the boundary lines of the playing field, or becomes blocked (situation C).

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**Pitch: for more situations see Rule 6 - Pitching Regulations (SP, FP, Orthodox)**

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88. The pitcher, while in possession of the ball and on the pitcher's plate, comes to a full and complete stop. The pitcher then goes through a legal wind-up and releases the ball toward the batter.

What part of the pitcher's action is considered the pitch?

**RULING:** The pitch is the act performed by the pitcher in throwing the ball to the batter.

The ball is considered a pitch from the time one hand is taken off the ball (FP) or any motion is made to deliver the ball up until the time the batter hits the ball, the catcher catches the ball, the ball becomes blocked or goes out of play or (SP) when the ball makes contact with the ground.

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**Pitcher's Circle: for more situations see Rule 6 - Pitching Regulations (FP, Orthodox)**

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89. There is one out. The next batter is in the batter's box waiting and the ball is dead. The pitcher has one foot entirely outside the pitcher's circle with the ball in her possession. Should the plate umpire signal and call "Play Ball"?

**RULING:** No!

(FP) Like the catcher's box, the lines of pitcher's circle are considered within the circle. In this situation the pitcher clearly has one foot outside the circle. The umpire must wait until the pitcher has both feet within the lines of the circle to put the ball in play.

**EXCEPTION:** In Slo-Pitch there is no pitcher's circle. The ball is dead after every pitch or when "Time" is called after the ball is returned to the infield and/or all play has stopped.

90. There is a runner at 2nd. The batter hits a pitched ball on a line directly at the pitcher. The pitcher catches the line drive and R2 (a) remains at second, or (b) is off second and one step toward 3rd.

**RULING:** R2 in (a) is allowed to move off base and continue toward 3rd or stop and then either advance or return to 2nd. In (b) R2 is allowed to return and stay at 2nd or tag up and then step back off 2nd and continue toward 3rd or stop and then either advance or return to 2nd.

**NOTE:** When a batted ball is caught by the pitcher in the eight foot circle the runner(s) are not governed by the eight foot circle rule.

When a runner is legitimately off his base after a pitch, or as a result of a batter completing a turn at bat, the runner must immediately (2-3 seconds) attempt to advance to the next base or return to the base left while the pitcher has the ball

within the eight foot radius of the pitcher's plate. The responsibility is completely on the runner. There is no obligation on the pitcher to look, fake, or throw.

Failure to immediately proceed to the next base or return to the original base after the pitcher has the ball within the circle will result in the runner being declared out. Once the runner has returned to any base for any reason, he shall be called out if he leaves said base unless (i) a play is made on him or another runner, (ii) the pitcher leaves the circle or drops the ball, or (iii) the pitcher releases the ball to the batter.

If two runners are off base and two different umpires call each runner out, they must determine which runner was called out first and return the other runner to the base he left. It is not possible to obtain two outs.

A base on balls or a dropped third strike is treated as a batted ball as long as the batter-runner continues past 1st. in one continuous motion. For scoring purposes, when a runner advances to 2nd, it is considered a stolen base. If the BR stops at 1st, however, and then steps off the base after the pitcher has the ball within the circle, he is out.

If, after the pitcher has the ball within the circle, the runner starts back to his original base or forward to another base and then stops or reverses direction, the runner is out unless the pitcher makes a play on him. When a play is made on a runner, he may stop or reverse his direction.

The runner is out if he stands off his base and does not immediately attempt to advance or return after the pitcher has the ball within the circle.

If the pitcher throws the ball from within the circle, carries it outside the circle, sets the ball on the ground, or otherwise loses possession of the ball, including handing it to another player, it is interpreted as making a play and runners on base may leave at their own risk, providing time has not been granted. A fake throw (umpire's judgment) is considered making a play. A pitcher is considered in the circle when both feet are within or touching the lines of the pitcher's circle.

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**Play Ball: for more situations see Rule 7 - Batting**

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91. The game is at the start of an inning and the pitcher has possession of the ball (SP) and is in the eight foot circle (FP, Orthodox). The catcher is standing in the catcher's box and all other defensive players are in fair territory. The plate umpire wishes to start play.

**RULING:** The umpire calls “Play Ball!” when the pitcher is in the pitcher’s circle and the batter has 10 seconds to get into the box after the “Play Ball!” call.

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**Safe Line (Co-Ed Slo-Pitch): for more situations see Rule 2 - The Playing Field**

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92. A Co-Ed game with runners at 1st and 3rd. The batter hits a pitched ball above the outfield where the defensive player catches the fly ball and then throws the ball toward home plate. R3 legally tags, advances toward home, and touches or crosses the safe line before the catcher receives the thrown ball while standing on home plate.

**RULING:** R3 is “Safe”.

**RULE:** The safe line is drawn in foul territory and shall extend 3.05m (ten feet) from the third base line into foul territory. The line shall start at the front corner of home plate closest to 3rd and perpendicular to the third base line.

When a runner touches the ground on or beyond the safe line prior to being legally tagged or prior to the defensive player legally holding the ball while in contact with home plate, the runner shall be ruled “Safe”.

**INTERPRETATION:** If the runner is not being played on the runner shall not be called out for stepping on home plate, provided there is no contact with a defensive player. A runner shall not be called out, if home plate is touched, in an attempt to avoid a collision.

93. A Co-Ed game with a runner on 2nd. The batter hits a pitched ball for a single. The throw from the outfield is caught by the catcher who (a) tags R2 out prior to R2 crossing the safe line, (b) tags home plate before R2 crosses the safe line, or (c) misses tagging the runner because R2 touches home plate and no collision was imminent.

**RULING:** In (a, b, c) R2 is “Out”. In all situations the ball remains live.

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**Starting Players: for more situations see Rule 4 – Coaches, Players and Substitutes**

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94. The starting line-up for both teams has been handed to the plate umpire. The plate umpire has asked both coaches if there are any changes to their line-ups. One of the managers wishes to make a change because one of the starting infielders has not arrived.

**RULING:** The plate umpire would allow the change to be made without penalty. The change is accepted and not considered to be a substitution.

Starting players must be in uniform and in the team area in order to be listed on the starting line-up.

(FP & (Orthodox): A minimum of nine players is required on the starting line-up before a game can begin.

(SP) A minimum of ten players is required on the starting line-up before a game can begin.

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**Strike Zone: for more situations see Rule 6 - Pitching Regulations (SP, FP, Orthodox)**

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- 95.. The batter takes a batting stance which is different than the one he used during his last at bat (i.e. wider stance so he is stooped or crouched down more). Where is the batter's proper strike zone?

**JUDGEMENT:** Judging a reasonable strike area is difficult when a batter is taking an unnatural stance, as is the case in crouching. A batter's strike zone is established with the natural stance on the swing (i.e. if a batter crouches and then comes up out of the crouch on the swing, then the strike zone is established when the batter comes up and not in the crouch position).

**A HELPFUL HINT:** A batter will always adjust his body to a more natural batting stance when the pitched ball is on its way toward the plate. The adjustment may be a minor modification, but the changed stance should now be used to establish the strike zone.

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**Team Member: for more situations see Rule 7 - Batting and Rule 8 – Batter-Runner and Runner**

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96. The bat boy has run onto the field to retrieve the bat left by the batter-runner. The bat boy interferes with the catcher's attempt to catch a throw and make an out. The umpire rules the scoring runner to be "Out" on the "Interference". The offensive coach argues the bat boy is not a team member because he isn't playing and the runner should be safe.

**RULING:** The runner is "Out". A team member is any person authorized to sit on the team bench area, including the substitute players, the manager, the scorekeeper, a bat boy, and any other person authorized by the team, and approved by the umpire to be in the team area.

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**Time: for more situations see Rule 10 - Umpires**

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97. The batter receives ball four. The offensive coach or team member immediately requests "Time" to make a substitution or give the batter a jacket.

**RULING:** (FP) The umpire shall ignore the request and wait until the batter advances to 1st.

(SP) The batter may pick up a jacket on the way to 1st because the ball is dead after every pitch.

**CLARIFICATION:** A team member or coach/manager may only request time when all play has stopped. The umpire may then order a suspension of play, during which the ball becomes dead.

**NOTE:** The umpire may suspend play when conditions justify such action. The umpire shall suspend play to brush the plate or perform other duties not directly connected with the calling of plays, when the ball is in the infield and, in the opinion of the umpire all immediate play is apparently completed or whenever a pitcher or batter steps out of position for a legitimate reason. The umpires decide when time should be granted and it is determined by the offence's action or inaction on the bases.

98. "Time" is called by the plate or base umpire as he needs to confer with the scorekeeper, player, or coach. An offensive coach or defensive coach runs out onto the field and talks to a runner or pitcher. The umpire then calls "Play Ball" and the coach immediately runs off the field. Should the coach be charged with a conference because he talked with the runner or pitcher?

**RULING:** If the coach immediately terminates the conference when the umpire is ready to play ball, the coach should not be charged with a conference during an officials' time out.

99. The batter requests time while the pitcher is on the pitching plate and has not started to pitch.

**RULING:** The plate umpire should grant "Time" and step quickly away from the catcher.

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**Turn at Bat: for more situations see Rule 7 - Batting**

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100. The batter at the start of the inning is using an illegal bat. The batter steps into the box with one foot. The defensive coach appeals that the batter should be out for using an illegal bat.

**RULING:** The batter is not out and will be asked to change the bat.

The batter does not start their turn at bat until they enter the batter's box (with both feet inside the lines of the box) and continues until the batter a) hits the ball into fair territory, b) is awarded first base, c) is put out by a defensive player, or d) is called out by the umpire for a rule infraction or e) (FP only) advances to first on a dropped third strike..

## **RULE 2 – PLAYING FIELD**

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**Batter's Box: for more situations see Rule 7 - Batting**

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1. The batter has one foot touching part of home plate when he swings and completely misses the pitched ball.



**RULING:** A strike is called. The bat must make contact with the ball to enforce the illegally batted ball rule (foot on home plate). It does not matter if the ball goes fair or foul, for the ball to be considered illegally batted and the batter out, as long as contact is made while the foot is on home plate.

2. The batter swings at and hits a pitched ball foul. One of the batter's feet is entirely out of the batter's box and touching the ground when the bat makes contact with the ball.

**RULING:** Dead Ball and the batter is "Out" for illegally batting the ball. What is of importance is the batter's actions and not whether the ball went fair or foul.

**NOTE:** In order for the batter to be called out for batting out of the batter's box, one foot or both feet must be on the ground completely outside the lines of the box when contact is made with the ball. The lines of the batter's box are considered inside the box unless any part of a foot is touching home plate when the batter contacts the ball. Hitting the ball while out of the batter's box should be called immediately. The batter is out whether the ball is fair or foul. In cases where there are no batter's box lines evident, good judgment must be used and the benefit of any doubt must go to the batter

3. The batter swings at and hits a pitched ball. The batted ball makes contact with the batter's leg while one foot is in the batter's box and the other is partially on the line, but not on the plate.

**RULING:** The plate umpire should call and signal "Foul Ball".

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### **Catcher's Box**

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4. (FP & Orthodox) On an intentional walk, the catcher stands with one foot completely outside the lines of the catcher's box before the ball is released by the pitcher.

**RULING:** The plate umpire should rule a "No pitch" any time after the pitcher starts the pitching motion and before the ball is released and make the catcher get into the catcher's box.

**NOTE:** If the catcher's infraction is noticed before the pitcher starts the pitching motion, then the plate umpire should hold up the pitcher and advise the catcher to correct his foot position.

5. The catcher stands in the catcher's box and provides a target off the ground for the pitcher, at the rear of the plate. (a) The catcher leaves his glove hand there during the pitch, or (b) the catcher brings the arm back as the pitcher starts to deliver the ball and then reaches forward again to catch the ball after the batter swings.

**RULING:** A legal position for the catcher and a legal pitch in both situations.

6. (FP & Orthodox) The catcher squats in the catcher's box and provides a target with his glove on the ground, anywhere between the plate and the front of the catcher's box;
- (a) Before the pitcher starts any motion to pitch, or
  - (b) After the pitcher starts any motion to pitch, or
  - (c) While the ball is on the way to the plate

RULING: A legal position for the catcher in (a, c).

In (b), an illegal pitch should be called by the plate umpire.

7. A pitched ball hits the ground in front of home plate or on home plate. The catcher leaves the catcher's box to retrieve the ball.

RULING: (FP, Orthodox) The ball is live and in play.

(SP) Once the ball touches the ground or plate, the ball is dead and the catcher may leave the catcher's box to retrieve the ball.

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### **Coach's Box**

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8. There is a play on a runner at 3rd. The ball is poorly thrown and makes contact with the offensive coach. The coach was (a) in the coach's box, or (b) out of the coach's box, when he was hit with the ball.

RULING: In both (a, b) the ball remains live and in play. This situation is not coach's interference unless the coach intentionally interferes with the overthrown ball.

INTERPRETATION: A coach being hit, in a poorly thrown ball situation, is different than the play on a runner situation (i.e. play on runner at home). A coach need not try to avoid the ball but cannot deliberately move to a thrown ball to make contact with it. Big stress on the word intentional if you are going to judge the coach's actions as interference.

CLARIFICATION: Coach's interference may take the form of a coach (a) running toward home and drawing a throw, (b) getting in the way of a fielder attempting to catch or throw a ball, (c) physically helping a runner, or (d) verbal hindrance.

9. The batter hits a pitched ball above foul territory near 3rd. The third baseman is unable to catch the fly ball because the coach remained in the coach's box and did not move.

RULING: The batter is "Out", for the coach's "Interference".

The coach's box is where the coach is to remain when a batter is at bat. Once the ball is hit the coach must allow the defensive player a chance to make a play on the batted ball even when it is hit in the area of the coach's box.

10. The batter hits a pitched ball above foul territory near 1st. The coach judges that the batted ball may land very close to the coach's box, and leaves the coach's box to allow the fielder to make a play on the fly ball. However, the coach misjudged the position of the batted ball. The fielder is unable to catch the fly ball because the coach is in the way.

**RULING:** The batter is "Out" for coach's "Interference".

**INTERPRETATION:** The coach is still guilty of interference because the coach must allow the defensive player a chance to make a play on the batted ball.

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### **Commitment Line (Co-Ed Slo-Pitch)**

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11. There is a runner at 3rd. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air to the outfield. The outfielder catches the fly ball and throws the ball toward home. R3 advances toward home. The catcher catches the thrown ball while in contact with the plate. However, the runner believes she may have left 3rd early, and retreats toward 3rd after having crossed the commitment line, and after the catcher has the ball. Situation (a) -the runner is between the commitment line and home and Situation (b) -is between the commitment line and 3rd.

**RULING:** If the umpire judges that the catcher has possession of the ball and is standing on home plate (a) while R3 is between home and the commitment line then R3 is "Out". The ball remains live and in play.

In (b) the defence may make an appeal on R3 for crossing the commitment line and returning to 3rd. If R3 had not tagged up then he would be ruled "Safe". However if, in the judgment of the umpire, R3 had legally tagged then R3 would be ruled "Out".

**CLARIFICATION:** If the runner crosses the commitment line after making a base running infraction (missed a base, left too soon on a fly ball), the runner may legally re-cross the line and return to third. In order to retire the runner, the defence must tag the runner with the ball before the runner reaches third base or hold the ball on the base before the runner returns (an appeal).

12. There is a runner at 2nd. The batter hits a pitched ball for a single. R2 is attempting to score and hustles around 3rd, missing the base. The outfielder throws the ball toward home. The catcher catches the thrown ball, while in contact with the plate. However, R2 realizes his running error and retreats toward 3rd after having crossed the commitment line.

**RULING:** If the umpire judges that the catcher has possession of the ball and is standing on home plate before R2 re-crosses the commitment line on his way back to third (R2 between commitment line and home) then R2 is "Out". The ball remains live and in play.

If R2 is between the commitment line and 3rd when the defence has possession of the ball at home the defence must tag the runner with the ball before the runner reaches third base or hold the ball on 3rd before the runner returns (an appeal) in order to retire him.

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## **Bases and Double Base**

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13. The batter hits a pitched ball for a single. The batter-runner slips on the base at 1st. The umpires immediately detect that 1st is not properly fastened to the ground.

**RULING:** The umpires shall call “Time” as soon as no further play is imminent and then have immediate repairs or replacement made to the inadequate base.

14. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground to the third baseman who scoops up the ball and throws it to 1st. The first baseman receives the throw slightly in advance of the batter-runner. The feet of both the defensive and offensive player are totally on the white portion of the double base and a collision occurs which causes the first baseman to drop the ball.

**RULING:** The ball is dead! The batter-runner is “Out” for causing “Interference”. A batter-runner touching entirely on the fair portion of the double base and causing the fielder to drop the ball is interference.

**RULE:** The batter-runner must use the foul portion of the double base on their first attempt at 1st when there is a play made by the defence.

**EXCEPTION:** (FP) when a ball is played from the first base foul territory.

15. There is a runner at 2nd. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground to the shortstop who scoops up the ball and throws it to 1st. The first baseman receives the throw slightly in advance of the batter-runner. The foot of the defensive and the offensive players are totally on the foul portion of the double base.

**RULING:** The batter-runner is “Safe” and the ball is live.

**RULE:** The defensive player must use only the fair portion of the double base at all times.

**EXCEPTION:** (FP) when a ball is played from the first base foul territory.

16. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground through the infield into center field. As the batter-runner rounds 1st, he collides with the first baseman who is standing on the fair portion of the double base.

**RULING:** The umpire should rule “Obstruction” by the first baseman, signal a delayed dead ball, and the ball remains live.

**RULE:** The batter-runner is allowed to use the fair portion of the double base on a hit through the infield or to the outfield.

17. The batter-runner steps on the foul portion of the double base, over-runs the base, and is ruled safe by the base umpire. The batter-runner returns in foul territory and stands only on the foul portion. The infielder tags the batter-runner.

**RULING:** The batter-runner is “Safe” because he is simply returning to the fair base via foul territory. The ball is live.

**NOTE:** After over-running 1st, the batter-runner may return to the foul side of the base but must be on the fair portion of the base prior to the pitcher starting his next pitch. The pitch starts when the pitcher makes any motion that is part of the wind-up after the required stop.

18. The batter-runner, after being ruled safe at 1st, returns and stands only on the foul portion of the double base. The ball is returned to the pitcher, and as the pitcher begins to deliver the next pitch, the base umpire notices that R1’s feet are not touching any part of the fair portion of the double base.

**RULING:** “Dead Ball” and R1 is ruled “Out”. The umpire will also rule a “No Pitch”. A runner is considered not in contact with 1st if they stand on only the foul portion when the pitch is delivered..

19. (FP) The catcher drops a pitched ball, which is the batter’s third strike. The catcher retrieves the ball in foul territory on the 3<sup>rd</sup> base side, throws the ball late to 1st and the first baseman uses the entire foul portion of the double base causing the batter-runner to slow up. Before the batter-runner touches the foul base, the first baseman catches the catcher’s thrown ball, while still entirely on the foul base, and then steps back onto the fair portion of the double base to record the force out.

**RULING:** The base umpire should rule and call “Obstruction” on the first baseman. The ball is dead as soon as the first baseman catches the ball. Other base runners would advance to the base they would have reached had there been no obstruction.

The double base rule states that the defence can must use the fair portion of the double base. If the umpire judges that the fielder’s action definitely impeded the batter-runner then you should rule obstruction.

**INTERPRETATION:** When the fielder at 1st reaches across into foul territory to catch a thrown ball, and uses all of the foul part of the double base and the batter-runner slows up for fear of colliding with the defensive player and in the umpire’s judgement the BR would have been safe had he not slowed down, then the base umpire should rule “Obstruction”.

**NOTE:** If the batter-runner would have been an easy out at 1st or the defensive player has to stretch across the base to secure a thrown ball ahead of the runner then there is no obstruction and the batter-runner is out if the defensive player then steps on any part of the fair base.

A fielder cannot block a player from a base unless he has the ball. If any contact is made by a fielder without the ball it is obstruction. The fielder cannot be on the baseline “about to receive the ball” and make contact with a runner, slow a runner down or make the runner go around him” unless he has the ball.

EXCEPTION: On any live ball play made from first base foul territory, the batter-runner and the defensive player may use either base. When the defensive player uses the foul portion of the double base, the batter-runner can run in fair territory and if hit by a throw from the foul side of first base, it would not be interference.

20. The batter swings at and misses a pitched ball for strike three. The catcher does not catch the pitched ball and retrieves the ball along the 3rd base line as the BR advances towards 1st. The catcher throws it to the first baseman who is standing entirely on the foul portion of the double base. The BR does not break stride, avoids the collision with the first baseman by running inside the foul line and steps entirely on the fair portion of the double base after the first baseman receives the thrown ball. The base umpire rules:

RULING: (FP) The batter-runner is “Safe” because the first baseman cannot step entirely on the foul portion of the double base. The ball remains live.

NOTE: The batter-runner should not be penalized for the illegal actions of the 1st baseman. Moreover the fielder has not met the legal requirements to obtain an out at 1st, i.e. has not touched the fair portion of the double base.

Give the batter-runner the benefit (“Safe”) when she avoids contact with the infielder who is standing entirely on the foul base.

(SP) The ball is dead when the pitched ball is swung at and missed.

21. (FP) There is no one on 1st or there are two outs. The batter runs toward 1st after a dropped third strike. The ball is picked up by F2 out in front of the plate. The batter-runner touches the fair part of the double base. The ball is thrown to the first baseman, who is standing on the fair portion (a) simultaneously with or very close to the same time, the batter-runner touches the fair portion of the base or (b) after the batter-runner has touched the fair portion of the base and gone well past the double base.

RULING: In (a) the batter-runner is “Out”, and the ball is live.

(b) The batter-runner is “Safe”, and the ball is live.

NOTE: The defensive team should not gain an out with double base out rule for a delayed play at 1st.

22. There is a runner at 1st. The batter hits a pitched ball above the outfield. R1 stands on the foul base, not in contact with any portion of the fair side

of the base, to get a running start, before the ball is caught. After the ball is caught, R1 advances, touching the fair portion of the double base on his way toward 2nd.

**RULING:** R1 is “Out” and the ball remains live. Runner(s) cannot position themselves behind and not in contact with a base, in an effort to get a running start on any fly ball.

23. The batter hits a pitched ball for a single. The outfielder is playing shallow and immediately scoops up the batted ball and throws it toward 1st in an effort to retire the batter-runner. The batter-runner steps on the fair portion of the double base just before the first baseman receives the thrown ball. The base umpire rules the BR safe. The defensive manager tries to persuade the base umpire that the call should be “Out” because the batter-runner did not use the orange portion of the double base on his initial attempt at 1st when a play was made.

**RULING:** The base umpire’s “Safe” call is not correct. Regardless of where the ball is hit, infield or outfield, the batter-runner is required to use the foul portion of the double base on their first attempt when a play is made, even by an outfielder.

24. The batter hits a pitched ball sharply on the ground. The shortstop scoops up the ground ball and throws the ball toward 1st. The throw is high and the defensive player has to leap high into the air to catch the thrown ball. The defensive player catches the ball and then lands with a foot partially on the fair side of the base and partially on the foul base before the batter-runner can touch the foul base.

**RULING:** The batter-runner is “Out”. It is acceptable for both the defensive player and the batter-runner to make contact with a portion of the fair side or foul side of the base.

25. The shortstop is playing deep on the outfield grass. The batter hits a pitched ball, on a line, toward the shortstop. The batted ball takes one hop, and the shortstop snares the batted ball in his bare hand and throws it toward 1st in an effort to retire the batter-runner. The batter-runner steps only on the fair portion of the double base just before the first baseman receives the thrown ball. The base umpire rules the BR safe. The defensive manager tries to persuade the base umpire that the call should be “Out” because the batter-runner did not use the foul portion of the double base on his initial attempt at 1st when a play was made.

**RULING:** The base umpire’s call should be “Out”. The batter-runner is required to use the foul portion of the double base on an infield hit on their first attempt, when a play is being made at 1st. The batted ball, in this situation, was fielded and thrown by an infielder. Regardless of infield or outfield hit – first play at first.

26. There is a runner on 2nd with none out. The teams are not playing with a double base at first but rather a single base. The batter hits or bunts a pitched ball on the ground to the third base side of home plate. The third baseman picks up the batted ball and throws it toward 1st. The thrown ball

makes contact with the BR in fair territory just as he is about to touch 1st. The ball rolls into right field and R2 scores easily. What is your ruling?

**RULING:** BR is safe at 1st and the ball remains live. The only way the BR could be declared out in this situation is if he clearly intended to interfere with the play. The BR is given equal right to touch the base and be in fair territory in his last step to touch 1st.

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### **Field and Diamond Boundaries**

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27. Spectators have occupied foul territory just along the right field out of play line after the game has started. The umpire(s) believe that the fans could potentially interfere with the ball in overthrow situations.

**RULING:** The plate umpire should speak with both managers and coaches together and explain additional ground rules that may be necessary to cover the situation.

28. The distance from home plate to 1st is discovered to be wrong in (a) the bottom of the third inning, or (b) after one pitch has been thrown in the top of the first inning, or (c) after the first play of the game at first, or (d) after the first base hit of the game.

**RULING:** In all cases (a-d), the distance will be corrected at the start of the next full inning.

**RULE:** Distances are measured from the back tip or point of home plate. If a distance cannot be corrected, the plate umpire may rule the distance legal for that game.

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### **On Deck Circle: For On Deck Batter situations see Rule 7 - Batting**

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29. The on deck batter requests that she use the opposition's on deck circle because the batter fouls off the pitched ball in her direction a good percentage of the time.

**RULING:** The on deck batter is allowed to use the opposition's on deck circle in SP and FP.

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### **Pitcher's Plate & Circle: for more situations see Rule 6 Pitching Regulation**

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30. The pitcher has the ball in her possession. One foot is inside the pitcher's circle and the other is (a) outside the circle, or (b) on the chalk line, or (c) inside the circle.

**RULING:** (FP, Orthodox) (a) The pitcher is considered outside the circle. (b, c) The pitcher is considered inside the circle.

(SP) There is no pitcher's circle in Slo-pitch.



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## Safe Line (Slo-Pitch)

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31. A Co-Ed game with none out and runners at 1st and 3rd. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air to the outfield where the defensive player catches the fly ball and then throws the ball toward home plate. R3 legally tags, advances toward home, and crosses the commitment line just as the catcher receives the thrown ball while standing on home plate. R3 continues toward home plate, slides, and knocks the catcher down, causing the ball to be dropped.

**RULING:** (SP) R3 is “Out” as soon as the catcher had possession of the ball while standing on home plate. As soon as the collision occurs we have a ruling of interference and a dead ball. R1 (the runner closest to home) is also ruled out. Because of the deliberate nature of the collision, R3 is ejected from the game.

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## Three Foot Line: for more situations

### see Rule 8 – Batter-runner and Runner

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32. The batter hits a pitched ball out in front of home plate. The catcher retrieves the batted ball and throws it toward 1st. The thrown ball hits the batter-runner in fair territory before the batter-runner reaches the three foot path.

**RULING:** The ball is live when a thrown ball hits a batter-runner before he reaches the three foot path, unless the batter-runner intentionally interfered with the thrown ball.

33. There are runners on 1st and 3rd with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball just out in front of home plate. The catcher fields the batted ball and throws the ball to the second baseman who is covering 1st. The thrown ball hits the batter-runner on the arm while she is in fair territory and prior to her reaching the three foot path. R1 and R3 were between bases when the batter-runner was hit by the ball.

**RULING:** If the batter-runner did not intentionally interfere then the ball remains live and in play.

The batter-runner is “Out” if the batter-runner intentionally interfered with the thrown ball. The ball is dead and the runners are sent back to R3 and R1 by the umpire(s).

A batter-runner may be in fair territory especially if the batter is a right handed batter. Running in the three foot path does not take effect until the batter-runner is half way toward 1st.

34. (FP only) The batter hits a ground ball off a drawn in F3 and the ball rolls into foul territory between home and 1st. F2 retrieves the ball and throws to F4 who is awaiting the throw on the foul portion of the double bag. B1 chooses to run to the fair portion of the bag and is struck by the thrown ball over fair territory just before reaching first base. The umpire makes no call and allows the play to continue.

**RULING:** Correct call by the umpire. On any live ball play made from first base foul territory, the BR and the defensive player may use either portion of the double base. When the defensive player uses the foul portion, the BR can run in fair territory and if hit by a throw from the foul side of first base, it would not be ruled interference unless it was deemed intentional.

## **RULE 3 - EQUIPMENT**

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### **Equipment on Field**

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1. The right fielder leaves his glove on the field in foul territory or resting on the fence post.

**RULING:** The player or team must retrieve the glove and place it out of play, preferably in the dugout.

**RULE:** If the umpire does not notice the glove and a batted or thrown ball makes contact with the glove then the ball is dead "Dead Ball". If a play could have been made the player who could have been played on is "Out". If no apparent play could be made all runners return to the base they held prior to the dead ball call.

2. There is a runner at 2nd. The batter hits a pitched ball to right field for a single. R2 tries to score on the hit. The throw from the outfielder hits the warm-up bat which has been dropped on the first base side of home plate. The catcher had a potential play on R2.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, "Dead Ball", as soon as the ball makes contact with the bat. R2 is "Out" for "Interference" by the offensive equipment because of the potential for an out.

**RULE:** Even if there was no apparent play on R2, the ball would still be dead, "Dead Ball". However, R2 would not be out and runners would return to the last base touched at the time of the dead ball declaration.

3. There is a runner at 2nd. The batter hits a pitched ball for a single. R2 attempts to score. The outfielder's thrown ball makes contact with the discarded bat, which was tossed to the right of home plate. The catcher (a) has a play on R2, or (b) does not have a play on R2.

**RULING:** The ball is live in both (a) and (b). No interference and no out. The batter's' discarded bat cannot cause interference unless the bat was intentionally tossed at the ball.

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### **Gloves**

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4. The pitcher is wearing a red, white, and blue glove.

**RULING:** (FP) If a yellow optic ball is in use, a legal glove for the pitcher.

(SP) A legal glove for the pitcher.

NOTE: (FP) All players may use a multi-coloured glove. Gloves with a white, gray or yellow optic circle(s) on the outside of the glove giving the appearance of a ball are illegal for all players. A pitcher's glove may be any combination of colours, providing none of the colours (including the lacing) are the colour of the ball.

(SP) A player may use any coloured glove with the following exceptions: gloves with a white, gray or yellow optic circle(s) on the outside of the glove giving the appearance of a ball are illegal for all players.

5. The catcher is wearing a glove. The offensive coach insists that the catcher must wear a mitt.

RULING: It is not mandatory for the catcher to wear a mitt, but if mitts are used only the catcher and first baseman are allowed to wear them.

NOTE: (SP only) The pitcher is also allowed to wear a mitt.

6. The shortstop uses a white glove to catch a fly ball.

RULING: The catch is legal as long as all other aspects of the glove are legal. Not permitting the use of a glove with the colour tone of the ball applies only to the pitcher in Fast Pitch.

7. A defensive player uses a multi-coloured glove.

RULING: (FP) Any player may use a multi-coloured glove. The pitcher's glove cannot have any colour tone of the ball in/on it.

(SP) Any defensive player, including the pitcher, may use a multi-coloured glove.

8. The defensive player uses a glove with a white or grey circle on the (a) outside, or (b) inside, of the glove.

RULING: (a) The glove is illegal because gloves with white or grey circles, on the outside of the glove, may not be used by any defensive player in either FP or SP.

(b) A legal glove.

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## Jewellery

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9. The team managers have been reminded of the distracting adornments rule at the pre-game conference. The umpire(s) notice a starting player wearing distracting jewellery, after the game has started.

RULING: The plate umpire should ask the player to remove it. If the player refuses to remove the jewellery, the player will be removed from the game and ruled ineligible.

CLARIFICATION: Only players participating in the game (batting and playing defence) are required to remove distracting adornments.

10. A starting player is wearing a medic alert bracelet or medic alert necklace.

**RULING:** A medic alert bracelet or necklace is not considered jewellery. Players are required to tape a medic alert, if distracting, to their body but should not be covering up the information on it.

**CLARIFICATION:** (FP) The umpire may request a pitcher that wears a medic alert bracelet on the pitching arm, to move the bracelet to the glove wrist if possible.

A pitcher that fails to comply with the umpire's request shall not be penalized!

11. A few starting players are wearing plastic hair clips in their hair.

**RULING:** The starting players with plastic hair clips will only be asked to remove them from their hair if they are considered to be distracting.

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### **Mask, Body Protector, Helmet**

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12. An adult male catcher insists that he does not have to wear a helmet while catching.

**RULING:** (FP) A catcher, in all levels of ball, must wear a mask, throat protector, and helmet. An extended wire protection attached to the mask can be worn in lieu of the throat protector.

(SP) Youth (minor) catchers must wear a mask with helmet. The mask must be worn while receiving warm-up pitches prior to and during the game. This includes anywhere on or near the playing field.

**RULE:** Fast pitch catchers must wear a mask, throat protector, and helmet while receiving warm-up pitches prior to and during the game. This includes anywhere on or near the playing field. Note that the bull pen is considered near the playing field. Failure to wear the mask and helmet after a warning will result in the removal of the individual who fails to comply.

If non team member refuses to wear the mask and helmet when requested, the coach/manager of the team is removed from the game and cannot coach the team.

"Prior To" means when the umpires are on the diamond and begin to carry out any function related to the game.

13. (FP) The catcher is wearing a helmet with two protective ear flaps.

**RULING:** A helmet worn for defensive purposes does not require ear flaps. However, if a catcher, or any other defensive player, wishes to wear a helmet with ear flaps, it is permissible.

14. A female adult catcher refuses to wear a chest protector.

**RULING:** (FP) A body protector must be worn by female catchers and all minor catchers. Failure to comply with the plate umpire's request for the catcher to wear the body protector would mean removal of the player. The player would also be ruled ineligible.

(SP) Body protection is recommended for females.

15. What additional equipment is mandatory for U12 and below Fast Pitch pitchers and catchers?

**RULING:** Male and Female pitchers, in categories U12 and below, must wear a protective face mask. The game cannot be played unless a pitcher has a mask on.

**RULING:** Male and female catchers, in categories U19 and lower, must wear shin guards which offer protection to the knee cap, and athletic support with protective cup.

16. A youth team member wishes to coach 1st base.

**RULING:** The youth team member may coach as long as the youth wears a protective helmet.

**NOTE:** The ruling does not apply to a youth age registered coach.

**RULE:** A protective helmet is one that is fully enclosed, with two (2) earflaps, foam liner, and peak.

**CLARIFICATION:** 1. Under Softball Canada rules it is not mandatory for U19 and lower categories to have a chin strap attached to the helmet and to be securely fastened in place.

2. FP/O All batters, on deck batters and baserunners must wear helmets that have an attached face mask in the U16 and below categories.

3. SP/FP/O All youth aged players must wear a helmet (face mask would be optional) if they are acting as a coach in a coaches box in the U16 and below categories.

17. An adult male batter is wearing a helmet with one ear flap. The flap is located on the same side as the pitcher, facing the infield.

**RULING:** The helmet cannot be worn. A helmet with two earflaps is mandatory for all Fast Pitch and youth Slo-Pitch batters, runners, and on deck batters. A protective helmet is one that is fully enclosed, with two (2) ear flaps, foam liner, and peak. A defensive helmet does not require earflaps.

Helmets (youth / minor players only in 2019. As of 2020, it will be mandatory that an approved batting helmet with two ear flaps be worn by all on-deck batters, batters and base

runners in all age categories. Failure to wear a helmet will result in removal from the game.

**NOTE:** In 2019 it is strongly recommended that all adult batters and base runners wear an approved batting helmet.

FP/O All batters, on deck batters and base runners must wear helmets that have an attached face mask in the U16 and below categories.

18. A batter-runner or runner removes the batting helmet while running the bases. A thrown ball (a) does not make contact with the discarded helmet, or (b) makes contact with the discarded helmet.

**RULING:** The batter-runner or runner is “Out” immediately, for deliberately removing the helmet, during a live ball. The only exceptions to the rule are a home run hit out of the park and a bases loaded walk.

In (a) the ball remains live, and in (b) the ball is dead “Dead Ball”, and all runners will return to the last base touched at the time of the dead ball declaration.

**CLARIFICATION:** There is no additional out on another runner, when a deliberately removed helmet causes interference. The ball is dead “Dead Ball”, and all runners will return to the last base touched at the time of the dead ball declaration.

19. There is a runner at 1st with two outs. The batter hits the pitched ball in the air to the outfield for a routine out. The umpire observes R1 removing her helmet and calls R1 out prior to the outfielder catching the fly ball. Who is the proper batter?

**RULING:** There are technically four outs recorded for the inning. The batter that hit the fly ball is not given the chance to start batting the next inning.

20. There is a runner at 2nd with one out. The batter hits the pitched ball for a single and loses her helmet unintentionally as she leaves the batter’s box. The right fielder retrieves the batted ball and throws it toward home in an effort to retire R2 at the plate. The thrown ball makes contact with the batter’s helmet. R2 scores on the play.

**RULING:** The ball remains live and in play when the thrown ball makes contact with a helmet that is lost accidentally or unintentionally.

**CLARIFICATION:** The player whose helmet comes off accidentally and causes interference is not an out and the ball remains live.

21. There is one out with runners at 1st and 3rd. The batter hits a pitched ball for a double and upon rounding 1st intentionally removes his helmet. R3 scores easily and R1 attempts to score when the outfielder’s thrown ball makes contact with the BR’s discarded helmet.

- RULING: The BR is “Out” immediately when the helmet is intentionally removed and the ball remains live. As soon as the thrown ball makes contact with the discarded helmet, the ball is dead “Dead Ball” and runners return to the last base held at the time of the contact. R3’s run counts and R1 returns to 3rd.
22. A runner (a) removes her helmet, or (b) loses her helmet accidentally, while running the bases. An infielder, in possession of the ball, makes contact with the helmet. The defensive player is still capable of making a play on a runner.
- RULING: In (a) the runner is “Out” for deliberately removing the helmet. The ball is dead “Dead Ball” as soon as the defensive player makes contact with the helmet. All runners will return to the last base held at the time of the contact
- (b) The runner is not out for accidentally losing the helmet. The ball remains live.
23. A runner removes his helmet intentionally while running the bases. An infielder, not in possession of the ball, makes contact with the helmet.
- RULING: The runner is “Out” immediately when the helmet is intentionally removed. The ball is dead “Dead Ball” when a fielder, who is not in possession of the ball, makes contact with a discarded helmet. All runners return to the last base held at the time of the dead ball declaration.
- NOTE: If the umpire(s) judge that the contact (with the ball or a defensive player) is deliberate, then the ball shall remain live.
24. A runner loses her helmet accidentally, while trying to steal 2nd. The batted ball makes contact with the dislodged helmet. In (a) the fielder had a play, or (b) did not have a play.
- RULING: In (a, b) the batted ball is live and in play when a batted ball makes contact with a helmet that is lost accidentally.
25. A runner (a) removes his helmet and carries the helmet with him while running the bases, or (b) removes his helmet while standing on base.
- RULING: (a) The runner is “Out” and the ball remains live. It does not matter that the runner did not throw the helmet to the ground. The intent of the rule is safety.
- (b) There is no penalty for a runner that removes their helmet while standing on base. Common sense must be used!
- TIP: Do not call runners out for removing their helmet to wipe perspiration from their hair or for removing their helmet when all action has ceased even when the ball is live. This is not the intent nor within the spirit of the rule.

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## Medical Apparatus

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26. One of the participating teams has had several injuries. One of the starting players is wearing a plastic cast on his wrist and another has a knee brace with exposed metal. A third team member is in a wheel chair and is coaching 1st or 3rd base.

**RULING:** The player with the cast (plasters, metal or other hard substances in its final form) would not be allowed to play unless the apparatus is removed. The player would still not be allowed to play even if the hard substance was covered with soft material.

The player with the knee brace would be allowed to play if adequately covered by soft material, taped, and approved by the plate umpire.

The team member in the wheelchair is allowed to coach from the 1st or 3rd base coach's box.

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## Official Bat: Illegal and Altered

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The umpire may "discover" the use of the illegal/altered bat at any time, either through personal observation or notification by the defense. This "discovery" may take place from the time the batter enters the batter's box to start their at bat up until the first pitch to the next batter.

The Intentional Walk to the next batter is considered a "Pitch".

- Any advances made as a result of the batter advancing to 1st base (walk, dropped third strike) would also be nullified if forced to advance by the batter progressing to 1st base.
- All other 'non forced' advances, even ones that happen concurrent to the batter advancing to 1st base (eg. stolen base, passed ball, wild pitch, etc.) would be permitted to stand.

In the case of a batter reaching first base while using an illegal/altered bat and then a subsequent batter stepping into the batter's box also using an illegal/altered bat, rule against the runner at 1<sup>st</sup>, i.e. only ONE out would be allowed. Remove both bats.

Any player 'discovered' using an illegal or altered bat as mentioned above is ruled out. If using an altered bat, the player is also ejected.

27. There are runners on 2nd and 3rd with none out. The batter has a count of 2 balls and 2 strikes. The batter requests and is granted time to change from a wooden bat to a metal bat.

**RULING:** The batter may use either a metal or wooden bat at any time.

28. The umpire is checking a bat that passes through the bat ring and meets all specifications of a legal bat. Is the bat legal for use?

**RULING:** FP & SP –The bat must be on either the USA Softball or WBSC approved lists to be deemed legal.



SP only: All bats must be listed on the current USA Softball (2000 or 2004 certification stamps only) or WBSC. Approved Bat lists, or must have a new USSSA certification stamp and not be on the USSSA withdrawn/non-compliant list.

29. The batter's bat is discovered to have paint on the bottom end of the barrel. The paint is not on the hitting surface.

RULING: The bat is a legal bat if the paint is solely for the purpose of identification.

30. The batter has wrapped the rubber grip of the bat with one layer of tape. Is this legal?

RULING: Yes, one layer of tape over a rubber grip is legal.

31. During a pre-game inspection of equipment, the umpire notices that a ball player is applying numerous layers of electrical tape to his bat.

RULING: The umpire should clarify with the player and team manager that (a) only a maximum of two layers of tape are allowed on the bat handle, and (b) no plastic or smooth tape is allowed.

32. The coach, player, and/or parent wishes their son or daughter to use a bat that is labelled "Little League Bat". The bat meets all specifications of an official softball bat, except the labelling. Do you allow the bat to be used?

RULING: The bat is not a legal softball bat and should not be allowed because the bat is specifically designed for hardball or baseball.

33. The batter hits a pitched ball for a single with a bat 35 inches long.

RULING: The bat is illegal. If noticed by the umpire or pointed out by the defence before a pitch to the next batter, then the batter is out and runners return to last base touched at the time of the pitch.

34. Runner on second base with one out. The batter, B1, enters the box with an illegal bat and hits the first pitch for a single, scoring R2. The next batter, B2, is about to use the same illegal bat and enters the batter's box. The defence indicates to the umpire, that the bat is illegal. Who is out B1, now standing on 1st, or B2?

RULING: If determined for certain that B1 used the bat, then B1 is out, and R2 returns to 2nd. If not, then B2 is out and the advance of B1 and R2 scoring stand. Even though B2 has started his turn at bat (entered the batter's box)), a pitch has yet to be thrown to B2 so B1 can still be penalized for use of an illegal bat.

35. R1, 1 out. B3 is awarded a base on balls. R1 is forced to 2nd base. Before the next pitch it is discovered (may be brought to the attention of the umpire by defence although this is not an appeal) that B3 used an illegal bat.

RULING: B3 is out. R1 returns to 1st base as she was forced to 2nd base as a result of B3's advance.

36. R1, 1 out. R1 steals 2nd base. Before the next pitch it is discovered that B4 is using an illegal bat.

RULING: B4 is out. R1 remains at 2B as her advance was not the result of B4 hitting the ball or gaining a walk.

37. R2, 1 out. B5 hits a double, scoring R2. Before the next pitch the defence points out that B5 was using an altered bat.

RULING: B5 is out and ejected. R2 returns to 2nd base.

38. R2, 3 balls on the batter, 1 out. R2 steals 3rd base. On the same pitch B6 is awarded a base on balls. Before the next pitch it is discovered that B6 used an illegal bat.

RULING: B6 is out. R2 remains at 3rd base because her advance was not the direct result of B6 advancing to 1st base on the walk.

39. The batter is in possession of an altered bat which is detected by the plate umpire before the batter enters the batter's box. What is the penalty?

RULING: No violation, since the bat was detected before the batter started her turn at bat, and the altered bat is removed from the game.

If the altered bat was discovered by the umpire while the batter was at bat, then the batter is "Out" and ejected from the game.

40. There is a runner on 2nd, when the batter triples to left center field. The defensive manager notices that the batter's metal bat has had lead added to the barrel of the bat.

RULING: An altered bat. The ball is dead and the batter is out and ejected. R2 returns to 2nd base and the altered bat is removed from the game.

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## Shoes

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41. The first base coach of a U16 team is wearing (a) flips or sandals, or (b) steel softball cleats. After it is brought to his/her attention, the plate umpire asks the coach to change to proper footwear.

RULING: This is a valid and correct request by the umpire in both cases. The rule states that a shoe shall be official if it is fully enclosed and is made of canvas, leather, or other materials. The rule also states that steel cleats are not permissible at the U16 and under level, both for players and coaches.

42. Players on team "A" are wearing a mixture of golf shoes, track shoes, and football cleats.

RULING: All of the above footwear is illegal in all categories of softball.

(FP, Orthodox) Only soles with spikes that do not exceed 3/4" from the sole or heel of the shoe, and soles with smooth or with soft or hard rubber cleats are permitted in Adult softball.

(SP) Only soles with spikes that do not exceed 3/4" from the sole or heel of the shoe, and soles with smooth or with soft or hard rubber cleats are permitted. Hard plastic, nylon, or polyurethane spikes are allowed. Metal cleats and detachable cleats are permitted.

(U16 and under FP or SP and Co-Ed) Only soles with smooth or with soft or hard rubber cleats are permitted. No metal cleats, detachable cleats (unless detachable cleats are made of rubber), hard plastic, nylon, or polyurethane spikes are allowed.

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### Warm-Up Bat

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43. The umpire is checking the bats prior to a game. She notices a bat that is of one-piece construction, has a safety grip, a safety knob and is properly marked "Warm-up". The barrel end passes through an official bat ring.

RULING: The bat should be declared illegal and removed from the game. The construction, grip and knob are legal. However, the barrel end should be in excess of 2¼" and the bat ring should not go over the end of an official warm-up bat.

44. The on-deck batter approaches the on-deck circle with three bats.

RULING: The on-deck batter is only allowed to swing two legal bats, or a combination of one legal bat and one legally manufactured warm-up bat while in the on-deck circle.

45. The on deck batter uses a steel bar to warm up. The umpire(s) had requested that the bat not be used in the game.

RULING: The plate umpire should be sure the bar is removed from the game. Continued use, after removal of any illegal equipment would subject said player to being ejected from the game. If ejected, the player would also be ruled ineligible.

46. The on deck batter is using (a) a "Bat Wrap", or (b) donut, or (c) fan, attachment on the bat while warming up.

RULING: The donut and a fan are illegal. The bat wrap is legal.  
Any batting attachment used in CASA play must be approved by Softball Canada.

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### Uniform

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47. The starting line-up for a female team has three players wearing caps and the remaining players do not wear any headwear.

RULING: This is legal as long as the caps are identical to team colors.

48. An all-female team has two players wearing headbands, four players wearing caps, and the remaining players not wearing any headgear.

**RULING:** Mixing different styles of headgear is legal as long as the headgear worn matches team colours.

**NOTE:** Due to various hairstyles worn by women, it is impractical to insist that all players wear a cap or to prohibit the use of headbands or visors. Some uniformity is necessary, thus the ruling that players head gear must match team colors. The visors must not be made of plastic or other hard material.

49. Only half of the players on a male Fast Pitch or Slo-Pitch team are wearing caps.

**RULING:** Mandatory for all of the players active in the game to wear ball caps and the caps must be identical in style, color, and worn properly.

**NOTE:** If a defensive player elects to wear a defensive fielding mask, that player may turn their cap backwards to accommodate wearing both cap and mask.

50. The pitcher is wearing a long sleeve, white undershirt. One other defensive player is wearing a blue undershirt. The offended team wants the umpire to ask the pitcher to remove the white undershirt because it is the same color as the ball.

**RULING:** The white undershirt is legal as long as the player in the blue undershirt changes to the white colour or no longer wears an undershirt

A pitcher should be dressed identically to other players on the team. A long sleeved undershirt of any color is acceptable under the jersey. If two players (including the pitcher) have undershirts on, they must be identical in color and style. No player may wear ragged, frayed or slit sleeves on an exposed undershirt.

**NOTE:** A pitcher may wear a batting glove and/or wristband on the glove hand and wrist. The batting glove may be white. A pitcher may wear a pitcher's toe plate on his shoe.

(FP) Nothing may be on the pitching wrist or hand, including a bandage.

(SP) A pitcher may wear a wristband on his pitching arm, and may have tape on the pitching fingers.

**CLARIFICATION:** A player shall be given permission to play only in an undershirt when a player has blood on their uniform and no spare uniform is available.

51. The shortstop has her shirt hanging outside her pants or shorts and the pitcher has her sleeves rolled up and tucked inside the shoulders of her top. Is this legal?

- RULING: The uniform is not being worn properly and the umpire shall instruct the shortstop to tuck in the shirt and the pitcher to unroll her sleeves. Failure to comply with the request would mean that the player is removed from the game and ruled ineligible.
52. The manager and coach of team “A” are wearing long pants instead of the team’s regular short style. The opposition’s coach and manager are wearing work clothes.
- RULING: Team “A’s” coach and manager are wearing a legal uniform. The opposition’s coach and manager are not wearing a legal uniform.
- RULE: The uniforms of the manager and coach may differ from that of the players. But those that are worn must be alike in color, trim and style, and in accordance with the color code of the team. FP Special Operating Rules allow coaches to wear dress shorts but they must dress in a similar fashion.
53. One of the participating teams is wearing a combination of short and long pants.
- RULING: (FP) All the players active in the game shall wear either all long or all short style pants. The pants must also be alike in color, trim and style, and in accordance with team colors.
- (SP) In Co-Ed and Masters categories, players may mix long and short pants in their uniforms provided that they are the team colors.
54. The batter is wearing a solid color sliding pad that is different in color than those worn by the runner at second or worn by another starting player, who is sitting on the bench.
- RULING: The plate umpire’s ruling will depend on whether the sliding pads are a temporary style or a permanent style.
- Permanent: The pads must be alike in color and style. If players are wearing a permanent style then one or more of them must remove the pads or pants before continuing the game.
- Temporary: Snap-On or Velcro sliding pads may be different in color. If permanent pads/pants are the same color then it is acceptable for the temporary pad(s) to be the same or different solid color.
- No matter what style, sliding pads must be a solid color, and no player may wear ragged, frayed, or slit legs on exposed sliding pants or pads.
- NOTE: The rule also applies to Jams or spandex as well as sliding pants that are visible below the shorts. If they are not visible the color does not matter.

55. The opposing team notices that the opposition's 4th batter, Brown, is wearing #15 but on the line-up card, the 4th batter is listed as Brown #7. Brown comes to bat and hits a pitched ball for a double. Before a pitch to the next batter, the defensive team appeal that Brown is an illegal substitute.

**RULING:** There is no penalty as long as the player whose name appeared on the line-up was the legitimate batter. The umpire should correct the number on the line-up and continue playing.

## **RULE 4 – COACHES, PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTES**

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### **Number of Players**

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1. A batter, batting 9th in the batting order, injures herself while running to 1st. The team has no substitutes, so they carry the injured player to her position in right field and lean her against the fence in fair territory. Is this legal?

**RULING:** This is legal.

2. At the home plate conference, prior to the start of a Co-Ed game, the visiting team manager indicates that he has ten players. Six of the players are women and four are men.

**RULING:** The plate umpire shall rule the game "Forfeited" in favour of the home team, if the home team has at least five female and five male players. Any team must have at least five female and five male players available and ready to play at the scheduled game time.

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### **Positions**

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3. There are runners at 1st and 2nd with one out. The coach/manager shifts the defensive players so that the left fielder is playing between the shortstop and second baseman. Is this legal and is the player an infielder or an outfielder?

**RULING:** The outfielder is still designated as the left fielder.

**RULE:** Infield fly situation: The infield fly would still be enforced if the left fielder caught a fair pop fly in territory normally covered by the infield.

Players in the field may be stationed anywhere in fair territory except the catcher, who must be in the catcher's box, and a pitcher, who must be in a legal pitching position.

**TIP:** The scorekeeper still has to mark the score sheet in accordance with the positions designated for the players on the official line-up card.

Player's positions are designated as follows:

(FP): Pitcher, catcher, 1st baseman, 2nd baseman, 3rd baseman, shortstop, left fielder, center fielder, right fielder. A designated player may also be used.

(SP): Pitcher, catcher, 1st baseman, 2nd baseman, 3rd baseman, shortstop, left fielder, left center fielder, right center fielder, and right fielder. An extra player or two extra players may also be used.

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### **Designated Player (DP) & FLEX (Flexible Player), FP, Orthodox**

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4. After the line-up cards have been reviewed by the teams and exchanged at the home plate pre-game meeting, the defensive coach wishes to start the game with the DP playing the defensive position of the FLEX.

**RULING:** The substitution is legal, as long as the coach reports the change to the plate umpire. The FLEX is still allowed to re-enter the game at any time.

5. The coach/manager wishes to enter a substitute in the game, as a DP, in the second inning and place her at the end of the batting order. The team started the game with 9 players on the line-up.

**RULING:** The substitution is illegal. The designated player must be listed on the line-up card before the plate umpire has approved the starting line-up at the home plate pre-game meeting.

6. In the fourth inning, a player is legally substituted for the starting FLEX. Later, in the same inning, the coach informs the plate umpire that the FLEX is re-entering the game and then announces that the FLEX will also be batting for the starting DP.

**RULING:** The changes are all legal changes.

The FLEX

(a) can exit and re-enter (starting FLEX only) the game once as long as he occupies the same position in the line-up

(b) and the DP cannot be in the game offensively at the same time

(c) can only enter on offence for the starting DP or his subs

(d) may go into the game in a different position in the batting order as a replacement player if he is not currently in the game.

7. The FLEX, legally substituted, runs for the starting DP. Later in the game, the starting DP re-enters the game and the FLEX (a) returns to the # 10 slot in the line-up, or (b) is taken out of the game.

**RULING:** In both (a, b) situations the change of the FLEX and DP is legal if reported to the plate umpire. Note that in (a) the FLEX is not considered to have left the game and as such the FLEX's movement is not a substitution. In (b) the team goes to nine players and the FLEX (if eligible) or an eligible substitution could re-enter the game later in the 10<sup>th</sup> slot.

8. The starting DP hits a pitched ball for a double. The manager/coach substitutes the DP with a substitute runner. What effect will this have on the playing status of the starting DP and the starting FLEX player?

**RULING:** The substitute runner is the new DP. The starting DP may re-enter the game.

The FLEX, could be inserted offensively for the new DP substitute or the starting DP, if he/she was re-entered in the game. The starting FLEX may also be substituted for or be taken out of the game. In both cases, the FLEX would be allowed to return to the game.

9. A team is using 10 players in their line-up with the DP batting third. The FLEX is playing right field. In the first and third innings, the DP gets on base and, in each case, the FLEX is put in to run. Is this legal?

**RULING:** This is a legal change if the substitution is reported to the plate umpire. However, after the starting DP re-enters in the third inning and is then replaced by the FLEX to run again in the third inning, the starting DP may not re-enter the game. If the starting DP re-entered now it would be an illegal re-entry.

10. The FLEX starts the game in the pitching position. In the fifth inning the FLEX bats for the designated player (DP).

**RULING:** This is a legal change if the substitution is announced to the plate umpire. The change in batter takes the DP out of the game. The DP could return to the game, if this was the first time the DP had been substituted for in the game.

**INTERPRETATION:** Failure to notify the plate umpire of the FLEX for DP change is an unannounced substitution because the DP is considered to have been taken out of the line-up. The manager would also be required to notify the plate umpire if the DP returned to the game later, in an offensive or defensive position.

11. The game starts with a DP. In the fifth inning, the FLEX bats for the DP. In the sixth inning, the manager/coach announces that the DP is re-entering into the DP's original batting position. The manager/coach (a) removes the FLEX from the game, or (b) moves the FLEX to the number ten position in the line-up.



**RULING:** The re-entry of the DP is a legal substitution. The manager/coach has the option of either removing the FLEX from the game or having the FLEX slide back into the tenth spot in the line-up.

12. The FLEX is injured and has to leave the game. The coach announces that the DP will replace the FLEX at the shortstop position.

**RULING:** This is a legal substitution.

The DP may play the game at any defensive position at any time during the game. When the DP or OPO replaces the FLEX on defense, the line-up is reduced from 10 to 9 players.

**TIP:** The FLEX is considered to have left the game when the FLEX's team is playing defence and the FLEX is sitting on the bench. This would have to have been announced to be considered a legal substitution.

13. The starting FLEX is substituted (sits on bench) by the DP in the fourth inning. In the fifth inning, the FLEX re-enters (a) in her original # 10 slot in the line-up, playing defence only, or (b) in the DP's slot playing defence and offence

**RULING:** The FLEX substitution in both (a) and (b) are legal if announced to the umpire. The FLEX re-entering the game has to be announced to the plate umpire or the substitution is an illegal substitution.

14. The DP, (a) plays third base in the second inning, second base in the fourth inning, center field in the sixth inning, and then (b) pitches for the FLEX in the seventh inning while the FLEX sits on the bench.

**RULING:** The changes are all legal. In (a) the DP may play defence for any player, and that player would become the OPO.

**EXCEPTION:** In (b) the FLEX is considered to have left the game, and the number of players is reduced from ten to nine. The plate umpire would have to be notified of this change or the DP would be an unannounced substitution after one pitch (legal or illegal).

15. A team is using 10 players in their lineup with the DP batting third and the FLEX pitching. The lineup is accepted by the coach at the pre-game conference with no changes announced. When the team goes out on defence in the 1st inning, the DP is pitching and the FLEX is sitting on the bench. After the first pitch to his first batter, the offensive coach calls time and appeals that the DP is an unannounced defensive substitute. Is this correct?

**RULING:** This is a valid and correct appeal by the offense. The DP is removed from the game and ruled ineligible. A legal substitute would now be required for the DP, or the FLEX could re-enter defensively reducing the lineup to 9.

INTERPRETATION: Defensive players may play any position on defence without penalty and this need not be announced. Exception: the FLEX is considered to have left the game any time he/she is substituted for, or is replaced on defence by the DP or OPO. This change must be announced.

16. A team is using 10 players in their lineup with the DP batting third and the FLEX playing right field. Tom, 4th in the lineup, is playing second base while Dick, 5th in the lineup, is playing left field. In the second inning, the DP is playing second base resulting in Tom becoming the OPO. This change is not announced. In the top of the fourth inning Tom is playing left field for Dick, Dick has moved to right field, and the FLEX is now sitting on the bench. These changes are not announced. After the first pitch to his first batter, the offensive coach calls time and appeals that Dick is an unannounced defensive substitute. Is this correct?

RULING: This is a valid and correct appeal by the offence. Dick is removed from the game and ruled ineligible. A legal substitute would now be required for Dick.

INTERPRETATION: Defensive players may play any position on defence without penalty and this need not be announced. Exception: the FLEX is considered to have left the game any time he/she is substituted for, or is replaced on defence by the DP or OPO. This change must be announced. In the second inning, the DP playing defence for Tom was legal and did not need to be announced. In the fourth inning, Tom playing left field for Dick was legal and resulted in Dick now becoming the OPO. Dick playing in right field for the FLEX was a valid change but should have been announced as the OPO was now playing defence for the FLEX.

17. A team decides to re-enter the FLEX on defence in the 10<sup>th</sup> spot in the order, without announcing the change to the plate umpire.

RULING: The change is treated as an unannounced substitution. The FLEX is removed from the game and ruled ineligible if the change is brought to the umpire's attention by the offended coach after one pitch has been thrown (legal or illegal) and before the defensive manager notifies the plate umpire. Before continuing, the coach/manager will need to provide a proper substitute for the FLEX to maintain the 10 player line-up.

TIP: If no substitute players are available to fill the 10<sup>th</sup> spot, the game will be considered a forfeit. The team can legally finish the game with nine players but only after re-establishing the 10 player line-up after the removal of the FLEX.

18. The DP plays defence for player "A" (not the FLEX) in the third inning. The coach/manager then inserts the FLEX to bat for player "A".

RULING: Step 1: Player “A” is then considered to be the OPO. The coach/manager need not make this change with the plate umpire.

Step 2: The FLEX batting for player “A” (not the DP) is illegal. The umpire should correct the error at the time of the announced change or the violation would be considered an illegal re-entry. If unannounced the change would also violate the illegal substitution rules.

Step 3: If the change is not announced, then the violation will be treated as any other illegal re-entry when it is appealed to the plate umpire.

19. The center fielder is batting second and the DP is batting fifth in the batting order. In the second inning, the coach wishes to have the FLEX bat for the center fielder. The coach explains that this is a simple substitution. The FLEX can bat anywhere in the line-up, as long as the coach removes the player that the FLEX is batting for. Is this legal?

RULING: The substitution is illegal and should not be accepted by the plate umpire, “Sorry coach I cannot accept that change”.

The coach is right about removing a player but he is wrong about which player the FLEX can substitute and bat for. When the FLEX plays offensively, then he can only alternate with the DP. The DP is then considered to have left the game. The starting DP can re-enter later, as long as this is the first time he is being substituted.

20. The manager/coach wishes to have the FLEX bat for one of the starting players (not the DP) and makes the change with the plate umpire. The opposition coach/manager protests the change (a) before a pitch to the FLEX, (b) after a pitch to the FLEX, (c) after the FLEX safely hits and drives in runs, or (d) the next inning.

RULING: The plate umpire has obviously accepted and allowed an illegal re-entry.

In (a) the proper changes are made, to correct the situation.

(b, c, d) the proper changes are made, to correct the situation, and the FLEX and the FLEX’s manager/coach (who signed the lineup card) are ejected from the game and ruled ineligible.

21. The DP is batting ninth in the batting order. The DP singles to left field. The FLEX bats next and hits a double. The number one batter bats next and singles, scoring both the DP and the FLEX. The defensive coach appeals to the plate umpire that the DP and FLEX playing offence is illegal and the run should be disallowed.

RULING: The DP batted legally.

The FLEX’s at bat was legal when one pitch was thrown to batter number one, resulting in the DP on 3<sup>rd</sup> and the FLEX

on 2<sup>nd</sup>. As the FLEX can only bat for the DP, he is considered an illegal re-entry because he batted illegally for the number one batter.

Batter number one re-entered illegally as batter number two was due up, and because he did not report, violated the substitution rule. Batter number one is called “Out”, and the batting actions of number one are nullified. This results in the DP returning to 3<sup>rd</sup> and the FLEX to 2<sup>nd</sup>. The FLEX and batter number one violated the re-entry and substitution rule, are ejected from the game and ruled ineligible. The manager is also ejected and ruled ineligible.

A proper substitute in the number one batting position is required at 2<sup>nd</sup>.

As batter number two was substituted for by batter number one, they are only eligible to return to the game if this was the first time they were substituted for. When play resumes batter number three is the proper batter.

NOTE: As the team had 10 players in the line-up, a substitute for the ejected FLEX is required. If no substitute is available, the game would be declared a forfeit. Once the substitute is announced, the team may then choose whether to continue with 10 players or drop down to 9. The plate umpire should clarify with the offence’s interim team manager (manager was ejected due to illegal re-entry) whether he wishes to continue with the FLEX or not.

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### **Extra Player (EP) Slo-Pitch**

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22. The home team wishes to bring a player into the game, in the fifth inning, as an EP and place him at the end of the batting order. Is this legal?

RULING: Illegal. The EP must be announced before the start of the game, with his name entered on the starting line-up.

NOTE: If the team uses the EP, he must be on the line-up at the start of the game, and the team must end the game with 11 players or forfeit.

All 11 players bat but only 10 play defence. Changes with the defensive players may be made at any time; however, the batting order may not change. Any of the starting players may leave the game once and re-enter. A starting player and his substitute may not be in the game at the same time. If this occurs, it is an illegal re-entry so the manager and the player listed in the wrong spot in the batting order are ejected by the umpire.

23. A team turns in a line-up card with 10 players but another player shows up before game time and bats 11th. No one is notified of this change and in the third inning the 11th player bats as the EP. The defence brings the

change to the umpire's attention (a) while the player is at bat, or (b) after the EP gets on base.

**NOTE:** An EP, if used, must be announced prior to the start of the game. Therefore, this 11<sup>th</sup> player cannot be considered as an EP.

**RULING:** In (a) the 11<sup>th</sup> player is removed from the game and the original starting player or another substitute replaces the player assuming the ball and strike count. When the 11<sup>th</sup> player entered the game to bat he did so as an unannounced player - an illegal substitute for the first batter. Therefore the first batter is considered to have left the game. The first batter, if he returns to assume the count, is considered as a re-entered player.

(b) The 11<sup>th</sup> player is "Out", removed from the game and the original starting player or another substitute must be brought in. The number two batter is the next proper batter. Any advance of runners as a direct result of the 11<sup>th</sup> player getting on base are nullified.

24. A team begins the game using an Extra Player (EP). The team's manager enters the only substitute he has to run for the EP, at any time during the game. Later, the manager indicates to the plate umpire that she would like to re-enter the EP in place of (a) the substitute, or (b) another starting player.

**RULING:** The plate umpire shall allow the substitution in (a), but not in (b). The substitution in case (b) would be considered an illegal re-entry and may be prevented by the plate umpire, before one pitch has been thrown, without penalty to the offending team.

**RULE:** The starting EP may re-enter the game once, but the starting player and her substitute cannot be in the game at the same time

25. At the home plate conference, prior to the start of a Co-Ed game, one of the teams indicates that they will be using a female Extra Player (EP).

**RULING:** The use of one Extra Player is illegal. However, two extra players, one male and one female, is permitted. All twelve players bat and any ten, five male and five female, will play defence.

26. A team starts the game with an Extra Player (EP). Another starting player takes the place of the player starting the game in right field on defence. The same right fielder enters the game later at another defensive position, and again plays defence for another starter.

**RULING:** These are legal changes and not considered substitutions. There is no limit on the number of times a starting player may leave or return to the game defensively, provided the player

is not taken out of her position in the batting order (i.e. the player continues to bat, but does not play defence).

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### **Substitutes: (a) legal and illegal, (b) offensive and defensive**

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An illegal substitution is a player who has entered the game and not been announced to the umpire.

27. The manager/coach does not inform the plate umpire of a change in the line-up. However, the player or team member notifies the plate umpire of the change. Is this acceptable?

**RULING:** Any change given to the plate umpire by a team member is legal. The plate umpire should confirm that the change is actually taking place and review the change with the team manager/coach before announcing the substitution.

**NOTE:** All substitutions must be reported to the plate umpire who, in turn, will report the changes to the official scorekeeper. All substitute names and numbers should be listed on the official line-up card submitted to the plate umpire at the start of the game; however, if a player is not listed on the card and is on the official roster, the substitute can be added after the game has begun.

If a substitute is in the game without reporting, he is considered an unannounced substitution, if brought to the plate umpire's attention by the offended team after the first legal or illegal pitch and before the team in violation informs the umpire, the umpire will remove him from the game and make him ineligible to play.

In FP, if a manager removes a substitute from the game and re-enters the same substitute later in the game, this is considered an illegal re-entry, and the player and his manager are ejected and both are ruled ineligible. This would not be a forfeit. Note that in SP, a substitute may re-enter the game one time.

The only time a game is forfeited for a substitution violation is when a player removed or ejected by the umpire (ineligible player) is back in the same game. Violation of any substitution rule is handled as an appeal by the offended team.

28. (Co-Ed SP) A team starts the game with six male and six female players. Between innings it is brought to the umpire's attention that the team is playing with six males and four females on defence.

**RULING:** There is no penalty. Correct the male/female numbers immediately and continue to play.

**CLARIFICATION:** If the same sex bats back to back in a CO-ED game, the proper batter is out when detected by the umpire up until the next pitch to the next batter. If there has been a pitch to the next

batter the change is made without penalty when it is noticed by the umpire. It is not an appeal play.

29. A team manager informs the umpire that a substitute player will hit for the starter who is batting third and then the starter will re-enter the game when the team plays defence.

**RULING:** The umpire shall accept the batting substitution; however, the re-entry must be reported to the umpire when it is actually made.

30. A substitute player is announced and takes his position in the batter's box. Before he is thrown any pitches, he is replaced by another substitute. Can the first substitute enter the game later?

**RULING:** No in FP. The first substitute is an official player, and officially in the game, as soon as he is announced to the plate umpire; or enters the batter's box and a legal or illegal pitch is thrown. In SP, the substitute could re-enter once later in the game.

**TIP:** The plate umpire should repeat the substitution to the coach, to be absolutely sure the change is correct and permanent, before updating the line-up card and informing the score keeper.

**CLARIFICATION:** "Announced" means the change has been given to the plate umpire, and the plate umpire has accepted the change.

31. The batter is legally replaced by a substitute with a count of two balls and two strikes. At the same time, a new pitcher is brought in to pitch to the legal substitute. Does a new count start?

**RULING:** The substitute or relief pitcher assumes any count on the batter at the point of substitution.

32. The team manager substitutes a player as his team leaves the dugout to take their defensive positions. The manager does not notify the plate umpire of the substitution until the new player comes to bat an inning later.

**RULING:** The substitution is legal. The manager has corrected his error before the offended team appealed.

**TIP:** The use of an illegal substitute (i.e. unannounced) must be brought to the attention of the plate umpire by the offended team. If the manager of the team in violation informs the umpire before the opposing team's notification, there is no violation, regardless of how long the player was illegally in the game.

33. There is a runner on 1st, with two out, when the manager substitutes for the next batter "A". R1 is put out trying to steal 2nd, before the substitute finishes her turn at bat. The coach decides to let "A" bat at the start of the next inning.

**RULING:** Legal substitution, if this was the first time “A” had been substituted. However, the substitute, that did not complete her turn at bat, is official and cannot re-enter the game in FP. The substitute could re-enter once in SP.

34. (SP/FP U19 and above/O) The pitcher notifies the plate umpire that he wishes to intentionally walk the batter. When the batter reaches 1st, the pitcher indicates again he wishes to walk the next batter. The defensive coach then notifies the umpire that the first batter is an illegal substitute (a) after the second batter is on 1st, (b) after the second batter is awarded 1st on the intentional walk.

**RULING:** An intentional walk is treated the same as if one pitch has been thrown. In both situations the first batter is removed by the umpire, ruled ineligible, and a legal substitute would replace the first batter on second base.

If the first batter is found to be an unannounced substitute before the intentional walk to the second batter, then the first batter would be “Out”, removed from the game, ruled ineligible, and replaced by a legal substitute.

35. The offensive team sends eight batters to bat in the top half of the first inning before the defence can get three out. The pitcher is the ninth batter. Does the pitcher have to pitch to a batter in the bottom half before he can be substituted?

**RULING:** The pitcher does not have to pitch to a batter. Any player in the line-up may be substituted for by a legal substitution.

36. A runner twists his ankle sliding into 2nd. The offensive coach replaces the runner with a substitute runner. The injured player returns to play defence the next inning.

**RULING:** The change for the injured player is legal if the manager informed the plate umpire of the runner substitution. The switch of the substitute, to the injured player is legal as long as the manager/coach informed the plate umpire of the change and is a re-entry of a starting player.

37. A player substitutes for another in the second inning. Later in the game the substitute is removed from the line-up and is replaced by the starter or another substitute. The substituted player proceeds to coach at 1st, immediately or later in the game.

**RULING:** A substitute that is legally replaced and substituted from the game may act as a coach on the field.

38. A team member substitutes for a starting player in the third inning, without being announced to the plate umpire. The offended team notifies the plate umpire of the change after the substitute (a) has a count of three balls and two strikes, or (b) hits a pitched ball for a single, or (c) grounds out to the first baseman.



**RULING:** The offended team has appealed an unannounced substitution and in;

(a) the illegal substitute is removed and declared ineligible, a legal substitute assumes the count, and any advance of runners is legal.

(b) The illegal substitute is “Out”, declared ineligible, and a legal substitute replaces the unannounced substitute in the line-up. Any advance of runners due to the hit is nullified.

(c) The illegal substitute is removed and declared ineligible. A legal substitute replaces the unannounced substitute in the line-up. The “Out” on the play stands. Any advance of runners due to the hit is nullified.

39. The starting player re-enters the game for his substitute but the change is not reported to the plate umpire. The offended team appeals that the starter is an unannounced substitution (a) after the first pitch, or (b) before the first pitch.

**RULING:** In (a) the starter is an unannounced substitution, is removed from the game and ruled ineligible. A legal substitute assumes the ball and strike count. Any advance of runners, while the unannounced substitute was at bat, is legal.

(b) The starter is ruled a legal substitute by the plate umpire.

**NOTE:** There can be no violation of the substitution rule until one pitch, legal or illegal, has been thrown.

If the offended team appeals to the plate umpire before the first pitch to an illegal substitute, then the plate umpire will consider the appeal a notification and shall rule the substitution legal.

40. (FP) There is a runner on 1st with one out. The first pitch to the next batter is a wild pitch advancing R1 to 2nd. The defence appeals that the batter is an illegal substitution. The umpire removes the illegal player from the game, rules him ineligible, and a legal substitute assumes the one ball count. Is R1 left at 2nd?

**RULING:** The advance was not the result of a batted ball or walk by the illegal substitute. R1 is allowed to remain at 2nd.

41. The pitcher is legally substituted for in the fifth inning. The pitcher re-enters, unannounced, an inning later. After throwing one pitch, the pitcher’s manager informs the plate umpire that the pitcher has re-entered the game.

**RULING:** The pitcher is considered a legal substitution and entitled to remain in the game. The substitution was announced to the plate umpire prior to (before) the opposing teams appeal.

42. There are runners at 1st and 3rd with one out. The manager uses a substitute runner for R3, but does not make the change with the plate umpire. After (a) several pitches to the batter, or (b) the batter hits a single

or strikes out, or (c) two innings later, the illegal substitute's coach notifies the plate umpire of the violation.

**RULING:** In all cases (a, b, c) the plate umpire should rule no violation of the substitution rule and the substitute player is declared legal.

43. A starting player re-enters the game for his substitute, but the change is not reported to the plate umpire. The starter hits a pitched ball for a home run. The offended team brings the violation to the plate umpire's attention (a) before a pitch to the next batter, or (b) after a pitch to the next batter.

**RULING:** In (a) the re-entering starter is "Out", removed from the game and ruled ineligible because he is considered an unannounced substitution. Any advance of bases or runs scored by other runners, due to the hit by the starter, are nullified, and runners return to the last base held at the time of the pitch. A legal substitute replaces the starter in the line-up.

In (b) the home run counts. The starting player is still considered an unannounced substitution and is removed from the game and ruled ineligible. Any advance of bases or runs scored by other runners, due to the hit by the starter, are legal. A legal substitute replaces the unannounced substitute in the line-up.

**CLARIFICATION:** If the starter begins his turn at bat, after re-entering, then he is considered in the game. If the starter is in, even if illegally, then the original substitute must be out of the game.

Because the starter is batting in his original position in the line-up, he is not considered an illegal re-entry, but rather an illegal substitution.

44. An announced substitute "A" takes the place of one of the starters offensively. The offensive manager notices a different substitute "B" went to bat instead of the announced substitute "A". The manager (a) immediately replaces the different unannounced substitute "B" with the original announced substitute "A" or the original starter before a pitch is thrown, or (b) after one pitch, announces the entry of substitute "B" or the original starter for the originally announced substitute "A".

**RULING:** In (a) the originally announced substitute "A" is allowed to play. Because one pitch (legal or illegal) had not been thrown, the unannounced different substitute "B" would be allowed to return as a substitute player as they were not yet considered officially in the game.

The original starter is also allowed to play as long as this was the first time he had been substituted for. In FP, if the starter returns to play then the originally announced player "A" would not be eligible to participate in the game again. In SP, "A" could re-enter once.

In (b) the unannounced different substitute “B” is officially in the game when one legal or illegal pitch has been thrown. Substitute “B” would be allowed to continue her turn at bat because the offensive coach corrected the error before the offended team notified the plate umpire. In FP, substitute “A” would no longer be able to participate as a player. In SP, “A” could re-enter once.

The original starter could be brought back in as long as this was the first time he had been substituted for. In FP if the starter returns to play then both substitute players “A” and “B” would not be eligible to participate in the game again. In SP, both “A” and “B” could re-enter once.

In (a, b) the substitute players are removed from the game by the coach/manager and not by the umpire.

45. (Co-Ed SP) One of the teams list a male player following another male player in the line-up and the score sheet. Immediately after the first male bats and prior to the next male batting, for the first time, the umpire notices the error in the batting order.

**RULING:** Obviously the umpire has accepted an invalid lineup card. The plate umpire should correct the lineup replacing the second male with a female player since the actual infraction has not occurred, and continue the game.

**CLARIFICATION:** A pitch must be thrown to the second same sex player to have a violation. If the pitch was thrown, the proper player is automatically out when detected by the umpire. It is not an appeal play. If it is detected by the umpire after the improper player completes his/her turn at bat and a pitch has been thrown to the next batter the proper sex player replaces the improper player without penalty. In both cases, correct the lineup card before proceeding.

46. (Co-Ed SP) Female #2 hits a pitched ball for a single. Female #4 inadvertently bats and also singles. Now male #3 steps up to bat and one pitch is thrown when the defensive manager notifies the plate umpire that male #3 is batting out of order.

**RULING:** The umpire should bring male #5 to bat as the proper batter. As soon as one pitch was thrown to male #3, everything female #4 did was legal. Male #3 will not bat again until his turn reappears in the batting order.

If the batting out of order had been discovered before the first pitch to male #3 then male #3 would be “Out” (the proper batter that followed female #2) and female #2 would have been returned to 1st. The next batter would then be female #4.

47. The bases are loaded with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball for a triple. All runners score but R1 misses 3rd. Before the next pitch, the

defence appeals R1 missing 3rd and that the batter was an illegal substitute.

**RULING:** The umpire should reject the appeal on R1 as all play is nullified due to the illegal substitution. The substitute is “Out” (and removed from the game) and all runners are returned to their respective bases.

48. There are runners at 1st and 2nd with two out. The manager uses a substitute player as a runner for R1 but does not make the change with the plate umpire. The batter hits the next pitched ball for a home run. Before a pitch to the next batter, the defence appeals that R1’s substitute is an illegal substitute.

**RULING:** The plate umpire allows three runs to count, including the unannounced substitute because the sub was not batting. The illegal substitute is removed from the game and ruled ineligible. A proper substitute will replace the illegal player in the line-up.

**NOTE:** The coach/manager must name/announce a substitute player to the plate umpire before play can be resumed.

49. There are runners at 1st and 2nd. The offensive coach requests “Time” and announces two substitute runners, to the plate umpire, for R1 and R2. However, the substitute for R1 does not enter the game, and no one notices the mistake. The batter hits a pitched ball for a double, scoring R2, and advancing R1 to 3rd. Prior to the next pitch to the next batter, the defensive team appeals the unchanged substitution that just took place.

**RULING:** The batter’s hit is still legal and R2’s run counts. R1 is removed from the game for returning to the game without being announced and is ruled ineligible. In FP, the announced substitute for R1 that did not actually enter the game has used up his “life” by being legally announced and substituted for. In SP, he could re-enter once. A legal substitute is placed at 3rd.

50. A player has been removed from the game by the umpire and declared ineligible. The ineligible player returns to the game and the substitution is (a) announced to the plate umpire, or (b) not announced to the plate umpire, by the coach/manager.

**RULING:** In (a) the plate umpire should inform the manager/coach that he cannot accept the change. The plate umpire should request, and wait for the manager to make a proper substitution or leave the original player in the line-up. It is not a substitution, if the manager leaves the original player in the line-up.

(b) The game is declared a forfeit if the offended team notifies the umpire or the umpire discovers the ineligible substitution after one legal or illegal pitch has been thrown.

**RULE:** A game is declared a forfeit when a player, previously declared ineligible, is discovered participating in the game after his removal and after one pitch.

51. A player from team "A" has been declared ineligible to play because he was removed earlier in the game for being an unannounced substitution. The player in question is coaching 1st. Is the game forfeiture?

**RULING:** The game is not forfeited. The player in question cannot return to the game but he has not been ejected from the game. Any player removed from the game and declared ineligible can assist by coaching base, warming up substitutes, etc.

52. There is an illegal substitute playing on defence. There are runners at 1st and 3rd with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball (a) in the air, or (b) on the ground, to the illegal substitute. The illegal substitute catches the fly ball in (a), or picks up the ground ball in (b) and relays it to the infielder who tags out one of the runners. The offence appeals the use of the illegal substitute.

**RULING:** The illegal substitute is removed, and declared ineligible. The offence is given the option of taking the result of the play or having the batter bat again assuming the ball and strike count prior to the appeal of the illegal substitute because the illegal substitute made a play, and was appealed before the next pitch.

53. There is an illegal substitute playing on defence. There are runners at 1st and 3rd with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball (a) in the air to, or (b) on the ground, to the illegal substitute. The illegal substitute does not catch the fly ball in situation (a). In both situations the illegal substitute then relays the ball to an infielder, who in turn relays the ball to another fielder, who in turn tags out a runner. The offence appeals the use of the illegal substitute.

**RULING:** The illegal substitute is removed, and declared ineligible. The offence is given the option of taking the result of the play or having the batter bat again assuming the ball and strike count prior to the appeal of the illegal substitute because the illegal player participated in the play, and was appealed before the next pitch.

54. A substitute fielder replaced the left fielder, but failed to tell his team member and the umpire. The inning started with four outfielders (FP) or five outfielders (SP). The extra fielder catches a fly ball.

**RULING:** The unannounced substitute is removed from the game by the umpire and declared ineligible to play. The coach shall pick one outfielder and this player is considered as being substituted for once. The coach of the offended team has the option of taking the result of the play or having the batter bat over with the count prior to the hit.

**TIP:** Umpires can avoid this by counting defensive players at the start of each half inning.

55. The starting right fielder is removed from the game by (a) the manager, or (b) the umpire. The starting right fielder returns to the field as the first base coach.

**RULING:** In (a) -the player may coach and/or re-enter the game.  
(b) -the player may coach and may not return the game because he is ruled ineligible.

**TIP:** A player is considered ineligible to play when removed from the game. A player removed from the game may sit on the bench and/or participate as a coach while a player ejected from the game must leave the park. If the player is an illegal re-entry the team's manager/coach is also ejected.

56. A Co-Ed game is in the bottom of the seventh inning. The score is tied and the lead-off female batter hits a pitched ball for a double. The offensive team manager wishes to substitute the female runner with a male runner at 2nd.

**RULING:** The plate umpire shall not allow the substitution. Substitutes shall be male for male, and female for female, in all situations.

57. A Co-Ed game with a male batter at bat. The on deck batter is a substitute for the female batter next in the line-up. The male batter receives a walk on four pitches and proceeds to 2nd. The female substitute informs the plate umpire that she will take the walk and proceeds toward 1st. As she is moving to 1st the (a) -offensive manager, or (b) -defensive manager notifies the umpire that she is a substitution.

**RULING:** (a) When the substitute's manager reports the substitution, she is now legally in the game.

(b) When the opposing manager notifies the umpire, she is an unannounced illegal substitution. The female batter is declared "Out", removed from the game and declared ineligible. As soon as the substitution declared she would accept the walk, even though no pitch had been made, she is officially in the game.

58. The line-up card, consisting of all starters and available substitutes, was given to the umpires at the start of the game. In the fourth inning, the manager substitutes a player whose name was not on the line-up card.

**RULING:** This is a legal substitution if the player is officially on the team roster and the manager properly notifies the umpire when the substitute enters the game.

59. The batting order is ABCDEFGHI. C is the catcher. There are 2 outs with B on 3rd. C gets a walk, so could be temporarily replaced with A. A is a slow runner so the coach doesn't want to make the switch. The next pitch is a wild pitch and B scores. Now B becomes the next available temporary

runner. Is the coach now allowed to request TIME and put B in as the temporary runner?

RULING: Yes, the coach may wait and elect to use the Temporary Runner at any time after the 2nd out occurs.

60. (SP) A team enters a substitute for their pitcher in their batting half of the inning. The substitute is now on base. Coach requests that the Temporary Runner now run for the substitute so that he/she can prepare to pitch the next inning.

RULING: The Temporary Runner may only run for the pitcher who completed the previous defensive half inning in the pitching position or is listed as the pitcher on the lineup card in the first half inning.

61. (SP) In the pre-game conference, the coach requests that his pitcher not be required to use a Temporary Runner as he is a very fast runner.

RULING: The use of a Temporary Runner is not an option. It is necessary to designate one at the pre-game meeting.

62. (SP) In the 5<sup>th</sup> inning, the designated Temporary Runner (Smith) is ejected from the game and Jones now enters the lineup as his substitute. Later in the game, the pitcher is now on base. The coach enters Jones as the Temporary Runner to run for his pitcher.

RULING: This is legal. The substitute for the original Temporary Runner now assumes the role of Temporary Runner.

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### **Re-Entry: (a) legal and illegal, (b) offensive and defensive**

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EXAMPLES: Of an illegal re-entry include:

(a) a starting player, including a DP or FLEX or EP, who re-enters twice.

(b) a starting player who re-enters into a different position in the batting order. (Includes the FLEX going into a spot in the batting order other than the starting DP's batting position and the DP going into some other position in the batting order other than his original starting position.

(c) In FP, a substitute player who re-enters the game.

NOTE: (SP) A substitute may re-enter once, i.e. enter the game twice. An illegal re-entry will also violate the illegal substitution rule, whether or not they are announced.

63. There is a runner on 1st, with two out, in the top half of the first inning. The offensive manager replaces the number four batter with a substitute. The substitute batter strikes out. Later in the game the manager announces the re-entry of the original number four starter to hit for the substitute. Is this legal?

**RULING:** This is legal. Members of the starting line-up may be removed and re-entered one time provided they occupy the same batting position when originally in the line-up.

64. The starting pitcher is substituted for in the third inning by a substitute pitcher. The starting pitcher re-enters later in the game, replacing the substitute player. Is this legal?

**RULING:** This is a legal substitution. A starting player may re-enter the game and replace a substitute player, as long as the starter bats in the original position in the batting order held at the start of the game.

65. A substitute player is legally substituted for starting player #6. The removed starter re-enters the game unannounced and for another starting player. The offended team appeals to the umpire to the substitution after three innings.

**RULING:** The starting player #6 is an illegal re-entry. The team's manager and #6 are ejected by the umpire. The additional penalty of an out would apply if the offended team notified the umpire #6 is on base and before a pitch to the batter that follows #6.

66. The offended coach/manager appeals that the batter is an unannounced illegal re-entry. The appeal is made (a) before a pitch to the batter or (b) after a pitch to the batter.

**RULING:** In (a) the proper substitute will take the place of the unannounced illegal re-entry player. Because the offended coach has notified the umpire before a pitch there is no penalty (substitution rule). The illegal re-entry and the manager are not ejected because the umpire can correct the mistake before a pitch (legal or illegal).

In (b) a proper substitute will take the place of the unannounced illegal re-entry player. The team manager (whose name appears on the line-up card) and the illegal re-entry player are ejected and ruled ineligible.

**RULE:** If the plate umpire discovers that the manager's announced substitution is an illegal re-entry, then the plate umpire can prevent the illegal re-entry up until the next pitch. Failure to do so does not alter any subsequent penalty.

**TIP:** If he realizes the error, the plate umpire is encouraged to use preventative umpiring by using a simple phrase such as, "Coach I cannot accept that change".

67. A player, who is an unannounced illegal re-entry, hits a pitched ball for a home run or a single. The defensive coach brings the infraction to the plate umpire's attention (a) before a pitch to the next batter, or (b) after a pitch to the next batter.

**RULING:** In both (a, b) the team manager/coach (whose name appears on the line-up card) and the illegal re-entry player are ejected



and ruled ineligible when the violation is appealed to the plate umpire. Note that the penalty for both the illegal re-entry and unannounced substitute are enforced.

In (a) the illegal re-entry is “Out” because the substitute is an unannounced substitution. Any advance of runners as a result of (the batter completing their turn at bat) i.e. a base hit, a walk, intentional walk, an error, or obstruction is nullified. Note that the penalty for both the illegal re-entry and unannounced substitute are enforced. All additional outs made as a result of the hit ball by the unannounced substitute stand. In (b) the illegal re-entry is replaced by a legal substitute. Any advance of runners as a result of a base hit, a walk, intentional walk, an error, or obstruction is legal. Note that an Intentional walk is considered as a pitch to the batter being put on base and a dead ball.

**CLARIFICATION:** In most cases, the use of an illegal re-entry has not been reported. In such cases, the illegal re-entry will also violate the offence illegal substitution rule. The plate umpire will enforce the appropriate illegal substitute/player rule in addition to the two ejections.

**SP –** The use of an illegal re-entry will always violate the illegal substitution rule.

68. The offensive coach/manager makes a player change with the plate umpire. The defensive manager/coach appeals that the substitute player is an illegal re-entry,

(a) After the substitute hits safely and before a pitch to the next batter.

(b) After the substitute hits safely and after a pitch to the next batter.

**RULING:** In both FP and SP, the illegal re-entry player and the manager/coach (whose name appears on the line-up card) are ejected and ruled ineligible.

(a) In FP, the illegal re-entry is not out on the illegal substitution rule because the coach announced the change to the umpire. Any advance of runners as a result of the batter completing their turn at bat is legal. In SP, the illegal re-entry is out and any advance of runners as a result of the batter completing their turn at bat is nullified, i.e. they return to bases occupied at the time of the pitch. In both FP and SP, the illegal re-entry is replaced with a legal substitute.

(b) The illegal re-entry is replaced with a legal substitute. Any advance of runners as a result of a base hit, a walk, an error, or obstruction is legal.

**CLARIFICATION:** Even though the plate umpire failed to notice the violation this would not alter any subsequent penalty to the illegally re-entered player or the manager/coach who is still ejected by the plate umpire and ruled ineligible.

69. (FP) The pitcher is removed from the pitching position in the fourth inning after four (six in U14) defensive charged conferences. The same pitcher returns to pitch later in the game. The offensive team appeals to the plate umpire (a) before one pitch is thrown, or (b) any time after one pitch is thrown.

RULING: In (a) the illegal pitcher is replaced with a legal pitcher.

(b) The pitcher is ejected. The illegal pitcher is replaced with a legal substitute.

70. (FP) The pitcher is removed from the pitching position in the sixth inning after four (six in U14) charged conferences. The same pitcher returns to pitch later in the game. The offensive team appeals to the umpire (a) after one pitch is thrown, (b) after the third batter in the inning grounds out, or (c) in the next inning after the batter hits a double.

RULING: The pitcher is an illegal pitcher and is ejected from the game. The illegal pitcher is replaced with a legal substitute.

In all three situations, the offensive manager has the option of taking either the result of the last pitch thrown prior to the appeal and having all plays stand, or having the last pitch nullified. If the pitch is nullified, the batter resumes his at bat with the count prior to the pitch and any base runners would return to the base held prior to the pitch.

71. A player, who is an unannounced illegal re-entry, is playing defence. The offensive coach brings the infraction to the plate umpire's attention: (a) before a pitch to the next batter, (b) after a pitch to the next batter, (c) after the fielder makes a play and before a pitch to the next batter, or (d) after the fielder makes a play and after a pitch to the next batter.

RULING: In all cases (a, b, c, d) the unannounced illegal re-entry player is replaced by a legal substitute.

In (a) because the offensive coach has notified the umpire of the change (before a pitch, legal or illegal) there is no illegal substitution penalty. The illegal re-entry and the manager are not ejected because the umpire can correct the mistake before a pitch.

(b, c, d) The manager (whose name appears on the line-up card) and the illegal re-entry player are ejected and ruled ineligible.

(b, d) All plays (any out, advance of runners, plays on runners, or plays resulting from the ball being hit) while the illegal re-entry was in the game will stand.

(c) The offence is given the option of taking the result of the play or having the play nullified (runners return to last base held at the time of the pitch and the batter assumes the ball and strike count prior to the last pitch).

TIP: The illegal defensive player must be involved in making the play (any involvement - throwing or catching the ball) for the offensive coach to have an option. It does not matter if there is an out or not. If the illegal sub does not become involved in the play then all actions stand and you remove the illegal player.

72. The defensive manager/coach makes a player change with the plate umpire.

The offensive manager/coach appeals that the substitute player is an illegal re-entry,

- (a) Before a pitch is thrown.
- (b) After one pitch is thrown.
- (c) After the substitute makes a play on a batted ball.
- (d) After the substitute makes a play on a batted ball and after a pitch to the next batter.

RULING: In all cases (a, b, c, d) if the player is an illegal re-entry then the player is replaced by a legal substitute.

In (a) because the offensive coach has notified the umpire, before a pitch, of the change, there is no penalty. The illegal re-entry and the manager are not ejected because the umpire can correct the mistake before a pitch, legal or illegal.

FP - In (c), the offence is not given the option and all plays (any out, advance of runners, plays on runners, or plays resulting from the ball being hit) are legal because the substitute player was announced.

SP – In (c), the offence is given the option of taking the result of the play or having the play nullified (runners return to last base held at the time of the pitch and the batter assumes the ball and strike count prior to the last pitch).

(b, c, d) The manager (whose name appears on the line-up card) and the illegal re-entry player are ejected and ruled ineligible

(b, d) Any out or advance of runners, plays on runners, or plays resulting from the ball being hit are legal.

CLARIFICATION: Even though the plate umpire failed to notice the violation this would not alter any subsequent penalty to the illegally re-entered player or the manager/coach. In such cases, the manager/coach is also ejected for violation of the re-entry rule.

73. In an adult FP game, the visiting team begin by using the DP/FLEX with the DP batting 9<sup>th</sup> and the FLEX pitching. During the course of the game they use up the 2 substitutes they had available and still have the DP and FLEX (10 players) in their lineup. Ahead by a run in the top of the 7<sup>th</sup> inning, their

lead-off batter (playing 2<sup>nd</sup> base) strikes out for the third out and is ejected for unsportsmanlike behaviour. As they have the opportunity to complete the game on defence, the coach opts to have his DP play 2<sup>nd</sup> base and attempt to close out the game with his 9 defensive players. The plate umpire allows this and the visiting team wins the game after getting the required 3 outs in the bottom of the 7<sup>th</sup> inning. Is this correct?

**RULING:** Incorrect ruling. A legal substitute is immediately required for the ejected player. If no substitute is available, the game is considered a forfeit.

74. There is a runner on 1st with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground to the shortstop who scoops up the ball and begins a 6-4-3 double play. Before the defensive team leaves the field, the offensive coach informs the plate umpire that the batter is an illegal player. The umpire checks his line-up and determines the player is an unannounced illegal re-entry. What do you do?

**RULING:** The double play is allowed to stand, inning over. The illegal re-entry and the coach are ejected and the illegal player is replaced with a proper substitute.

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### **Blood Rule**

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75. The pitcher is cut or has a blister on the pitching hand and the injury is bleeding. The manager asks permission to use a bandage to cover the wound.

**RULING:** The game must be interrupted immediately to allow the player, who is bleeding, to treat or cover the wound. The player would not be allowed to pitch if the bleeding was not controlled.

(FP) the player would not be allowed to pitch if a bandage had to be used, on the pitching hand, to control the bleeding. (A pitcher is not allowed to use tape or substance on the pitching hand).

(SP) the player would be allowed to pitch if a bandage had to be used, on the pitching hand, to control the bleeding.

76. The pitcher is cut on the forearm of the pitching arm. The injury is neatly covered and protected with a 2" bandage, completely around the arm, just below the elbow. Is the pitcher allowed to pitch?

**RULING:** (FP) The player would be allowed to pitch if the bleeding was controlled and if they wore a long sleeved 'legal' undershirt covering the bandage.

(SP) The player would be allowed to pitch if the bleeding was controlled. The bandage may be any color.

77. A player has a scraped leg and the injury is bleeding. The bleeding is noticeable by the stain on the uniform.

**RULING:** The game must be interrupted immediately to allow the player, who is bleeding, to treat or cover the wound.

**RULE:** The plate umpire should allow a reasonable amount of time to treat and cover the wound, and/or to change/remove the soiled uniform. If the bleeding cannot be stopped within a reasonable time, the player must be taken out of the game and may not return to the game until the bleeding ceases, the area cleaned or covered and, if necessary, the uniform replaced.

If a change of number is required due to the new uniform shirt, there is no penalty.

A withdrawn player shall be replaced by a replacement player (who may have previously been in the game but subsequently substituted), who may act for the withdrawn player for the remainder of the inning in progress and for the following complete inning. The use of a replacement player is not subject to the provisions of the substitution rule provided the withdrawn player returns to the game within the time permitted.

The replacement player and the withdrawn player must be reported to the plate umpire and the plate umpire must be advised when the withdrawn player is returning to the game. Failure to report to the umpire is an appeal play and substitution penalties apply if appealed. A player currently playing in the game cannot act as a replacement player.

Should the withdrawn player not be able to return to the game within the time permitted then the replacement player must be treated as a substitute. If the replacement player has been in the game previously then he must be replaced by a legal substitute. The withdrawn player may re-enter the game subject to the provisions of the Official Rules of Softball.

If no substitute is available, the game is considered a forfeit.

**CLARIFICATION:** A player removed or ejected cannot be the replacement player. A minor player who has left the game due to injury or illness cannot act as a replacement player.

78. (FP) The starting pitcher cuts his hand on a play. After a reasonable amount of time has elapsed, the umpire chooses to have the pitcher leave the game until the bleeding ceases. A replacement player takes the pitcher's place and does not perform very well. The defensive coach is granted time to speak with the pitcher. Is the pitcher charged with a conference?

**RULING:** A defensive conference would be charged. Any statistics accrued by the replacement player at bat or in the field while he is in the game are credited to that player.

Should a fourth (sixth in U14) defensive charged conference occur while the replacement player is pitching, is anyone removed from the pitching position and if so, who?

The replacement player would be removed from the pitching position and would not be eligible to pitch for the remainder of the game. The replacement player would still be eligible to play any other defensive position.

79. (FP) In the fourth inning with the game tied the pitcher from the visiting team is removed from the pitching position due to four (six in U14) charged defensive conferences. The game remains tied until the seventh inning when the visitors score a go ahead run (one).

The visitor's pitcher develops a bleeding blister after getting two outs in the bottom of the seventh with the bases loaded. The bleeding cannot be stopped after a reasonable amount of time and the defensive coach is compelled to use a replacement player for the pitcher.

The defensive coach informs the umpire that he has burnt (used up) all his available substitute players and wishes to use the services of his original removed pitcher as the replacement player.

What does the plate umpire rule?

**RULING:** The original pitcher was removed from the pitching position as a result of the team having taken four (six in U14) defensive charged conferences. In this scenario, he/she may enter the game as a replacement player but is not eligible to pitch.

Let's assume the plate umpire allows the team to replace the current pitcher with the original pitcher (who is an illegal pitcher). The illegal pitcher strikes out the next batter to win the game. The home team appeals before the umpires leave the field.

**RULING:** The pitcher is ejected. Have the batter return to bat with the last pitch nullified (count prior to last pitch). Have the defensive coach select another replacement player for the withdrawn injured pitcher.

80. THE BATTER HITS A SHORT FLY BALL TO LEFT FIELD. F6 AND F7 BOTH ATTEMPT TO CATCH THE FLY BALL AS THEIR HEADS APPEAR TO COLLIDE AS THE BALL FALLS TO THE GROUND. F6 GETS UP RUBBING THE BACK OF HIS HEAD AND NECK AREA.

THE DEFENSIVE COACH WANTS TO HAVE F6 UNDERGO A CONCUSSION PROTOCOL.

**RULING:** A REPLACEMENT PLAYER IS ALLOWED TO TAKE THE SPOT OF F6 FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE CURRENT INNING AS WELL AS THE ENTIRE NEXT INNING IF NECESSARY. IF AFTER THE ALLOTTED TIME HAS PASSED, F6 MUST RETURN TO THE GAME OR HAVE LEGAL SUBSTITUTE TAKE HIS PLACE.

81. R1 attempts to steal second base. The throw from the catcher, not a hard throw, glances off the helmet of R1. R1 appears not to be injured by the throw but rather acts anxious and upset just by the fact of being hit in the head. The offensive coach asks for a replacement player for R1. Should the umpire allow this change?

**Ruling:** Anytime there is the slightest possibility of a concussion the umpire should allow the player to be withdrawn from the game for a legal replacement player.

## **RULE 5 – THE GAME**

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### **Home or Visiting Team**

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1. The opposing teams get in an argument over which team should be the home team.

**RULING:** The first or last at bat will be decided by a toss of a coin unless otherwise stated in the rules or schedule of the organization under which the game is played.

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### **Fitness of Ground**

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2. Heavy rains have made the playing field not playable prior to the game starting. Who calls the game off?

**RULING:** The plate umpire decides whether a field is playable.

3. The league director decides in the third inning that heavy fog makes the game no longer playable.

**RULING:** Only the plate umpire should make this decision.

**CLARIFICATION:** In league or everyday games, the plate umpire makes decisions regarding the fitness of the grounds. In a Canadian championship, the plate umpire decides on the fitness of the grounds once the game has started but starting or continuing a game is up to the tournament supervisors.

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### **Regulation Game and Winner of Game**

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4. The game is called by the plate umpire in the bottom of the fourth inning due to weather conditions. Is this a regulation game?

**RULING:** No. A regulation game must be five innings long, or four and a half innings, if the home team is leading in the game.

5. The home team is losing by one run after five and a half complete innings. The home team scores (a) one run, or (b) two runs, in the bottom of the inning, but the game is called due to weather, before the home team has completed its turn at bat. Who wins the game?

**RULING:** The game is a regulation game. In (a) the game is a tie, and in (b) the home team is the winner. The score does not revert back to the last complete inning, when the visitors were leading, because the home team has at least tied the score.

**NOTE:** In determining the winner of a game after five innings (regulation game), the home team must have had the opportunity to bat and tie the score, unless the home team has scored more runs than the visiting team and the game is called in the bottom of the fifth or sixth inning, the home team shall be the winner. If the visiting team has scored more runs than the home team in the sixth or seventh inning and the home team has not had the opportunity to complete its turn at bat, the game reverts back to the previous full inning. If the score was not tied, a winner would be declared if one team was ahead and five or six full innings had been played.

6. The game is in the last half of the sixth inning with the bases loaded. The batter hits a home run, tying the score. It then begins to rain heavily, and after waiting considerable time the plate umpire decides to call off the game.

**RULING:** The regulation game ends in a tie.

**CLARIFICATION:** There is no regulation time or set time that an umpire must wait before calling off a game. Many factors, such as intensity of weather, condition of field, type of game (regular season or tournament), or time of day, may help to determine whether to wait to complete a game. Safety should be the prime concern.

7. The home team is leading by one run after five innings. The visitors score two runs, to go ahead, in the top half of the sixth inning. With one out in the bottom half of the same inning, the umpire calls the game off due to rain. Who wins the game?

**RULING:** This is a regulation game and the home team wins. The score reverts back to the last complete inning because the home team has not completed its turn at bat in the sixth inning and is behind in the score.

8. The game is tied 5-5 in the bottom of the seventh inning with the bases loaded. The batter hits a pitched ball to right field. The batted ball bounces over the outfield fence for a ground rule double. What is the final score of the game?

**RULING:** The final score is 6-5 for the home team. Only as many runs as necessary to win a game are credited in this situation.

If the batted ball was a home run then the final score would be 9-5 for the home team. The ball must be hit over a fence to be counted as a homerun. It can't be a 4 base award.

9. One of the teams starts the game with (a) ten players in a Slo-Pitch game, or (b) nine players in a Fast Pitch game. The team loses a player due to



injury and there is no legal substitute to replace the injured player. What happens now?

**RULING:** The game is forfeited. The game may not continue with less than the minimum number of players required to start the game.

**EXCEPTION:** (MINOR) The re-entry rule is waved if a team has used all substitute players when an injury occurs and there is no legal substitute to replace the injured player.

10. One of the teams has only 10 players in a Fast Pitch game. They begin the game using all 10 players, i.e. a DP and FLEX are being used. The team loses a player (not the DP or FLEX) due to a sprained ankle and there is no substitute to replace the injured player. What happens now?

**RULING:** The game is forfeited. The game may not continue with less than the minimum number of players required to start the game.

**EXCEPTION:** (MINOR) The FLEX can be suspended and the player used to assume the lineup position of the injured player. The injured player may not return to the game.

11. The visiting team forfeits the game because they have less than the required minimum number of players. What is the score?

**RULING:** The score of a forfeited FP game is seven to zero, one run for each inning. In SP, the score would be fifteen to zero.

12. The umpires lose track of the number of outs and team “A” leaves the field after out number two. (a) Before one pitch to the first batter or (b) after one pitch to the first batter the coach for team “B” appeals that team “A” left the field after only two were out in the previous inning. The plate umpire checks with the official scorekeeper and confirms that there were only two outs when team “A” left the field. The plate umpire rules that the previous inning is over and the game must continue with team “A” at bat. Team “B” protests because they believe the game should revert back to the point when team “A” left the field after two outs.

**RULING:** In (a) it is not too late to notify the umpire of the error in the number of outs. The previous inning is not complete and the team at bat must return to play defence.

(b) The notification to the plate umpire is too late because the next inning has started. The teams should not be asked to change field position after the first legal or illegal pitch to the first batter.

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## Tiebreaker

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13. The game is into extra innings, and the tie breaker rule is in effect. The improper runner (not an illegal substitute) goes to second base to start the inning. The proper batter comes to bat and takes one pitch. The defence appeals the improper runner and demands that R2 be ruled “Out”. The

offence blames the umpire for the mistake, and demands the inning be started over again with the proper runner at 2nd. What do you do?

**RULING:** There is no penalty if the runner is a player already in the line-up. The proper runner (player scheduled to bat last in that inning) is placed at second base. Any play, while the improper runner was in the game, is legal.

Even though it is the responsibility of the plate umpire to ensure the proper runner starts at second base, the scorekeeper and the umpire should communicate with one another, at the start of each tie breaker inning, to ensure the proper runner starts at second base.

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### Scoring Runs and runs not scored

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14. The bases are loaded with one out. The batter hits a fly ball to the center fielder, who catches the ball for out number two. The runners at 2nd and 3rd leave their bases before the catch. The defence makes a proper appeal at (a) 3rd, or (b) 2nd.

**RULING:** (a) R3 is the third out and no runs count.

(b) R2 is the third out and the run by R3 counts if the appeal is made after R3 scores.

15. The bases are loaded with none out. All runners leave their respective base with the release of the pitched ball (FP) or when the ball reaches home plate (SP). The batter hits the ball deep above the outfield. The left fielder makes a spectacular catch for out number one. The outfielder relays the ball to 2nd and then 1st on the runners who failed to tag for out number two and three. R3 scored before the out at first.

**RULING:** R3's run counts even though the runner did not properly retouch 3rd. This is a "timing" play. The defence has to properly appeal 3rd for the run not to count.

16. (FP) There are runners at 2nd and 3rd with two outs. The batter strikes out, but the ball gets away from the catcher. The runners advance and R3 scores while R2 is thrown out at the plate. The batter-runner failed to advance to 1st and the catcher, after tagging R2, throws to 1st for the force out on the BR.

**RULING:** The out on R2 is the third out and the inning is over. R3's run counts. By rule, an additional out appeal, e.g. missing a base, may be made to remove a run. However, this is not an appeal situation as the BR not advancing to first is not considered as missing the base.

17. There are runners at 1st and 3rd with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball for a double but misses 1st and R1 misses 2nd when advancing to 3rd as R3 scores. The defence appeals (a) the BR missing 1st and then R1 missing 2nd, or (b) R1 missing 2nd and the BR missing 1st for the third out. Does R3's run count?

RULING: In (a) the second appeal on the R1 is no longer a force but a time play and R3's run would count if R3 crossed the plate before the appeal on R1.

(b) When appealing 2nd and then 1st, both are force plays and the run would not count.

18. The bases are loaded with none out when the batter hits a pitched ball on the ground to an infielder. The defence turns the double play on R1 and the BR at 2nd and 1st. Both R3 and R2 advance and score. However, R2 missed 3rd and is called out on an appeal. Does R3's run count?

RULING: R3's run would count. R2 missing 3rd is no longer a force out because R1 and the BR were called out previous to the appeal.

19. There are runners at 1st and 3rd with one out when the batter hits a pitched ball on the ground to an infielder. R1 is forced out at 2nd and then interferes with the throw to 1st in an attempt to retire the batter-runner. At the time of the interference R3 had already scored. The next runner closest to home is the BR who is called out for the third out. Does R3's run count?

RULING: R3's run would not count because the 3rd out is the force out on the BR at 1st.

20. There are runners at 2nd and 3rd with one out. The batter hits a fly ball to the outfield, which is caught for the second out. R3 tags up and leaves 3rd legally and scores. However, R2 left 2nd before the batted ball was touched by the outfielder. The defence appeals 2nd before R2 returns to retouch 2nd, and is declared "Out" by the base umpire.

RULING: Three out and R3's run counts if the appeal is made after R3 touches home plate.

This is a timing play. The defence would have to appeal 2nd before R3 touched home plate if they wanted to nullify the run.

21. There are runners at 1st and 3rd with one out when the batter hits a pitched ball for a single, scoring R3. R1 misses 2nd but advances safely to 3rd. The batter-runner is thrown out at 2nd trying to stretch his hit into a double. R1 is called out by the umpire when the defence appeals 2nd. Does R3's run count?

RULING: R3's run would count. R1 missing 2nd is no longer a force out because the BR was called out prior to the appeal.

22. The bases are loaded with two out. The batter hits the pitched ball for a triple, but misses (a) 1st, or (b) 2nd. An appeal is made by the defence after all three runners have scored. The base umpire calls the batter-runner "Out", on the appeal, for the third out.

RULING: In (a) no runs count since the batter-runner did not safely reach the base he was forced to touch.

(b) 3 runs count because the batter-runner is not forced to advance to 2nd, even though he must touch the base in legal order.

**NOTE:** A run will not score if the last out of the inning is a putout at 1st on the BR or at another base if a preceding runner is forced because of the batter becoming a BR.

Missed bases could result in a force out. (i.e. R1 missed 2nd on a base hit and the infraction is appealed for the third out of the inning, any runs scored would not count.)

An appeal play on a runner leaving base too soon on a caught fly ball is considered a time play and not a force out. If the appeal results in the last out, any runners preceding the appealed runner would score if they crossed home plate prior to the out.

**TIP:** A force out situation cannot be created by a fly ball out. If the batter does not become a BR you cannot have a force out.

23. The game is tied in the bottom of the seventh inning with the bases loaded and two outs. The batter receives a walk or an intentional walk and advances to and touches 1st. R3 also advances and touches home plate scoring the winning run. R1 and R2 do not advance to their respective base but rather join in the celebration at home plate. What do you rule if the defence appeals that either R1 did not touch 2nd or R2 did not touch 3rd?

**RULING:** R3's run would not count and the game goes into extra inning(s). R1 or R2 would be ruled the last out force out on the appeal because the runner(s) did not safely reach the base they were forced to touch (the next base) when the batter was walked or an intentional walk and became a BR.

24. The game is tied in the bottom of the seventh inning with the bases loaded and one out. The batter receives a walk or an intentional walk and advances to and touches 1st. R3 also advances and touches home plate scoring the winning run. R1 and R2 do not advance to their respective base but rather join in the celebration at home plate. What do you rule if the defence appeals that R1 did not touch 2nd and R2 did not touch 3rd?

**RULING:** R3's run would not count if the appeals were made on R2 (second out force out) and then R1 who is the third out force out.

R3's run would count if the appeals were made on R1 (second out force out) and then R2 who is not forced to advance because 2nd is now an open base due to R1 being ruled out on the appeal.

25. There is a runner at 3rd with two out. The batter hits the pitched ball to the shortstop, who throws the batter-runner out at 1st. However, the third baseman obstructed R3. Is R3 awarded home plate and does the R3's run count even though the batter-runner was the third out, force out at 1st?

RULING: R3's run would not count because the last out is a force out. There would be no change to the ruling, "Out", even if R3 touched home plate before the last out is recorded at 1st.

26. The bases are loaded with two outs. The batter hits the next pitched ball over the outfield fence for a home run. R3 fails to touch home, while all the other runners touch all the bases in regular order, including home plate. After all play has ceased a verbal appeal is made on R3 at home plate. The plate umpire rules R3 is "Out". How many runs count?

RULING: No runs score because R3 is the last out, force out, at home plate.

27. The score is tied in the bottom half of the seventh inning. The bases are loaded with two out. The batter receives a walk. R3 scores the winning run, the batter-runner fails to go to 1st, but instead leaves the field because she assumes the game is over. The defence appeals 1st.

RULING: This is not an appeal play. The batter-runner should be ruled "Out" as soon as she enters out of play territory (i.e. dugout), and R3's run does not count because the last out is a force out.

28. There are runners at 1st and 3rd with two outs. The batter hits the pitched ball on the ground toward the second baseman. The infielder picks up the ball and chases R1 back towards 1st and tags R1 before R3 scores or after R3 scores.

RULING: In either situation R3's run does not count since the last out is a force out. R1 is forced to advance to 2nd because the batter is now a BR.

29. There are runners at 1st and 3rd, with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air to the outfield where the center fielder catches the ball. R3 left 3rd before the fly ball was touched by the outfielder. The ball is thrown wildly into the stands at 3rd in an attempt to make a live ball appeal on R3 at 3rd. R1 had already reached 2nd, at the time of the throw. The umpire properly awards R1 home plate (two base award). After all runners have been given an opportunity to complete their base running obligations and touch all awarded bases, the defence properly appeals that R3 did not tag-up at 3rd.

RULING: R3 is "Out" and the runs scored by R3 and R1 are cancelled, because R3 is the third out, and no succeeding run is permitted to count.

30. The game is in the bottom of the seventh inning, and there are runners at 1st and 3rd with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground toward the first baseman, who scoops up the ball, and tags R1 who has remained in contact with the base. The infielder then touches 1st ahead of the batter-runner. Meanwhile R3 has scored the apparent winning run.

RULING: R1 and the batter-runner are both “Force Out” situations. R3’s run does not count because the last out is the result of the batter-runner being a force out.

31. There are runners at 1st and 3rd with one out. A pitched ball is hit on the ground to the first baseman who fields the ball, touches 1st and then throws the ball to 2nd where R1 is tagged out. In the meantime R3 scores before the tag on R1.

RULING: R3’s run counts because the third out of the inning, R1, was not a force out. The force on R1 was removed when the infielder touched 1st base for the out on the batter-runner.

32. The score is tied in the bottom of the last inning. There are runners at 1st and 3rd with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air to the outfield. The fly ball is caught. R3 legally tags up but R1 does not and advances toward 2nd. R3 scores (a) before the ball is thrown to 1st for the live ball appeal, or (b) after the ball is thrown to 1st for the live ball appeal. R1 is declared out.

RULING: In (a) R3’s run counts.  
(b) R3’s run does not count.

33. There are runners at 2nd and 3rd with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball for a single. R3 scores and R2 is thrown out at the plate. The BR advances to 2nd but on an appeal at 1st is called out for missing the base.

RULING: R3’s run does not count because the third out of the inning is a force out.

34. There are runners at 2nd and 3rd with two outs. The batter hits a pitched ball for a single. R3 scores and R2 is thrown out at the plate. The BR advances to 2nd but on an appeal at 1st is called out for missing the base.

RULING: R3’s run does not count. The legal appeal for ‘missing a base’ results in the BR being ruled out at 1<sup>st</sup> which is a force out.

RULE: Additional out appeals may be made after the third out as long as they are made properly and are made to remove a run.

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### **Offensive Conference**

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35. The third base coach requests and is granted time to talk with the first base coach.

RULING: A conference between coaches is a charged offensive conference.

36. The third base coach requests and is granted time to talk with the first base coach. After the coaches converse, one of the coaches speaks to one of the runners (a) on her way back to the coach’s box, or (b) from the coach’s box; and before the umpire can initiate “Play Ball”.

**RULING:** In (a) the offensive coach is charged with a conference. Because the coach requested and was granted time and a message was sent to the runner before the coach returned to the coach's box. It does not matter if the verbal instruction is given to the runner while the coach is walking back to the coach's box while in fair or foul territory.

(b) The umpire would not charge the offence with a second conference as they are not delaying the game. A coach can converse with the runner from the coaching box as long as they do not hold up play and are ready to continue once the umpire calls "Play ball". If the coach requested "time" for a conference with the runner the umpire would deny the request for the 2nd charged conference.

37. The offensive coach has already been charged with one offensive conference. Later in the same inning the defensive coach requests time for a conference with the pitcher. During the defensive charged conference, the offensive coach comes out onto the field to talk to one of the runners. The offensive coach leaves (a) before, or (b) at the same time, or (c) immediately after, the defensive conference is over.

**RULING:** In all situations above, the plate umpire should not charge the offence with a conference.

**INTERPRETATION:** During a defensive charged conference, the offensive coach should only be charged with a conference if the coach fails to comply immediately with the plate umpire's request to break off the offensive conference or as long as the offence is ready to play when the defence is ready.

If the offence is charged with a second conference, then the manager/coach, who insists on continuing or participates in the conference, is ejected and ruled ineligible.

38. In the bottom of the second inning the batter is granted time to go and confer with the third base coach. The plate umpire informs the coach, "That is one conference, coach", immediately after the conference is over with the batter. Later in the same inning a runner requests time from the base umpire to consult with the first base coach.

**RULING:** The umpire should not grant time or allow the second conference.

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## **Defensive Conference**

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39. The manager of the defensive team comes out of the dugout and yells at one of the defensive players to pitch, and for the pitcher to move to another defensive position.

**RULING:** There is no charged conference in this situation as a pitching change is being made, even if the coach requested time before yelling at his players.

40. The manager of the defensive team has a conference with the pitcher. After speaking with the pitcher, the manager leaves the pitching area on his way to the dugout. Before crossing the foul line, the manager returns to the pitching area and says something more to the pitcher.

**RULING:** The manager's trip to speak with the pitcher is one charged conference. The return is part of the original conference. The conference does not end until the team representative crosses the foul line on the way to the dugout.

41. The pitcher walks two consecutive batters. The defence requests and is granted "Time". A defensive player goes to the circle and speaks with the pitcher.

**RULING:** The defensive player's trip to speak with the pitcher is a Charged Defensive Delay in FP/O U19 and above. It is also a charged conference in SP.

**CLARIFICATION:** (SP) A team is allowed 3 charged conferences for each pitcher during a game. Unlike FP, 1 or more players leaving their position to meet and delaying the resumption of the game will be considered a conference. A fourth conference charged against a specific pitcher will result in the pitcher being declared an illegal pitcher. A Charged Defensive Delay (FP/O) or a Charged Conference does not actually need to involve the pitcher.

42. The manager enters the playing field and removes the pitcher before making the substitution with the plate umpire. The relief pitcher gets two batters out. The manager again enters the playing field to speak with the reliever.

**RULING:** The manager's trip to speak with the original pitcher is not a charged conference as a pitching change was made. The visit with the relief pitcher would be a charged defensive conference if no pitching change was made.

43. The count on the batter is three balls and no strikes. The manager requests and is granted "Time". The manager goes directly to the pitcher's circle to talk to the pitcher. As the manager leaves the field, the plate umpire informs the manager that he is being charged with a defensive conference. Two batters later, the manager again requests and is granted "Time". The manager goes directly to the plate umpire, without crossing the foul line, and makes a substitution for the pitcher.

**RULING:** This is not a second charged conference. The pitcher is eligible to re-enter the game in any position, including pitcher.

**CLARIFICATION:** A conference would not have been charged even if the coach had crossed the foul line and communicated with the pitcher as long as he then made a pitching change.

44. The pitcher is removed from the pitching position as a result of excessive charged defensive conferences. The pitcher returns later in the game and



throws one pitch. The use of an illegal pitcher is appealed by the offended team.

**RULING:** The pitcher is ruled an illegal pitcher. The illegal pitcher is ejected from the game, ruled ineligible and replaced by a legal substitute.

**INTERPRETATION:** The game is not forfeited. The pitcher did not become ineligible until after he was ruled illegal and ejected.

If the pitcher returned to play again, after the ejection, then the game would be forfeited, because the player was labelled ineligible from the above situation. This is not an appeal situation but it may be brought to the umpire's attention by the other team.

45. The defensive coach has already been charged with one defensive conference. Later in the same inning the offensive coach requests time for a conference with the batter or runner. During the offensive conference, the defensive coach comes out onto the field to talk to the pitcher. The defensive coach leaves (a) before, or (b) at the same time, or (c) immediately after, the offensive conference is over.

**RULING:** In all situations above, the plate umpire should not charge the defensive team with a charged conference.

**INTERPRETATION:** During an offensive charged conference, the defensive coach should only be charged with a second conference if the coach fails to comply immediately with the plate umpire's request to break off the defensive conference.

46. (FP) During the first seven innings of the game, the visiting team has not taken any defensive charged conferences. In the bottom of the 8th inning, the defensive coach calls time to confer with his outfielders. As he returns to his bench, he is informed by the plate umpire that he is being charged with a defensive conference. Later in the same inning, the defensive coach once again calls time to confer with his pitcher. As he crosses the foul line and is returning to his dugout, the plate umpire informs him that he is being charged with a defensive conference and that unless a pitching change is made, he must now remove the current pitcher from the pitching position for the remainder of the game. The coach argues that he has only been charged with two defensive conferences and that he is entitled to three per game.

**RULING:** The umpire has ruled correctly. A team may take up to 3 defensive charged conferences during the first 7 innings of a game without having to remove their pitcher from the pitching position. However, unused charged conferences do not carry over into extra innings. In extra inning play, a team is only permitted one defensive charged conference per inning. For each subsequent defensive charged conference taken in the same inning, the current pitcher must be removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.

47. The defensive coach or manager intends to change his pitcher. The manager walks directly toward the plate umpire to make the pitching change, without speaking to the pitcher. After the substitution is made, the manager (a) goes directly back to the bench area, or (b) speaks with either pitcher.

RULING: In (a) the manager is not charged with a defensive conference.

(b) The manager is not charged with a defensive conference unless the manager delays the game by delaying the pitching change or by delaying the substitute pitcher from taking the warm-up pitches.

If after one warning from the plate umpire the manager delays the game, then he should be charged with a defensive conference.

48. The defensive team manager requests and is granted time by the umpire. The manager comes onto the field and confers only with the shortstop. Prior to the resumption of play the shortstop walks over to the eight foot circle and picks up the resin bag. The shortstop chats briefly with the pitcher and then returns to his defensive position.

RULING: The plate umpire should charge the defensive team with a conference.

A conference is charged when the defensive team requests a suspension of play for any reason, and a representative, not on the field, enters the playing field and talks to any defensive player.

CLARIFICATION: In SP, if the umpire felt that the subsequent discussion between the shortstop and the pitcher caused an additional delay in the game, he could charge them with an additional defensive conference.

49. The third baseman goes over to the team area and receives instructions from the coach. No "Time" was called.

RULING: This is a charged conference.

If any defensive player goes over to the team area and receives instructions, it is a charged conference even if "Time" was not called.

50. (SP) The batter steps into the batter's box as the pitcher is preparing to pitch. The umpire calls "Play Ball". The catcher then leaves his position to speak with the pitcher.

RULING: The umpire will indicate that a defensive conference is being charged. A defensive conference will be charged when one or more players leave their positions to meet and delay the resumption of play.

51. FP/O U19 and above. The batter steps into the batter’s box as the pitcher is preparing to pitch. The umpire calls “Play Ball”. The catcher then leaves his position to speak with the pitcher.

**RULING:** The umpire will indicate that a Charged Defensive Delay is being charged. A Charged Defensive Delay will be charged when one or more players leave their positions to meet and delay the resumption of play.

52. In a FP, U16 game the short stop goes to the first base player and discusses the next batter. The umpire allows this to happen with no ruling on the action. The coach of the offensive team asks the PU to rule that a Charged Defensive Delay applies.

**RULING:** The umpire is correct and understands that a Charged Defensive Delay does not apply in this situation. A Charged Defensive Delay will be charged when one or more players leave their positions to meet and delay the resumption of play in a U19 or above game.

## **RULE 6 – PITCHING REGULATION FP & ORTHODOX**

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### **Position**

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1. The pitcher takes the signal from the catcher while standing inside the eight foot circle, but not on the pitching plate or rubber.

**RULING:** No action required as long as the pitcher subsequently appears to take a signal while legally in contact with the pitcher’s plate.

**NOTE:** A signal must “appear” to be taken by the pitcher while both feet are in contact with the pitcher’s plate. The ball is held in one hand only and the hands are clearly separated. The ball held in one hand may be in front or behind the body. Taking a signal prevents the pitcher from walking onto the pitcher’s plate and throwing a quick pitch.

2. The pitcher has assumed the pitching position and places the ball in both hands and stops. The pitcher then moves the ball, while his hands are still together, to his side and stops again.

**RULING:** The umpires should call an “illegal pitch” and signal a delayed dead ball. The second stop is considered an illegal act. The ball remains live because the batter should be given the advantage of being able to exercise the opportunity to hit an illegal pitch. An additional ball is awarded the batter and runners advance one base should the pitcher not deliver the ball.

3. There are runners at 1st and 2nd with one out. Preliminary to pitching, the pitcher does not bring his body to a complete stop and the batter hits into a double play.

**RULING:** The umpires should call an “Illegal pitch” and signal a delayed dead ball. Since each runner, including the batter, did not advance at least one base, the umpire gives the coach the option of the illegal pitch award or taking the result of the play. As this was an inning ending double play, the coach would likely take the award, i.e. a ball is awarded the batter, R2 is awarded 3rd, and R1 is awarded 2nd.

4. There is a runner on 2nd. The pitcher has the ball in the circle. He lays his glove down, with the ball in it, in order to tie his shoe lace but does not request time. R2 advances to 3rd.

**RULING:** The base umpire rules that R2 is safe. The pitcher did not have control of the ball in the circle.

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### **Pitch Starts**

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**NOTE:** The start of the pitch begins when the pitcher takes one hand off the ball or makes any motion that is part of the pitcher’s windup or delivery.

5. The pitcher has taken a legal pitching position. The ball is in both hands for the required minimum stop. The pitcher then separates his hands and steps back off the pitcher’s plate.

**RULING:** The umpires should call an “Illegal pitch”. The ball is dead “Time”, an additional ball is awarded the batter, and runners advance one base. The pitch starts once the hands are separated, after being together, and the pitcher must then deliver the ball to the batter.

**TIP:** The only way a pitcher can legally get out of delivering the ball to the batter, after both hands are together, is to

(a) Request “Time” from the plate umpire, or

(b) Step back off the pitcher’s plate with both hands still together.

6. As the pitcher begins the pitching motion, the batter steps backwards away from the plate and plants a foot outside of the batter’s box. The pitcher sees the batter’s actions and retains possession of the ball. Is this an illegal pitch?

**RULING:** Technically the pitcher has started his pitching motion however he should not be penalized for the batter’s action (i.e. attempting to coax the pitcher into an illegal pitch). Declare “Time, No Pitch”, issue a warning to the batter’s team and start over with the batter in the batter’s box. Repeat of such actions could result in the ejection of the offender.

7. The pitcher pushes from the pitcher's plate in such a manner that the non-pivot foot touches the ground before or after the pivot foot leaves the pitcher's plate.

RULING: A legal pitch.

8. The ball slips from the pitcher's hand after the required stop (during the windup).

RULING: The ball is live and runners advance at their own risk. A "Ball" is awarded the batter. It does not matter how far or in what direction the ball rolled.

9. The ball slips from the pitcher's hand on his delivery to the plate. The pitched ball bounces once or several times on route toward home plate. The batter swings at the bouncing ball.

RULING: The umpire calls a strike because the batter swung at the pitched ball. The ball remains live.

10. The pitcher has started the pitching motion when any umpire spots a stray ball on the playing field. The umpire calls "Time". However, the batter hits the pitched ball (a) for a single, (b) a home run, or (c) for an out.

RULING: The umpires should not allow the play to stand even though the pitcher was in the pitching motion.

RULE: In most situations, the umpires should not call and signal "Time" after the pitcher has started the pitching motion. Player safety was the reason the umpires correctly enforced the "Time" call.

11. The pitcher has started the pitching motion when the catcher requests time. The pitched ball is not swung at and the umpire calls the pitch a strike.

RULING: As the request was from the defense, i.e. the catcher, the plate umpire should rule "No Pitch" rather than a strike. The batter may have been distracted by the catcher's actions.

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## Delivery

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12. The pitcher stands to the right side of the pitcher's plate, with both feet in contact with the pitching plate. When delivering the ball, the pitcher steps so that the non-pivot foot lands outside of the 24" width of the pitcher's plate.

RULING: The umpires should call an "Illegal pitch", and signal a delayed dead ball. The pitcher must land with the non-pivot foot within the 24" width of the pitcher's plate. Although the width of the plate is not marked, an imaginary line does follow forward toward the batter's boxes.

NOTE: (Female U16 and under, Male U14 and under, and Orthodox) A step (only one) may be taken and if taken must be forward,

toward the batter and within the 24-inch length of the pitcher's plate. The pitcher may push off from the pitcher's plate with the pivot foot. If the pivot foot releases from the pitcher's plate it must continue forward in a dragging motion.

(Male U16 and above, Female U19 and above) The pitcher may drag, leap or hop from the pitching plate.

CLARIFICATION: Only the non-pivot foot is required to land within the 24-inch length of the pitcher's plate. The pivot foot is not required to remain in the 24" width of the plate when it is dragged or lifted away.

13. On the delivery of the ball, the pitcher's front foot (non-pivot foot) reaches so far in front that it lands outside the eight-foot circle. Is this legal?

RULING: The position of the foot is legal.

14. The pitcher has taken the signal with his hands apart. He then holds his hands together with the ball for the required stop. He starts his delivery by taking the ball in his pitching hand from the glove and moves the hand back beside or behind his body and stops, holding the ball there for a few seconds before starting the forward motion of the windmill pitch. Is this legal?

RULING: The actions of the pitcher are illegal. The pitcher may take the ball in his hand to his side or behind his back after the required stop or pause. However, stopping the hand there is illegal. To make the delivery legal the pitcher may only hesitate momentarily at his side or behind his back before starting the forward motion of the arm as it is illegal to pause twice.

15. There is a runner at 3rd. The catcher returns a pitched ball to the third baseman.

RULING: The actions of the catcher are legal. The catcher may throw the ball to any of the defensive players when there are runners on base.

16. There are no runners on base. On the next pitch, the batter hits the ball foul. The catcher retrieves the ball and throws it to the third baseman, who in turn hands it to the pitcher.

RULING: The plate umpire should award an additional ball on the batter. When there are no runners on base and the catcher retrieves a foul ball, the ball must be returned directly to the pitcher.

17. There are no runners on base and the batter has a count of one ball and one strike. The plate umpire calls the next pitched ball strike two. The ball rolls away from the catcher and is retrieved by the third baseman, who hands the ball to the pitcher.

**RULING:** There is no violation and no additional ball awarded. The count is one ball and two strikes.

**CLARIFICATION:** An infielder is permitted to pick up the deflected pitched ball but like the catcher, they must also return the ball directly to the pitcher. Should an infielder pick up a pitched ball that deflects off the catcher, umpire, backstop or other equipment and fails to return it directly to the pitcher, the umpire shall award a ball on the batter.

18. There are no runners on base in a fast pitch game and the batter has a count of two balls and two strikes. On the next pitch, the batter starts to swing and then checks the swing by pulling the bat back. The catcher misses the pitched ball, races to the screen, throws the ball toward 1st, then turns to the plate umpire and makes an appeal on the batter's check swing. The appeal from the plate umpire to the base umpire comes back as no swing. Is the batter awarded an additional ball?

**RULING:** The batter is not awarded an additional ball. The catcher should not be penalized for trying to get an out on a check swing third strike. It does not matter that the plate umpire initially called the pitch a "Ball".

19. There are no runners on base. The count on the batter is two balls and one strike. The batter bunts or hits the pitched ball close to the third base line. The catcher retrieves the batted ball and instantaneously throws it toward 1st. The plate umpire judges the ball to be foul, when the catcher touches the ball, and rules "Foul Ball". The offensive team appeals that an additional ball should be called on the batter in accordance with the rule - returning the ball directly to the pitcher after each pitch except after a strike out or put out by catcher.

**RULING:** An additional ball is not awarded to the batter if the plate umpire judges that the catcher was attempting to make a play on the batter-runner.

**CLARIFICATION:** A catcher who retrieves a ball is always trained to make a play on the batter-runner, if possible. Any time the ball is hit close to the foul line, regardless of the ball's final position, the catcher will automatically react and assume the batter is a runner and throw the ball toward 1st. Regardless of the umpire's call, the catcher's throw to 1st should never be judged or penalized in accordance with the returning the ball to the pitcher rule.

**TIP:** The batter can advance to 1st in different ways. The batter does not have to hit the pitched ball to become a runner. When a batter-runner runs to 1st the catcher has to assume that he is a runner and is allowed to throw to 1st base without the penalty of an awarded ball.

20. The catcher returns a pitched ball directly to the pitcher. The umpire decides that the pitcher is taking an unusual amount of time preparing for the next pitch.

**RULING:** The pitcher has 20 seconds to release the next pitch after receiving the ball or after the umpire indicates “play ball”. An additional ball is awarded the batter for violation of the 20 second delivery rule.

21. The batter disagrees with the plate umpire’s call of strike two. The batter steps out of the box and quietly complains. The plate umpire listens patiently and then requests that the batter to get back into the batter’s box by calling “Play Ball”! The batter ignores the umpire’s request and does not get into the batter’s box. What does the plate umpire do?

**RULING:** If the batter does not enter the batter’s box within ten (10) seconds and the plate umpire has called “Play Ball”, the umpire should call a strike. No pitch has to be thrown for the plate umpire to award the additional strike.

**TIP:** If a batter or any team member adamantly disputes a judgement call the umpire should warn the offending team coach that any repeated “questioning” will result in an ejection.

22. F1 has the pivot foot in contact with the pitching plate. The non-pivot (stepping) foot is behind the plate and both feet are within the width of the plate. F1 holds the ball in both hands to the side of the body allowing the shoulders to not be in line with 1st and 3rd bases, pauses and completes the delivery

**RULING:** This is a legal delivery in U16 and above. The pitcher need only have the pivot foot in contact with the plate as long as both feet are within the width of the pitching plate, the hips must be in line with the 1st and 3rd bases In U14 and below, this is not a legal delivery as the pitcher is required to start with both feet on the pitcher’s plate.

23. F1 steps onto the pitcher's plate with both feet in contact with the pitcher’s plate, then steps back with the non-pivot (stepping) foot, places the hands together for 2 seconds and completes the pitch.

**RULING** In U16 and above, this is a legal delivery. In U14 and below, this is an illegal delivery.



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## Wind-Up

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24. The pitcher comes to the required stop prior to the pitch. The pitcher then takes the ball in the pitching hand back past the hip, and then makes a complete revolution, passing the hip as second time, before releasing the ball.

**RULING:** This is a legal delivery by the pitcher.

**TIP:** The rules do not state that the ball must be released when the ball passes the hip for the first time.

One revolution is interpreted as “Not Two Complete Revolutions”. The pitcher’s hand may go past the hip twice as long as there are not two complete revolutions. On the initial wind-up if the pitcher moves his arms backwards it is not considered going past the hip. The wrist may not be any farther from the hip than the elbow.

25. The pitcher, in an Orthodox game, uses a windmill or sling shot type pitch.

**RULING:** The pitcher’s style, for Orthodox, is illegal. The plate and/or base umpire should call an “Illegal pitch”, and signal a delayed dead ball.

**TIP:** Imagine a bowler throwing a 5 pin ball. The arm must come forward straight towards the batter. If the arm whips sideways across the body then this is an illegal pitch. The slingshot motion cannot do this as the arm is bent on release and normally the driving hip comes through after the point of release.

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## Tape and Substances

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26. There is a runner at 1st with one out. The batter has a count of one ball and two strikes. The pitcher applies resin directly to the ball before the umpires can call time and delivers the ball to the batter.

**RULING:** The umpires should call an “Illegal Pitch” and signal a delayed dead ball.

**CLARIFICATION:** Powdered resin or drying agents approved by Softball Canada are the only substances that may be used by the pitcher on the hands. They are not to be applied directly to the ball. Neither rock, bowling, or lacrosse resin, nor any other non-approved substance which leaves the hands sticky is permitted. The proof of guilt must be beyond doubt.

**TIP:** An illegal pitch should be called if the pitcher applies an illegal substance on the ball. If the pitcher repeats the violation a warning to the coach must be given. If any defensive player is caught applying an illegal substance on the ball after the warning to the coach, the pitcher is ejected from the game.

27. The pitcher spits on the ball and delivers the ball to the batter.

**RULING:** The umpires should call an “illegal pitch” and signal a delayed dead ball.

**TIP:** For the first infraction by the pitcher, the umpires should call time, request that the pitcher clean off the ball, and educate the pitcher. An illegal pitch and a warning to the coach should be given for using foreign substance on the ball next time. After the warning to the coach, a future infraction should result in the ejection of the pitcher.

28. The pitcher spits on his pitching hand and delivers the ball to the batter.

**RULING:** The umpires should call an “illegal pitch”, and signal a delayed dead ball. If the pitch is not hit, then the batter is awarded a ball and any runners would advance one base.

**TIP:** For the first infraction by the pitcher, the umpires should call time, request that the pitcher wipe off the hand. The pitcher may wet his fingers as long as he wipes them off before handling the ball. An illegal pitch should be called for continued application of moisture, not removed, to the fingers or hand of the pitching hand.

29. The umpire(s) notice that the pitcher has tape on his pitching hand (a) when the pitcher assumes the pitching position, or (b) when the pitcher has his hands together, or (c) after the pitcher separates his hands to begin the pitch, or (d) after a pitch to the batter.

**RULING:** In (a, b) The umpire(s) would call “Time” and have the pitcher remove the tape as soon as it is noticed (preventative umpiring).

(c) An “illegal pitch” should be called and a delayed dead ball signalled once the pitcher’s hands separate to start the pitch.

(d) An “illegal pitch” should be called and the appropriate award or option should be provided.

The pitcher is not allowed to use tape or unapproved substances on the pitching hand. The tape must be removed or the pitcher is replaced. Tape on the forearm of the non-pitching hand is acceptable (legal).

**CLARIFICATION:** When the plate umpire notices or is notified about tape on the pitcher’s pitching hand after a pitch, the plate umpire would rule an “illegal pitch” and award or provide an option, whichever is appropriate.

The pitcher is also not allowed to wear a sweatband, bracelet (exception: medical alert bracelet) or similar item on the wrist or forearm (at or below the elbow) of the pitching arm.

**TIP:** The pitcher may wear a long sleeve shirt. This may disguise the wearing of any forearm apparatus. Umpire(s) should not

go searching or looking for trouble when none is visibly apparent.

30. The pitcher develops a blister on one of the fingers of the pitching hand. To prevent the wound from bleeding, the pitcher is seen applying a thin layer of an artificial repair known as “new skin” or “second skin” to his finger. The substance is clear, hard, very difficult to notice and will not come off onto the ball. Is the pitcher allowed to pitch?

**RULING:** The pitcher is not allowed to pitch because the use of a foreign substance on the pitching hand is illegal. The pitcher shall be asked to remove the substance. If he pitches with it on his hand it is an illegal pitch. He can be ejected if he continues to apply it or to pitch with it on his hand.

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### Quick Pitch

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31. The pitcher attempts a quick pitch of the ball, before the batter is ready in his batting position.

**RULING:** The plate umpire should call “Dead Ball”, and rule the pitched ball a “No Pitch”.

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### Warm-Up Pitches

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32. At the start of the second inning the pitcher throws three warm-up pitches to the substitute catcher at home plate and then throws four more pitches to the short stop at the short stop’s position. The regular catcher takes her position behind the plate, takes one pitch, and then throws the ball down to 2nd. The offensive team coach protests that four excessive warm-up pitches were taken and the first batter should be awarded four balls and be standing on 1st to start the inning.

**RULING:** A team should not be penalized for excessive warm-up pitches when a substitute catcher takes warm-up pitches while the regular catcher is getting ready to catch (i.e. putting on catching equipment). The pitcher shall be allowed to take any number of pitches, as long as the regular catcher is dressing immediately and the pitcher only takes one pitch when the regular catcher is ready in position behind the plate.

33. At the start of the first inning the pitcher for the home team wants a choice of ball to throw. Does the umpire allow the pitcher a choice of ball?

**RULING:** The umpire does not allow the pitcher a choice of ball.

**BALL ROTATION:** Each pitcher must throw an unused ball at the start of the first inning. No choice is offered.

After the first inning, the pitcher has a choice of ball at the start of each inning. The current choice must be used until such time as the ball goes out of play or becomes not playable. When the ball goes out of play, the plate umpire

will throw another ball to the pitcher. If the pitcher does not like that ball, remove it from the game and give the pitcher another ball. An umpire should never take a ball back from the pitcher and put it in his ball bag unless it is at the start of an inning when the pitcher is selecting his game ball.

After the inning is completed, the ball should be returned to the vicinity of the pitching plate by the team leaving the field. The pitcher taking the field now has the ball with which to start the inning. The pitcher may request the other ball from the plate umpire, but should throw the first ball to the umpire prior to receiving the second ball. The pitcher should not have both game balls in his possession when making his choice.

34. A pitcher who starts the inning is replaced by another pitcher. The starter returns in the same inning. Is the starter allowed five warm-up pitches?

**RULING:** No. A pitcher is not entitled to warm-up pitches when substituted for and returning in the same inning.

35. After walking a batter on four straight pitches, the starting pitcher is relieved by a substitute pitcher. After the substitute pitcher (a) throws five warm-up pitches, or (b) pitches to one batter, the starting pitcher legally re-enters the game in the pitching position in the same inning.

**RULING:** In both (a, b) the starting pitcher is not allowed any warm-up pitches.

**CLARIFICATION:** The starting pitcher is not entitled to warm-up pitches if the pitcher returns to pitch in the same inning and already had warm-up pitches in the same inning.

**TIP:** A plate umpire may allow the starting pitcher and any reliever additional warm-up pitches during extremely cold weather conditions. The privilege is designed to prevent pitcher injuries. However, both team managers should be notified by the plate umpire in regards to this concession as conditions warrant, preferably before the game starts.

36. The pitcher is injured and has to leave the game. The defensive team does not have a substitute pitcher warming up or the substitute has just started to warm-up in the bull pen.

**RULING:** The plate umpire should allow the substituting pitcher as many warm-up pitches as is necessary to get ready.

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### **No Pitch**

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37. The pitcher has started the wind-up when the batter raises his hand or makes a motion as if to request "Time". The pitcher commits an illegal pitch by stopping in the middle of the wind-up.

RULING: The ball is dead “Dead Ball”, and “No Pitch”. The pitcher is not penalized for batter’s actions which cause the pitcher to commit an illegal pitch.

38. There is a runner at 2nd. The third base coach or batter yells time. The pitcher, who has started the pitching motion, stops and does not release the ball.

RULING: The plate umpire shall rule a “No Pitch” because the coach’s or batter’s actions confused the defensive team. The offending team is warned that any repeat of this type of act that confuses the opposition, shall result in the offender being ejected from the game.

39. The pitcher tries to pitch before a runner has retouched his base after a foul ball.

RULING: The plate umpire shall rule a “No Pitch”.

TIP: The plate umpire should hold the pitcher up until the runner(s) have had reasonable time to return to their base(s) before signalling the pitcher to pitch.

40. The batter has a count of one ball and one strike. The runner at 1st leads off and the pitched ball is (a) called ball or strike two, or (b) hit for an out or single.

RULING: The base umpire shall rule the ball is dead immediately, “Dead Ball” and R1 is “Out” for the lead off. The plate umpire shall repeat the dead ball call, “Dead Ball”, in conjunction with the base umpires call, and declare a “No Pitch”. The count on the batter remains one ball and one strike.

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### **Illegal Pitch**

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- 41.. There are no runners on base. After the required stop, the pitcher makes a motion to pitch but stops for no apparent reason.

RULING: The umpires should call “Illegal Pitch” and signal a delayed dead ball. The batter is awarded a ball.

- 42.. There are no runners on base. The pitcher commits an illegal act and the pitched ball makes contact with the batter who did not swing at the ball.

RULING: The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, as soon as the pitched ball hits the batter. The batter is awarded 1st. unless the contact was in the strike zone. If the batter is hit in the strike zone by an illegal pitch the umpire shall call “Dead Ball” and award a ball on the batter and all runners one base.

43. There are runners on base. The pitcher commits an illegal act and the pitched ball makes contact with the batter.

RULING: The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, as soon as the pitched ball hits the batter. The batter is awarded 1st and runner(s) are awarded one base due to the illegal pitch.

CLARIFICATION: If the batter is hit in the strike zone by an illegal pitch the umpire shall call “Dead Ball!” and award a ball on the batter and award all runners one base.

44. There is a runner at 2nd. The batter hits an illegal pitch and reaches 1st safely. However, R2 is (a) thrown out at 3rd, or (b) is safe at 3rd, or (c) is thrown out at home plate.

RULING: In (a) the manager of the offensive team is given the option of taking the result of the play or the penalty (R2 awarded 3rd and the batter returns to bat with an additional ball).

(b, c) The illegal pitch is disregarded and the play stands.

45. There are runners at 2nd and 3rd. The batter has a count of two balls and two strikes. An illegal pitch is called on the next pitched ball. The batter swings and misses the pitch.

RULING: The ball is dead, “Time”. The batter is not out and is awarded an additional ball. R2 and R3 are awarded one base.

46. The runner at 2nd leaves the base before the pitcher releases the ball. The pitcher also commits an illegal pitch.

RULING: The umpire(s) must determine which violation occurred first leaving the base too soon or the illegal pitch.

If leaving the base too soon occurred first, then the ball is dead “Dead Ball”, and the runner is “Out” for a “Lead Off”. The illegal pitch does not come into play because it would have occurred after the umpire’s “Dead Ball” call.

If the illegal pitch occurred first, then there is a delayed dead ball call and the illegal pitch ruling would then apply.

If, by chance, the runner left base after the illegal pitch, and before the release of the ball, “Dead Ball” would be called immediately, even though there is the initial delayed dead ball call. The runner cannot take advantage just because there is an illegal pitch. In this situation, since the runner would be awarded 2nd anyway on the illegal pitch, he cannot be called out for the lead-off.

47. There are runners at 2nd and 3rd with two outs. The defence plans to walk the next batter by throwing 4 balls or with an intentional walk. When the pitcher starts the pitching motion or indicates to the umpire to intentionally walk the batter, all the defensive players are standing in fair territory, except the third baseman who is straddling the foul line.

RULING: All players except the catcher must be in fair territory when the pitcher begins the pitching motion. If a player violates this rule then it is “No Pitch.” The umpire makes the players move into fair territory”.

Any umpire may prevent the defensive player from committing the illegal act of standing in foul territory any time before the pitcher starts to pitch.

**NOTE:** The ball is dead during an intentional walk and live during a walk on 4 pitched balls. All defensive players must be in fair territory until the pitch is released in a live ball situation but it does not matter in a dead ball situation. The catcher must remain in the catcher's box, and the pitcher must be in a legal pitching position at the start of each pitch. The pitch must be thrown to the catcher. There is no illegal pitch called when a defensive player is in foul territory on a pitched ball. It is a "No Pitch" call.

**INTERPRETATION:** (FP) If the catcher leaves the box prior to the release of the pitch it is an illegal pitch but if any other player is in foul territory prior to the release of the pitch it is a "No pitch".

## **RULE 6 – PITCHING REGULATIONS Slo-Pitch**

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### **Position – Slo-pitch regulations**

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1. The pitcher has the ball in either one or both hands and then begins the pitching motion. The pitcher then stops her motion for more than a second and then begins to pitch again.

**RULING:** This is an illegal pitch for stopping twice.

2. The pitcher has the ball in either one or both hands and begins to pitch with one foot within the pitching chute while the other foot is not within the pitching chute.

**RULING:** This is a legal position for the pitcher's feet as long as the pivot foot is within the pitching chute. The pitcher must start with the pivot foot remaining on the ground at the established point within the pitching chute. The non-pivot foot may be placed anywhere in relation to the pitching chute (within, in front, behind, or off to the side).

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### **Pitch Starts**

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3. The pitcher has both feet on the ground somewhere within the pitching chute. The pitcher removes one foot by stepping backward and then pitches the ball to the batter. The batter does not swing at the pitched ball.

**RULING:** A legal pitch. A step with the free or non-pivot foot is not required, but if a step is taken it can be in any direction as long as the pivot foot remains at the established point on the ground within the pitching chute until the ball is released.

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## Delivery

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4. The ball slips from the pitcher's hand after the required stop (during the windup).  
**RULING:** The ball is dead and it is a "No Pitch" situation.
5. The ball slips from the pitcher's hand on his delivery to the plate. The pitched ball bounces once or several times on route toward home plate. The batter swings at the bouncing ball.  
**RULING:** The ball is dead as soon as it touches the ground for the first time. A ball is awarded to the batter.
6. After an initial warning, the pitcher again delivers the ball with excessive speed. The plate umpire orders the pitcher removed from the game. The manager wants the pitcher to play the outfield and insists that the move is legal.  
**RULING:** An "Illegal Pitch" is called and the batter is awarded a ball. The pitcher is removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game and may continue to participate in the game at any other position.
7. As the pitcher begins the pitching motion, the batter steps backwards away from the plate and plants a foot outside of the batter's box. The pitcher sees the batter's actions and retains possession of the ball. Is this an illegal pitch?  
**RULING:** Technically the pitcher has started his pitching motion however he should not be penalized for the batter's action (i.e. attempting to coax the pitcher into an illegal pitch). Declare "Time, No Pitch", issue a warning to the batter's team and start over with the batter in the batter's box. Repeat of such actions could result in the ejection of the offender.  
**TIP:** Once the umpire warns the batter to get in the batter's box he can start the 10 second count. If the batter fails to comply in 10 seconds a strike is called on the batter. No pitch has to be thrown to call a strike.
8. The pitcher delivers the ball to the batter. The pitched ball reaches a maximum height of 15 feet before beginning a downward flight toward the plate.  
**RULING:** The pitched ball shall be ruled an "Illegal Pitch" and signalled "Delayed Dead Ball", as soon as the ball goes higher than the maximum arc allowed or below the minimum arc allowed. A "Ball" shall then be called by the plate umpire, provided the batter does not swing at the pitched ball. The ball is dead, and runners do not advance a base.



9. There is a runner at 1st. The batter has a count of one ball and one strike. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground in foul territory, which the catcher catches and hands to the base umpire. The plate umpire gives another ball to the catcher who throws it to the first baseman.

**RULING:** A ball is awarded the batter and the count is now two balls and two strikes.

The catcher returning the ball directly to the pitcher after each pitch still applies regardless of runners on base. Exception - After a strike out or put out by the catcher or a ball fielded close to the line, the ball may be thrown to any fielder.

10. There are no runners on base. The batter has a count of one ball and one strike. The next pitched ball is called a strike and the ball rolls away from the catcher. The third baseman retrieves the ball and throws it to (a) the shortstop, or (b) the pitcher, or (c) the catcher whom in turn throws it back to the third baseman.

**RULING:** In (a, b) there is no violation, and the count is one ball and two strikes. The returning of the ball directly to the pitcher rule only applies to the catcher. In (c), a violation has occurred as the catcher did not return the ball directly to the pitcher. The umpire would award a ball and the count would now be two balls and two strikes.

11. There are no runners on base. The count on the batter is two balls and one strike. The batter hits the next pitched ball close to the third base line. The catcher retrieves the batted ball and quickly throws it toward 1st. The plate umpire judges the ball to be just foul when the catcher touches the ball and rules "Foul Ball". The offensive coach appeals to the plate umpire that an additional ball should be called on the batter in accordance with the rule - returning the ball directly to the pitcher after each pitch except after a strike out or put out by catcher.

**RULING:** If the plate umpire judges that the catcher was attempting to make a play on the batter-runner, then the plate umpire should not rule an additional ball.

**NOTE:** A batted ball retrieved by the catcher close to the foul line, in foul territory, and thrown toward 1st should not be judged or ruled on in accordance with the returning the ball to the pitcher penalty.

**CLARIFICATION:** A catcher that retrieves a ball is always trained to make a play on the batter-runner, if possible. Any time the ball is hit close to the foul line, regardless of the ball's final position, the catcher will automatically react and presume the batter is a runner, and throw the ball toward 1st. Regardless of the umpire's call, the catcher's throw to 1st should never be judged or penalized in accordance with the returning the ball to the pitcher rule.

12. There are no runners on base and the count is one ball and one strike. The batter hits a pitched ball foul. The catcher picks up the ball and throws it to an infielder other than the pitcher.

RULING: The plate umpire should award an additional ball to the batter.

13. The batter has a count of three balls and two strikes. On the next pitch, the batter is awarded ball four. The catcher throws the ball to an infielder who in turn hands the ball to the pitcher.

RULING: An additional ball is not awarded to the next batter.

14. The catcher returns a pitched ball directly to the pitcher. The umpire decides that the pitcher is taking an unusual amount of time preparing for the next pitch.

RULING: The pitcher has 20 seconds to release the next pitch. An additional ball is awarded to the batter for violation of the 20 second delivery rule.

15. The batter disagrees with the plate umpire's call of strike two. The batter steps out of the box and quietly complains. The plate umpire listens patiently and then requests that the batter to get back into the batter's box by calling "Play Ball"! The batter ignores the umpire's request and does not get into the batter's box. What does the plate umpire do?

RULING: If the batter does not enter the batter's box within ten (10) seconds) when the plate umpire has called "Play Ball", the umpire should call a strike. No pitch has to be thrown for the plate umpire to award the additional strike.

TIP: If a batter or any team member adamantly disputes a judgment call the umpire should warn the offending team coach that any repeated "questioning" will result in an ejection.

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## Wind-Up

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16. The pitcher comes to a one second stop, and then takes the ball in his pitching hand over the top of his head and down and around in a windmill type motion, releasing the ball just after the first time past the hip.

RULING: A legal pitch. A windmill delivery is legal if the ball is released the first time past the hip and all other aspects of the pitching rule are followed.

17. The batter has a count of three balls and two strikes. The pitcher delivers the ball with an overhand motion. The batter swings and misses the pitched ball.

RULING: The pitched ball is an "Illegal Pitch" and a strike on the batter for swinging at the pitched ball. A warning should be given to the pitcher regarding the style of pitch and the potential for

removal from the pitching position for further similar actions.

**TIP:** The umpire(s) should call “Illegal Pitch” as soon as the pitch becomes illegal, thus giving the batter as much opportunity as possible to not swing at the illegal pitch.

18. The pitcher has started the wind-up when the batter raises his hand or makes a motion as if to request “Time”. The pitcher commits an illegal pitch, by stopping in the middle of the wind-up.

**RULING:** The ball is dead “Dead Ball”, and “No Pitch”. The pitcher is not penalized for batter’s actions which cause the pitcher to commit an illegal pitch.

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## **Tape and Substances**

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19. The pitcher has tape on her pitching hand and is wearing a blue wristband or sweatband on both of her wrists.

**NEW RULING:** THE PITCHER IS NOT PERMITTED TO HAVE TAPE ON THE PITCHING HAND OR FINGERS OR A WRISTABDN ON THE PITCHING ARM. NOTE: A MEDICAL ALERT BRACELET IS PERMITTED ON EITHER WRIST. NOTE:

A medical alert bracelet is permitted on either wrist.

20. The pitcher shows the plate umpire a blister or cut on his pitching hand and asks permission to use a bandage.

**NEW RULING** THE PLATE UMPIRE SHALL NOT ALLOW THE PITCHER TO PITCH WITH A BANDAGE OR TAPE ON THEIR PITCHING HAND. **RULE:** A GAME MUST BE STOPPED OR INTERRUPTED IMMEDIATELY ANY TIME A PLAYER IS BLEEDING. THE WOUND MUST BE TREATED AND COVERED WITHIN A REASONABLE TIME. IF THE WOUND IS ON THE PITCHING HAND OR PITCHING ARM AND REQUIRES A BANDAGE OR OTHER FOREIGN SUBSTANCE TO TREAT THE WOUND, THE PLAYER MAY REMAIN IN THE GAME BUT IS NOT ALLOWED TO PITCH.

21. The pitcher develops a blister on one of the fingers of the pitching hand. To prevent the wound from bleeding the pitcher has the finger covered with a thin coat of an artificial repair known as “new skin” or “second skin” that is clear, hard and very difficult to notice. The substance will not come off onto the ball. Is the pitcher allowed to pitch?

**NEW RULING** - The pitcher is NOT allowed to pitch.

22. There is a runner at 1st with one out. The batter has a count of one ball and two strikes. The pitcher (a) applies resin directly to the ball, or (b) spits on the ball, or (c) spits on the pitching hand, and before the umpires can call time, the pitcher delivers the ball to the batter.

**RULING:** The umpires should call an “Illegal pitch” and signal a delayed dead ball. If the pitch is not hit or swung at, the batter is awarded a ball. R1 does not advance to 2nd.

**TIP:** For the first infraction by the pitcher the umpires should call time and request that the pitcher wipe off the hand and/or ball.

No member of the defensive team can apply a foreign substance to the ball. If a defensive team continues to apply a foreign substance to the ball after an illegal pitch has been called and the team has been warned, the pitcher shall be ejected from the game.

**EXCEPTION:** The pitcher may wet his fingers as long as the pitcher wipes off the fingers, before handling the ball. An illegal pitch should be called for continued application of moisture, not removed, to the fingers or hand of the pitching hand.

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### **Quick Pitch**

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23. The plate umpire has put the ball in play and the pitcher attempts a quick return of the ball before the batter has taken the batting position or before the batter is ready.

**RULING:** The umpire should signal and verbalize “illegal pitch” as soon as the pitcher delivers the ball.

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### **Warm-Up Pitches**

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24. At the start of the second inning the pitcher throws two warm-up pitches to the substitute catcher at home plate and then throws two more pitches to the short stop at the short stop’s position. The regular catcher takes her position behind the plate, takes one pitch and then throws the ball down to 2nd. The offensive team coach protests that two excessive warm-up pitches were taken and the first batter should be awarded two balls.

**RULING:** The two additional pitches to the shortstop are not considered warm-ups.

**CLARIFICATION:** A team should not be penalized for excessive warm-up pitches when a substitute catcher takes warm-up pitches while the regular catcher is getting ready to catch (i.e. putting on catching equipment). The pitcher shall be allowed to take a number of pitches, as long as the regular catcher is dressing immediately and the pitcher only takes one pitch when the regular catcher is ready in position behind the plate.

25. A pitcher who starts the inning is replaced by another pitcher. The starter returns in the same inning. Is the starter allowed three warm-up pitches?

**RULING:** No. A pitcher that returns to pitch in the same inning is not entitled to warm-up pitches.

26. The starting pitcher is relieved by a substitute pitcher. After the substitute pitcher (a) throws three warm-up pitches, or (b) pitches to one batter, the starting pitcher legally re-enters the game in the pitching position.

**RULING:** In both (a, b) the starting pitcher would not be allowed three warm-up pitches.

**CLARIFICATION:** The starting pitcher would not be allowed three warm-up pitches, even if the starting pitcher went to another defensive position when he was relieved.

**TIP:** A plate umpire may allow the starting pitcher and any reliever additional warm-up pitches during extremely cold weather conditions. The privilege is designed to prevent pitcher injuries. However, both team managers should be notified by the plate umpire in regards to this concession as conditions warrant, preferably before the game starts.

27. The pitcher is injured and has to leave the game. The defensive team does not have a substitute pitcher warming up or the substitute has just started to warm-up in the bull pen.

**RULING:** The plate umpire should allow the substituting pitcher as many warm-up pitches as is necessary to get ready.

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### **No Pitch**

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28. The runner at 2nd leaves the base before the ball reaches home plate.

**RULING:** If a runner leaves the base before any pitch occurs and before the ball reaches home plate, the ball is dead “Dead Ball”, and the runner is “Out” for a “Lead Off”. The pitched ball is a “No Pitch”.

29. The ball slips from the pitcher’s hand(s) after the required stop of the pitcher’s body.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, “Dead Ball” and subsequent action on the attempted pitch is cancelled “No Pitch”.

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### **Illegal Pitch**

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30. There are no runners on base. After the required stop, the pitcher makes a motion to pitch but stops for no apparent reason.

**RULING:** The umpires should call “Illegal Pitch” and signal a delayed dead ball. The batter is awarded a ball.

31. There are runners at 1st and 2nd. The batter hits an illegally pitched ball in the air to the outfield. The center fielder catches the fly ball. R2 legally tags and is thrown out at 3rd by the center fielder.

**RULING:** The batter and R2 are both “Out”. The pitched ball was no longer illegal when the batter swung at the ball.

32. There are runners at 2nd and 3rd. The batter has a count of two balls and two strikes. An illegal pitch is called on the next pitched ball. The batter swings and misses the pitch.

RULING: The batter is “Out”, and the runners remain at their respective bases. The ball is dead after every pitched ball not hit.

33. The pitcher commits an illegal act and the pitched ball makes contact with the batter, who did not swing at the ball.

RULING: The ball is dead as soon as the pitched ball hits the batter. The batter is awarded a ball.

34. The runner at 2nd leaves the base before the pitch reaches home plate. The pitcher also commits an illegal pitch.

RULING: The umpire(s) must determine which violation occurred first, the leaving the base too soon or the illegal pitch.

If leaving the base too soon occurred first, then the ball is dead “Dead Ball”, and the runner is “Out” for a “Lead Off”. The illegal pitch does not come into play because it would have occurred after the umpire’s dead ball call for the “Lead Off”.

If the illegal pitch occurred first, then there is a delayed dead ball call and the illegal pitch ruling would then apply. “Dead Ball” would be called immediately, when the runner left base, after the illegal pitch, and before the pitched ball reaches home plate, even though there is the initial delayed dead ball call. The runner cannot take advantage just because there is an illegal pitch. In this situation, the batter would not be given the opportunity to hit the illegally pitched ball, but instead be awarded a ball automatically, and the runner would not be called out for the lead-off.

35. (SP/FP U19 and above/O) The defence plans to walk the next batter intentionally. Does the pitcher have to pitch to the batter?

RULING: Because the ball is dead when it crosses the plate and no play may be made, it is permissible for the batter to be walked intentionally if the umpire is notified verbally by the pitcher.

If two successive batters are to be walked, the plate umpire will not award the second intentional walk until the first batter reaches first base.

# RULE 7 – BATTING

## On Deck Batter

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1. There is a runner at 1st and 2nd; a pitched ball gets away from the catcher. The ball rolls near the offensive teams on deck circle. The on deck batter remains in the circle. The catcher's attempted throw toward 3rd to retire the stealing R2 hits the on deck batter while he is in the on deck circle.

**RULING:** (FP) Interference by the on deck batter. The ball is dead, "Dead Ball", and R2 is "Out" (runner closest to home plate). R1 would return to the base held at the time of the interference.

**INTERPRETATION:** (FP) Any interference by the on deck batter, while in or out of the on deck circle, would mean that the runner closest to home is ruled "Out". The interference does not have to be intentional in these situations.

(SP) The ball is dead after every pitched ball that is not hit. R2 and R1 would remain on their respective bases.

2. A third strike is not caught by the catcher and the ball rolls over to the offensive team's on-deck circle. The on-deck batter (a) steps over in the way of the ball or (b) does not move, and interferes with the catcher's ability to retrieve the ball. No physical contact is made between the catcher and the on-deck batter.

**RULING:** In both (a, b)

(FP) (i) If there are no runners on base, the batter-runner would be declared "Out" for "Interference" because the interference is with the catcher's attempt to make a play on the batter-runner at 1st. The ball is dead, "Dead Ball".

(ii) If there are runners on base (1st not occupied) and there are less than two out, the runner closest to home plate, prior to the interference, is "Out". The ball is dead, "Dead Ball". The batter is awarded 1st.

If however there are runners on base (1st occupied) and there are less than two out, the batter is automatically "Out". In this case, an interference call would depend on whether or not other base runners were trying to advance.

(iii) If there are runners on base with two out, the runner closest to home plate, prior to the interference, is "Out". The ball is dead, "Dead Ball".

(SP) The ball is dead after every pitched ball that is not hit. Runners would remain on their respective bases.

3. There is a runner at 3rd. The batter hits a pitched ball into the air above the third base dugout. The catcher attempts to catch the foul fly but cannot reach the ball because the on-deck batter is (a) in the on deck circle, or (b) out of the on deck circle while trying to avoid the fly ball.

**RULING:** In both (a, b) the plate umpire should rule “Interference” by the on deck batter. The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, and the batter is “Out”. R3 would remain at 3rd.

**CLARIFICATION:** If the fielder had a play on the ball and was impeded by the on deck batter, it will always be ruled as interference whether it was intentional or not.

4. The on deck batter gets in the way of the catcher who is trying to receive a thrown ball for a play at the plate. The catcher may have had a play on the runner.

**RULING:** The ball is dead immediately “Dead Ball” and the runner is “Out” because of “Interference” by the on deck batter. The on deck batter did not give the catcher an opportunity to make a play.

5. The on deck batter intentionally interferes with a thrown ball at the plate. No defensive player had an opportunity to make a play at home since the ball was thrown high and wide off the plate.

**RULING:** The ball is dead “Dead Ball” and all runners would return to the last base touched at the time of the dead ball declaration.

**CLARIFICATION:** Umpire concentration and judgment is the key. If the fielder did not have a possible play and the on-deck batter does not intentionally interfere then the ball may stay live. Depending on the circumstances, the umpire could make the ball dead and runners forced to return to the last base touched with no out. The key is that the fielder did not have a possible play. Nothing was happening.

6. The on deck batter gets in the way of the catcher who is trying to retrieve a thrown ball that has rolled away from the catcher after a play at the plate. The runner rounds 3rd and sees the catcher having trouble and starts to sprint for the plate.

**RULING:** The plate umpire should rule the ball is dead “Dead Ball” and the runner closest to home is “Out”. Other runners must return to the last base held at the time of the dead ball declaration.

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## **Batting Position**

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7. The batter enters the batter’s box and assumes his stance with part of his foot outside the line of the box.

**RULING:** The plate umpire should hold up the pitcher from pitching the ball and ask the batter to place his foot on or inside the



lines of the box. If the batter refuses the umpire will call a strike, after 10 seconds.

8. As the pitcher comes to the stop position, the plate umpire notices the batter's foot is partially out of the batter's box.

RULING: The plate umpire should hold up the pitcher, or call "Time", and then ask the batter to correct the position of his foot.

9. There is a runner on 1st when the batter illegally bats the ball toward the shortstop. R1 is obstructed going to 2nd.

RULING: The plate umpire should call and signal a dead ball, "Dead Ball", as soon as the ball is batted illegally. The batter is "Out," and R1 returns to 1st.

10. The batter steps across home plate to the other batter's box while the pitcher is off the pitcher's plate.

RULING: The movement of the batter is legal because the pitcher was not in the pitching position. "In the pitching position" is described as any time the pitcher is in contact with the pitcher's plate and has possession of the ball.

11. The batter wishes to move from one batter's box to the other batter's box while the pitcher is taking the signal from the pitcher's plate.

RULING: The batter must request and be granted "Time" by the plate umpire before the batter can change to the other batter's box. The batter is out if the batter does not request time and steps in front of or behind the catcher to the other box while the pitcher is taking the signal from the pitcher's plate or any time prior to or after the release of the ball.

12. A right hand hitter is at bat and has a count of three balls and one strike. The pitcher releases the next pitch and, while the ball is in flight, the batter starts toward 1st, crossing in front of home plate and passing through the opposite batter's box. Is the batter out?

RULING: Yes, the batter is "Out". He may not go into the opposite batter's box during the pitch.

13. (FP) There is one out with a runner at 3rd. The batter has a count of three balls and one strike. R3 attempts to steal home on the release of the pitched ball. The batter steps out of the batter's box and fouls off the pitched ball. What do you do?

RULING: The ball is dead, "Dead Ball" is called and the batter is "Out" for hitting the ball while outside the batter's box. R3 returns to 3rd.

The batter must have at least one foot completely outside the lines of the batter's box and touching the ground to be considered out of the batter's box.

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## Batting Order

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14. There is a runner at 3rd. The incorrect batter hits a pitched ball on the ground. The fielder throws out the batter-runner and R3 scores from 3rd. The defence appeals the batting out of order before the next pitch.

RULING: Return R3 to third base. The incorrect batter remains "Out". The proper batter is "Out". The next batter is the one who follows the proper batter unless that batter was just put out.

15. The number three batter incorrectly bats in place of the second batter, and the infraction is not discovered until a pitch to the next batter, number four.

RULING: No one is out. The proper next batter is number four. Batter number two misses his/her turn at bat and may legally bat when his/her turn comes around again.

16. A batter bats out of order and is put out by the defence by means of a fly ball or ground ball. Before the next pitch, the defence legally appeals that the batter batted out of order. Is the appeal upheld even though an out is recorded and the result of the play would not change?

RULING: The "Out" on the incorrect batter stands and the proper batter is also declared "Out". Any advances of the runners on the hit are nullified and the next batter is the one to follow the proper batter (who is out) unless he was the incorrect batter who was just called "Out". If the "next batter" was already out on the play then the correct batter will be the one who follows him.

17. The bases are loaded with one out. An improper batter takes a turn at bat and hits the pitched ball for a triple, scoring all three runners. The defensive team immediately appeals the batting out of order. What is the call?

RULING: The appeal stands and the batter that should have batted is declared "Out". No runs score and the runners return to the bases they held before the triple. The next batter is the player whose name in the lineup follows that of the player called out for failing to bat.

18. There is a runner on 1st with one out. A batter bats out of order and hits into a fielder's choice, with R1 being retired at 2nd. The defence appeals the batting out of order before a pitch to the next batter.

RULING: R1 is "Out" and the hit of the incorrect batter is nullified. The batter who should have batted is called "Out". The next batter is the one who follows the batter who should have batted.

19. The bases are loaded with two outs. A batter bats out of order and hits a pitched ball clearing the bases. The batter tries to stretch his double into a

triple and is thrown out at third. The teams switch positions, but before a pitch, the team coming to bat appeals the batting out of order.

**RULING:** The defensive team forfeited its right to appeal the batting out of order when all fielders (including the pitcher) left their normal positions (crossed the foul line).

20. The fourth batter is the last out from the previous inning. In the next inning, the third batter comes to bat instead of the proper fifth batter. The improper third batter flies out and the fourth batter comes to bat again and singles. The defence now appeals a batting out of order.

**RULING:** The third batter became a legal batter as soon as one pitch was thrown to the fourth batter. The number four hitter is now the legal batter.

**TIP:** In effect what happened was seven batters missed their turn at bat.

21. None out and the batting order is A, B, C, D, E. A leads off with a double. D bats next and is put out at first. The defence now appeals a batting out of order.

**RULING:** The proper batter B is ruled out and the out on D is retained as well. C would now be at bat with 2 out.

C hits a single advancing A to third. The next batter would now be E.

**CLARIFICATION:** As D was already called out as an improper batter, his/her turn at bat shall not take place in the same inning until all other batters in the batting order have completed their turn at bat.

22. The batting order for the inning is A, B, C, D and E. Batter "C" leads off the inning with a double and batter "A" grounds out advancing "C" to 3rd. Batter "B" comes to the plate and takes one pitch before the defence appeals the batting out of order.

**RULING:** The first pitch to "A" legalized "C's" double and the pitch to "B" legalized the ground out by "A". No additional out, batter "B" is the proper batter and retains the one pitch count.

If batter "C" is still on base after batter "B" has completed her turn at bat then batter "D" would be the next batter

If batter "C" is not on base after batter "B" has completed her turn at bat then batter "C" would be the next batter.

If the half inning is concluded after batter "B" completes her turn at bat then the lead-off batter in the next inning is batter "C".

23. The batting order for the inning is A, B, C, and D. Batter "C" bats, in place of the proper batter "A", and hits a pitched ball for a single. Batter "D" comes to bat next. After one pitch is delivered to batter "D", the defensive coach appeals "C" and/or "D" batted out of order.

RULING: The defence's appeal is too late. Because a pitch has already been thrown to batter "D", batters "A" and "B" simply miss their turn at bat. Batter "D" continues to bat.

24. "A" is the first batter and hits a double. "D" comes up, out of order, to bat next, gets hit by a pitched ball and is awarded 1st. The next batter that comes to bat is "B". "B" hits an infield fly, and is declared out. "C" bats next and flies out to center field. The defensive team then notices that "D" is on 2nd. The defence wants a batting out of order ruled for out number three.

RULING: No out on the appeal and the next batter is "E". "D" is not removed from the base he is occupying, and simply misses his turn at bat with no penalty.

All plays stand, since the batting out of order by "D" was not discovered until after a pitch to the next batter.

25. (FP) There is a runner at 3rd with one out. The wrong batter steps into the batter's box. The batter works the count to three balls and two strikes. The next pitched ball bounces past the catcher allowing the improper batter to advance to 1st and R3 to score. The defensive coach appeals the batting out of order, before a pitch to the next batter. The plate umpire rules the proper batter out. Does R3's run count?

RULING: R3's run counts as R3's advance was not the direct result of the batter becoming a BR.

26. The batting order for the inning is A, B, C, D, and E. In the third inning substitute "1" replaces "B". In the fourth inning batter "A" leads off and reaches 1st. Next, "B" bats and singles, moving "A" to 2nd. Substitute "1" bats and sacrifices "A" and "B" to 3rd and 2nd, respectively. "C" strikes out. Before a pitch is thrown to "D", the defensive coach appeals that the offence is batting out of order.

RULING: The offence has not violated the batting out of order rule which the defence has brought to the attention of the umpire but has violated the substitution rule, and the re-entry rule.

"A" batted legally.

"B" re-entered legally but did not report and violated the substitution rule.

Substitute "1" re-entered illegally (replaced "C") and because he did not report violated the substitution rule.

"C" (who was replaced by substitute "1") re-entered illegally (replacing "D"), and because he did not report, violated the substitution rule.

"D" was about to re-enter illegally and replace "E", but because the defence caught the problem, did not actually violate any rule.

Putting substitution and re-entry problems aside, the at bats by “A”, “B”, and substitute “1” are all legal. Substitute “1” at bat was legalized when one pitch was thrown to “C”. At the time of the appeal “C” was guilty of being an unannounced illegal re-entry. Even though “C” strikes out he is called “Out” for being an illegal substitute, and the batting actions of “C” are nullified.

Substitute “1” and “C” violated the re-entry rule, and “B”, substitute “1”, and “C” violated the substitution rule. “B” is removed from the game. Substitute “1”, “C”, and the team manager/coach are ejected and ruled ineligible. “D” who was replaced by “C” is entitled to re-enter the game if his re-entry is properly reported. Eligible substitutes are entitled to replace and assume the position in the batting order for the removed and ejected player (namely players “B” and “C”).

Player “A” and the substitute for “B” remain on 3rd and 2nd respectively. There are two outs. When play resumes, batter “E” is the next proper batter.

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### **Interference by Batter**

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27. (FP) There are runners at 1st and 3rd with one out. R1 is off with the release of the pitched ball and the batter swings at and misses it for strike three. The batter then interferes with the catcher’s attempt to throw the ball to 2nd.

**RULING:** The ball is dead “Dead Ball” and the runner closest to home is “Out” for the batter’s “Interference”. R1 returns to 1st.

**CLARIFICATION:** The batter, who is already out, created an interference and the runner closest to home is also declared out. All other runners return the last base touched at the time of the infraction.

28. (FP) There is a runner at 2nd. After the next pitched ball, the catcher throws the ball toward 3rd in an attempt to throw out R2 who is stealing. The catcher’s throw hits the batter’s bat, while the batter is still in the batter’s box, and the ball rebounds back to or away from the plate area. The deflection is accidental and not intentional on the part of either the batter or the catcher. R2 is safe at 3rd.

**RULING:** No interference on the batter because the batter remained in the box and did not intentionally interfere.

**NOTE:** The batter is considered out of the box when one foot is on the ground outside the lines of the batter’s box.

If the batter is out of the box:

- (a) The catcher should be in the act of throwing the ball for the interference. If the catcher stops the act of throwing the ball before releasing it because it appears the batter is blocking

him then call “Interference”. There does not have to be contact with the batter in order for there to be interference.

- (b) If the batter is out of the box deliberately or accidentally and then interferes with the catcher’s attempt to make a play then you would have interference.

29. (FP) There is a runner at 3rd. On the next pitched ball, the catcher cocks his arm in an attempt to pick R3 off 3rd, but finds he cannot make the throw because (a) the batter remained in the batter’s box, or (b) the batter stepped out of the batter’s box.

RULING: In (a) no interference, unless the batter intentionally interfered.

(b) If the batter stepped into the throw then “Interference” is called. The ball is dead “Dead Ball,” and the batter is “Out”. R3 returns to 3rd.

CLARIFICATION: There must be some intent on the batter while he is in the batter’s box to intentionally interfere with the catcher’s throw. The action of the batter moving within the box is not automatically ruled as interference.

30. (FP) There is a runner at 3rd. The catcher attempts to catch R3 off 3rd, and makes a throw toward 3rd after he catches the pitched ball. The throw touches the batter or the batter’s bat while the batter is still in the batter’s box. The ball rebounds toward the backstop allowing R3 to score.

RULING: R3’s run scores. The act of the batter was not intentional, thus no interference ruling.

31. (FP) There are runners at 1st and 3rd. On the next pitched ball, caught by the catcher, the batter interferes with the catcher’s ability to throw out R1 who is stealing 2nd. The play is not completed at 2nd because the shortstop cuts off the catcher’s thrown ball. The shortstop then throws the ball home, in an effort to retire R3, who is stealing home. The batter does not interfere with the play at home. R3 is (a) safe at home, or (b) out at home.

RULING: In both (a, b) the ball is dead immediately, “Dead Ball”, when the batter interferes with the catcher’s ability to make a play on R1. The batter is “Out” for “Interference”. R1 returns to 1st, and R3 returns to 3rd.

32. (FP) There is a runner at 1st. The batter squares to bunt by positioning the bat squarely across home plate. R1 is stealing on the release of the ball. The batter does not move the bat and the pitched ball is belt high across the plate. No contact is made between the bat and the ball. The catcher makes contact with the stationary bat as he is throwing the ball toward 2nd. R1 is thrown out in spite of the contact.

RULING: (FP only) The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, and the batter is “Out” for “Interference”. R1 returns to 1st.

**INTERPRETATION:** The batter is entitled to hold the bat over the plate during a pitched ball. However, once the catcher catches the ball the pitch is considered concluded and the batter should not proceed to hold the bat over the plate.

If the catcher did not make contact with the bat then the batter would not be out unless the batter made some motion that necessitated the catcher to move to avoid bumping into the bat or batter.

33. (FP) There is a runner on 2nd. The batter strikes out on the next pitch and the catcher drops the ball. R2 starts to advance toward 3rd and the batter-runner interferes with the catcher's throw to 1st.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, "Dead Ball", and batter-runner is "Out" because of the "Interference". R2 must return to the base he occupied at the time of the pitch.

34. The batter, in an attempt to swing at a pitched ball, steps backward toward the catcher, causing one foot to be completely out of the batter's box. There is contact between the bat and the catcher's glove during an attempted swing.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, "Dead Ball," and the batter is "Out" for "Interference". The catcher is not responsible for the contact and should not be penalized. The batter shall not hinder the catcher from fielding a pitched ball by stepping out of the box.

35. The batter, in an attempt to swing at a pitched ball, steps backward toward the catcher. Both the batter's feet are in the batter's box when contact is made between the bat and the catcher's glove during an attempted swing.

**RULING:** "Obstruction" on the catcher and a delayed dead ball signal. The manager has the option of taking the result of the play or the penalty - the batter would be awarded 1st if he did not hit the ball and advance one base safely. The batter is not responsible for the contact and should not be penalized. The catcher shall not hinder the batter from hitting a pitched ball while the batter is in the batter's box. And all other base runners advance one base only if forced by the batter being awarded 1<sup>st</sup> base.

**TIP:** The plate umpire should call "Time", if the batter's bat makes contact with the catcher or his equipment during a warm-up swing and before the pitcher releases the ball.

36. There is a runner at 1st. The catcher drops a pitched ball which then rolls to the batter's feet. Forgetting about R1 at 1st, the batter picks up the ball and hands it to the catcher. R1 (a) steals 2nd, or (b) remains at 1st.

**RULING:** In (a, b) the ball is dead, "Dead Ball" as soon as the batter picks up the ball. R1 remains at 1st and the batter is not out.

37. (FP) There is a runner on 1st with none out. On the next pitch, the batter steps on home plate as she tries to hit the pitched ball that is well outside

the strike zone. The batter makes contact with the catcher's glove with the bat when swinging at the pitched ball and is unable to hit the ball.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, "Dead Ball" and the batter is "Out" for "Interference" because the batter has stepped out of the box and hindered the catcher from fielding a pitched ball. R1 returns to 1st.

38. (FP) There is a runner at 1st. R1 attempts to steal 2nd on the next pitched ball. The batter steps across home plate after the catcher catches the ball. The catcher hesitates in throwing the ball because the batter is in the way.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, "Dead Ball". The batter is "Out" for "Interference" because the batter stepped out of the box and caused interference. R1 returns to 1st.

39. (FP) There is a runner at 1st with one out and the batter has a count of one ball and one strike. R1 attempts to steal 2nd on the next pitched ball. The batter steps in front of home plate in an attempt to interfere with the catcher's throw to second. No contact is made between the players. Despite the interference, R1 is called out at 2nd.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, "Dead Ball", as soon as the plate umpire judges the batter's action to be interference. The batter is "Out". R1 returns to 1st.

**INTERPRETATION:** A batter is considered to be interfering with a throw if the batter steps in front of home plate when the catcher is attempting a play on a stealing runner.

40. (FP) There is a runner at 1st. R1 attempts to steal 2nd when the pitcher releases the ball. The batter swings and misses the pitched ball. The batter loses his balance after the swing as the catcher attempts to throw the ball to second. The batter (a) makes contact with the catcher's arm, or (b) steps in front of or on home plate, not making contact with the catcher, but hindering an accurate throw.

**RULING:** In both (a, b) the ball is dead, "Dead Ball". The batter is "Out", for "Interference". R1 returns to 1st.

**RULE:** The batter shall not hinder the catcher from fielding or throwing the ball by stepping out of the batter's box, or intentionally hinder the catcher while standing within the batter's box.

41. (FP) There is a runner at 3rd. The batter attempts to bunt the next pitched ball and R3 attempts to score. The batter misses the ball and (a) steps in front of the catcher, or (b) makes contact with the catcher who is in the catcher's box, so that R3 can score.

**RULING:** The plate umpire should call and signal "Dead Ball". The batter is "Out" for "Interference". R3 is returned to 3rd.

42. (FP) There is a runner at 3rd. The batter swings at and misses a pitched ball for strike three, but the ball caroms off the catcher's glove toward 1st. The batter starts to run toward 1st when the ball then takes a crazy hop into



the BR's path who is five feet from home plate and in fair territory. The BR unintentionally kicks the loose ball and ends up safe at 1st. Is this interference?

**RULING:** This is interference with a dropped third strike. A "dead ball" would be ruled, and the BR is out. R3 remains at 3<sup>rd</sup>.

43. (FP) The runner at 1st is attempting to steal. The defence anticipates the steal and the pitcher delivers a high and outside pitch. The batter tries to make contact with the pitched ball, in an effort to protect R1, and throws the bat at the pitched ball. Is this interference?

**RULING:** If the batter's intent is to hit the pitched ball, her actions are legal. If the intent was to hinder or obstruct the catcher's opportunity to throw out the stealing runner, then it is interference by the batter.

44. (FP) There is a runner at 1st when the batter lunges at and misses a pitched ball with his bat. The bat slips out of his hands and travels toward 1st. The catcher throws the ball to 1st in an attempt to pick R1 off 1st but the ball makes contact with the bat in midair and sails into right field. R1 advances to 2nd before the outfielder can recover the ball. Is this interference?

**RULING:** The ball is dead "Dead Ball" as soon as the thrown ball makes contact with the bat and the batter is "Out" for "Interference". R1 is returned to 1st.

**CLARIFICATION:** Accidental or not the batter does control the whereabouts of the bat and as such is responsible for the bat's action. The batter is responsible for holding onto the bat. The key in this situation is the batter did not make contact with the pitched ball.

45. The batter swings at a pitched ball and hits it on the ground to the pitcher. (a) The bat breaks and a piece of the bat makes contact with the ball or the pitcher, or (b) the whole bat slips from the batter's hands and makes contact with the ball or the pitcher.

**RULING:** In both cases, if any part of the bat contacts the ball, the ball is dead "Dead Ball", and the batter is "Out" for "Interference". If there is no contact with the ball and any part of the bat contacts the pitcher, live ball.

46. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground toward an infielder. However, the bat breaks and part of the bat follows the direction of the ball. The infielder, who is playing the ball, has to jump out of the way to avoid being hit by the piece of bat. The infielder cannot make a play on the batter-runner.

**RULING:** The ball is live and in play. There is no interference on the batter.

**CLARIFICATION:** While the batter is responsible for their bat, they have no control when the bat breaks.

47. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground toward an infielder, however, the bat slips from his hands and the bat follows the direction of the ball. The infielder, who is playing the ball, has to jump out of the way to avoid being hit by the bat. The infielder cannot make a play on the batter-runner.

**RULING:** The ball remains live and in play and the batter is not out.

**INTERPRETATION:** The difference between this situation and case 44 is the batter made contact with the ball. Because the batter hit the ball it would not be interference unless the batter deliberately throws the bat at the infielder.

**NOTE:** A discarded bat cannot cause interference unless the bat makes contact with the ball, in which case you would have a double hit ball.

48. (FP) There is a runner at 2nd. The batter bunts the next pitched ball on the ground in front of home plate. R2 attempts to advance toward 3rd. Meanwhile, the batboy comes out of the dugout and causes interference by (a) getting in the way, causing the catcher not to throw for fear of hitting the batboy, or, (b) getting hit by the thrown ball in a pick-off attempt at 3rd. Interference was unintentional in both situations.

**RULING:** In (a) if the catcher cocks his arm to throw and stops because the batboy is in the way, "Interference" should be called. The ball is dead, "Dead Ball", and the runner closest to home, R2, is "Out."

If the catcher just looks and makes no attempt to throw then there is no interference, and the ball is live and in play.

(b) The ball is dead, "Dead Ball," and R2 is "Out" for "Interference" by the batboy.

49. There is a runner at 3rd. The batter hits a pitched ball into the air above the third base dugout. The catcher attempts to catch the foul fly which is playable but cannot reach the ball because the on deck batter is in the way.

**RULING:** The plate umpire should rule the ball is dead, "Dead Ball", and the batter is "Out" for "Interference" by the on-deck batter.

**CLARIFICATION:** The onus is on the offence to avoid any interference with a defensive player's attempt to field a batted ball. It does not matter if it is intentional or not.

50. (FP) There is a runner at 1st. On the next pitched ball R1 attempts to steal 2nd. The plate umpire interferes with the catcher's attempted throw toward 2nd.

**RULING:** The plate umpire will signal a delayed dead ball with his left arm. If R1 is thrown out at 2nd, the play stands. However, if R1 is not put out at 2nd, the umpire declares a dead ball "Dead Ball", and R1 would be returned to 1st - the base he occupied before the interference.

CLARIFICATION: The catcher need not complete the throw for the interference to be enforced. The ball is dead and the runner must return to the base occupied prior to the interference.

NOTE: Plays that do not create umpire interference are: hit by a thrown ball or a pitch, runs into a defensive player, or runs into an offensive player. The ball remains live and all plays stand.

51. The batter grounds a pitched ball to an infielder, or flies out to center field, or hits the ball for a single. The batter-runner carries his bat to 1st. Is the BR out?

RULING: There is nothing in the rule book that prevents a runner from carrying the bat around all bases should he choose to do so. If the batter-runner uses the bat in an unsportsmanlike manner, or in any way interferes with a play being made, then he can either be ejected for the unsportsmanlike act, or ruled on for interference.

52. (FP) There is a runner at 3rd with one out. The next pitched ball gets past the catcher. R3 charges home as the defensive team scrambles to cover home plate. The catcher retrieves the ball and flips the ball toward home plate. The batter swings and hits the ball. What is the call?

RULING: The ball is dead “Dead Ball” and the batter is “Out” for “Interference”. R3 must return to 3rd.

53. (FP) There is a runner on 3rd. The next pitched ball is a wild pitch and gets by the catcher. R3 breaks for home. The catcher retrieves the ball and flips it to an infielder who is covering home plate. The infielder has a play on R3. The thrown ball makes contact with the batter who is standing in the batter’s box.

RULING: The ball is dead “Dead Ball” and the batter is “Out” for “Interference”. R3 returns to 3rd.

The batter’s box is not a sanctuary for the batter. The batter must be aware of the situation after every pitched ball, especially when a runner is trying to score.

CLARIFICATION: It is not automatic interference when the ball makes contact with a batter while the batter is still in the batter’s box. Crucial details an umpire must judge in determining interference are (a) is the throw an accurate one and not grossly off line, as well as (b) is there a potential play for an out.

54. There is a runner on 3rd. On a pitched ball R3 attempts to steal home. The batter stays in the batter’s box and spreads his legs across the baseline. The catcher is blocked from making an attempt to tag due to the presence of the batter and R3 successfully slides between the batter’s legs and touches home plate. What is your ruling?

RULING: “Interference” on the batter, the ball is dead “Dead Ball”, the batter is out and R3 returns to third. The purpose of the

batter's box is clearly to define the area within which a batter must stand while batting. The batter's box does not provide him immunity from interfering in a play.

55. There is a runner on 2nd when the batter hits a pitched ball in the air above the infield close to home plate. The batter remains in the batter's box momentarily and the catcher and the batter collide in the catcher's attempt to chase after the fly ball. The ball falls to the ground untouched and remains fair while the BR advances safely to 1st and R2 advances to 3rd. The plate umpire rules:

**RULING:** (a) If the catcher had a play on the ball, the ball is dead "Dead Ball", the batter is "Out" for "Interference" and R2 returns to 2nd.

(b) If the catcher did not have a play on the ball then the catcher is guilty of obstruction. The plate umpire signals a delayed dead ball and verbally calls "Obstruction."

- (i) If the BR becomes a runner, the "Obstruction" is nullified.
- (ii) If the BR is played on before reaching 1st safely, the ball is dead "Dead Ball", and the runners are awarded the bases they would have attained had the BR not been obstructed.

**NOTE:** In (b) the manager does not have the option because the batter was obstructed after he hit the pitched ball. The obstruction is enforced by awarding base(s) to the obstructed runner and the other runners affected by the obstruction.

56. There is a runner on 3rd when the batter hits a pitched ball on the ground in front of home plate. The batter and catcher collide as the batter attempts to advance to 1st and the catcher attempts to chase after the ball. The ball then rolls foul. The plate umpire rules:

**RULING:** (a) If the catcher had a play on the ball, the ball is dead "Dead Ball", the batter is "Out" for "Interference" and R3 returns to the last base held at the time of the pitch.

(b) If the catcher did not have a play on the ball then the catcher is guilty of obstruction. The plate umpire signals a delayed dead ball and verbally calls "Obstruction." When the batted ball is declared a "Foul Ball" the ball is dead, the obstruction is nullified, R3 returns to 3rd and the batter returns to bat with a strike added to the count.

**EXCEPTION:** In Slo-Pitch the batter-runner would be out if the foul was a third strike.

**CLARIFICATION:** If a batted ball is declared foul before the interference or obstruction then the batted ball is a "Foul Ball" and the interference or obstruction is not enforced.

Likewise if the batted ball is declared foul after an obstruction ruling the batted ball is a “Foul Ball” and the obstruction is not enforced.

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### Hitting a Pitched Ball A Second Time

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57. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground. While the batter is still in the batter’s box, the batter’s discarded bat rolls against the ball in fair territory. The ball then rolls foul.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, as soon as the bat touches the ball. The batter is “Out” for making bat contact with the ball twice in fair territory.

**RULE:** Staying in the batter’s box matters if the bat is still in the batter’s hands. The batted ball is a foul ball if the batted ball rebounds off the ground and touches the bat. If the bat is out of the batter’s hands and the ball is contacted in fair territory it is a double batted ball. The ball is dead “Dead Ball” and the batter is “Out”.

**NOTE:** An umpire should place the act of a batter hitting the ball a second time into one of three categories.

- (a) If the bat is in the hands of the batter when the ball comes in contact with it, and the batter is in the batter’s box, it is a foul ball. If an entire foot of the batter is completely outside the batter’s box and touching the ground, he is out. When in doubt, do not guess the batter out. Call it a foul ball.
  - (b) If the bat is out of the batter’s hands (dropped or thrown) and it hits the ball in fair territory, the ball is dead and the batter-runner is out. If the ball hits the bat on the ground, the batter is not out. The umpire should then determine whether the ball is fair or foul based on the fair/foul rule. If the ball rolls against the bat in fair territory, it remains live. If it stops or is touched in fair territory, it is a fair ball. If it touches the bat in fair territory and then rolls to foul ground and stops or is touched, it is a foul ball. If the ball rolls against the bat in foul territory, it is a foul ball regardless.
  - (c) If a batter swings and misses the pitched ball but (i) accidentally hits it on the follow-through, (ii) intentionally hits it on the second swing, or (iii) hits the ball after it bounces off the catcher or his mitt, the ball is dead whether hit fair or foul, and it is called a dead ball. If it is the third strike the batter is out.
58. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground in the direction of the pitcher, and drops the bat in foul territory. The backspin on the ball causes it to rebound and hit the discarded bat.

**RULING:** The plate umpire would rule, call and signal a “Foul Ball”, dead ball. The batter is not out for hitting the ball a second time.

**EXCEPTION:** In Slo-Pitch the batter-runner would be out if the foul was a third strike.

59. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground in the direction of the on deck circle, and drops the bat in the direction of the almost motionless ball. The bat makes contact with the ball, in foul territory, causing the ball to rebound and roll fair.

**RULING:** The plate umpire would rule, call and signal a “Foul Ball”. The ball is a dead ball. The batter is not out for hitting the ball a second time because contact occurred in foul territory.

**EXCEPTION:** In Slo-Pitch the batter-runner would be out if the foul was a third strike.

60. The batter bunts (FP) or swings at a pitched ball, hitting it toward the ground. The ball rebounds off the ground or plate and hits the bat a second time, in fair territory, while the batter has (a) both feet still in the box, or (b) one foot in the box and one foot in the air outside of the box, or (c) at least one foot touching the ground entirely outside of the batter’s box.

**RULING:** In (a, b) “Foul ball”, dead ball, and strike on the batter because the batter is in the batter’s box.

**EXCEPTION:** In Slo-Pitch the batter-runner would be out if the foul were a third strike.

(c) The ball is dead “Dead Ball”, and the batter is “Out” for hitting the ball a second time while one foot is touching ground while entirely outside of the batter’s box.

61. There are runners on 2nd and 3rd with two outs and the batter has a count of two strikes. The batter is fooled by the next pitch, swings and misses the ball. The ball hits the catcher’s glove and bounces upward making contact with the bat on the follow through swing. The batter did not hit the ball intentionally, but it took a play away from the catcher who could have caught the ball for strike 3. What is your call?

**RULING:** The ball is dead and the batter is “Out”.

**CLARIFICATION:** We are ruling “Interference” and any runners must return to base held at time of pitch.

62. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground. While the batter-runner is advancing toward 1st, the discarded bat rolls against the ball in fair territory. The ball then rolls foul.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, as soon as the bat touches the ball. The batter is “Out” for contacting the fair ball a second time fair territory.

**CLARIFICATION:** When the action of the discarded bat is towards the ball, and it is apparent that the ball is not rolling toward the stationary bat, the batter is “Out”.

When the action of the ball makes it roll towards and make contact with a stationary discarded bat, the batter-runner is not out. Likewise, a batted ball and discarded bat moving toward one another simultaneously will be ruled as the batter-runner is “Out”.

63. The batter bunts a pitched ball down the first base line. The batter discards her bat toward 1st. The bat lands in fair territory and the bunted ball rolls against the stationary bat. The deflected ball then rolls foul where the catcher picks up the ball. Is the BR out for hitting or making contact with a ball a second time?

**RULING:** The BR is not out. The ball remains in play (not necessarily fair). Contact with the bat does not determine whether a batted ball is fair or foul. The ball is a “Foul Ball” when the ball rolled into foul territory and was touched foul by a defensive player.

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### **Strike or Ball**

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64. The batter starts to swing at a pitched ball but attempts to hold back on the swing. The batter misses the ball. How does the umpire judge whether the batter’s actions constitute a swing, for a “Strike”, or a check swing, for a “Ball”?

**RULING:** The plate umpire, in order to be consistent, has several criteria to guide him in making the decision.

**JUDGMENT:** A check swing can be especially difficult since most batters do not stand square with the plate but rather stand to the back of the batter’s box. It is not automatic for the plate umpire to check with their partner. Most base umpires will give you what they see, so do not ask if you do not want an honest answer.

**CLARIFICATION:** In most cases the plate umpire should check with their partner when the defence requests a check swing appeal. Only the plate umpire should make the request and the base umpire should not respond unless it is the plate umpire that requests the appeal. The plate umpire should not call a strike unless the ball is in the strike zone or the ball was swung at or hits the strike mat (in a SP game using the mat). Pitches that are called strikes should not be appealed or checked by the plate umpire.

**GUIDELINE:** A check swing should not be judged solely by whether a batter “broke the wrists” or not. There are normally four areas that constitute whether or not a batter has swung at the ball or checked the swing.

- (a) Did the batter roll the wrists?
  - (b) Did the batter swing through the ball and bring the bat back, unless the bat came back before the ball arrived?
  - (c) Was the bat in front of the body or did the barrel of the bat pass the batter's front hip?
  - (d) Did the batter make an attempt to hit the ball as in moving the bat toward the ball?
65. The batter swings and misses a pitched ball delivered slowly. The batter has time to reset and swing again, making contact the second time with the ball going fair or foul.
- RULING: (FP) When contact is made on the second swing, the hit should be ruled a "Foul Ball" no matter whether the ball went fair or foul.
- (SP) The ball is dead after the batter misses on the first swing.
66. There are two strikes on the batter. The next pitch is swung at by the batter who misses the pitch, however, on the follow through, the ball accidentally hits the bat and rolls fair.
- RULING: The ball is dead when the batter hits the ball on the follow through and the batter is out on the third strike. If the batter had only one strike the ball would be dead and strike two. It is not considered a hit ball when a batter hits the ball on the follow through.
- CLARIFICATION: This is not the same as a batter trying to avoid a pitch and having the ball hit the bat. Once the batter has swung and missed a pitch ball any subsequent hit by the bat is not valid. The ball is dead. No penalty on the batter for the second hit.
67. There is a runner on 2nd. The batter swings at and misses the next pitched ball which makes contact with the catcher's glove and pops up into the air. The batter accidentally hits the ball on the back swing of the bat and the ball rolls away from the catcher. R2 advances safely to 3rd.
- RULING: The ball is dead "Dead Ball", the batter is assessed a strike and R2 returns to 2nd.
- Even though the catcher deflected the pitched ball into the batter's bat on the back swing, the contact would be considered the same as hitting a ball a second time while in the batter's box.
- NOTE: In Slo-Pitch the ball is dead when the batter swings and misses a pitched ball. R2 remains at 2nd.
68. A pitched ball bounces in front of home plate. The batter swings at the ball and either misses the ball or hits the ball.
- RULING: (FP) The pitched ball is live. If the pitched ball is missed by the bat, the pitch is a strike. If contact is made with the



pitched ball, the resulting hit and subsequent play is the outcome of the pitch.

(SP) The pitched ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, as soon as it makes contact with the ground in front of home plate. A ball is awarded the batter. Any runners would remain at their respective base.

69. The batter hits a pitched ball, not higher than her head, which goes directly from the bat to the catcher’s mitt.

RULING: (FP) The pitched ball is a “Strike” and the ball is live. This is a foul tip.

(SP) A “Strike” is called and the ball is dead. Runners may not advance a base.

70. (SP) The batter has a count of one ball and two strikes. The pitcher delivers a ball that has an arc of less than six feet. The plate umpire calls “Illegal Pitch” and signals a “Delayed Dead Ball” as soon as the arc is judged low. Simultaneously, the batter hits the pitched ball “Foul”. The offensive manager, as does the batter, complains that not enough time was allowed to hold up the swing and the hit should not count.

RULING: The batter is “Out” on the foul ball third strike rule.

71. The plate umpire judges the batter to have swung at a pitched ball. The batter requests the plate umpire check with the base umpire.

RULING: The batter’s appeal would not be allowed. Only a ball call on a check swing is allowed. The ball call check is requested by the defence.

TIP: The umpire should only check on a swing if he/she calls a ball. If the umpire called a strike it is assumed he/she saw the pitch clearly.

72. There is a runner at 1st. The batter squares to bunt by positioning the bat squarely across home plate. The batter does not move the bat and the pitched ball is (a) belt high across the plate, or (b) outside the strike zone. No contact is made between the bat and the ball.

RULING: (FP) In bunting, any movement of the bat toward the pitched ball, when the ball is over or near the plate area, is a “Strike”. The mere holding of the bat in the strike zone, before, during, or after the pitched ball arrives at the plate area, is not considered an attempt to bunt unless the ball is already in the strike zone. On a missed bunt attempt with two strikes, the dropped third strike rule will apply.

(SP) Bunting the ball is not allowed. However, any movement of the bat toward the pitched ball, when the ball is over or near the plate area, is a “Strike”, when the ball is missed. The mere holding of the bat in the strike zone, before, during, or after the pitched ball arrives at the plate area, is not considered a bunt for an “Out,” unless contact is made with

the ball. If the pitched ball hits the strike mat, in a game using a strike mat, it is a strike.

73. (SP) The batter is standing at the rear of the batter's box. A legal pitch is delivered and the ball crosses home plate above the batter's highest shoulder. However, when the ball passes the batter, it is between the highest shoulder and the batter's knees or misses the strike mat (if used).

RULING: A "Ball" shall be called provided the batter did not swing at the pitched ball. A pitched ball shall be judged a ball or a strike relative to the ball's position when it crosses home plate.

74. A pitched ball is blown by a gust of wind such that it misses the strike zone and hits the batter.

RULING: (FP) The ball is dead, "Dead Ball", and the batter is awarded 1st. Other runners advance only if forced. Note that if no attempt is made by the batter to avoid the ball, a "Ball" will be called.

(SP) The pitched ball is a "Ball" because it hit the batter outside the strike zone and before hitting the strike mat. The ball is dead after every pitched ball not hit and runners do not advance a base.

75. A pitched ball drifts towards the batter. The batter does or does not move and the ball hits his bat, which was resting on his shoulder. The ball dribbles into fair territory. The shocked batter runs toward 1st. The astonished catcher also finally reacts, fields the ball, and throws the ball toward 1st. The thrown ball is caught by the infielder at first, after the runner had touched first base.

RULING: (FP) The ball is live and in play. The base umpire would rule, call and signal the batter-runner safe at 1st.

(SP) The ball is live and in play. The base umpire would rule, call and signal the batter-runner safe at 1st. While the hit had the effect of a bunt, the batter did not exhibit any intention to deliberately bunt the ball.

CLARIFICATION: Any pitched ball that makes contact with the batter's bat shall be ruled in accordance with a batted ball. A batter need not exhibit any intention to deliberately hit a pitched ball when the pitched ball makes contact with the bat.

# RULE 8 – BATTER-RUNNER AND RUNNER

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## Fair Ball or Foul Ball

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1. A batted ball comes to rest on home plate.  
RULING: The batted ball is a fair ball.
2. The batter has a count of one ball and two strikes. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air to the outfield or above the infield, near the foul line. The defensive player dives for the fly ball and touches it in the air over (a) foul territory, or (b) fair territory. The fielder then collides with the ground and drops the ball.  
RULING: (FP) In (a) the batted ball is a “Foul Ball”, and the ball is dead.  
(b) The batted ball is a “Fair Ball”, the batter is not out because the catch is not a legal catch. The ball is live and runners are in jeopardy.  
(SP) In (a) the batted ball is a “Foul Ball”, dead ball, and the batter is “Out” on the uncaught third strike foul ball rule. Runners may not advance.  
(b) The batted ball is a “Fair Ball”, the batter is not out because the catch is not a legal catch. The ball is live and runners are in jeopardy.
3. A batted ball first hits home plate and, without touching any foreign object, settles on fair ground between the pitcher’s plate and home plate.  
RULING: The batted ball is a fair ball.
4. A batted ball comes to rest on the chalk line between home plate and 1st or 3rd, or on a line drive touches the foul line beyond 1st or 3rd and bounds into foul territory.  
RULING: The batted ball is a fair ball since the chalk line is part of fair ground.
5. A batted ball is hit above the infield and drops onto fair territory between home and 1st and rolls into foul territory where it is touched by the infielder.  
RULING: The batted ball is a “Foul Ball”. Any batted ball that lands within the confines of the infield, without being touched by a fielder, and rolls foul, where it is then touched, before it reaches 1st or 3rd, is a foul ball.
6. The batter hits a pitched ball on a line along the left field line. The batted ball hits foul past 3rd and then bounces fair where the left fielder plays the ball in fair territory.

- RULING: The batted ball is a “Foul Ball”. When a batted ball first lands foul beyond 1st or 3rd, it is a foul ball regardless where the ball ends up.
7. A batted ball touches the ground in foul territory before 1st or 3rd and comes to rest on the chalk line between home plate and 1st or 3rd.
- RULING: The batted ball is a fair ball since the ball came to rest before 1st or 3rd in fair territory.
8. A batted ball, line drive to right field, touches the foul line beyond 1st and bounces into foul territory where it hits the fence and rebounds to the outfielder.
- RULING: The batted ball is a fair ball. Any batted ball that first touches fair territory beyond the bases is a fair ball. The actions of the ball after the initial touch to the ground are of no significance in determining fair or foul.
9. A batted ball touches the ground in foul territory beyond 1st or 3rd, and comes to rest on the chalk line.
- RULING: The batted ball is a “Foul Ball” since the ball first touched beyond 1st and 3rd in foul territory.
10. A bounding batted ball touches 1st, 2nd, or 3rd base and then rolls into foul territory where it is picked up by the infielder.
- RULING: A fair ball. A batted ball is judged and signalled fair when the ball hits any base and deflects into foul territory, or the ball bounces from the infield over any base and lands in foul territory.
11. A batted ball first lands in fair territory between home plate and third, then rolls foul, and then spins back into fair territory in front of third base where it is touched or settles.
- RULING: A fair ball. Any batted ball that is touched or settles in fair territory before the bases is a fair ball.
12. The batter hits a ground ball that zigzags along the baseline and bounces directly over any part of the bag at 1st or 3rd and then settles in foul territory.
- RULING: A fair ball.
13. The batter breaks her bat into pieces as a result of hitting a pitched ball. The bouncing batted ball rolls into foul territory before 1st, then hits a piece of the broken bat, which causes the ball to change direction and roll fair. The infielder picks up the ball in fair territory and throws the batter-runner out at 1st.
- RULING: The batted ball is a “Foul Ball”, and the ball is dead. The batter-runner is not out for hitting the ball a second time.
- If the ball had hit the bat pieces in fair territory and stayed fair then it would be a fair ball. If after hitting the bat pieces

in fair territory, the ball rolled foul and was touched or settled in foul territory, then it would be a “Foul Ball”.

14. A slow rolling batted ball hits a discarded bat in (a) foul territory and rolls fair before 1st or 3rd, where it is picked up by an infielder, or (b) fair territory and rolls foul before 1st or 3rd, where it is picked up by an infielder.

**RULING:** In both situations the batted ball is a “Foul Ball.”

**TIP:** A batted ball touching a foreign object in foul territory makes the ball a foul ball. The ball touching a foreign object in fair territory does not make the ball fair or foul until it is touched or comes to rest.

15. The batter makes contact with a pitched ball. The ball is popped up just over the batter’s head and makes contact with the catcher’s shoulder, while the catcher is still in the squatting position. The ball then rolls down the catcher’s back, before it is finally squeezed against her back by the third baseman, who eventually controls the ball in her bare hand before the ball touches the ground.

**RULING:** The batter is “Out” on the caught foul fly and the ball remains live.

16. The corner of 1st is clearly outside the foul line, in foul territory. A batted ball hits the corner of the base or hops over the corner of the base, which is in foul territory.

**RULING:** The batted ball is a foul ball. Even though the bag is clearly in foul territory, the judgment and subsequent ruling as to whether a ball is fair or foul is based on the position of the ball and the foul line.

**TIP:** The bases should be checked by the umpires before the start of each game to make sure they are positioned correctly and are securely fastened in place.

The umpires should also visually check the position of the bases, at 1st and 3rd, after every play, hit, or turn at bat.

17. The corner of 1st is clearly inside the foul line, in fair territory with a six inch space between the base and the foul line. A batted ball rolls between 1st and the foul line. Is the ball fair or foul?

**RULING:** The batted ball is a fair ball. Even though the bag is clearly in fair territory, the judgment and subsequent ruling as to whether a ball is fair or foul is based on the position of the ball and the foul line.

18. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air to the outfield. The curving ball is (a) over fair territory or (b) over foul territory when it passes around the outfield fence foul pole.

**RULING:** In (a) the batted ball is a “Fair Ball”, and a home run.

(b) The batted ball is a “Foul Ball”.

19. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air to the outfield. The curving ball is (a) inside, or (b) outside the foul line when it passes over the outfield fence, scarcely glancing off the side of the foul pole.

RULING: In both (a, b) a fair ball, and a home run.

20. The batter hits a pitched ball into the air. The fly ball lands untouched onto foul territory, five feet beyond 1st, or 3rd, and spins back toward home plate. The ball then rolls fair between home and the 1st, or 3rd.

RULING: The batted ball is a “Foul Ball” as soon as it touches the ground in foul territory beyond the base.

21. The batter fouls a pitched ball straight back toward the catcher. The ball first deflects off the catcher’s chest protector. The ball is eventually caught and controlled, by the catcher, prior to the ball touching the ground.

RULING: The batted ball is a “Foul Ball”, and the ball is dead. The batted ball is not considered a foul tip because it first made contact with the catcher’s body and not his glove and/or hands.

22. A line drive batted ball hits the pitcher’s plate without touching a player. The ball rebounds into foul territory between home and 1st or 3rd. The ball (a) is touched by a defensive player over foul territory, or (b) comes to rest in foul territory, or (c) goes out of play.

RULING: The batted ball is a “Foul Ball”, and the ball is dead.

CLARIFICATION: The ruling would remain the same no matter how the batted ball reached the pitcher’s plate whether on the ground or directly in the air. The key is the batted ball rebounding between home and 1st or 3rd and where it is first touched or comes to rest.

23. A batter hits a pitched ball on a line drive which hits the pitcher’s plate and rebounds back toward the catcher on the fly. The catcher fields the ball and throws the batter-runner out at 1st. Is the BR out?

RULING: When the batted ball hit the pitcher’s plate it was no longer in flight, so the batter is not out on the catch. It depends on the position of the batted ball when it is touched by the catcher. If touched on or over fair territory, the ball is a fair ball and the play stands. If touched over foul territory, the ball is a foul ball and the batter returns to bat with an additional strike. The position of the catcher’s feet or body has no bearing on whether the ball is fair or foul.

EXCEPTION: In Slo-Pitch the batter-runner would be out if the foul was a third strike.

24. A fly ball is first touched by an outfielder who is standing in foul territory. The ball is over (a) fair territory or (b) foul territory when contact is made by the defensive player.

RULING: In (a) the batted ball is a fair ball.

(b) The batted ball is a “Foul Ball”.

**RULE:** A fair fly ball should be judged to be fair or foul by the relative position of the ball and the foul line, including the foul pole when it is first touched by the fielder, and not by the position of the fielder in fair or foul territory. It does not matter whether the ball first touches fair or foul territory as long as it does not touch anything foreign to the natural ground in foul territory and complies with all other aspects of a fair ball.

25. The batter has a count of two balls and two strikes. A pitched ball is hit on the ground along the first base line in foul territory. The batted ball is still moving when it is declared “Foul” by the plate umpire. After the ball is declared foul, the ball hits a pebble and deflects into fair territory between home and 1st. The first baseman picks up the batted ball and attempts to tag the batter-runner. The fielder misses with the tag and the batter-runner is safe at 1st.

**RULING:** (FP) The batted ball is a “Foul Ball”. The batter returns to bat with a count of two balls and two strikes.

(SP) The batted ball is a “Foul Ball”. The ball is dead. The batter is “Out” on the third strike rule - batting foul after two strikes.

**INTERPRETATION:** The plate umpire definitely ruled too quickly on this situation. Unfortunately, the plate umpire’s early call error cannot be corrected.

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### **Foul Tip**

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26. (FP) There is a runner on 1st who steals 2nd as the batter swings at the pitched ball. The pitched ball deflects off the bat and goes directly back to the catcher’s chest and rebounds into his glove, where it is held securely.

**RULING:** The plate umpire should rule, call, and signal a “Foul Ball”. The ball is dead and R1 must return to 1st. The batted ball cannot be considered a foul tip since the ball hit the catcher’s chest first.

27. There is a runner on 1st, when the batter hits a foul which goes directly back to the catcher and is caught.

**RULING:** (FP) This is a foul tip, and is treated the same as any other strike (a live ball).

R1 would be allowed to steal 2nd.

(SP) This is a foul tip, and is treated the same as any other foul strike (a dead ball). R1 would not be allowed to steal 2nd.

28. The batter swings at a pitched ball. The batted ball goes off the bat, hits the catcher’s bare hand or glove hand, rebounds off the catcher’s body, and is then controlled by the catcher in either hand before the ball touches the ground.

RULING: (FP) This is a foul tip and a “Strike” on the batter. The ball remains live and runners may advance.

(SP) This is a foul tip and a “Strike” on the batter. The ball is dead and runners may not advance.

29. The batter swings at and tips a pitched ball over his head. The catcher catches the ball at waist height.

RULING: The batter is “Out”.

This is considered a foul fly because contact was made with the ball above the batter’s head.

Any ball that is above the batter’s head after initial contact with a bat, or remains above the head momentarily after contact, is a foul fly. The position of the ball when it is caught is irrelevant.

30. The batter makes contact with a pitched ball. The ball goes directly from the bat to the catcher’s glove or hand and then rebounds toward the first baseman, who catches the ball in flight over fair or foul territory.

RULING: (FP) The batted ball is a “Foul Ball” and the ball is dead. It is a strike on the batter. Runners would not be allowed to steal and must return to last base held at time of the pitch. The catcher must catch the ball for it to be a foul tip and considered a live ball.

(SP) This is a “Foul Ball”, and the ball is dead. A strike on the batter and the batter would be out if the foul was a third strike.

31. The batter hits a pitched ball out in front of home plate. The catcher lunges and catches the ball before it touches the ground. The ball did not go higher than the batter’s head. Is this a foul tip?

RULING: The batted ball is not a foul tip because the ball did not go directly to the catcher’s glove from the bat. Since the catcher went to the ball, the catch should be ruled a legal catch for an out.

32. The batter has a count of two strikes. The next pitched ball hits the ground in front of home plate and then the batter swings and fouls the ball back into the catcher’s glove.

RULING: (FP) The batter is “Out” and may not advance to 1st. If the batter had swung at and missed the pitch he could have run under the third strike rule because a pitched ball touching the ground is considered a trapped ball. However, because the ball was tipped, the result is the action of the ball off the bat which is a foul tip.

(SP) The ball is dead as soon as it touches the ground in front of home plate, a ball on the batter.



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## Hit By Pitched Ball

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33. The batter is hit on the leg by a pitched ball.
- RULING: (FP) The plate umpire should call and signal “Dead Ball”. The batter is awarded 1st.
- (SP) The batter is awarded a ball.
34. The batter attempts to avoid getting hit by a pitched ball but inadvertently moves into the pitch he is trying to avoid and gets hit by the ball.
- RULING: (FP) The plate umpire should call and signal “Dead Ball”. The batter is awarded 1st unless the contact occurred in the strike zone.
- (SP) The batter is awarded a ball provided the ball would not have passed through the strike zone or hit the strike mat.
35. The batter leans into or tries to get hit by the pitched ball and gets hit by the ball.
- RULING: (FP) The plate umpire should call and signal “Dead Ball”. The batter is not awarded 1st. The batter is awarded a ball unless the pitch is in the strike zone, then award a strike.
- (SP) The batter is awarded a ball unless the pitch is in the strike zone or going to hit the strike mat, then award a strike.
36. The batter does not attempt to avoid being hit by a pitched ball.
- RULING: (FP) Could the batter have reasonably avoided the pitched ball?
- If the batter freezes or the ball bounces and the batter is struck, rule a hit batter and award 1st. The pitch belongs in the strike zone and not in the batter’s box.
- If the batter simply stood there and let the ball hit him, award a ball unless the pitch is in the strike zone, and then award a strike.
- (SP) The batter is awarded a ball.
- TIP: (FP) The hands are not part of the bat. If a pitch is outside the strike zone and hits the batter’s hand, award the batter 1st. If the ball hits both the hand and the bat, the ball probably hit the hand first because it is on top of the bat. Award the batter 1st.
37. There is a runner on 1st, and the batter has a count of two strikes. The batter swings at the next pitched ball, which touches him. The ball rolls away from the catcher and R1 steals 2nd.
- RULING: (FP) The batter is “Out” because he swung at and missed the pitched ball for strike three. The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”,

when it hits the batter, and R1 returns to 1st (base occupied at the time of the pitch).

(SP) The batter is “Out”. The ball is dead and runners may not advance.

38. There is a runner at 2nd with one out and the batter has a count of two strikes. The batter swings at the next pitched ball, hitting the ball with his hands or fingers. The ball is punched fair toward the shortstop that is unable to throw the batter-runner out at 1st.

RULING: (FP) The batter is “Out”, due to the swinging at and missing a pitched ball which is the third strike. The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, when the ball hits the batter, and R2 returns to 2nd (base occupied at the time of the pitch). The ball is dead because the pitched ball contacted the batter’s hands. The hands are not considered part of the bat.

(SP) The batter is “Out”. The ball is dead and runners may not advance.

39. There is a runner on 1st. The pitcher delivers a ball, which is ruled an illegal pitch. The pitched ball hits the batter after the batter swings at the pitched ball.

RULING: (FP) Illegal pitch, the batter is awarded a ball, and R1 is awarded 2nd. When a batter swings at and then is hit with an illegally pitched ball, the runners are awarded one base due to the illegal pitch and the batter a ball for the illegal pitch.

(SP) The illegal pitch is ignored and a strike on the batter. The ball is dead after every pitched ball not hit. Runners may not advance. If the batter does not swing at the illegal pitch and is hit in the strike zone the batter is awarded a ball.

40. The batter has a count of two balls and two strikes. The batter swings at the next pitched ball which hits him in the hands. The ball rolls into fair territory

RULING: The batter is “Out” for swinging at and missing a pitched ball. The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, because the pitched ball hit the batter.

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## Fly Ball

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41. There is a runner at 3rd. The batter, who has a count of one ball and two strikes, hits a pitched ball in the air to the outfield near the foul line. The outfielder first touches the fly ball over foul territory, eventually makes the catch, and then throws the ball toward home plate. R3 legally tags and scores before the thrown ball reaches the catcher.

RULING: (FP) The batter is “Out” because the batted ball was caught. The ball is live, and R3’s run counts.

(SP) The batter is “Out” because the potential third strike foul was caught for the out. The ball is live, and R3’s run counts.

42. There is a runner on 3rd. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air and close to (a) the opposing teams’ dugout, or (b) his own dugout. The catcher, who is tracking the fly ball places both feet at the edge of the dugout (within the field of play) and leans towards the dugout to make the catch. Before the catch is made, (a) opposing team members, or (b) fellow team members inside the dugout support the catcher’s body to prevent him from falling into the dugout. The catch is made. Is this a legal out?

**RULING:** In (a) the batter is “Out” and the ball remains live if the catcher remains in playable territory.

(b) If the intent of the fellow team members was to assist the catcher in making the catch (i.e. by keeping him in play) then the ball is dead “Dead Ball”, the batter is not out, and a strike is called.

(SP) The batter would be out in (b) if the strike was the third strike.

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### **Infield Fly**

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43. There are runners on 1st and 2nd with none out when the batter hits a pop fly above the infield. The infielder loses sight of the ball in the sun and the ball lands in foul territory and without being touched spins fair between home plate and 3rd. The fielder then picks up the ball and throws to the second baseman covering 2nd, who then touches R2 with the ball while the latter is off the base.

**RULING:** The plate or base umpire should call and signal “Infield Fly, the batter is out if fair”. The batter is automatically “Out” because the batted ball ended up being a fair ball. R2 is also “Out” because the ball remains live.

44. There are runners on 1st and 2nd with one out when the batter hits an infield fly. The runners believe there are two out and start to run as soon as the ball is hit. The infielders fail to catch the ball which lands and stays fair and both runners score. If the defence appeals that R1 and R2 left their bases early are they “Out” for leaving early?

**RULING:** No, the runners are not out for leaving their bases early. The batter is “Out” on the infield fly rule, and the ball remains live.

This situation is dealt with the same way as any uncaught fly ball, and as such both runs would still count and any appeal by the defence would result in the base umpire ruling, calling, and signalling both runners “Safe”.

**TIP:** FP runners can legally leave a base when the pitcher releases the ball. In SP the runner can legally leave a base when the ball reaches home plate or the ball is batted. If an infield fly has been called runners are in jeopardy to be called out if

they have left the base. They must return to tag up if the infield fly ball is caught.

45. The bases are loaded with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball high above the infield and the plate umpire declares the hit an infield fly. The batted ball makes contact with the infielder's glove, bounds away, and hits the ground. All runners advance one base. The defence appeals that R3 and R2 left base before the infielder touched the ball.

**RULING:** Runners do not have to tag up when the ball is not caught. The batter is called "Out" on the infield fly.

46. There are runners at 1st and 2nd with none out. The batter hits the pitched ball for an infield fly toward the second baseman. The plate umpire does not declare the batted ball an infield fly and the infielder misplays the ball and the ball falls to the ground. The second baseman picks up the ball and tags R1 who is running toward 2nd. The BR reaches 1st safely. The umpire realizes his error and rules the BR out and returns R1 to 1st. The defence protests the umpire's ruling. Is the ruling correct?

**RULING:** The batter and R1 are both "Out". Players have a responsibility to be familiar with the rules and act accordingly. R1 is not protected when he advances unnecessarily on an undeclared infield fly. R1 cannot be returned to 1st after being declared out during a live ball.

A properly filed protest by the defence should be upheld (two outs) if the umpire's error is discovered before the next pitch.

47. There are runners on 1st and 2nd with none out when the batter uses a slashing motion in an endeavour to bat the ball over the third baseman. The ball loops into the air about 10 feet and then falls to the ground behind the infielder and between home plate and 3rd. The third baseman would have been able to catch the ball if he had been playing his normal infield position.

**RULING:** The batter is not "Out" if the infielder could not catch the ball with ordinary effort.

The batter's attempt to bat the ball (slashing is considered swinging) rather than bunt the ball makes the hit a potential infield fly.

**TIP:** The infield fly rule does not say how high or how far the ball must go before it is judged an infield fly. The simple action of a swing and the ability of an infielder to catch the ball with ordinary effort are enough to judge whether a batted ball is an infield fly.

**NOTE:** A bunted ball or line drive is not considered an infield fly.

48. The bases are loaded with one out when the batter hits an infield fly to the shortstop, who is playing sixteen feet beyond and to the left of 2nd. The shortstop calls for the ball but steps out of the way just in time for the

charging center fielder to touch and drop the fly ball. All runners advance one base.

**RULING:** The batter is “Out” on the infield fly rule and the ball remains live. The advance of the other runners is legal.

The center fielder’s attempt to field the ball has no bearing on the infield fly rule. As long as the fly could be easily handled by an infielder, in this case the shortstop, then the batter is “Out”.

49. There are runners on 1st and 2nd with less than two outs when the batter hits a pitched ball in the air which comes down over foul territory. Is this an infield fly if?

(a) The ball touches the ground, out of reach of all infielders and takes a long hop into fair territory between home plate and 1st or 3rd?

(b) The ball is within reach of an infielder, who does not touch the ball, and the ball bounces into fair territory between home plate and 1st or 3rd?

**RULING:** In (a) if the umpire believes it was not within reach of any infielder then it is not an infield fly.

(b) the batted ball is an infield fly.

**RULE:** A “Foul Ball” when

(a) An uncaught infield fly ball lands, untouched, in foul territory and is touched in foul territory or remains foul, or

(b) An uncaught infield fly ball lands, untouched, in fair territory and rolls foul, where it is touched or comes to rest.

**RULE:** An “Out,” when

(a) An uncaught infield fly ball lands, untouched, in fair territory and remains in or is touched fair, or

(b) An uncaught infield fly ball lands, untouched, in foul territory and rolls fair, where it is touched or comes to rest.

An infield fly ball, which is caught over foul territory, is an “Out” due to the catch, and not because of an automatic out due to the infield fly rule.

50. Runners on 1st and 2nd with one out when the defence shifts their infield and positions the left fielder where the third baseman would normally play. The batter hits an infield fly, which could be easily handled by the left fielder, now playing in the infield. However, the left fielder drops the ball near 3rd.

**RULING:** The plate umpire should rule, call and signal an “Infield Fly”. The batter is “Out.”

51. The bases are loaded with less than two out when the infielders shift to defensive positions between 1st and 2nd, leaving the third base area uncovered. The batter hits an infield fly which lands and settles in fair territory beside 3rd.

If the umpire feels that a fielder stationed on the infield could make the catch with ordinary effort, the "Infield fly" is called. In softball, it is easy for a fielder to make catches on fly balls anywhere on the infield due to the short base distances. Just because the fielder shifted does not mean that a player stationed at shortstop could not field a fly ball over the third base area.

**TIP:** A player shifting is not relevant and a fielder in his normal fielding position is not relevant. The ability of the fielder to make the play with ordinary effort is the determining factor of an "Infield fly".

52. The bases are loaded with less than two out when the batter hits the ball above the infield. No call or signal is made by the umpires to signify an "Infield Fly, The Batter Is Out." The ball settles in fair territory. All the runners advance one base and the batter-runner reached 1st safely. The defence yells at the umpires claiming the batter-runner should be "Out."

**RULING:** The batter-runner is called "Out" by the plate umpire, under the "Infield Fly" rule. All other runners advance at their own risk.

**CLARIFICATION:** Even though the "Infield Fly" is not signalled, the rule is still in effect and it is the responsibility of the defence and offence to be aware of the situation.

53. The bases are loaded with none out when the batter hits a line drive directly at the shortstop.

**RULING:** (FP) The batted ball is not an infield fly because it is a line drive. A bunted ball is also not considered an infield fly situation, even if it is popped up in the air.

(SP) The batted ball is not an infield fly because it is a line drive. Bunting a ball fair or foul is not allowed in Slo-Pitch and is an "Out" and the ball is dead immediately.

54. There are runners on 1st and 2nd with one out. The batter hits the pitched ball above the infield. The ball hits R2 while (a) R2 is standing on 2nd, or (b) R2 is near 2nd. In both situations the ball has not passed an infielder and the infielder is in position to make the catch.

**RULING:** In (a) the batter is "Out" on the infield fly rule. The ball is dead, "Dead Ball", as soon as the ball makes contact with R2. Runners return to the last base touched at the time of the dead ball ruling.

(b) The batter is “Out” on the infield fly rule. The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, and R2 is “Out” on the “Interference” for being hit with a batted ball while off base and when an infielder had a play on the ball. Runners return to the last base touched at the time of the interference - R1 stays at 1st.

55. There is one out and the bases are loaded. The batter hits a pitched ball high above the infield. The plate umpire rules the hit an “Infield Fly, The Batter Is Out”. No fielder attempts to make the catch, the ball lands near the pitcher’s plate and then rolls toward the first base line. The ball makes contact with the batter-runner in (a) fair territory, or (b) foul territory. The catcher then grabs the ball and throws it toward 3rd. The third baseman catches the ball and tags R3 while she is off base.

**RULING:** In (a) the batter-runner is “Out”, on the infield fly rule as soon as he is hit with the ball in fair territory. The ball is dead immediately, “Dead Ball”, and all runners return to the last base touched at the time of the pitch.

(b) A “Foul Ball” because the batter-runner was hit in foul territory. The ball is dead immediately. Runners return to the base held at the time of the pitch. (FP only) The batter comes back to bat. (SP only) The batter comes back to bat, unless the foul ball is a foul ball third strike.

56. There are runners at 1st and 2nd with one out. After the batter gives every indication he is about to bunt, he swings at the pitched ball and pops it up into the air between home and 1st.

**RULING:** The swinging action of the bat dictates that the batted ball is an infield fly. The plate umpire should rule, “Infield fly, if fair, the batter is out”. The ball remains live.

57. There are runners at 1st and 2nd with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball above the infield and the plate umpire calls and signals an “Infield Fly, The Batter Is Out”. The infielder intentionally drops the ball and then tags R2 who had wandered off 2nd.

**RULING:** The ball remains live. The infield fly takes precedence so there is no “intentionally dropped ball” call. On an infield fly, runners advance at their own risk.

**INTERPRETATION:** The intentional dropped fly ball is disregarded because runners are protected on the infield fly call. Runners are not forced to leave their bases and if they do, they are in jeopardy to be called out.

58. The bases are loaded with none out. The batter hits a pitched ball above the infield toward the shortstop. The shortstop allows the ball to fall to the ground or bobbles the ball and drops it. The shortstop then picks up the ball and throws it to the second baseman, who tags R2 while he is off 2nd. The ball is then relayed to the first baseman who tags R1 who is also off base.

**RULING:** The batted ball is ruled and called an “Infield Fly”, and the batter-runner is “Out” as soon as the shortstop touches the ball in fair territory. R1 and R2 are also “Out” for being tagged while off base.

**CLARIFICATION:** The runners should not be confused with the fact that the batted ball is an infield fly, or that the ball was unintentionally dropped. Their base running errors are their mistake and not the responsibility of the umpire(s) or defensive players.

59. The bases are loaded with one out. B5 hits a pitched ball very, very high above the infield. The plate umpire rules the hit an “Infield Fly, the Batter is Out”. The ball lands on the ground without being touched by any infielder. The ball rebounds off the ground and makes contact with B5, who is between 1st and 2nd. At the time the ball made contact with B5, all the runners had advanced at least one base.

**RULING:** As soon as he is hit with the ball in fair territory B5 is “Out” on the infield fly rule and the ball is ruled “Dead”. Runners return to last base touched at the time the batted ball made contact with B5.

60. There are runners on 1st and 2nd with less than two outs. The batter hits a pitched ball above the infield. The shortstop and the second baseman move into position, on the outfield side of the base path, to catch the pop-up. Both defensive players misjudge the fly ball and the ball lands on the ground in front of the infielders. The ball bounces up and accidentally makes contact with R2 who is off 2nd.

**RULING:** The plate umpire calls and signals “Infield Fly, the Batter is out.” The ball is dead “Dead Ball” and R2 is “Out for Interference” because the ball has not passed an infielder. R1 returns to last base touched at the time the batted ball made contact with R2.

61. There are runners at 1st and 2nd with no outs. The batter hits a pitched ball high above the infield that can be caught with ordinary effort. The umpire rules that the batted ball is an infield fly. The second baseman catches the ball with an illegal glove. The offence notices the illegal equipment and appeals to the plate umpire.

**RULING:** The batter is “Out’ on the infield fly. The ball remains live and no option is given to the offence. The illegal glove should be removed from the game. The illegal glove made no difference because the catch was not necessary for the out.

62. The bases are loaded with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball above the infield close to 3rd. The third baseman allows the ball to drop to the ground untouched. The third baseman then throws his glove at and makes contact with the ball in fair territory.

**RULING:** Two out and three runs score. The batter is “Out” on the infield fly rule. The ball is dead as soon as all play has ceased



and all runners are awarded three bases due to the dislodged equipment rule.

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### **Intentionally Dropped Fly Ball**

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63. There is a runner on 1st with one out. The batter hits a fly ball above the infield. The infielder gets the ball in his hands but intentionally drops the ball so the defensive team can turn the double play.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, and the batter-runner is out. R1 returns to 1st.

**RULE:** If an infielder intentionally drops a fair fly ball, including a line drive or bunt (FP only), that can be caught with ordinary effort whenever a runner is on first base, and less than two out, the ball is dead and the batter is out. The intent of the rule is to protect the offence and prevent an undeserved double play.

**TIP:** The expression on the fielder’s face sometimes is a key to the intentionally dropped ball. Note where the runner(s) is/are and the type of hit. Selling this call is important, so when you see it call it right away and the louder the better. A trapped ball is not considered as having been intentionally dropped.

The ball cannot be intentionally dropped unless the fielder has controlled and then dropped the ball. When in doubt, kill the ball and rule an intentional drop.

64. There are runners at 1st and 2nd with none out. The batter hits a pitched ball above the infield. R1 collides with the infielder who is positioning himself to catch the fly ball and prior to the catch. The untouched ball lands fair and rolls foul.

**RULING:** When R1 interferes the ball is dead “Dead Ball” and R1 is “Out” for “Interference”. If he ball was judged to be an infield fly the batter is also out. R2 returns to the last base touched at the time of the interference. The ball is judged fair or foul as soon as the “interference” is called. In this situation, the determination is with the ball in the air.

65. There is a runner at 1st with one out. The batter hits a line drive to the second baseman, who intentionally drops the fly ball. The infielder picks up the ball and throws it to the shortstop for the force out on R1 at 2nd. The second baseman then throws the ball to 1st for an out on the batter-runner.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, as soon as the batted ball is intentionally dropped by the second baseman. The batter-runner is “Out”. R1 returns to 1st.

66. There is a runner at 3rd with one out. The batter hits the pitched ball above the infield. The infielder or outfielder, charging toward the infield, deliberately drops the fly ball.

RULING: The batter is not out, and R3 is in jeopardy. The intentionally dropped fly ball only applies whenever there is a runner at 1st with less than two out.

67. The bases are loaded with one out. The shortstop intentionally drops a lazy pop-up near 2nd. Another infielder recovers the ball and quickly tags out a surprised R2 who is off 2nd.

RULING: The infield fly rule takes precedence over the intentionally dropped ball ruling. The ball remains live. The batter is “Out” on the infield fly rule. R2 is “Out” because he runs at his own risk.

68. The bases are loaded with one out. The shortstop intentionally drops a lazy pop-up near 2nd. R3 has left 3rd early and crossed home plate before the fly ball was intentionally dropped. The plate umpire calls “Time” and calls the batter out and returns R1 and R2 to their respective bases. Does R3’s run count? Is R3 returned to 3rd without penalty? Can the defence make an immediate dead ball appeal on R3?

RULING: The umpire has made an error by calling TIME. This is an infield fly, which takes precedence over the intentional dropped fly ball. If the defensive or offensive team protests the play before the next pitch, the batter is “Out” for the Infield fly. The ball remains live and the run counts because runners may advance at their own risk. R1 and R2 can go back to the base they achieved before the misinterpreted ruling by the umpire. There is no appeal for R3 leaving early because the ball was not caught.

69. There are runners at 1st and 3rd with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball above the infield. The infielder lets the batted ball fall to the ground. The infielder then fields the ball on the bounce and steps on 2nd ahead of R1. The infielder then throws the ball to 1st in advance of the BR completing the double play.

RULING: The ball remains live and the umpire(s) allow the play to stand. This is not an intentionally dropped fly ball because the infielder did not intentionally drop the batted ball before it made contact with the ground.

70. There are runners at 1st and 3rd with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air to right field. The right fielder moves under the ball in foul territory, catches the fly ball, and then decides to allow it to drop to the ground. R3 legally tags and advances safely to home plate.

RULING: If the umpire feels the fielder had control of the ball, this is considered a catch, an out, and a live ball. Otherwise, the batted ball is a “Foul Ball” because it was touched and dropped over foul territory and R3 is returned to 3rd and R1 to 1st.

TIP: This could not be considered an intentionally dropped fly ball as it occurred over foul territory.

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### Third Strike Rule and Third Strike

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71. (FP) No runners on. The catcher drops a third strike pitch. The batter simply starts toward the dugout and the catcher does not attempt to retire the batter at 1st. When is the BR declared out?

RULING: The BR is declared out as soon as he/she enters (one foot touching) dead ball territory.

72. The batter has a count of two strikes and swings and misses the next pitched ball, which makes contact with the ground behind home plate, for strike three. The batter heads for the dugout and steps one foot inside the dugout. The manager encourages the batter to run to 1st. The batter advances to 1st safely to the surprise of the defence.

RULING: (FP) The plate umpire declares the batter “Out” as soon as she steps one foot inside the dugout or dead ball territory.

(SP) The batter is “Out” and the ball is dead after every pitched ball not hit.

73. There are no runners on base with two outs, and the batter has a count of two strikes. The batter attempts to hit or bunt (FP) the pitched ball, but misses, and the catcher drops the ball.

RULING: (FP) The batter becomes a batter-runner and must be retired before reaching 1<sup>st</sup>. safely The batter-runner would be called safe if he reached 1st before the ball is held by the fielder while touching the base or before being tagged with the ball.

(SP) The batter is “Out” due to the third strike, and the ball is dead. The batter is not out for bunting because he did not make contact with the pitched ball.

74. The bases are loaded with two outs. The batter swings and misses a pitched ball for strike three. The catcher drops the ball but recovers the ball in time to tag home plate before R3 touches the plate.

RULING: (FP) The batter is not out on the dropped third strike rule because there are two outs. As a result, the three runners are forced to advance and the catcher’s tag of home plate retires R3 and the side.

(SP) The batter is “Out” and the ball is dead.

75. There is a runner at 1st with (a) none out, or (b) two out, and the batter has a count of two strikes. The batter swings and misses the next pitched ball. The catcher drops the pitched ball and does not throw the batter-runner out at 1st.

RULING: (FP) In (a) the batter is “Out”.

(b) The batter-runner is safe at 1st.

(SP) In both situations, the batter is “Out” due to the swinging third strike, and the ball is dead. R1 cannot advance.

NOTE: (FP) to avoid on field confusion in third strike rule situations (a) the plate umpire should point at the batter and declare him “Out”, if the batter decides to run toward 1st. The plate umpire need not declare the batter out, if the batter decides to go directly to the dugout or bench area. In situation (b) when 1st is occupied by another runner, the batter is only entitled to run when there are two out.

76. The bases are loaded with two outs. The batter has a count of two strikes. The next pitched ball hits the ground before reaching home plate and the batter swings at and misses the bouncing ball. The catcher immediately rolls the ball toward the pitcher’s circle and the defensive team leaves the playing field. All runners, including the batter, advance one base.

RULING: (FP) The batter is “Safe” at 1st. A pitched ball that bounces is considered the same as a dropped third strike. The catcher has not caught the third strike legally. The batter is not out if he beats the throw to 1st. The advance of all runners is legal.

(SP) The ball is dead as soon as it touches the ground, a ball on the batter, and runners remain at 1st, 2nd, and 3rd.

TIP: (FP) There is no difference in the third strike rule, should a pitched ball hit the ground before or after the batter swings.

77. There is a runner at 1st with one out and the batter has a count of two balls and two strikes. The next pitched ball is swung at by the batter and the ball lands in the dirt behind the plate. The catcher traps the pitched ball and, thinking there are three outs, heads for the bench with his team following close behind. The catcher tosses the ball to the third or first base coach who is standing in the coach’s box. R1 has left 1<sup>st</sup>. base but not advanced to 2<sup>nd</sup> or beyond. The coach (a) catches the ball or (b) lets the ball hit him in the arm and watches it fall to the ground. R1 and the batter advance around the bases uncontested and score what is apparently two runs. What is your ruling?

RULING: (FP) (a) The batter is out on the dropped third strike rule. The ball is dead “Dead Ball” and R1 is returned to 1<sup>st</sup>. base.

(b) The batter is out on the dropped third strike rule. The ball is live and R1’s run counts.

(SP) The batter is “Out” and the ball is dead as soon as the batter does not hit the pitched ball. Runners cannot advance.

78. The bases are loaded with one out. The batter has a count of two balls and two strikes. The next pitch is swung at and missed for strike three. The catcher drops the pitched ball and the batter starts to run toward 1st. and R3 breaks for the plate. Simultaneously the plate umpire calls the batter out and the catcher picks up the ball and throws it toward 1st but hits the batter who is running inside the three-foot path. The ball rolls out of play.

RULING: (FP) “Dead Ball” The batter is “Out” on the Fast Pitch third strike rule. The ball is dead “Dead Ball” and runners are awarded 2 bases from the time of the throw.

(SP) The batter-runner is “Out” on the Slo-Pitch third strike rule. The ball is dead after the pitched ball crosses home plate. All runners remain on the bases held at the time of the pitch.

CLARIFICATION: The defense is responsible for being aware of the situation. The batter would only be penalized if they were intentionally interfering, e.g. running outside the lane in an attempt to block the catcher’s throw to 1<sup>st</sup> to catch R1 off base.

79. There are runners at 1st and 2nd with one out. The batter has a count of two balls and two strikes. The next pitch is swung at and missed for strike three. The catcher drops the pitched ball and the batter starts to run toward 1st. R1 anticipates a hit and wanders off 1st. The catcher picks up the ball and throws it toward 1st in an effort to pick R1 off at 1st. The catcher’s throw toward 1st hits the batter who is running inside the three-foot path. The ball rolls out of play.

RULING: (FP) The batter is “Out” on the Fast Pitch third strike rule. The ball is dead “Dead Ball” and R2 (the runner closest to home) is “Out” for “Interference” by the batter. R1 stays at 1st.

(SP) The batter-runner is “Out” on the Slo-Pitch third strike rule. The ball is dead after the pitched ball crosses home plate. All runners remain on the bases held at the time of the pitch.

80. (FP) There are runners at 1st and 2nd with no outs. The batter strikes out on a pitch and the runners attempt to steal 2nd and 3rd. The batter, even though he is out, runs to 1st and the catcher throws to 1st to make a play on the batter.

RULING: The batter is “Out” on the dropped third strike rule and the ball remains live and in play

81. (FP) There are runners at 1st and 2nd with no outs. The batter strikes out on a pitch and the runners attempt to steal 2nd and 3rd. The batter, even though he is out, runs to 1st and the catcher throws the ball to 3rd in an effort to retire R2.

RULING: The ball is live and R2 would be safe or out depending on the umpire’s call.

82. (FP) There is one out. The runner at 1st is running with the release of the pitched ball. The batter strikes out on the pitch and the catcher drops the 3rd strike. The batter runs to 1st and the catcher throws the ball into right field while attempting to retire the BR.

RULING: The batter is “Out” on the dropped third strike rule and the ball remains live.

83. The batter has a count of one ball and two strikes. The batter hits a pitched ball above playable territory. A defensive player makes contact with the batted ball while the ball is over foul territory. The fly ball is not caught and lands in fair or foul territory.

RULING: (FP) The plate umpire should call and signal a “Foul Ball”. The ball is dead. The batter still has a count of one ball and two strikes. Any runners would return to last base held at time of the pitch.

(SP) The plate umpire should call and signal a “Foul Ball”. The batter is “Out” on the third strike rule - batting foul after two strikes. The ball is dead. Any runners would return to last base held at time of the pitch.

84. There are runners on 2nd and 3rd with (a) none out, or (b) one out, or (c) two outs. The catcher drops a third strike delivered by the pitcher.

RULING: (FP) The batter may advance to 1st in all the above situations and the ball is live. R2 and R3 may advance at their own risk. The batter-runner would be called safe if he reached 1st before the ball is held by the fielder while touching the base or before being tagged with the ball.

(SP) The batter is “Out”, and the ball is dead. R2 and R3 cannot advance.

85. There is a runner at 2nd when the catcher drops a called third strike. The batter starts towards the dugout and the catcher does not throw the ball toward 1st. The batter then decides to make a quick dash toward 1st and reaches the base before the first baseman receives the catcher’s late throw.

RULING: (FP) A legal advance and the batter-runner is “Safe” at 1st.

(SP) The batter is “Out”, and the ball is dead. R2 cannot advance.

86. There is a runner at 2nd. A pitched ball, which is called strike three, gets by the catcher. The passed ball rebounds off the fence and touches the batter-runner, who is on her way toward 1st, in (a) foul territory, or (b) fair territory.

RULING: (FP) In both situations, the ball is dead and the batter-runner is out. The batter-runner must avoid contact with the ball. R2 remains on 2<sup>nd</sup> and cannot advance.

(SP) In both situations, the batter is “Out” due to the called third strike, and the ball is dead. R2 cannot advance.

87. There is a runner at 1st with one out. The batter has a count of one ball and two strikes. R1 is running with the release of the pitched ball (FP), or when the ball reaches home plate (SP). The catcher drops the third strike pitch and the batter-runner beats the catcher’s throw to 1st. The defence appeals that R1 should return to 1st, because the batter-runner confused the catcher when he ran to 1st, and is not allowed to run due to the third strike rule.

RULING: (FP) The batter-runner is “Out” on the dropped third strike rule. The ball is dead. R1 must return to first.

(SP) The batter is “Out” due to the swinging third strike, and the ball is dead. R1 cannot advance and returns to 1st.

88. (FP) There is a runner at 1st and the batter has a count of three balls and two strikes. The pitch is delivered as R1 advances (stealing) to 2nd. The batter checks his swing and the plate umpire calls the pitch ball four. R1 slows down between 1st and 2nd. The catcher throws the ball to the second baseman who tags R1 while he is off the base. The catcher requests an appeal on the pitched ball. The plate umpire asks his partner and the base umpire comes back with a verbal “Yes” and a strike signal. Is R1 out?

RULING: Because the umpires put R1 in jeopardy on the reversal call, signal “Dead Ball”, and place R1 back on 1st. The batter is called “Out”.

89. There is a runner at 1st and the batter has a count of three balls and one strike. The pitch is delivered and the batter checks his swing and the plate umpire calls the pitch ball four. R1 is forced to 2nd due to the walk. The catcher requests check swing assistance on the pitched ball. The plate umpire asks his partner and the base umpire comes back with a verbal “Yes” and a strike signal. The catcher throws the ball to the second baseman who tags R1 before R1 has touched 2nd and while he is off the base. Is R1 out?

RULING: Because the umpires put R1 in jeopardy on the reversal call, signal “Dead Ball”, and place R1 back on 1st. The batter returns to bat with two strikes.

NOTE: If R1 had touched 2nd and then was tagged while off base then R1 would be “Out”.

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## Bunting Foul

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90. There is a runner at 1st, and the batter has a count of two strikes. The batter bunts the next pitched ball over foul territory. The batted ball is not caught and R1 attempts to advance to 2nd. The infielder picks up the batted ball in foul territory and throws R1 out at 2nd.

RULING: (FP) The batted ball is a “Foul Ball” and the ball is dead “Dead Ball”. The batter is “Out” for bunting foul, after having two strikes. R1 must return to 1st.

(SP) The batted ball is dead, “Dead Ball”. The batter is “Out” for bunting.

91. There is a runner at 2nd and the batter has a count of two strikes. The batter bunts the next pitched ball over foul territory. The batted ball is caught and R2 attempts to advance to 3rd. The infielder throws R2 out at 3rd.

RULING: (FP) The batter is “Out” on the catch. R2 is also “Out” on the tag because the ball remains live.

(SP) The ball is dead “Dead Ball”, and batter is “Out” for bunting. R2 returns to 2nd.

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## Illegal Glove

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92. The umpires notice that one of the fielders is using an illegal glove (a) before the inning starts, or (b) after the plate umpire has said “Play Ball”, or (c) during a batter’s turn at bat, or (d) after another defensive player, who is wearing a legal glove, makes a play.

**RULING:** The umpires would ask the defensive team manager to have the illegal equipment removed from the game. There is no penalty for detecting illegal equipment when the defensive player is not making a play on the ball.

**NOTE:** This is an example of “Preventative Umpiring”. The umpire should explain to the manager/coach and player what is specifically wrong with the glove. Aside from the pitcher, there is no penalty should any player decide to continue playing with the illegal glove. They would however be subject to an appeal by the offensive team. In Fast Pitch, if the pitcher does not heed an umpire’s request to remove an illegal glove, the player will be removed from the game.

93. The fielder uses an illegal glove to catch a fly ball and (a) the umpires notice the illegal act, or (b) the offensive team notices the illegal act and notifies the umpires before a pitch to the next batter.

**RULING:** In (a) the umpires will say nothing unless the act of using an illegal glove to make a play is appealed by the offended team.  
  
(b) The manager of the offended team has the option of having the batter bat over, assuming the ball and strike count before the hit pitch, or taking the result of the play.

The plate umpire should have the glove removed from the game. The defensive player using the illegal glove remains in the game.

**NOTE:** The plate umpire must explain the options to the offended manager even if the manager does not ask or approach the umpire(s) for a clarification.

94. There is a runner at 3rd. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air to the outfield. The right fielder catches the fly ball with a catcher’s mitt. R3 tags and scores easily.

**RULING:** If the manager of the offended team appeals then he is given the option of (a) having the entire play nullified, with the batter batting over again, assuming the ball and strike count before the hit pitch, and R3 returns to 3rd, or (b) accepting the play, R3 scores and the batter is “Out”, disregarding the use of the illegal glove.



- NOTE:** The plate umpire should have the glove removed from the game. The defensive player using the illegal glove remains in the game.
- RULE:** If the same player or another player is caught using the previously removed illegal glove later in the game, the player using the glove shall be ejected and ruled ineligible.
95. The shortstop scoops up a ground ball with a glove that has a white circle on the outside and throws the batter-runner out at 1st.
- RULING:** The fielder is using an illegal glove. If the manager of the offended team appeals then he is given the option of (a) having the entire play nullified, with the batter batting over again, assuming the ball and strike count before the hit pitch, or (b) accepting the play, the batter is “Out”, and disregarding the illegal action.
- NOTE:** The plate umpire should have the glove removed from the game. The defensive player using the illegal glove remains in the game.
96. There are runners at 1st and 3rd with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air to the outfield. The fly ball is caught and R3 tags and scores. R1 remains at 1st. The offensive coach notices the outfielder making the catch is wearing a mitt and informs the plate umpire.
- RULING:** This is a catch using an illegal glove. If the offended coach appeals, he has the option of:
- (a) Disregarding the use of the illegal glove and let the play stand with R3 scoring and R1 on 1st, or
  - (b) Accepting the ruling and have the batter bat over, assuming the count before the pitch he hit. R3 would return to 3rd and R1 to 1st.
- NOTE:** The plate umpire should have the glove removed from the game. The defensive player using the illegal glove remains in the game.
97. The batter hits a pitched ball toward a defensive player who is wearing an illegal glove. The fielder picks the ball up with the bare hand makes a play on a runner for an out. The offensive team notices the illegal glove and notifies the umpires before a pitch to the next batter.
- RULING:** If the offensive coach appeals the illegal glove ruling should still be enforced even though the fielder used the bare or non-glove hand to play the batted ball. The manager of the offended team has the option of having the batter bat over, assuming the ball and strike count the batter had prior to the pitch that was hit, or taking the result of the play.
- NOTE:** Remove the glove from the game. The defensive player using the illegal glove remains in the game.

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## Appeal

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98. The game is over and the umpires have left the field. The coach from the defensive team, which just left the field, indicates that they wish to make a dead ball appeal.

**RULING:** An illegal appeal. An appeal may only be made by the defensive players before all defensive players have left fair territory and before the umpires have left the field.

**NOTE:** Once all the defensive fielders have crossed the foul line on the way to their dugout, no appeal may be made.

99. One out with a runner on first. The scoreboard incorrectly states two outs. The batter hits a pitched ball to center field and the runner advances past second as the fly ball is caught for the apparent third out. The defensive team leaves the field as the offensive team takes the field.

During the pitcher's warm-up the coach for the now defence appeals to the plate umpire that there is only two out. The plate umpire checks with the scorekeeper and sure enough the coach is correct, the score board was incorrect, there are only two outs.

What does the plate umpire rule?

**RULING:** This is a form of protest and not an appeal. The manager has protested before the next pitch which makes it a valid protest. The umpire has made an error allowing an inning to be completed with two outs. Have the team come back up to bat and place R1 back on 1st. There would be two outs.

100. There is one out with runners at 2nd and 3rd. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air to the outfield. The fielder catches the fly ball for the second out. Both runners left their base before the caught fly ball was touched. The defence makes a live ball appeal at 2nd for the third out. All the defensive players, except the center fielder, leave fair territory. The center fielder makes a dead ball appeal on R3 from a position in (a) the outfield, or (b) the infield.

**RULING:** In (a), the umpire does not allow the appeal. It is denied because the appeal must come from a player in the infield.

(b) The umpire allows the appeal and declares R3 as the fourth out.

**RULE:** A dead ball appeal should be used whenever possible. Once time has been called and the ball is dead, any fielder (including the pitcher, catcher or an outfielder who has come into the infield) may make the verbal appeal . . . with or without the ball . . . and on or off the base.

**NOTE:** Make sure the appeal is specific to a particular player. Do not allow guessing. Specific appeals on more than one runner and the same runner are allowed. Before granting any appeal, base runners must be allowed to finish their base running obligations which include awarded bases.

**EMPHASIS:** More than one appeal play may be made but guessing games should not be allowed. Example: A runner misses 2nd by a step but just touches 3rd. Even though an appeal is made at 3rd, and the umpire called the runner safe, an appeal may be made at 2nd on the same runner. An appeal may be made after the third out as long as the appeal is made properly and for the purpose of negating a run or correcting the batting order.)

101. The bases are loaded with one out. The batter hits the pitched ball in the air deep to right field. All the runners, thinking the ball will not be caught, leave their respective bases. A strong wind holds up the ball and the outfielder makes the catch and relays the ball to the first baseman for an appeal on R1. Prior to the appeal on R1 both R3 and R2 had touched home plate. How many runs score?

**RULING:** R1 is "Out" on the appeal and because the appeal at 1st is a timing play for the third out both runs count. R3 and R2 are in jeopardy of being called out if the defence appeals their base running mistakes before all defensive players leave the field.

**CLARIFICATION:** This is a case where multiple appeals are allowed and more than 3 outs are allowed in an inning.

102. There are runners at 1st and 3rd with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air to the outfield. The fielder catches the fly ball for the second out. R1 and R3 both advance on the play before the ball is touched. The defence appeals that R1 left early and the base umpire declares R1 out. All the defensive players, except the catcher, leave fair territory. The catcher makes a dead ball appeal on R3 from a position in (a) foul territory, or (b) fair territory.

**RULING:** In (a) The appeal is allowed as long as the catcher is in his normal fielding position or in fair territory. His normal fielding position is in foul territory behind the plate.

(b) The umpire allows the appeal and declares R3 as the fourth out.

**NOTE:** If an appeal is not properly submitted, e.g. from a player in the outfield, simply wait until a proper appeal is received. If a proper appeal is received before the next pitch, grant the appeal.

103. There is a runner at 1st. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air to the outfield. R1 does not tag up and advances to 2nd. The caught fly ball is returned to the infield. The defence requests and is granted time. The outfielder makes a dead ball appeal on R1 leaving 1st early.

**RULING:** The appeal would not be ruled on until an infielder or an outfielder on the infield made the dead ball appeal.

CLARIFICATION: When “Time” has been called by the umpire or the ball becomes dead any defensive player in the infield may make a dead ball appeal.

104. There is a runner on 1st. The batter hits a single and R1 advances to 3rd missing 2nd on the way. The ball is returned to the pitcher who throws the ball toward second in an attempt to make a live ball appeal on R1. However, the ball is thrown into the outfield, and R1 returns to touch 2nd and advance to 3rd and possibly home. The ball eventually returns from the outfield and the appeal is eventually made at second.

RULING: R1 is “Safe” on the appeal.

R1’s action of physically retracing steps is recognized as correcting the running error. It does not matter that R1 has advanced forward and is standing on another base because the advance to 2nd had not been legally completed on the initial miss.

If the umpires know an appeal was being made they should call and signal “Time” to stop the continuation of a more perplexing play. Avoiding the chaos created in such situations is preventative umpiring.

INTERPRETATION: Any verbal indication from any defensive infielder during a dead ball appeal that they are appealing a runner missing a base or failing to tag up is sufficient, acceptable information for the umpire to make a ruling. The ball need not be used to tag a runner or the base in a dead ball appeal.

A verbal dead ball appeal should be considered the common or desired approach!

EMPHASIS: An appeal must be honoured even if the base missed was before or after an award.

105. There is a runner on 1st when the batter hits a pitched ball in the air to center field. The outfielder catches the fly ball and throws the ball to 1st in an attempt to retire R1 who had left 1st early. The ball is overthrown. R1 did not retouch 1st and advances to 2nd and then 3rd on the awarded bases. The defence properly appeal that R1 did not legally tag-up.

RULING: R1 is “Out” for not retouching 1st. A team retains its right to appeal even if it throws the ball out of play.

106. R1 is caught in a run down between 1st and 2nd. The defence throws the ball out of play at the same time as R1 is scrambling back towards 1st. The umpires call and signal “Dead Ball” and awards R1 two bases. R1 does not retouch 1st but instead advances to 3rd, touching 2nd on the way. After all play has ceased, the defence properly makes a dead ball appeal claiming R1 has to re-touch 1st.

RULING: R1 is ruled “Safe” by the base umpire. R1 is awarded 3rd (two bases from the last base legally held which was 1st).

CLARIFICATION: The ruling in this situation would be “Out”, if R1 was caught in the run down after she had missed 1st on her initial attempt, or had failed to tag up on a fly ball.

107. R1. On a passed ball, R1 is able to advance all the way to 3<sup>rd</sup> but misses 2<sup>nd</sup> base in the process. The batter takes far too long to get back in the batter's box so the plate umpires calls a strike. F4 then calls time and asks the base umpire if the runner now on third missed second base. Can the umpire take the appeal after the strike call?

RULING: Yes a defensive player may still appeal the missed base as they have done so prior to a pitch (legal or illegal). The strike call is not considered to be a pitch.

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### **Thrown or Batted Ball Goes Out of Play (Fair or Foul)**

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108. (FP) There is a runner on 1st. The batter swings at the next pitched ball and misses. The catcher, in an attempt to pick R1 off 1st, throws the ball into the outfield where it rolls under the fence and out of play. R1 is around 2nd at the time the ball rolls out of play.

RULING: The ball is dead and R1 is awarded 3rd. The two base award is governed by the position of the runner(s) at the time the ball left the fielder's (catcher) hand.

NOTE: Umpires should not order a runner to go to 3rd, but rather, advice “Runner you are awarded two bases,” or “Runner you are awarded 3rd base.” The onus is then on the runner to touch all appropriate bases on their way to the awarded base.

109. There is a runner at 1st. The batter hits the pitched ball for a single. The outfielder throws the ball wildly toward 1st and the ball

a) goes into the stands, out of play.

b) rebounds off the enclosing fence to the catcher.

RULING: In a) the ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, as soon as the ball leaves the playing field. The batter-runner and R1 are awarded two bases from the time of the outfielders' throw.

b) The ball is live and the batter-runner and R1 are in jeopardy.

NOTE: Runners are always awarded two bases on overthrows which go out of play or become blocked. Regardless of who made the throw, two bases are awarded from the last base touched at the time the ball left the hand. Direction of the runner has no bearing on the award, except if the runner is returning to retag a base left too early or retouch a missed base after the ball becomes dead. The runner returning must have been returning in the direction of the missed base or the base left too early when the ball becomes dead. If he can legally return to the base, the base award is two bases from

the base he returns to. If he is returning to first, the award is third.

If a runner touches the next base and returns to his original base, the original base he left is considered the last base touched for the purpose of an overthrow award. The award of bases is determined by the position of the front runner if two runners are between the same bases at the time of the award.

When a fielder loses possession of the ball on an attempted tag and the ball enters the dead ball area or becomes blocked, all runners are awarded one base from the last base touched at the time the ball entered dead ball area or became blocked.

(FP) On a pitched ball going out of play, the runners are awarded one base from the last base touched at the time of the pitch.

110. The batter hits a pitched ball to right field for a single. The right fielder's thrown ball to 1st goes into the first base dugout. The BR had already passed 1st at the time of the throw. The umpire correctly awards 3rd to the BR who cuts across the infield to 3rd rather than touching 2nd before advancing to 3rd.

RULING: The BR is "Out" if the defence properly appeals the BR for missing 2nd. If they do not appeal, the action of the BR is ruled legal after the first pitch to the next batter.

111. There is a runner on 1st. The batter hits a pitched ball on a line to the shortstop who throws the ball toward 1st in an attempt to double up R1 at 1st. The ball is thrown out of play. R1 is awarded 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base on the overthrow. R1 legally retouches 1st but misses 2nd on his way to 3rd. While standing on 3rd the runner's team mates yell from the dugout for him to go back and touch 2nd which he does and then returns to 3rd. The defensive manager yells from the dugout that R1 missed 2nd.

RULING: R1's base running obligations would be considered complete once he reached 3<sup>rd</sup>. He would then be subject to a proper appeal by the defense for missing 2<sup>nd</sup>. The manager yelling from the dugout is not considered a proper appeal.

NOTE: R1 would be "out" on the appeal if the manager leaves the dugout and makes a proper appeal.

112. There is a runner on 1st. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground toward the shortstop. The shortstop fields the batted ball and flips it to the second baseman, at 2nd, for the force out. The second baseman then throws the ball toward 1st. The ball goes out of play. The batter had already touched 1st at the time of the second baseman's throw.

RULING: The ball is dead, "Dead Ball", as soon as the ball goes out of play. The batter is awarded 3rd. The award of bases is

governed by the position of each runner and the last base touched at the time of the throw.

113. There are runners at 1st and 2nd. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground toward the shortstop who misplay the ball, recovers it, and then throws it late toward 1st. R1 and R2 each reach 2nd and 3rd respectively. However, R2 at 3rd now attempts to advance toward home. The first baseman throws the ball toward the catcher but the throw is high and the ball goes into the dugout.

**RULING:** The ball is dead “Dead Ball”, as soon as the ball goes out of play. R1 and R2 are awarded home plate and the batter is awarded 3rd because at the time of the first baseman’s throw, the runners were at 3rd, 2nd, and 1st respectively.

114. There are runners at 1st and 2nd. The batter hits the pitched ball in the air to shallow right field. The fielder cannot catch the fly ball and the ball bounces once before it is fielded by the outfielder. R2 is beyond 3rd, R1 is beyond 2nd, and the batter has touched 1st, when the outfielder throws the ball toward home. The ball bounces into the stands.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, as soon as the ball goes out of play. R2 and R1 both score, and the batter is awarded 3rd. Award each runner, including the batter, two bases from the base they last occupied when the ball left the hand of the outfielder.

115. There are no runners on base. The batter hits a pitched ball sharply to the right fielder who scoops the ball up after one hop and throws it toward 1st to force out the batter-runner. The ball bounces past the first baseman and out of play, just as the runner reaches 1st.

**RULING:** The batter is awarded 2nd. The batter-runner had not reached 1st at the time of the outfielder’s throw.

116. R1. Batter hits a line shot to center field. R1 was off on the pitch and has rounded second when F8 comes up throwing to 1<sup>st</sup> to try and get the slow BR. The offensive team dugout is on the first base side and the next on deck batter has already opened the gate to take his position. The throw from F8 is off line and leaves the playing field through the open gate. The plate umpire calls ‘Dead Ball’ and awards R1 home and the BR 2<sup>nd</sup> on the play. The defensive coach comes out and insists the ruling is inappropriate as the offensive team caused the ball to go out of play by opening the gate early. Is the umpire’s ruling correct?

**RULING:** Umpire has made the correct ruling. In this situation the rule in violation is a thrown ball that goes out of play and all runners are awarded two bases from the time of the throw.

**INTERPRETATION:** Gates are opened and closed throughout a ball game and are a simple fact of the game. Unless the offensive team player intentionally opened the gate as the ball approached we have no violation by the offensive team. It is the errant throw of the defensive team that created the issue, not the open gate.

117. There are runners at 1st and 2nd. The BR hits a line drive with both runners scoring and the BR is heading for third base. The throw from the outfield comes in over the head of the third baseman. This park is totally fenced in with each dug out area having one gate to get into the bench area. As the thrown ball ricochets off the fence it rolls into the offensive team's dug out because the door to the dugout was left open by the bat boy retrieving the bat of the BR. PU rules "Dead Ball" and leaves the batter runner at third base.

**RULING:** Incorrect ruling by the umpire. This is a thrown ball that goes out of play and all runners are awarded two bases from the time of the throw. The BR is awarded home.

**INTERPRETATION:** Gates are opened and closed throughout a ball game and are a simple fact of the game. Unless it is deemed that the gate was intentionally opened, we have no violation by the offensive team. It is the errant throw of the defensive team that created the issue, not the open gate.

118. (FP) There is a runner at 1st with two outs. A called third strike is dropped by the catcher and the ball rolls along the first base foul line. The batter and R1 have already advanced one base when the first baseman scoops up the ball and overthrows 3rd in attempt to retire R1 at 3rd. The thrown ball goes out of play or gets stuck under the fence.

**RULING:** R1 is awarded home plate, and the batter-runner is awarded 3rd (two bases from the time of the throw).

119. R1 and R2 are both between 2nd and 3rd and the batter-runner is between 1st and 2nd when the outfielder throws the ball. The thrown ball ends up out of play or is blocked.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, "Dead Ball", as soon as the ball enters dead ball territory. All runners are awarded two bases from the time of the throw. R1 and R2 are awarded home plate. The batter-runner is awarded 3rd.

120. There are less than two outs. R1 holds up between 1st and 2nd on a fair fly ball. The ball drops to the ground and the outfielder overthrows the ball. At the time the ball is thrown R1 and the BR are between 1st and 2nd.

**RULING:** A two base award from the time of the throw. R1 is awarded 3rd and the BR is awarded 2nd. In this situation, the award is governed by the lead runner.

121. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground toward the shortstop. The infielder bobbles the batted ball. The infielder eventually gains control of the ball after the batter-runner has reached 1st and proceeds to throw the ball over the first baseman's head into dead ball territory.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, "Dead Ball", as soon as the ball enters dead ball territory. The batter-runner is awarded 3rd (two bases from the time of the throw).



122. There are runners at 1st and 2nd. The batter hits a pitched ball for a single. All runners have advanced one base when the fielder releases the ball. The ball goes out of play or becomes blocked.

**RULING:** Both R2 and R1 are awarded home. The batter-runner is awarded third. The runners are awarded two bases from the time of the fielder's throw.

123. There are runners at 1st and 2nd with one out when the batter hits a pitched ball in the air to right field. The runners believe the batted ball will not be caught and advance to the next base. The fly ball is caught by the outfielder whose momentum carries him near the out of play line. In an attempt to double off R2 the outfielder hastily tries to throw the ball back into the infield but loses control of the ball, while in the act of throwing, on the backward motion of his arm. The ball falls out of play.

**RULING:** The ball is dead "Dead Ball". R2 and R1 must be in the act of returning when the ball becomes dead. If they are, the base award is from the base they return to. If they are not returning, the award is two bases from the last base legally touched, and, they could be appealed "out".

124. There is a runner on 1st with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground toward the second baseman. The infielder bobbles the batted ball and throws too late to retire R1 at 2nd. The shortstop's relay throw toward 1st gets by the first baseman and goes into the dugout.

**RULING:** The ball is dead "Dead Ball" as soon as the ball goes into the dugout. Each runner is awarded two bases from their position when the shortstop released the ball. R1 is awarded home and the BR is awarded 2nd.

125. A batted ball first touches the foul line beyond third base and bounces into the stands.

**RULING:** The plate umpire should signal a fair ball and then declare a dead ball, "Dead Ball," when the ball goes out of play. Any runners, including the batter, are awarded two bases from the time of the pitch.

126. There is a runner at 1st. The batter hits a pitched ball to the outfield. R1 is past 2nd and the batter-runner is touching 1st when the ball rolls under the outfield fence.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, "Dead Ball", as soon as the ball goes out of play. R1 is awarded 3rd and the batter-runner 2nd.

**RULE:** In any situation when a fair ball is untouched and goes out of play, the award of two bases is governed by the time of the pitched ball.

**NOTE:** Awarded and/or intervening bases must always be touched, whether in regular or reverse order, even though the ball may be dead. If this is not done, a proper appeal can be made after the plate umpire puts a ball back in play. The only

exception to this rule is if a player was obstructed trying to touch an awarded base.

127. There is a runner on 1st when the batter hits a pitched ball fair. The ground ball is accidentally booted by an infielder or outfielder and rolls into dead ball territory.

**RULING:** The ball is dead “Dead Ball”, R1 is awarded 3rd and the BR is awarded 2nd. Awards on batted balls hit off a defensive player into dead ball territory are made from the time of the pitch.

128. The batter hits a pitched ball fair down the right field line. The BR is obstructed as he is about ten feet from 2nd and before the ball bounces over the fence.

**RULING:** The ball is dead “Dead Ball” and the batter-runner is awarded 2nd.

**NOTE:** The ball out of play from the time of the pitch takes precedence over the obstruction.

129. The batter hits a pitched ball above the infield. The fly ball lands in fair territory just beyond 1st or 3rd on the outfield side of the base path. The batted ball spins back into the infield and rolls into foul territory between home and 3rd, or home and 1st. The ball then rolls out of play.

**RULING:** The batted ball is a “Fair Ball”. The ball is immediately dead, “Dead Ball”, when it rolls out of play. The batter and all runners are awarded two bases from the time of the pitch.

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### **Deflects Off Fence or Defensive Player**

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130. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air to the outfield. The ball (a) hits the top of the outfield fence in fair territory and lands outside the playing field, or (b) deflects off the fielder’s glove, above the top of the outfield fence in fair territory, and lands outside the playing field, or (c) deflects off the fielder’s glove, below the top of the outfield fence in fair territory, and lands outside the playing field over fair territory.

**RULING:** (FP) A home run in all situations (a, b, c).

(SP) A home run in (a) and a four base award in situation (b, c). Both situations (b, c) do not count towards the home run total (SOR – Canadian Championship).

**CLARIFICATION:** The four base award for SP is for any ball that clears the fence after making contact with a defensive player.

131. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air to the outfield that hits on top of the outfield fence in fair territory and, without touching the ground, the ball bounces off the fielder and out over the outfield fence in (a) fair territory, or (b) foul territory.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, as soon as the ball enters dead ball territory. A two base award in both situations. Any runners are awarded two bases from the time of the pitch.

132. There are runners at 1st and 2nd. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air to the outfield. The right fielder tries to catch the fly ball but instead ends up dropping the ball and then kicks the ball out of play. All runners have advanced one base at the time of (a) the misplayed ball, or (b) the ball rolled out of play.

**RULING:** In both (a, b) the ball is Dead, “Dead Ball”, as soon as the ball goes out of play. R2 is awarded home, R1 is awarded 3rd, and the batter-runner is awarded 2nd.

**RULE:** The batted ball has gone out of bounds as a result of a fielder trying to field a batted ball. Even though the ball may not have gone out of play unless it was misplayed, the rule is two bases from the time of the pitch. It may appear that the defence has gained an unfair advantage in the award of bases. However, for consistency in awarding bases the rule states, “if it deflects off a fielder or an umpire” it is a two base award from the time of the pitch.

**NOTE:** If the fielder intentionally caused the ball to go out of play by any means the runners are awarded two bases from the last base touched at the time the ball entered dead ball territory.

133. There is a runner at 1st. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground fair and toward the third baseman. The infielder misplays the batted ball and the ball rolls out of play.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, as soon as the ball goes out of play. R1 is awarded 3rd and the batter-runner is awarded 2nd.

134. The batter hits a pitched ball for an apparent home run. The outfielder jumps high into the air and deflects the ball off the foul pole above the fence line and over the fence in foul territory.

**RULING:** The ball is dead “Dead Ball” and the batter is awarded four bases for the home run.

135. A batted ball is hit in the air deep to the outfield. The outfielder, who is standing in foul territory, reaches back into fair territory to play the ball. The fly ball deflects off the outfielder and goes directly over the outfield fence in (a) fair territory, or (b) foul territory.

**RULING:** In both (a, b) the batted ball is a fair ball.

In (a) the batted ball is a home run. The batter is awarded four bases.

(b) The batted ball is a two base award. The batter is awarded 2nd (two bases from the time of the pitch).

136. A pitched ball is batted in the air to the outfield. The batted ball hits the top of the outfield fence in fair territory and ricochets back toward the

outfielder, hitting him on the shoulder. The ball then deflects back toward and over the outfield fence in (a) fair, or (b) foul territory.

**RULING:** In both (a, b) the batted ball is a fair ball. The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, as soon as it goes over the outfield fence. The batter and any other runners are awarded two bases from the time of the pitch.

**CLARIFICATION:** The batted ball is not ruled a home run because the ball touched the defensive player after making contact with the outfield fence.

**TWOBASEAWARD:** When a ball in flight contacts the fence in fair territory, then a player, and then goes out of play fair or foul, or a ball in flight contacts a player, and goes out of play over foul territory.

**HOME RUN:** When a ball in flight contacts the fence in fair territory, and then goes out of play over fair territory, or a ball in flight contacts a player, and then goes out of play over fair territory.

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### **Ball Four and Pitched Ball Hits Batter**

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137. The batter has a count of three balls and two strikes. The pitcher delivers the next pitch low for ball four. The batter walks his bat to the bench area, and without going out of play, tosses the bat gently into the dug-out. The defence appeals that the batter did not go directly to 1st and should be called “out”.

**RULING:** The batter is entitled to 1st.

There is no time limit considered in the case of a batter being awarded a walk. He is entitled to first base, without liability to be put out.

**INTERPRETATION:** (FP) If the batter had entered dead ball territory with the bat and then proceeded to 1st, this would be considered as not going directly to 1st. The plate umpire should automatically call the batter-runner “Out” for entering dead ball territory. The ball remains live.

(SP) The batter would not be out if he entered dead ball territory with the bat and then proceeded to 1st.

**CLARIFICATION:** A player is ruled out of play when one foot is completely over the out of play line and touching the ground.

138. There are runners at 1st and 2nd. The batter receives ball four. The batter-runner overruns 1st after touching the base. The batter-runner is then tagged with the ball while he is off 1st.

**RULING:** (FP) The batter-runner is “Safe” at 1st. The batter-runner is not out as long as he returns directly to 1st and does not indicate an attempt to advance toward 2nd.

EMPHASIS: If a batter-runner passes 1st before the throw arrives, the BR is considered to have touched the base unless an appeal play is made.

NOTE: After over-running 1st, the BR may legally turn to his left or his right when returning to 1st. If any attempt is made to advance to 2nd, regardless of whether he is in fair or foul territory, he is liable for an appeal out if tagged by a defensive player with the ball while off base.

(SP) The ball is dead after every pitched ball that is not hit. The batter-runner is not in jeopardy no matter which way he turns at 1st.

139. There is a runner on 1st. The batter receives ball four. R1 touches 2nd and over slides or overruns the base. R1 is then tagged with the ball while he is off 2nd.

RULING: (FP) R1 at 2nd is "Out". R1 is in jeopardy as soon as he passes the awarded base.

(SP) R1 at 2nd is "Safe" because the ball is dead after every pitched ball that is not hit.

140. (Co-Ed SP) The male batter is walked on four pitches or less and is correctly awarded 2nd. The male batter goes directly to 2nd without touching 1st because the female batter does not want to bat.

RULING: Each batter is treated separately. The male batter must touch 1st prior to moving on to 2nd or a proper appeal could rule him "Out".

CLARIFICATION: If the umpire awarded each batter the bases at the same time, an appeal would not be granted for the male batter missing first base. If the two batters went directly to the bases without direction from the umpire the appeal would be granted.

141. There are no runners on base with one out. The batter receives a base on balls and walks toward 1st. The batter-runner (a) delays stepping on 1st, or (b) walks past the base without touching it. The batter-runner is then tagged with the ball, by the first baseman, while off base.

RULING: (FP) In (a) the batter-runner is "Safe" because he is awarded 1st by means of four balls without liability to be put out up until he touches 1st.

(b) The batter-runner is "Out" because he over-walked 1st on the initial pass of 1st and the defence is making a live ball appeal on the batter-runner's illegal action.

(SP) The ball is dead after every pitched ball not hit. The batter-runner is not out.

142. (FP) There are runners at 1st and 2nd with two out. The batter has a count of 3 balls and 2 strikes. The batter half swings at the next pitched ball, which is out of the strike zone, and the plate umpire judges it to be ball

four. Before the plate umpire can ask for check swing assistance, the defence throws the ball to different infielders in an attempt to retire the advancing R1 and R2. Eventually, R2 is safe at 3rd and R1 is safe at 2nd. The batter has remained near home plate during the defence's endeavours. The defence finally makes a live ball appeal at 1st, stating that the batter should be out for not advancing directly to 1st after the ball four call.

**RULING:** No out on the appeal. There is no time limit on how long it should take a batter-runner to get to 1st after the batter is told ball four. However the batter-runner should be encouraged to move toward 1st quickly in the interest of speeding up the game.

143. The pitcher pitches ball four to the batter. However, the catcher cannot catch the pitched ball and the ball rolls into the dugout or gets lodged under the fence. The offensive coach insists that the batter-runner should be awarded 2nd on the blocked ball.

**RULING:** (FP) The batter-runner is only awarded 1st, and the ball is dead, "Dead Ball". Any other runners would be awarded one base from the time of the pitch due to the blocked ball.

(SP) The batter-runner is only awarded 1st and other runners advance only if forced because the ball is dead after every pitched ball not hit.

144. The batter receives ball four. The batter-runner walks toward 1st, steps on the base, and continues toward 2nd. Meanwhile, the pitcher has received the ball back and is standing in the eight foot circle before the batter-runner reaches 1st. Is the batter-runner out for a leadoff?

**RULING:** (FP) The batter-runner is not out because the batter-runner walked with continuous motion and did not stop.

**INTERPRETATION:** A runner in motion cannot be stopped from being in motion simply by the pitcher having possession of the ball in the eight foot circle.

(SP) The batter-runner is not out because the ball is dead after every pitched ball. The batter-runner would be asked to return to 1st.

145. There is a runner at 1st. With the count two balls or less, the next pitch is delivered. The batter drops the bat and runs toward 1st after the catcher catches the ball. R1 advances toward 2nd. The defence is confused by the batter's action and R2 safely advances to 2nd.

**RULING:** (FP) R2 remains at 2nd and the batter returns to the batter's box. The defensive team should be aware of the batter's count at all times. Therefore they should not be confused by the batter's advance toward 1st.

(SP) R1 is returned to 1st because the ball is dead after every pitched ball which is not hit.

**TIP:** As the plate umpire, suggest to both teams that a repeat of such actions (making a travesty of the game) may result in a ruling that may not be to their teams' best interest. (i.e. call the batter out and eject him from the game).

**NOTE:** A runner who is out and continues to run can be called for interference if he draws a throw.

146. There are no runners on base. The batter has a count of two balls and two strikes. The next pitched ball is called a ball and the batter thinking it is ball four proceeds to 1st. The catcher throws the ball to 1st. The umpire's correctly bring the batter back to bat immediately. The offensive coach insists that the batter should be awarded ball four because the pitched ball was not returned to the pitcher.

**RULING:** The plate umpire will not award an additional ball to the batter. The count is three balls and two strikes.

147. There are two outs and the bases are loaded. The next pitched ball is called ball four on the batter. R1 advances to 2nd, touching the base, and in the same motion takes two steps beyond 2nd. The catcher throws the ball to the shortstop who tags R1 while he is off 2nd. The base umpire rules R1 out. The out is called before R3 touches home plate.

**RULING:** (FP) R1 is out to end the inning. R3's run does not count.

**RULE:** The batter-runner is the only runner entitled to a base. Other runners only advance because they are forced to advance due to the batter becoming a base runner. When R1 passed 2nd base, the force is off. It became a timing play, so the runner must cross the plate prior to the out for the run to count.

(SP) R1 is not out. R3's run does count, because (i) the ball is dead after every pitched ball that is not hit, and (ii) all runners are entitled to advance one base without liability to be put out.

148. There are two outs, and the bases are loaded. The next pitched ball is called ball four on the batter. R1 advances to 2nd, touching the base, and in the same motion takes two steps beyond 2nd. The catcher throws the ball to the shortstop, who tags R1 while he is off 2nd. The base umpire rules R1 out. The out is called after R3 passes over and past home without touching the plate.

**RULING:** (FP) R1 is indeed "Out". R3 missing home is a timing play. If the defence appealed R3 missing home before R3 legally returned to touch the plate then the run would not count. If the defence did not appeal or R3 successfully returned and touched the plate before the appeal then the run would count.

(SP) R1 is not out. R3 missing home or touching the strike mat (game using the mat) is a timing play. If the defence appealed R3 missing home then the run would not count. If the

defence did not appeal or R3 successfully returned and touched the plate before the appeal then the run would count.

149. (SP/FP U19 and above/O) There is a runner at 2nd. There are two power hitters scheduled to bat next followed by a weaker hitter. The pitcher notifies the plate umpire that she wishes to intentionally walk both power hitting batters.

**RULING:** The “Intentional Walk” may be carried out at any time during a batter’s turn at bat. However, the plate umpire should inform the pitcher that each intentional walk must be administered separately. Each batter would have to enter the batter’s box and advance to the awarded base before the pitcher could inform the plate umpire of the next intentional walk.

**NOTE:** When the pitcher intentionally walks a batter, that constitutes a pitch. This clears up when a team may appeal an illegal substitution and when the umpire can enforce the violation.

150. A Co-Ed game is in the top of the fourth inning. A male batter has a count of one ball. The pitcher indicates he would like to intentionally walk the batter (a) before the next pitch, or (b) after the next pitch is called a ball, or (c) after the next pitch is called a strike.

**RULING:** In (a, b, c) this is an intentional walk and the male batter is awarded 2nd. The next batter, a female, is informed by the plate umpire that she has the option of batting or accepting a walk up until the delivery of the first pitched ball.

**RULE:** The female walk option is given any time a male batter is walked on four pitches or fewer.

151. A Co-Ed game. The first pitched ball to a male batter is called strike one. The pitcher intentionally pitches the next four balls wide or high so that the batter cannot hit the pitched ball. The batter is walked.

**RULING:** This is not an intentional walk. The male batter is only awarded 1st. The next batter, a female, must bat.

**RULE:** Because the male batter is walked on more than four pitches, the female walk privilege is not an option.

152. There is a runner on 1st when a pitched ball is dropped by the catcher. The plate umpire, in an effort to get out of the way, accidentally kicks the ball into the dugout.

**RULING:** (FP) R1 is awarded one base (2nd) from the last base held at the time of the pitch.

(SP) The ball is dead after every pitched ball not hit. R1 remains at 1st base.



153. (FP) There is a runner on 1st who is stealing 2nd on a pitched ball. The pitched ball hits the ground and deflects off the catcher's body or equipment high into the air and finally out of play. At the time the ball goes out of play, R1 was already at 2nd. The umpires leave R1 at 2nd even though the offensive coach argues that R1 should be awarded 3rd because he was already at 2nd when the ball went out of play.

RULING: The umpire's ruling is correct. R2 stays at 2nd. The ball is dead "Dead Ball" as soon as the ball goes out of play. R1 is awarded one base from the time of the pitched ball.

154. The pitcher pitches the ball wildly toward the batter. The batter attempts to duck out of the way and does not swing at the pitched ball. The ball hits part of the bat and part of the batter's thumb on the bat at the same time.

RULING: (FP) The plate umpire should rule the ball is dead, "Dead Ball", as soon as the pitched ball makes contact with the batter. The batter is awarded 1st since the pitch was wild and the batter attempted to avoid the pitch. The plate umpire should never rule that a ball hit the bat and the hand at the same time. In this situation the batter should not be penalized for the wild pitch thrown by the pitcher.

(SP) The ball is dead and the batter is awarded a ball.

155. The batter swings at a pitched ball. The ball hits the batter's hand, while his hands are still on the bat, and the ball rolls (a) fair, or (b) foul.

RULING: A "Strike" is called in (a, b) because the batter swung at a pitched ball. The ball is immediately dead, "Dead Ball", because it touched the batter while in the act of swinging.

CLARIFICATION: If strike three, the batter is out.

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### **Batted or Thrown Ball Hits Runner/Umpire**

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156. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air above fair territory. The fly ball is touched by the first baseman, deflects off his glove and hits the base umpire. The ball is then caught, before it touches the ground, by the second baseman.

RULING: The batter is not out, and the ball is live. The ball is live because it has passed an infielder, other than the pitcher, before it hits the umpire. When a batted ball in flight hits an umpire, it is interpreted to be the same as the ball touching the ground where the umpire is standing.

CLARIFICATION: The base umpire can only cause interference on a fair batted ball before the ball passes a fielder without being touched.

157. The batter hits a pitched ball fair above the infield. The fly ball is touched by the first baseman in fair territory, deflects off his glove and hits the batter-runner in foul territory. The second baseman who has come over to back up the play, catches the ball after it caroms off the runner, but before it touched the ground.

**RULING:** The batted ball is a fair ball, and the catch is ruled a no catch because the ball made contact with an offensive team member. The ball is live.

158. The batter hits a line drive, which, after passing the first baseman, strikes the base umpire in fair territory. The ball deflects off the umpire and is caught by the infielder at second base. The ball has not yet touched the ground.

**RULING:** Not a legal catch. The batter would have to be played on at 1st. A batted ball which hits anything, other than a defensive player, while in flight, cannot be legally caught.

**RULE:** If the above line drive had struck any defensive player first, while in flight, and then was caught by any defensive player, without first touching the ground, the batter would be out.

Any runners would be entitled to leave their respective base, at the time of the first contact with the ball by a defensive player, and would not be in jeopardy of being called out on subsequent appeals, for leaving early.

159. There are runners at 1st and 3rd. A batted ball hits the base umpire while the umpire is (a) on fair territory behind the third baseman, or (b) behind the pitcher but in front of an infielder.

**RULING:** In (a) the ball remains live, since the batted ball has passed an infielder.

(b) The ball is dead “Dead Ball”, the batter-runner is awarded 1st, R1 is forced to advance to 2nd, and R3 remains at 3rd.

If the batted ball touched the pitcher in situation (b), then the ball would remain live and the runners would be in jeopardy.

160. There is a runner at 2nd. The batter hits the pitched ball on the ground toward 2nd. The second baseman and shortstop are (a) playing deep behind the baseline, or (b) in front of the baseline, when the batted ball hits R2 while he is off the base.

**RULING:** In (a) the ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, and R2 is “Out” for “Interference” if the umpires feel the defensive fielders had an opportunity for an out. The batter-runner is awarded 1st.

(b) The ball remains live and the touching is ignored unless the umpires rule that R2’s action is intentional.

**TIP:** In situation (a) expect on field confusion and heated post play discussion when an umpire delays in making an interference call immediately, “Dead Ball, runner is out for interference”, and instead allows the play to continue before ruling interference.

161. There is a runner at 2nd when the batter hits the pitched ball on a line toward the pitcher, who deflects the batted ball, which hits R2 as s/he is advancing toward 3rd.

**RULING:** No violation on R2, the ball is live, and the runners are in jeopardy.

If the umpire(s) ruled that R2 intentionally touched the ball (interference), then the ball would be dead, “Dead Ball” and R2 would be “Out” for “Interference”. The batter-runner would be awarded 1st; unless of course the touch by R2 was to prevent a double play, in which case the batter-runner would also be “Out”.

**RULE:** There shall be no interference when a runner is hit by a batted ball, after the ball is touched by any infielder, including the pitcher, unless the ball is touched intentionally by the runner.

162. There is a runner at 1st. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground between 1st and 2nd. R1:

(a) is hit by the batted ball and an infielder had a chance to make an out, or

(b) hinders the second baseman in his attempt to throw toward 1st.

**RULING:** In both situations the ball is dead “Dead Ball”, and R1 is “Out” for interference.

(a) On a batted ball, the batter-runner is awarded 1st.

(b) If the interference clearly prevented the second baseman from putting out the batter-runner at 1st, then the batter-runner is also out.

**RULE:** For interference by a runner, the batter runner is awarded 1st provided the interference did not hinder a possible double play at 1st.

163. There is a runner at 3rd. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground toward 3rd. The batted ball makes contact with 3rd and then bounces foul. The deflected ball hits R3, who is off 3rd and standing in foul territory. The batted ball has (a) passed an infielder, or (b) not passed an infielder.

**RULING:** A fair ball in (a, b).

In (a) the ball remains live and the runners are in jeopardy unless R3 intentionally interfered with the batted ball.

(b) If a fielder has an opportunity for an out, the ball would be dead, “Dead Ball”. R3 would be “Out” for “Interference with a batted ball”. The batter would be awarded 1st. R3 is “Out”, even though the runner is in foul territory, because the fielder had an opportunity for an out.

If the fielder has no chance for an out, the ball would be dead, “Dead Ball”, and runners would return to the last base

touched at the time of the contact, unless forced by the BR being awarded 1st.

164. There is a runner at 2nd. The batter hits a pitched ball past the shortstop that is playing inside the base path. The batted ball touches R2 while he is off base and is deflected toward foul territory.

**RULING:** R2 is “Safe” and the ball is live because the batted ball has already passed an infielder and no other fielder is in position to field the batted ball.

If R2 intentionally deflected the batted ball, the umpire will rule a dead ball, “Dead Ball”, and R2 is declared “Out” for “Interference”. The batter-runner would be awarded 1st.

165. There is a runner at 1st. The batter hits the pitched ball sharply on the ground past the first baseman. The batted ball makes contact with R1 who is off base and advancing toward 2nd. The umpires judged that the second baseman that was playing toward 1st had a chance to make an out.

**RULING:** The ball is dead “Dead Ball”, and R1 is “Out” for “Interference with a batted ball”. The batter-runner is awarded 1st.

166. There are runners at 1st and 3rd with one out. The first baseman is playing in front of R1 when the batter hits the pitched ball. The batted ball deflects off R1’s foot in fair territory while R1 is in contact with the base. The ball then rolls toward the second baseman, who scoops up the ball, tags R1, and throws to the first baseman who touches 1st in advance of the batter-runner.

**RULING:** The ball remains live and in play. R1 and the batter-runner are “Outs”.

R1 is not out when the ball hit him on the foot because the runner is still in contact with the base. The ball remains live because the ball had passed an infielder, the first baseman.

**NOTE:** A runner will never be called out while in contact with the base, unless the runner intentionally interferes. The ball remains live or dead depending on the closest defensive player.

- a. If the closest defensive player is in front of the base, and no other infielder has a play and the runner is in contact with the base, the ball is live.
- b. If the closest defensive player is behind the base or is in a position to make a play on the ball prior to its deflection, and the runner is in contact with the base, the ball is dead.

167. There is a runner at 1st. The first baseman is playing to the outfield side of the base. The batter hits a pitched ball sharply on the ground. The batted ball hits R1 while the runner is still standing on 1st and before the ball can pass an infielder. The first baseman (a) picks up the ball and tags R1 and then steps on 1st for a double play, or b) cannot reach the deflected ball.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, as soon as the ball touches R1. R1 is not out when the ball hit him on the foot because the runner is still in contact with the base. The batter-runner is awarded 1st and R1 is forced to advance to 2nd.

**CLARIFICATION:** Even if R1 is standing on base, R1 should be called “Out” if the runner intentionally interfered with the batted ball.

168. There is a runner at 3rd. The third baseman is playing to the outfield side of the base. The batter hits a pitched ball sharply on the ground. The batted ball hits R3 while the runner is still standing on 3rd, and the ball rolls out of play.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, as soon as the ball touches R3. R3 is not out when the ball hit him on the foot because the runner is still in contact with the base. The batter-runner is awarded 1st and R3 remains at 3rd.

If R3 intentionally interfered with the batted ball then R3 would be out and the BR would be awarded 1st.

169. There is a runner at 2nd. The batter hits a pitched ball on a line to the left of 2nd. The batted ball hits R2 while the runner is off base. The ball has not passed an infielder and no fielder has a play on the ball.

**RULING:** R2 is not out. The batted ball is ruled dead with the BR awarded 1<sup>st</sup>. Runners are placed back on bases held at the time of the interference unless forced to advance by the BR.

170. The batter hits a pitched ball that hits the pitcher’s plate and ricochets back and makes contact with the batter-runner over fair territory between home and 1st. F3 had a chance to get to the ball.

**RULING:** The ball is dead “Dead Ball” and the batter-runner is “Out” for “Interference” with a batted ball prior to reaching 1st base.

171. There is a runner at 2nd. The batter hits a pitched ball (a) above the infield, or (b) on the ground. The batted ball hits R2 while the runner is standing on 2nd. The batted ball has not passed an infielder and the runner does not intentionally interfere with the batted ball.

**RULING:** R2 is not out. The ball would be live, if no fielder had a chance for an out.

If a fielder had an opportunity for an out, the ball would be dead, “Dead Ball”. R2 is not out. The batter is awarded 1st in situation (a, b).

172. There is one out with runners at 1st and 2nd. The batter hits a pitched ball above the infield. The pop fly ball hits R2 while the runner is standing on 2nd. The batted ball has not passed an infielder and the runner does not intentionally interfere with the batted ball.

**RULING:** The batter would be “Out” on the infield fly rule. The ball would be dead, “Dead Ball”. R2 is not out.

173. There is one out, with runners at 1st, and 2nd. The batter hits a pitched ball above the infield. The pop fly ball hits R2 while the runner is standing on 2nd. The batted ball has not passed an infielder and the runner does not intentionally interfere with the batted ball. However, R1 left 1st early and is between 1st and 2nd when the batted ball hits R2.

RULING: R2 is not out. The ball would be dead, “Dead Ball”. The batter would be “Out” on the infield fly rule. R1 would return to 1st.

174. There is a runner at 2nd. The batter hits a pitched ball (a) above the infield, or (b) on the ground. The batted ball hits R2 while the runner is standing on 2nd. The batted ball has not passed an infielder and the runner intentionally interferes with the batted ball.

RULING: In (a, b) the ball is dead, “Dead Ball”. R2 is “Out” for “Interference” and the BR is awarded 1st .

INTERPRETATION: The BR is not ruled out as there was no opportunity for a double play.

175. There is a runner at 3rd with one out. The third baseman is playing in front of the R3 looking for the bunt. R3 is hit by the batter’s fair batted ball near 3rd in fair territory. The defence cannot recover the deflected ball in time to play on R3 and R3 scores easily.

RULING: The batted ball remains live and the run is allowed to score. There is no out as the ball had passed an infielder and no other fielder had a chance to make an out.

176. There is a runner at 1st. The batter hits a pitched ball toward 1st. The batted ball makes contact with R1 who is still standing on 1st in fair territory. The first baseman is playing in front of the base.

RULING: The ball is live. The runner is not out.

RULE: The ball is dead or live depending on the position of the fielders when a runner is hit by a fair batted ball while standing on base. The runner is not out unless the runner intentionally interferes with the batted ball.

177. There is a runner at 2nd. The batter hits a pitched ball directly at the shortstop that is playing deep. The batted ball is touched by the shortstop and the ball deflects so that it rebounds into R2 who is advancing toward 3rd.

RULING: R2’s contact with the ball is ignored unless R2 purposely deflects the ball. The ball remains live because the batted ball has been touched by an infielder.

178. R2 is hit by a batted ball while standing on 2nd, and before the ball passes a fielder. The infielders were in a full shift with F6 playing behind second base. There was no motion by R2 to stop the ball.

RULING: The ball is dead and R2 is not out.

CLARIFICATION: a) If a ball hits a runner while holding his base, he is not out unless he intentionally interferes with the ball.

- b) If the ball has passed infielders and no other infielder has a chance to make an out, the ball remains live.
- c) If the ball has not passed an infielder the ball is dead and the batter runner is awarded first base.
179. There are runners at 1st and 3rd with one out. The first baseman is playing behind R1. The batter hits a pitched ball that deflects off R1's foot in fair territory while R1 is in contact with the base. The ball then rolls toward the second baseman who scoops up the ball, tags R1, and throws to the first baseman who touches 1st in advance of the batter-runner.
- RULING: The ball is dead, "Dead Ball", as soon as the ball makes contact with R1. The batter is credited with a hit, awarded 1st, R1 advances to 2nd, and R3 remains at 3rd.
- R1 is not out when the ball hit him on the foot because he was still in contact with the base. The ball is dead because the ball had not passed the infielder, the first baseman, who had a chance for an out. Runners advance a base, if forced.
180. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground toward the shortstop. The batted ball makes contact with R2 (a) before the ball passes the shortstop, or (b) after the ball passes the shortstop.
- RULING: In (a) the ball is dead, "Dead Ball", and R2 is "Out for Interference". Other runners return to last base held at the time of the interference.
- (b) the ball is live and in play unless R2 intentionally interfered with the batted ball.
- RULING: When a batted ball passes an infielder, excluding the pitcher, and in the umpire's judgment, another fielder did not have a chance to make an out, then the runner is not out and the batted ball remains live.

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### **Carrying the Ball Out of Play (Unintentional and Intentional) Entering Team Area**

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181. There is a runner on 2nd. The playing field has painted out of play lines instead of fences. The outfielder catches a fly ball in playable territory and then carries the ball out of play. R2 tags up and advances toward 3rd.
- RULING: The ball is dead, "Dead Ball," as soon as the fielder steps out of play with the ball. R2 is awarded one base from the time the ball is unintentionally carried into dead ball territory.
- NOTE: When a fielder carries a live ball into a dead ball area, the ball becomes dead and a base or bases are awarded to all runners. If the act is unintentional, the award is one base. If the act is intentional, the award is two bases. The base award is governed from the last base legally touched at the time the ball became dead.

If a chalk line is used to determine an out-of-play area, the line is considered in play. If a fielder is touching the line, he is considered in the field of play and may make a legal catch or throw. If either foot is on the ground completely in dead ball territory (not including the line), the ball becomes dead and no play may be made.

If a player has one foot inside the line or touching the line, and the other foot in the air at the time the catch is made, the catch is good and the batter is out. If the fielder then steps into dead ball area (foot on ground), the ball becomes dead and all runners are awarded one base from the last base touched when the ball became dead.

If the fielder is in dead ball territory, jumps in the air, and makes the catch in the air it is not a valid catch even if he lands in playable territory after the catch. To have a valid catch after being in dead ball territory he must have both feet on the ground in playable territory before the catch is made.

182. There are runners at 1st and 2nd with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball for a double to center field. The outfielder picks up the ball and throws it to the catcher. R2 slides and misses home prior to the catcher's tag. R2 proceeds to the dugout. The catcher realizes R2's mistake and follows him to the dugout to make a live ball appeal. R1 who stopped at 3rd proceeds to home plate and the BR rounds 2nd and sprints for 3rd when the catcher leaves the field of play to tag R2.

**RULING:** The ball is dead "Dead Ball" and all runners are awarded one base from the time the catcher left the field of play. R1 is awarded home and the BR is awarded 3rd. The defence may still make a dead ball appeal on R2 missing home. The catcher following the runner into the dugout is considered "unintentional".

183. There are runners at 1st and 3rd. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air to the outfield. The fly ball is caught by an outfielder in (a) fair territory near the outfield fence, or (b) foul territory near the out of play fence. In both situations the fielder, with the ball, falls out of play over the fence.

**RULING:** In both situations the batter is "Out", and the ball is dead "Dead Ball" as soon as the fielder takes the ball out of play. Runners are awarded one base. R3 scores and R1 advances to 2nd.

**RULE:** The additional base is awarded from the last base touched at the time the defensive player entered dead ball territory.

184. There is a runner at 1st. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground toward the third baseman. The infielder touches and fumbles with the ball in fair territory. Eventually the ball is booted or pushed out of play unintentionally. At the time off the initial touch, R1 had not reached 2nd, but was past 2nd when the ball rolled out of play.



**RULING:** The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, as soon as the ball goes out of play. R1 is awarded 3rd and the batter-runner is awarded 2nd. This situation is not considered a losing of the ball possession call.

**NOTE:** Runners are awarded two bases from the time of the pitch when a fair ball bounds out of play unintentionally off a defensive player.

185. (FP) There is a runner at 1st with one out. R1 starts running as soon as the pitcher releases the ball. The batter hits the pitched ball on a line to the outfield. The right fielder makes a diving catch for out number two. After touching 2nd, R1 continues to advance toward 3rd. Meanwhile, instead of appealing 1st with the ball, the outfielder continues to run and carries the ball out of play.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, as soon as the fielder carries the ball out of play. R1 is awarded 3rd because R1 was between 2nd and 3rd when the ball became dead or went out of play. After all play has ceased, R1 would be in jeopardy of being out if properly appealed by the defence. R1 could not return to 1st base to retag unless he was running in that direction when the ball became dead. If he was running in the direction of 1st base, he may retag but the one base award is one base from 1st base, the base he returned to.

**EXCEPTION:** If the defensive player’s actions are considered an obvious attempt to prevent the runner from returning to a previous base (intentionally carried the ball out of play) then the umpire will award R1 two bases from the last base touched when the ball went out of play. If the runner were returning to tag up at his original base the two base award would be from first base (the original base).

186. There are runners at 2nd and 3rd with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air to left field. The outfielder makes a running catch and keeps running until he crosses the out of play line. In the umpire’s judgement the outfielder ran out of play intentionally. R3 and R2 are correctly awarded home. Three “what if” scenarios:

- a) What is your ruling on the scoring of R3 if the defence appeals R2 left the base early and is called out by the umpire?
- b) What is your ruling on the scoring of R2 if the defence appeals R3 left base early and is called out by the umpire?
- c) What is your ruling on the scoring of R2 if R2 left the base early before the ball was carried out of play by the outfielder, and only decides to return to retouch bases properly at the urging of his coach and after the dead ball was declared?

**RULING:** a) Score R3.

b) Don’t score R2 as the preceding runner (R3) is now the last out of the inning.

c) Initially score R2. However, R2 cannot return to retouch second base after the ball becomes dead as he was not in the process of returning when the ball became dead. If properly appealed for leaving 2<sup>nd</sup> base early, the appeal would be granted and R2 would be ruled out.

187. The batter hits a long fly ball to the outfield fence. The outfielder leaps to make the catch and falls over the fence into the stands.

**RULING:** The batter is “Out” if, in the umpire’s judgment, the outfielder made the catch (possession) before making contact with any part of the area beyond the fence.

**NOTE:** The fence is an extension of the playing field, making it legal for a player to climb and make the catch. If the fielder catches a ball in the air and his momentum carries him through or over the fence, the catch is good, the batter-runner is out, the ball is dead, and with fewer than two outs, all runners are advanced one base without liability to be put out. The guidelines are (a) if the fielder catches the ball before his feet (one or both) are completely over and touching the ground (or any other object) outside the playing area, the catch is legal, or (b) the fielder catches the ball after his feet (1 or both) are touching the ground, or any other object, outside the playing area, it is not a catch.

If a portable fence is used which is collapsible and a defensive player is standing on the fence, it is ruled a good catch.

188. The bases are loaded with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air deep to the outfield. The outfielder jumps up, catches the fly ball in fair territory, and then falls over the fence. The fielder does not lose possession of the ball when he makes contact with the ground beyond the fence.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, as soon as the fielder lands outside the fence area. The batter is “Out”. All runners are awarded one base from the last base touched at the time the fielder entered dead ball territory.

**RULE:** In order to have a legal catch, at the moment of the catch the defensive player’s last point of contact must be in live ball territory and while she may be over dead ball territory, the fielder’s feet (one or both) may not be completely touching dead ball territory.

189. The batter hits a pitched ball high above foul territory, near the short out of play fences. The first baseman hustles over to make a play as the ball comes down near dead ball territory. The infielder climbs the fence, makes the catch, and then falls over the fence, out of play.

**RULING:** The batter is “Out”, on the legal catch of the foul fly ball, providing the ball is caught before any part of the fielder’s body touches the ground outside the playing area and the fielder last touched an “in play” spot. The ball is dead, “Dead

Ball”, when the ball is carried out of play. Any runners advance one base from the time of the pitch.

190. There is a runner at 3rd with two outs. The batter hits the pitched ball to the outfield fence. The left fielder leaps high in the air, catches the fly ball, and crashes to the ground outside the playing field. The offensive coach wants R3’s run to count because the fielder carried the ball out of play.

**RULING:** The batter is out and R3’s run does not count because the batter-runner is the 3rd out of the inning.

191. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground back toward the pitcher. The pitcher hesitates in throwing the ball toward 1st. However, the batter-runner assumes he will be an easy out and decides to retreat toward the dugout and enters his team’s bench area. The pitcher finally throws the ball toward 1st but the ball is thrown wildly and rolls into out of play territory.

**RULING:** The batter-runner is “Out” as soon as he leaves the field of play. The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, as soon as the ball rolls out of play. Any runners would be awarded two bases from the last one’s they touched at the time of the pitcher’s throw toward 1st.

**TIP:** Remember nothing happens until the defence legally retires the batter or the batter enters the dugout or dead ball area. When that occurs, the batter is declared “Out” and the ball remains live.

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### **Equipment: Dislodged or On Field of Play**

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No loose equipment, miscellaneous items or a detached part of a player’s uniform, other than that being legally used in the game at the time, should be in playable territory. Official equipment which may be in playable territory with no penalty includes the batter’s bat, the catcher’s mask, umpire paraphernalia, any helmet which has inadvertently fallen off an offensive or defensive player during the course of play or any equipment belonging to a person assigned to the game. Loose gloves, hats, helmets, jackets, balls, the on-deck batter’s bat, or any other loose equipment, miscellaneous item or detached uniform part which are in playable territory and are not being legally used in the game at the time could cause a blocked ball or interference.

If a batted ball or thrown ball hits loose equipment belonging to the team at bat, a dead ball is declared immediately. If such action interferes with a play for a possible out, interference is ruled. The runner being played on shall be declared out, and each runner must return to the last base touched prior to the thrown ball hitting the loose equipment. If no out is obvious, no one is called out, but all runners must return to last base touched at the time of the dead ball declaration unless forced by the BR being awarded 1st. If the loose equipment belongs to the team in the field, it becomes a blocked ball. On a throw, the overthrow rule applies. A batted fair ball touching loose equipment belonging to the defence is considered

a blocked ball. The ball becomes dead and all runners, including the batter-runner, are awarded two bases from their position at the time of the pitch. A batted foul ball touching loose equipment is a foul ball.

192. There is a runner on 1st when the batter hits the pitched ball to the outfield. The fielder removes his cap and,

- (a) Controls the ball with his cap before it touches the ground in fair territory.
- (b) Controls the ball with his cap after it touches the ground in fair territory.
- (c) Controls the ball with his cap before it touches the ground, in foul territory.

**RULING:** The batted ball is an illegally caught or contacted ball.

In (a) the plate umpire should call “Illegal Catch” and signal a “Delayed Dead Ball”. The ball is live until one of the runners is played on. The batter is not out and all runners are awarded three bases from the time of the pitch.

(b) The umpire should call “Illegal Catch” and signal a “Delayed Dead Ball”. The ball is live until one of the runners is played on. All runners shall be awarded three bases from the time of the pitch.

(c) The umpire should call and signal a “Foul Ball”. The ball is dead. The runners return to last base touched at the time of the pitch.

**RULE:** If a fielder contacts or controls a fair ball with the cap, mask, glove or any part of his uniform, while it is detached from its proper place on his person, the runners are entitled to three bases if a batted ball, and two bases if a thrown ball.

**NOTE:** As soon as one of the runners is played on the ball is dead unless the runner has advanced farther than the awarded bases then the ball remains live. A home run (4 base award in SP) is awarded when a batted ball, which normally would have been a home run (i.e. cleared the outfield fence), has been stopped by a piece of equipment which was thrown by a fielder.

193. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air to the outfield. The fielder controls the fly ball in his cap but the momentum of the ball pulls the cap from the fielder’s hand. The ball and cap roll together toward the outfield fence. The batter-runner continues to run and touches 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and continues toward home plate where he is thrown out.

**RULING:** The batter-runner is “Out.”

**RULE:** Runners may advance further than the awarded bases but they do so at their own risk and are in jeopardy of being called “Out.”

194. The first baseman throws his cap or glove and makes contact with a batted ball which is:

(a) Clearly a fair ball.

(b) Clearly a foul ball.

RULING: In (a) call and signal a delayed dead ball and the batter shall be awarded three bases when all play is completed.

(b) Foul ball and no penalty for contact with thrown equipment or uniform.

195. There is a runner at 1st. The batter hits a pitched ball sharply on the ground toward 3rd. The infielder alertly snares the batted ball with his cap and then throws the ball toward 1st in time to retire the BR.

RULING: A "Delayed Dead Ball" is signalled. The ball is dead "Dead Ball" as soon as the BR is played on and all runners are awarded three bases. R1 is allowed to score and the BR is awarded 3rd.

196. The third baseman throws his cap or glove and makes contact with a batted ball which is over foul territory. The batted ball might have been fair had it not been touched by the cap or glove.

RULING: "Foul ball" and no penalty for contact by thrown equipment or uniform.

197. A line drive hit ball is snared by the second baseman. The force of the hit pulls the glove off his hand and carries it to the outfield grass. Is this considered dislodged equipment?

RULING: The glove is off the hand due to the line drive and not deliberately thrown at the ball. The batted ball is not an illegally caught ball, no catch is ruled and the ball remains live.

198. The batter hits a pitched ball on a line over the head of the shortstop that jumps high in an attempt to catch the ball. The shortstop reaches with his arm and accidentally loses his glove from his hand and the glove then touches the ball.

RULING: "Delayed Dead Ball", ball is live and the batter is awarded three bases from the time of the glove touching the ball. Runner is not protected beyond 3<sup>rd</sup>. and is jeopardy if he rounds 3<sup>rd</sup>. base.

199. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground close to the foul line in fair territory. The infielder throws his glove at the batted ball and

(a) Misses the ball.

(b) Makes contact with the ball.

RULING: In (a) no infraction and the ball is live if the ball remains fair.

(b) The plate umpire should call, “Illegal Touch”, signal a “Delayed Dead Ball”, and the ball remains live. The ball becomes dead, “Dead Ball”, if the batter or other runners do not advance at least three bases before being played on. The runners are entitled to three bases from the time of the pitch and the umpire completes the award after he stops the action.

200. The batter hits the top of a pitched ball causing the ball to roll fair ten feet out in front of home plate. The catcher throws his glove at the ball but does not make contact with the ball. The pitcher fields the batted ball and throws the batter-runner out at 1st.

**RULING:** The batter-runner is “Out” at 1st. There is no interference since the thrown glove did not touch the batted ball.

201. The batter hits a pitched ball to right field for a single and attempts to reach second. The outfielders’ high throw is knocked to the ground by the second baseman’s thrown glove. The infielder then picks up the ball and tags the BR before he reaches 2nd.

**RULING:** The ball is dead “Dead Ball” as soon as the BR is going to be called out on the tag at 2nd. The BR is awarded two bases from the time of the throw and is directed to 3rd.

202. There are runners on 1st and 2nd. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground to the shortstop who fields the ball and steps on 2nd to force out R1. The shortstop then throws the ball wide of the first baseman who throws his glove at the ball touching it and causing it to go out of play.

**RULING:** The ball is dead “Dead Ball”. R2 and BR are awarded two bases each from the time of the throw. R2 scores and the BR goes to 2nd. In situations when a detached glove touches a ball prior to the ball becoming dead, the ruling for detached equipment hitting the ball prevails.

The ruling for detached equipment would have no bearing if a glove made contact with the ball after the ball became dead.

203. There are runners at 1st and 2nd. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground toward the shortstop. The shortstop scoops up the ball, touches 2nd, and then throws the ball toward 1st. The throw is a little high and the first baseman tosses his mitt into the air making contact with the thrown ball. The ball rolls out of play.

**RULING:** R1 is “Out” on the force play at 2nd. The ball is dead “Dead Ball” when the ball goes out of play. Both R2 and the batter-runner are awarded two bases each (R2 to home and BR to 2nd) from the time of the throw.

**CLARIFICATION:** If the thrown ball had remained in play, the detached equipment rule would still apply. However, runners could advance further at their own risk as the ball remains live.

204. The catcher catches a foul fly ball in his mask.

RULING: The batted ball is a “Foul Ball”, dead ball.

The batted ball has to be fair to enforce the detached equipment rule. The plate umpire shall rule “No Catch” because it is an illegally caught ball.

205. There is a runner at 2nd. A pitched ball gets by the catcher and R2 advances to 3rd. The catcher retrieves the ball but, instead of using his glove, he scoops the ball up with his mask.

RULING: (FP) No additional penalty and R2 remains at 3rd. The ball remains live and play continues. The plate umpire would not award an additional base for the catcher scooping the ball up with the mask. There is no apparent play and no advantage has been gained.

(SP) No penalty because the ball is dead after every pitched ball which is not hit.

206. There are runners at 1st and 2nd. A pitched ball deflects off the catcher. The runners advance as the loose pitched ball rolls toward the out of play line. The catcher throws his mask at the ball, deflecting the ball, and preventing the ball from crossing the dead ball line.

RULING: (FP) Delayed dead ball until one of the runners is played on. Runners will be awarded one base from the time of the pitch but may advance further at their own risk.

(SP) No penalty because the ball is dead after every pitched ball which is not hit.

207. The batter hits a pitched ball for a single and R2 attempts to score. The throw from the outfield hits a warm-up bat which has been discarded by the on-deck batter so that she could direct the runner at home plate. The catcher has a play on R2.

RULING: The ball is dead “Dead Ball” and R2 is “Out” for “Interference”. The BR returns to the last base touched at the time of the infraction.

208. A thrown ball makes contact with a bat or glove of the defensive team left lying in the field.

RULING: The ball is dead “Dead Ball” and all runners are awarded two bases from the time of the throw. The ball becomes a blocked ball since the bat or glove belongs to the team in the field and the overthrow rule applies.

209. There is a runner on 2nd. The batter hits the next pitched ball for a single. The outfielder’s throw toward home is a few feet up the first baseline. The catcher, who had picked up the batter’s bat, uses the bat to stop the misdirected ball. As a result R2, who is between 3rd and home at the time of the catcher’s actions, retraces his steps and arrives safely at 3rd. What is the umpire’s ruling?

RULING: R2 is awarded home. This is not a blocked ball situation but rather the use of detached equipment. B1 is awarded 2nd base.

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### **Interference by Runner or Team Member or spectator, Crashing Defensive Players, Kicking a Ball**

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210. There is a runner at 1st with one out. The batter hits a fly ball above the infield, which could be easily caught by the second baseman. R1 advances toward 2nd and stops in front of the second baseman and yells and/or waves his hands in front of the infielder causing the infielder to drop the ball.

RULING: The umpires should call and signal, “Dead Ball”. R1 is “Out” for “Interference”. If the umpire feels the interference was an obvious attempt to prevent a double play, the BR would also be ruled out. Otherwise, the BR is placed on 1st.

CLARIFICATION: If there was already two outs, then R1 would be the third out and the batter-runner would have already have batted so the next batter, in the next inning, would be the player that follows the batter-runner, who hit the fly ball.

211. There is a runner at 1st. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground to the first baseman. The ball bounces off the first baseman’s chest and lands in front of him. R1 and the first baseman collide as the first baseman tries to pick up the bobbled ball.

RULING: The ball is dead “Dead Ball” and R1 is “Out” for “Interference”, no matter how hard R1 tries to avoid the contact. If a fielder errors on a batted ball, it remains a batted ball if the ball remains in front of the fielder. The question here - is the first baseman making a play for an out?

212. The bases are loaded with none out. All the runners attempt to advance a base as soon as the next pitched ball (FP) is delivered or (SP) reaches home plate. The batter hits the pitched ball into the air close to the first base foul line. The batter-runner makes contact with the infielder who is attempting to make the catch.

RULING: The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, due to the interference. The batter-runner is “Out”, and all runners return to their respective bases at the time of the interference. If the batter-runner’s interference is an obvious attempt to prevent a double play then R3 is also “Out”. The batter-runner is also ejected from the game, if the plate umpire judges that contact with the infielder was flagrant or deliberate.

This could be an infield fly. Once the interference is called, the ball is judged fair or foul in the air. If it is fair, the infield fly rule applies and the runner closest to home is also out because the interference is caused by a player who is already out.



213. There are runners at 1st and 2nd with none out. The batter hits the next pitched ball out in front of home plate. The batter-runner then interferes with the catcher who is attempting to recover the batted ball.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, and the batter-runner is “Out” for “Interference”. If the batter-runners’ interference is an obvious attempt to prevent a double play, then R2 is also declared “Out”.

214. There is a runner at 3rd with none out. The batter hits the next pitched ball on the ground toward the first baseman. The batter-runner runs in fair territory waving his arms and puts himself in F3’s throwing lane interfering with the first baseman’s throw to home plate for a play on R3.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”. The batter is “Out” for “Interference”. R3 is also declared “Out”.

**RULE:** The runner is also “Out”, when the batter-runner interferes with a play at home plate in an attempt to prevent an obvious out at the plate.

215. There is a runner at 2nd. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground and near home plate. The batted ball dribbles along the third base line and close to home plate. The pitcher and the third baseman hover over the ball hoping it will roll foul. The ball continues along the line and R2 rounds 3rd and collides with (a) the plate umpire who is also following the ball, or (b) the third baseman or pitcher. In each case, after the collision R2 falls to the ground and the third baseman picks up the still fair ball and tags R2. Is R2 out?

**RULING:** The collision in situation (a) provides no protection for R2. R2 is “Out” when tagged.

The umpire must use judgment in situation (b) to determine whether the collision is interference or obstruction. By letting the ball roll the defence has indicated they could have picked up the ball but so far have not. A fielder is not always protected after he’s had an opportunity to field the ball. There is no protection for a fielder standing over a ball hoping it will roll foul.

When the fielder reaches down to pick up the ball then he is fielding the ball and protection is reinstated. Rule “Interference” if the fielder is reaching for the ball or contact is deemed intentional. Rule “Obstruction” if the fielder is not reaching for the ball and the fielder is responsible for the contact.

216. There is a runner on 3rd with none out and the batter has a count of two balls and one strike. The batter hits the next pitched ball above foul territory close to the fair/foul line between home and 3rd and about twenty feet from 3rd base. R3, while off 3rd, unintentionally interferes with the third baseman’s attempt to make a play on the foul fly ball. In the umpires judgment the infielder had a play on the ball. What is the umpire’s call and what do you do with the batter?

**RULING:** Dead Ball “Dead Ball”, R3 is “Out” for “Interference” and the batter returns to bat with a count of two balls and two strikes.

**INTERPRETATION:** The batter may not be awarded 1st in this situation because the batted ball was not fair.

217. There are runners at 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> with none out. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground toward the shortstop. R2 collides with the shortstop during his attempt to field the ball. The collision occurs (a) prior to, or (b) after, R3 has scored.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”. R2 is “Out” for “Interference”. The batter is awarded 1st. All other runners return to last base touched at time of interference. In (a) R3 returns to 3rd, and (b) R3 scores.

218. There is a runner at 1st. The batter hits a pitched ball into the air near 1st. The first baseman moves into foul territory to catch the pop-up, but a breeze pushes the ball back over fair territory. As the first baseman moves back into fair territory, he collides with R1 who is striving to maintain contact with the bag and also trying to avoid the first baseman. The first baseman contacts and drops the ball over fair territory.

**RULING:** R1 is not guilty of interference, the ball is live and in play and the BR is safe because of the dropped fly ball. Even though there was contact between a runner and a defensive player attempting to field a batted ball, at the time of contact R1 was on base and trying to avoid interfering. Ball is still live and in play and R1 and BR are in jeopardy.

219. There is a runner at 2nd. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground toward the shortstop. R2 causes interference with the shortstop. However the shortstop still throws the batter-runner out at 1st.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, as soon as R2 causes “Interference”. R2 is “Out”. The batter-runner is awarded 1st, unless the interference was an obvious attempt to prevent a double play.

**RULE:** If, in the umpire’s judgment, the interference is an obvious attempt to prevent a double play, the immediate succeeding runner shall also be called out.

220. There are runners at 2nd and 3rd. The batter hits a pitched ball for a single. R3 scores easily and R2 is attempting to score from 2nd. The thrown ball goes wild at home plate and bounces back to the screen. R3 causes interference, (a) intentionally, or (b) unintentionally, by not allowing the catcher to field the rolling ball.

**RULING:** There is no obvious out on R2 at home.  
  
In (a) the ball is dead, “Dead Ball”. The runner closest to home, at the time of the interference, would be “Out”. If R2 had scored at the time of the interference, then the batter-

runner would be out. If R2 had not scored at the time of the interference, then R2 would be out.

(b) There is no interference call on R3. The ball is live.

CLARIFICATION: On a thrown ball the interference must be intentional. A thrown ball simply hitting R3 on the back or rolling up against him would not be interference.

221. There are runners at 1st and 3rd. The batter hits a pitched ball above the infield. R1, advancing toward 2nd, waves her arms and yells at the defensive player, "I've got it". The fielder (a) backs away from the ball, allowing the ball to drop to the ground, or (b) catches the fly ball.

RULING: In both (a, b) the ball is dead, "Dead Ball". R1 is "Out" for verbal "Interference". If the umpire feels the interference was an obvious attempt to prevent a double play, the BR would also be ruled out. Otherwise, the BR is placed on 1st.. R3 would return to 3rd if the runner had not touched home plate prior to the interference.

222. There are runners at 1st and 2nd. The batter hits a pitched ball above the infield, close to the first base foul line. The batter-runner intentionally rubs against the first baseman who is attempting to make the catch. The batter-runner (a) knocks the infielder down, or (b) does not knock the infielder down.

RULING: In both (a, b) the ball is dead, "Dead Ball". The batter-runner is "Out" for "Interference". R1 and R2 return to the last base legally touched at the time of the pitch.

JUDGMENT: If in the umpires' judgment, the batter-runner makes a motion to interfere with the fielder attempting to catch the ball, interference shall be ruled.

223. There is a runner at 2nd. A pitched ball is hit sharply toward the pitcher who deflects the batted ball but cannot make the play. The shortstop moves in to follow up on the play and in doing so collides with R2. The shortstop (a) does not have a play on the BR at 1st, or (b) does have a play on the BR at 1st, or (c) may have a close play on the BR at 1st.

RULING: In (a), the umpire should call "Obstruction" on the shortstop and a delayed dead ball.

(b, c) the umpires should call "Interference" on R2. The ball is dead, "Dead Ball", and R2 is "Out". The batter-runner is awarded 1st.

CLARIFICATION: Even though some plays are difficult to judge, due to coincidental contact, there are very few plays that would warrant a no call. In most cases either the defence is guilty of obstruction or the offence is guilty of interference.

224. (FP) There is a runner at 2nd. After the next pitched ball, the catcher throws the ball back to the pitcher. The catcher's throw glances off the pitcher's glove and rebounds toward the shortstop. R2 and the shortstop collide

when the shortstop moves to pick up the loose ball. Is this obstruction or interference?

**RULING:** The shortstop is guilty of “Obstruction”. R2 is guilty of “Interference” if the umpires feel the shortstop had an opportunity for an out and the interference was intentional.

225. There is a runner at 1st. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground toward the shortstop. The shortstop scoops up the batted ball and steps on 2nd for the force out on R1. The shortstop holds onto the ball because R1 is coming into 2nd standing up. The defence argues that R1 is guilty of interference and the batter-runner should be declared out.

**RULING:** The base umpire should not interpret R1’s actions as interference unless the runner deliberately distracts the fielder from making a throw. The ball is live and in play.

**CLARIFICATION:** If a runner is running at a fielder, no throw is necessary to call interference but the runner must do something to warrant an interference call. Things to look for include taking a fielder out while not sliding at the base, staying on his feet and running into the fielder, or waving the arms in the fielder’s face. If a runner is running away from a fielder, there must be a throw to warrant interference, no exception. Any interference call on a throw must be intentional on the part of the runner.

226. Runner on 1st with none out. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground to the second baseman who is standing on 2nd base. R1, seeing that there is no way he will be safe at second, takes 3 to 4 steps off 1st base and towards second, standing on the base line. The 2nd baseman scoops up the ball, touches 2nd and then throws the ball toward 1st. What is ruling if R1 stands motionless and the ball hits her?

**RULING:** Interference by R1, the ball is dead and both R1 and BR are outs. Be sure that the infielder has touched 2nd for the out on R1 because if he hasn’t then the ball remains live and R1 must touch 2nd unless he intentionally interfered with the thrown ball.

What is the ruling if R1 ducks and the 1st baseman misplays the thrown ball allowing the BR to be safe at 1st?

**RULING:** No interference, R1 is out and the ball remains live.

227. There is a runner at 2nd. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground toward the shortstop. R2 advances toward 3rd and stops very close to the shortstop, clearly trying to avoid interfering with the fielder’s play. After fielding the batted ball, the shortstop stands up and brushes his body against R2. There is no tag on R2. R2 continues toward 3rd by running behind the shortstop. The shortstop pumps his arm as if to throw to 1st but suddenly decides to play on R2 at 3rd. The throw to 3rd is late and R2 slides safely into 3rd. No play is made on the batter-runner at 1st.

**RULING:** There is no interference on R2.

The umpires should not call interference on R2 because (a) the runner did not hinder the shortstop's attempt to field the batted ball, (b) the fielder had the ball when contact occurred, and (c) the fielder was not hindered from voluntarily releasing the ball.

228. There is a runner on 2nd. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground toward the shortstop. R2 advances toward 3rd and passes very close to the shortstop. The shortstop is distracted by the runner and misses the batted ball or bobbles the ball and cannot make a play on the BR or R2. What is the call?

**RULING:** There is no interference on R2. The umpire must judge the effect the runner had on the fielder. If the runner, moves without hesitation directly to the next base, judge his actions legal even if the runner is forced to jump directly over the batted ball. Likewise, if the runner breaks stride or hesitates, and allows the ball to pass before him, judge his actions legal.

If the runner alters his path to move closer to the fielder or hesitates to time his advance over the batted ball, or proceeds directly to the base and clearly hinders or distracts the fielder, then judge his actions as interference.

229. There are runners at 2nd and 3rd. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground toward 3rd.

- (a) R3 is touched by the ball over fair territory while off the base and before the ball passes an infielder who is ready to field the ball.
- (b) R3 collides with the third baseman while he is attempting to retrieve or throw the ball toward 1st.

**RULING:** In both situations, the ball is dead "Dead Ball", and R3 is "Out". R2 is returned to 2nd since at the time of the interference R2 had not yet reached 3rd. BR awarded 1st.

230. There is a runner at 1st. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground between 1st and 2nd. R1 is:

- (a) Hit by the batted ball before it passes an infielder or after it passes an infielder and a second infielder has a chance to make an out.
- (b) Hinders the second baseman in his attempt to throw the batted ball toward 1st.

**RULING:** In both situations the ball is dead "Dead Ball", and R1 is "Out" for "Interference"

(a) Interference with a batted ball. The batter-runner is awarded 1st.

(b) Interference with a fielder attempting to make a play while in possession of the ball. If the interference clearly prevented the second baseman from putting out the batter-runner at 1st, then he is also out.

**RULE:** For interference by a runner, the batter runner is awarded 1st, provided the interference did not hinder a possible double play, in which case the immediate succeeding runner would also be called out. Every other runner advances only if forced.

231. There are runners on 1st and 2nd with less than two outs. The batter hits a pitched ball above the infield. The shortstop and the second baseman move into position, on the outfield side of the base path, to catch the pop-up. Both defensive players misjudge the fly ball and the ball lands on the ground in front of the infielders. The ball bounces up and accidentally makes contact with R2 who is off 2nd.

**RULING:** The plate umpire calls and signals “Infield fly, the Batter is “Out”. The ball is dead “Dead Ball” and R2 is “Out for Interference” because the ball has not passed an infielder. R1 returns to last base touched at the time the batted ball made contact with R2.

232. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground towards 1st. The batted ball is touched by the batter-runner in his advance toward 1st. The touching is:

- (a) Intentional.
- (b) Accidental while the ball is over fair territory and the ball has not passed an infielder.
- (c) Accidental while the ball is over foul territory.
- (d) Accidental and over fair territory, but after the ball hits 1st or passes an infielder.

**RULING:** In (a, b) the ball is dead “Dead Ball”, and the batter-runner is “Out” for “Interference”.

(c) “Foul Ball” and not interference since the ball is over foul territory.

(d) “Fair Ball” and not interference, unless intentionally done by batter-runner, since the ball already has passed an infielder.

233. There is a runner on 1st with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground slowly toward the second baseman who scoops up the ball and flips it to the shortstop covering 2nd. The shortstop comes off the base before catching the throw, and then throws to 1st in an attempt to retire the BR. The shortstop’s thrown ball hits R1 who was in the base path but made no attempt to get out of the way of the throw. The deflected ball then rolls out of play. Who is out?

**RULING:** R1 is “Safe” at 2nd because the shortstop did not have possession of the ball while in contact with the base and the ball is dead “Dead Ball” when the ball goes out of play. R1 is entitled to move into 2nd and did nothing to warrant an interference call. More important R1 did not try to block or interfere with the defensive player making the throw. R1 and

the BR are awarded two bases from the time of the shortstops' throw - R1 to 3rd and the BR to 2nd.

234. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground towards 1st. The first baseman is playing beyond 1st. The batted ball hits 1st and then rebounds back toward home and makes contact with the batter-runner in fair or foul territory.

**RULING:** Deflection off a base is unusual but it offers the runner no special protection. A fair ball and if a fielder has an opportunity to make a play or the batter runner intentionally interfered, the ball would be dead, "Dead Ball". The batter-runner would be "Out" for "Interference with a fair batted ball".

235. There is a runner at 3rd with two outs. The batter hits a pitched ball very short and low above the infield between the pitcher's plate and home. The batted ball bounces about twenty feet in front of home plate, backspins and moves directly towards home. Just as R3 reaches home plate, and while R3 still has a foot on the plate, the untouched ball hits R3 in the leg over fair territory. Ouch! What is the call?

**RULING:** If the ball has not passed an infielder then the ball is dead "Dead Ball" and the BR is awarded 1st. R3's run counts because the plate is considered a base and any runner hit with a batted ball while standing on base cannot be ruled out unless the runner intentionally interferes with a batted ball.

If the ball has passed an infielder then the ball remains live and in play unless R3 intentionally interferes with the batted ball.

236. There is a runner at 1st. The batter hits a pitched ball toward the first baseman. The ball spins along the line. R1 advances toward and touches 2nd. The batter-runner is then hit, in (a) fair territory, or (b) foul territory, by the batted ball when the BR is five feet from 1st and before the ball has been touched by or passed an infielder.

**RULING:** In (a) the batted ball is dead, "Dead Ball", and the batter-runner is "Out" for "Interference". R1 remains at 2nd because he reached the base before the interference by the batter-runner.

(b) The batted ball is a "Foul Ball". R1 returns to 1st.

(SP) If the foul ball occurred after the batter had two strikes, then the batter would be "Out" under the foul ball strike three rule.

237. The batter hits a pitched ball for a single and tries to stretch the hit into a double. The BR slides safely into 2nd. The infielder bobbles the throw from the outfield and the ball ends up next to the BR at 2nd. The BR picks up the ball and hands it to the infielder. Is the BR out for interference?

**RULING:** Handling a live ball is not specifically covered in the rule book and BR's polite act could be considered interference if it was

done to prevent or stop the fielder from making a play on other runners. Rule the BR safe since the infielder was not attempting to make a play. Rule a ball dead “Dead Ball” and the BR “Out” for “Interference” if it prevents or stops the fielder from making a play on other runners.

238. There is a runner on 3rd with none out. The batter (FP) bunts or (SP) hits a pitched ball out in front of home plate (FP) on a squeeze play. R3 slides home and kicks the ball prior to touching the plate. The kicked ball then rolls out of play. What bases are the runners awarded?

**RULING:** The ball is dead “Dead Ball” and R3 is “Out” for touching a fair batted ball before the ball passes an infielder. The batter is awarded 1st.

239. A batted ball passes the shortstop without being touched by him and no other fielder has a chance to make an out on the ball. The runner from 2nd intentionally kicks the batted ball.

**RULING:** The ball is dead “Dead Ball” and the runner is “Out” for “Interference”. The batter is awarded 1st. The key to this ruling is the runner intentionally kicked the ball.

240. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground. After the ball passes the shortstop, R2 intentionally deflects the ball with his right foot so that the ball is directed away from the left fielder that is covering up behind the shortstop.

**RULING:** R2’s action of deflecting or kicking the batted ball is interference. The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, and R2 is “Out”. The batter-runner is awarded 1st and other runners return, unless forced, to last base touched at the time of the interference.

241. There are runners at 2nd and 3rd. The batter hits the next pitched ball on the ground toward the shortstop. The infielder scoops up the hard hit ground ball and tags R2 with the ball. Then the fielder, in an attempt to throw the ball toward 1st, is interfered with by R2.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, and R3 is also called “Out”. The batter is awarded 1st.

**RULE:** When a runner, after scoring or being declared out, interferes with a defensive player’s opportunity to make a play on another runner, the runner closest to home plate, at the time of the interference, shall also be declared “Out”.

242. There are runners at 2nd and 3rd. The batter hits the next pitched ball on the ground toward the third baseman. R3 breaks for home as the infielder throws the ball to the catcher. R3 is tagged out and then disgustedly bumps the catcher, preventing him from making a play on R2 at 3rd.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, and the runner closest to home, R2, is also “Out” for R3 causing “Interference” after being declared out.



243. The bases are loaded with none out. The batter hits the next pitched ball on the ground toward the second baseman. R1 is tagged out by the infielder and then interferes with the infielders attempt to play on the BR at 1st. Meanwhile R3 has scored before R1 can cause interference.

RULING: The ball is dead, "Dead Ball", and the runner closest to home, R2, is also "Out" for R1 causing "Interference". R3's run is allowed to score.

244. The bases are loaded with one out. The batter hits the next pitched ball on the ground toward the second baseman. R1 is tagged out by the infielder and then interferes with the infielder's attempt to play on the BR at 1st. Meanwhile R3 (a) is between 3rd and home or (b) has scored before R1 can cause interference.

RULING: In (a) The ball is dead, "Dead Ball", and the runner closest to home, R3, is also "Out" for R1 causing "Interference". The BR is awarded 1st. There are three outs.

(b) The ball is dead, "Dead Ball", and R2 is also "Out" for R1 causing "Interference". R3's run is not allowed to score because run cannot score when interference occurs on the third out force out.

245. There is a runner on 3rd. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground to the first baseman who steps on 1st. The BR then interferes with the infielder's throw to home plate for a play on R3.

RULING: The ball is dead "Dead Ball", the batter-runner and R3 are both "Out" for "Interference" by the BR.

246. A runner is attempting to score on a single by the batter. The play at the plate is close and the plate umpire calls the runner (a) out, or (b) safe. The runner then proceeds to get in the catcher's way or grabs at the catcher's arm in an attempt to delay the catcher's subsequent throw to play on another runner.

RULING: The runner's action on the catcher is interference. The ball is dead, "Dead Ball", and the runner closest to home plate is "Out". The run still counts in (b).

RULE: When a runner, who has previously been put out or scored a run, interferes with a fielder's attempt to play on another runner, then the runner closest to home plate is "Out". Other runners return to last base held at the time of the interference.

247. There is a runner at 1st with none out. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground toward the shortstop. The infielder's throw toward 2nd pulls the second baseman off the base and R1 is clearly safe at 2nd. Simultaneously, R1 over slides 2nd into the second baseman who is off the base, hoping to prevent a throw to 1st. The infielder is unable to make the throw to 1st.

RULING: The ball is dead "Dead Ball" and R1 is "Out" for "Interference". The BR is awarded 1st.

In reality you will only get one out in this situation even if the umpire felt that the defence had a play on the BR because R1 was ruled safe at 2nd.

248. There are runners at 2nd and 3rd. The batter hits the next pitched ball on the ground toward the third baseman. R3 breaks for home as the infielder throws the ball to the catcher. R3 remains on his feet and deliberately, with great force, crashes into the defensive player (catcher) who is holding the ball and waiting to tag R3.

**RULING:** The ball is dead “Dead Ball” and R3 is “Out” and ejected for deliberately crashing into a fielder with the ball. The BR is awarded 1st and all other runners return to last base touched at time of interference.

**TIP:** A catcher is at a distinct disadvantage because his field of vision is narrowed as he focuses in on the catch. In a lot of cases it is in the runner’s best interest that the catcher makes the catch and therefore does not interfere with the runner. Catchers expect to get bumped, not crashed.

The runner has the advantage of sliding which is the best way to prevent injury and avoid the tag. The runner’s field of vision is not as restricted as the catcher’s and he has the third base coach and on deck batter to assist him to take evasive actions. Therefore, the onus of sportsmanship is placed on the runner. This does not mean we should call out and eject every runner that is involved in a collision with the catcher. Umpire judgment plays a key role in judging words like clearly, deliberately, and great.

As the umpire we can protect the catcher if he clearly is fielding the ball in his normal position. The umpire has an obligation to enforce the rule for safety if he feels that the runner bowled over the defensive player to avoid a tag by knocking the ball loose. Likewise the catcher cannot be expected to be protected if the thrown ball pulls him out of position and into contact with the runner who is trying to avoid a collision. The offence cannot be penalized for a bad throw.

Contact resulting from a poorly executed slide is not necessarily deliberate nor is it with great force even though the impact may be severe. Runners who find themselves in a play situation when one wasn’t apparent and the closeness of the play results in a brushing cannot be ruled deliberate. Nor can you penalize the offence because the catcher mishandles the ball on a sloppy tag.

Understanding the intent of the rule plus weighing the circumstances surrounding the play will result in the proper implementation of the rule. Down and dirty is well worth heeding.

249. There is a runner at 2nd. The batter hits a pitched ball for a single. R2 is trying to score the winning run. The catcher receives the thrown ball and is waiting for the runner. The runner remains on his feet and with great force crashes into the catcher who does or does not drop the ball. At the time of the contact, the batter-runner is on his way to 2nd.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, R2 is “Out”, and ejected for the flagrant act. The batter-runner returns to 1st.

250. There are runners at 1st and 2nd. The batter hits a pitched ball to the outfield for a single. The on deck batter has moved into a better position to direct R2 to slide at the plate. The throw from the outfield arrives at the plate just after R2 scores. The ball gets past the catcher and rolls back to the backstop where it deflects off of the on deck batter (a) and the defense has a play or (b) and the defense does not have a play. At the time of the contact the batter-runner has rounded 1st and R1 is between 2nd and 3rd.

**RULING:** (a) If the on deck batter interferes with a defensive player’s opportunity to make an out, the runner closest to home at the time of the interference is called out. Other runners return to last base touched at the time of the interference.

(b) If there is no play for an out on a runner the ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, and runners return to last base touched at the time of the contact. No runner is called out

251. There are no outs with a runner at 1st. The batter has a 2 ball and 2 strike count. On the next pitch the batter squares to bunt but misses the ball. The batter begins to run to first and is called out by the plate umpire. Meanwhile the pitched ball has been misplayed by the catcher and the loose ball rolls down the first base line. The catcher chases after the ball, retrieves the loose ball to make a play at 1st on R1 and is run over by the batter who is running toward 1st. What is your ruling?

**RULING:** (FP) Interference on the BR, the ball is dead, the BR is “Out” on the third strike rule and R1 is out for BR’s interference.

(SP) The ball is dead, BR is out and R1 returns to 1st.

252. R3 is trying to reach home plate after properly tagging up at 3rd. The third base coach is hit in the back by the outfielders thrown ball. The coach is out of the coach’s box.

**RULING:** If the umpire rules interference then the ball is dead, “Dead Ball”. R3 would be “Out” on the “Coach’s Interference”. Other runners would return to the last base touched at the time of the interference.

If the umpire judges that there is no play on a runner, there is no interference. The ball remains live.

**JUDGMENT:** The umpire should judge whether there is interference based on the position of the runner and the direction of the thrown ball (i.e. the throw is on line or off line). In essence, the umpire has to ask himself, “Does the defence have an opportunity to get an out”.

253. In an attempt to retire a runner, the catcher throws the ball wildly toward 1st or 3rd. The ball hits the base coach. What is the call?

RULING: The ball is live and in play unless the coach intentionally interfered with the thrown ball.

254. The batter hits a pitched ball above live ball territory near the stands. The outfielder moves in for what appears to be a routine catch. A spectator interferes with the defensive player by leaning over into live ball territory, or by touching the ball. The outfielder does not make the catch.

RULING: The spectator is guilty of interference. The ball is dead, "Dead Ball", and the batter is "Out". If the umpire feels that other runners may have advanced a base, he may award the runner(s) the base s/he would have achieved had the spectator not interfered. A spectator that hinders a play or prevents a ball from being caught when the ball is over playable territory is guilty of interference.

NOTE: When there is spectator interference with any thrown or batted ball, the ball shall be dead at the moment of interference and the umpire shall impose such penalties as in his opinion will nullify the act of interference.

255. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground, fair, just inside the base at 1st. The batted ball curls into foul territory and rolls toward the out of play line. A spectator reaches into playable territory and touches, deflects, or picks up the ball before the outfielder can reach the ball.

RULING: The spectator is guilty of interference. The ball is dead "Dead Ball" and the umpire shall award the runners the base or bases they would have reached, in the umpire's judgement, had there been no interference.

256. A pitched ball is hit in the air and close to the stands. The outfielder leans over into dead ball territory in an attempt to catch the fly ball. A spectator interferes with the defensive player or touches the ball. The outfielder does not make the catch.

RULING: The spectator is not guilty of interference. The ball is dead. The batted ball is either a home run or a foul ball based on the position of the ball when it went into dead ball territory.

257. (FP) There is a runner at 1st with none out. On the next pitched ball, R1 attempts to steal 2nd. The plate umpire accidentally knocks the ball from the catcher's hand on the throw. The catcher retrieves the ball and throws out R1 at 3rd.

RULING: Delayed Dead Ball is signalled. Once R1 is safe at 2<sup>nd</sup>, a "Dead Ball" is called and signalled. R1 is returned to 1<sup>st</sup> because of the Umpire Interference on the catcher.

258. There is a runner on 1st and/or 2nd with none out. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air to center field. The center fielder makes a running catch and quickly makes a return throw to the infield. The relay throw to 2nd from

an infielder retires the advancing runner. The defensive team and umpires then realize the runner tagged out is the batter-runner. What do you do?

**RULING:** The ball is dead “Dead Ball” and the runner closest to home is also “Out”. The responsibility is on the offensive player to know when he is out (there is leeway given in those cases where there is doubt about an out). The BR has no right running the bases and his illegal act confused the defence. The BR is guilty of “Interference”.

R1 is “Out” if at the time of the interference R2 had scored and R1 had not. Count two runs if both R2 and R1 scored before the interference because the interference would not have influenced a subsequent play.

259. A defensive player kicks or flicks a batted ball with his foot toward another defensive player in an effort to make an out.

**RULING:** The action of kicking or flicking a batted or thrown ball by only the defence with the foot is legal.

260. There is a runner on 3rd and the batter has a count of two balls and one strike. The batter hits the next pitched ball on the ground close to the third base fair/foul line between home and 3rd. The infielder has not yet touched the batted ball when R3, while off 3<sup>rd</sup>, interferes with the third baseman’s attempt to make a play on the fair ball. In the umpire’s judgment the infielder (a) had a play on the ball or (b) did not have a play on the ball.

**RULING:** (a) Dead Ball “Dead Ball”, R3 is “Out” for “Interference” and the batter is awarded 1st. However, if the interference or contact with the infielder occurred when the ball was foul then it is a “Foul Ball”, R3 returns to 3rd, and the batter returns to bat with a count of two balls and two strikes.

(b) Delayed dead ball signal, verbal “Obstruction” call by the umpire and the ball remains live.

**CLARIFICATION:** for (b) Any penalty would depend on whether the ball was ruled fair or foul.

Fair: If R3 is played on before scoring, the ball is dead “Dead Ball”, and the obstruction is enforced (umpire will award the runners the bases they would have reached had R3 not been obstructed.).

Foul: The ball is dead “Foul Ball”, R3 returns to 3rd, and the batter returns to bat with a count of two balls and two strikes

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### **Obstruction by Catcher or Fielder**

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261. The pitcher starts to deliver the ball. The batter takes one more swing to set himself while the pitcher still has the ball. On the batter’s back swing, but before the ball is actually released by the pitcher, the bat hits the tip of the catcher’s glove. Is the catcher guilty of obstruction?

**RULING:** If the plate umpire realizes the catcher has obstructed the batter accidentally, and feels there is an opportunity to stop the play before the pitch is released, then call “Time”. In most cases the pitcher will not deliver the ball. You can effectively avoid a significant penalty for an inadvertent and inconsequential rule violation.

262. There are runners at 2nd and 3rd. The batter attempts to hit or bunt (FP) the pitched ball but misses the ball because the catcher (a) touches the tip of the bat, or (b) steps on the plate to catch the pitched ball.

**RULING:** (FP) (SP) Catcher “Obstruction” in both situations and the ball is dead “Dead Ball”. The offensive manager/coach is given the option of the batter being awarded 1st or returning to bat. The strike on the play stands. The new count has an additional strike. R2 and R3 remain at 2nd and 3rd respectively. An illegal pitch is not called because the situation is not a squeeze play (i.e. R3 is not trying to advance in the direction of home plate on the pitched ball).

263. There is a runner on 1st. The catcher obstructs the batter’s swing. However, the batter manages to hit the pitched ball on the ground to the outfield. The batter-runner advances to and remains at 1st while the fielder throws R1 out at 3rd.

**RULING:** Delayed dead ball signal, verbal “Obstruction” call by the plate umpire, and the ball remains live. R1 is “Out” at 3rd, the batter-runner is safe at 1st, and the ball remains live.

The obstruction by the catcher is ignored and the play stands, since the batter-runner reached 1st safely, and R1 advanced at least one base (2nd) safely.

264. There is a runner at 3rd. The catcher obstructs the batter’s swing. However, the batter hits the ball to an infielder or the outfield and reaches 1st safely. R3 remains at 3rd.

**RULING:** The plate umpire signals a delayed dead ball, verbally calls “Obstruction”, and the ball remains live. As soon as all play stops, a dead ball is called “Time”, and the umpire leaves R1 at first base. The result of the play and penalty are the same but by leaving R1 at first base he can be credited with a hit.

**NOTE:** In this situation the option and result of the play are the same result so the umpire can leave the runner at the base without asking the coach. For scoring purposes the player should be credited with a hit or awarded base on the obstruction whichever is to the advantage of the player. In batting obstruction, it is important to remember that the manager has the option of taking the result of the play or the award being enforced due to the obstruction.

265. There is a runner on 3rd with one out. The catcher obstructs the batter from swinging at a pitched ball. The umpire awards the batter 1st and R3

remains at 3rd. The offensive manager wishes to have the batter remain at bat.

**RULING:** A swinging strike is a play, just as a fly ball or a base hit is a play. The manager has the option of the award, or taking the result of the play (the batter returning to bat). The strike on the play stands and is added to the count in effect before the pitch.

Catcher “Obstruction” and the ball is dead “Dead Ball”. The batter is awarded 1st and R3 remains at 3rd. The batter may take the result of the play and return to bat with an additional strike.

266. There is a runner at 1st. The catcher obstructs the batter from hitting a pitched ball. However, the batter manages to tap a ground ball to the shortstop that forces R1 out at 2nd. The batter-runner reaches 1st safely.

**RULING:** The plate umpire signals a delayed dead ball, verbally calls “Obstruction”, and the ball remains live.

As soon as all play stops, a dead ball is called “Dead Ball”, and the manager of the offensive team has the option of:

(a) Taking the result of the play: batter-runner at 1st, and R1 out at 2nd, or

(b) Having the obstruction enforced: batter-runner awarded 1st and R2 to 2nd.

267. An illegal pitch is thrown to the batter. However as the batter swings he is obstructed by the catcher causing the batter to miss the pitch.

**RULING:** (FP) The batter may swing at an illegal pitch, however, it does not remove the call. When the obstruction occurred, the offensive team is given a choice of the result of the play (the illegal pitch award) or the obstruction penalty because the batter and/or runners did not advance a base.

**NOTE:** (FP) The result of the illegal pitch is a ball and any runners are awarded a base.

(SP) When the batter swings at an illegal pitch, this removes the call, and the obstruction penalty is enforced, resulting in the batter being awarded 1st or taking the result of the play which is an additional strike.

268. There is a runner on 2nd. The batter hits a pitched ball for a single even though the catcher is guilty of obstruction. R2 is thrown out at home but missed 3rd on the way to the plate. Even though R2 is out the offensive manager wants the catcher obstruction enforced rather than the result of the play because R2 never touched 3rd and therefore has not legally advanced a base.

**RULING:** R2 is “Out” at the plate and the catcher’s obstruction is ignored. A runner is considered to have reached a base when

the base is passed (whether missing the base or not) and no option is given.

269. The batter has a count of one ball and one strike with a runner on 2nd and one out. The batter swings at the next pitched ball and the bat makes contact with the catcher's glove and then the ball, which is hit in the air to center field. The plate umpire calls catcher obstruction and signals a delayed dead ball. R2 advances when the ball is hit, touches 3rd and continue towards home. Just before touching home plate R2 turns around because she believes the outfielder has caught the fly ball and retouches 3rd and proceeds to 2nd. The outfielder picks up the loose ball which she did not catch and throws the ball to an infielder who tags out R2 as she slides back into 2nd. The umpire calls R2 out. The BR reaches 1st safely. The umpire rules:

**RULING:** Because R2 did not advance safely to 3rd (R2 gave up 3rd by going back to 2nd) the offensive team has the option of taking the result of the play (R2 is out and the BR stays on 1st) or have the obstruction rule enforced (R2 remains on 2nd and the BR is awarded 1st).

270. There is a runner at 3rd. The batter hits the pitched ball in the air to the outfield as the plate umpire calls and signals "Catcher Obstruction". The fly ball is caught by the outfielder and R3 tags and scores.

**RULING:** As soon as all play stops, a dead ball is called "Dead Ball", and the manager of the offensive team has the option of:

(a) taking the result of the play: batter-runner is out, and R3 scores, or

(b) having the obstruction enforced: batter-runner awarded 1st, and R3 at 3rd.

271. There is a runner on 2nd with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball out in front of home plate toward 3rd and is obstructed from running to 1st by the catcher. The pitcher retrieves the batted ball and throws R2 out at 3rd. The third baseman's relay throw to 1st is in time to retire the BR. Does the obstruction cancel the out on R2 and what happens to the BR?

**RULING:** R2 is ruled "Out" at 3rd. The ball is dead "Dead Ball" as soon as the BR is called out at 1st. The BR is awarded 1st due to the "Obstruction" by the catcher.

**CLARIFICATION:** Catcher obstruction is only on the swing of the bat. If the catcher obstructs a runner the regular obstruction rule applies and no option is given.

272. The batter hits a pitched ball between the outfielders. The BR is obstructed by the first baseman as he rounds 1st. The BR punches the infielder and continues on running toward 2nd. What do you do?

**RULING:** Umpires should not call TIME to eject a player until all play has been completed. If an act of interference, obstruction or a physical altercation occurs after the action warranting ejection, the umpire should deal with those situations as set



out in the rules. The umpire signals a delayed dead ball and if possible, waits for play to cease or until a play is made on the BR. “Dead Ball” is then called, eject the BR for unsportsmanlike conduct, and award a legal substitute base(s) the BR would have achieved had there been no obstruction.

**NOTE:** Place any other runners on the base they would have achieved had “Dead Ball” not been called due to the obstruction.

**CLARIFICATION:** Keep in mind if the umpire feels the runner’s actions are designed to stop a play or create interference then interference is the appropriate call and the BR would be ruled “Out”.

273. There are runners on 1st and 2nd. The batter hits a pitched ball to the outfield for a base hit. As the BR rounds 1st he decides to advance to 2nd when the outfielders throw is relayed to home in an attempt to retire R2. The BR is obstructed by the second baseman and is forced to scramble back to 1st even though he is not being played on.

**RULING:** The base umpire signals a delayed dead ball, verbally calls “Obstruction”, and the ball remains live. The BR will be awarded the base the umpire felt he would have received had he not been obstructed when all play has ceased or the BR is called out.

274. (FP) A left handed hitter bunts a pitched ball along the third baseline. The third and first baseman charge forward to field the tapped ball while the second baseman moves over to cover 1st. As the third baseman grabs the ball, the BR bumps into the first baseman in fair territory and near the three foot path. The third baseman’s throw to 1st glances off the BR in fair territory and rolls into the outfield. Is the play interference, obstruction, or incidental contact?

**RULING:** The umpire signals a delayed dead ball, verbally calls “Obstruction”, and the ball remains live.

The first baseman has no valid reason to be in the batter-runner’s path and prevented the BR from moving into the safe haven of the three foot line in foul territory. Although an obstructed runner can later be guilty of interference, in this case it seems the obstruction caused the interference unless the umpire rules the interference intentional or an unrelated act.

275. There are runners at 1st and 2nd with one out. The batter hits the pitched ball on the ground directly back to the pitcher who throws R1 out at 2nd (force out). Meanwhile, the third baseman grabs at and delays R2 who is advancing toward 3rd.

**RULING:** The umpire(s) will signal “Delayed Dead Ball”, and call “Obstruction” on the third baseman. R1 is still “Out”, the batter-runner is in jeopardy, and the ball remains live until all

play has ended or R2 is called out. If R2 reaches 3rd safely then the obstruction is cancelled.

**NOTE:** In running obstruction, it is important to remember that the manager of the offended team has no option and the obstruction is enforced by awarding base(s) to the obstructed runner.

276. There is a runner on 1st with one out. R1 takes off with the release of the pitch and is obstructed by the first baseman. The batter hits the pitched ball on the ground to the shortstop that fields the ball and tosses it to the second baseman for the force out on R1. The second baseman's relay throw to 1st is in time to retire the BR.

**RULING:** The base umpire should call "Obstruction" and signal a delayed dead ball as soon as R1 is obstructed by the first baseman. As soon as R1 is called out at 2nd the ball is dead "Dead Ball" and R1 is awarded 2nd because of the infielder's "Obstruction". The batter-runner is awarded 1st.

277. There is a runner on 1st with one out. The batter hits the pitched ball on a line to the shortstop. R1 takes off with the release of the pitch and is obstructed by the second baseman but continues toward 2nd. The shortstop who catches the fly ball throws the ball to the first baseman for the apparent out on R1 (double play).

**RULING:** The base umpire should call "Obstruction" and signal a delayed dead ball as soon as R1 is obstructed by the second baseman. As soon as R1 is played on at 1st, ending the play, the ball is dead "Dead Ball" and R1 is awarded 1st because of the infielder's "Obstruction". The batter-runner is out.

278. There are runners on 1st and 2nd. The batter hits the pitched ball on the ground past 2nd. The shortstop obstructs R2 which prevents R1 and the batter from advancing.

**RULING:** The umpire will call "Obstruction" and signal a delayed dead ball with the left arm. After all play is over, or when R2 is called out, the umpire will award the runners the bases they would have reached or attained had there been no obstruction.

279. There is a runner on 1st. The batter hits a pitched ball to the gap in right center field. R1 rounds 2nd and collides with the shortstop who is watching the play in the outfield. R1 gets up and advances past 3rd and about halfway toward home decides to retreat back to 3rd as the ball is relayed home. The offensive coach wants R1 awarded home on the obstruction.

**RULING:** The umpire signals a delayed dead ball, verbally calls "Obstruction", and the ball remains live. R1 will be awarded the base(s) the umpire felt he would have received had he not been obstructed when all play has ceased or the R1 is called out.

280. There is a runner on 1st. The batter hits a pitched ball for extra bases. R1 misses 2nd on his way to 3rd and is then obstructed between 2nd and 3rd. The BR rounds 1st and is going to 2nd as the ball comes back into the infield, and returns to 1st. R1 who is standing on 3rd decides to return and retouch 2nd, and is tagged out.

**RULING:** R1 is out on the appeal. An obstructed runner can be called out between the bases he was obstructed, with an appeal for missing a base or leaving a base too soon on a caught fly ball.

281. A pitched ball is hit over the left fielder's head to the fence. As the batter-runner passes 1st he is obstructed and is subsequently thrown out by a wide margin at 3rd.

**RULING:** The batter-runner is "Out". If, in the opinion of the umpire, the batter advanced beyond the base he would have made had he not been obstructed then the BR is "Out". In this situation the key is the wide margin by which the BR was thrown out.

282. There is a runner at 2nd. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground to the outfield. The batter-runner is obstructed after reaching 1st. The ball is thrown to 2nd and the batter-runner is called out at 2nd. R2 is half way between 3rd and home plate at the time of the tag on the batter-runner.

**RULING:** The base umpire will call "Obstruction" and signal a delayed dead ball when the batter-runner is obstructed. The ball is immediately dead, "Dead Ball", when the batter-runner called out at 2nd. Award the batter-runner 2nd, and R2 is awarded home plate.

If the defence had made a play on R2, instead of the batter-runner at 2nd, then the ball would be live and R2 would be in jeopardy.

**RULE:** Award each other runner affected the bases he would have reached had there been no obstruction.

**NOTE:** If an obstructed runner misses a base because of obstruction he is not required to touch the base and cannot be called out on a subsequent appeal. Key point is did the obstruction cause the player to miss the base.

**JUDGMENT:** If other runners are equal to or more than halfway to the next base, then award the runner the base he is advancing toward.

283. There is a runner at 2nd. The batter hits a pitched ball that deflects off the pitcher's glove and rolls toward the shortstop. The shortstop is (a) clearly in the act of fielding the ball for a play on the batter-runner, or (b) is not capable of fielding the ball. R2 then collides with the shortstop.

**RULING:** In (a) the ball is dead, "Dead Ball", and R2 is "Out" for "Interference". The batter-runner is awarded 1st base.

(b) “Obstruction” is called on the shortstop and a delayed dead ball signal is given. Normal rules for obstruction would apply.

284. There are runners at 1st and 2nd. The batter hits the next pitched ball for a single. R2 advances to and stays at 3rd. R1 advances to 2nd and is obstructed after rounding the base. R1 continues toward 3rd in spite of the obstruction. The ball is thrown to third and the fielder tags R1.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, as soon as R1 is called out. If, in the umpire’s judgment, R1 would have reached 3rd, then R1 is awarded 3rd and R2 would then be forced to vacate 3rd and advance to home plate.

If, in the umpire’s judgment, R1 would not have reached 3rd, then R1 is awarded 2nd and R2 remains at 3rd.

285. There is a runner on 2nd with two outs. The batter hits a pitched ball for extra bases. R2 is obstructed between 3rd and home as the outfielder’s throw goes to 2nd. The BR is then tagged out before R2 reaches home.

**RULING:** R2 is not awarded the run just based on the obstruction call. If the umpire judges that R2 would have scored prior to the BR being tagged out, had he not been obstructed, the run would count.

286. There is a runner at 1st. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air between the pitcher and the first baseman. Both defensive players misplay the ball. The second baseman that was backing up the play at 1st, decides to try and play the batted ball, and in doing so, bumps into R1 who was ten feet off 1st going towards 2nd.

**RULING:** The base umpire should rule and call “Obstruction”, and signal a delayed dead ball. The play will be allowed to continue until all play has ceased or R1 is called out.

287. There are runners at 2nd and 3rd with none out. The batter hits the pitched ball on the ground toward the hole between 3rd and short. The third baseman cuts in front of the shortstop and just as he grabs the ball R2 knocks over the shortstop that was in the baseline. The third baseman drops the ball and all runners are safe.

**RULING:** The shortstop’s contact with R2 constitutes obstruction. When two or more infielders attempt to field a batted ball, only one is entitled to the benefit of the interference rule.

288. There is a runner on 2nd. The batter hits the pitched ball deep to the outfield for a double. R2 is rounding 3rd and is obstructed by the third baseman. The plate umpire calls “Obstruction” and signals with a delayed dead ball. The outfielder’s throw is relayed home. R2 realizes that she may be an easy out and reverses direction. The catcher throws the ball to 3rd and the ball is thrown into left field. R2 retouches 3rd and then continues back toward the plate for a second time. The outfielder retrieves the ball and throws the ball to home plate. R2 is called out at home. Is the obstruction call enforced?

**RULING:** The base umpire should rule and call “Obstruction”, and signal a delayed dead ball. The play will be allowed to continue until all play has ceased or R2 is called out. The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, as soon as R2 is called out. R2 is awarded the base she would have reached had she not been obstructed. The award is umpire judgment and could be 3rd or home.

**NOTE:** In obstruction, when the obstructed runner is played on the umpire should not rule a dead ball. He should allow the play to continue until all action has finished or until the obstructed runner is called out whichever occurs first. If the obstructed runner is called out the umpires should rule a deal ball immediately.

289. There is a runner on 1st when the batter hits a pitched ball to left field. R1 is obstructed advancing toward 2nd and as he slides into 3rd the ball is dislodged from the infielder’s glove and goes out of play.

**RULING:** The ball is dead “Dead Ball” and all runners are awarded one additional base from the base occupied at the time the ball entered the dead ball area.

290. There is a runner on 2nd when the batter hits a pitched ball on the ground to the second baseman. R2 attempts to advance to 3rd, but is obstructed by the shortstop, causing R2 to fall to the ground. The second baseman’s throw to 3rd goes out of play.

**RULING:** The ball is dead.  
“Dead Ball”, R2 is awarded home and the BR is awarded 2nd. The obstruction is a delayed dead ball call. The play ends with a dead ball and a two base award due to the overthrow.

291. There is a runner at 2nd when the batter hits a pitched ball for a single to center field. R2 is deliberately obstructed and unable to touch 3rd and continues on to home plate where he scores. After all play has stopped the defence makes a dead ball appeal on R2 for missing 3rd.

**RULING:** The umpires shall award R2 both 3rd and home due to the deliberate obstruction. R2 is not required to touch 3rd base due to the obstruction. If a runner cannot touch a base because s/he was obstructed s/he cannot be called out on a subsequent appeal.

292. (FP) There is a runner at 3rd. The pitcher delivers a wild pitch. As the catcher scrambles to recover the ball, the pitcher heads home to cover the plate, and R3 advances, trying to score. The pitcher gets to home plate first, slips, falls, and winds up sitting on home plate - completely covering the plate. Is the pitcher guilty of obstruction if (a) the catcher’s thrown ball beats the runner, (b) the runner beats the catchers thrown ball, (c) R3 tries to avoid injuring the pitcher and slows down before attempting to touch the plate, or (d) R3 collides with the pitcher.

**RULING:** The question is whether to rule obstruction?

(a) No obstruction. The runner is out. A player with the ball can block the base.

(b) Obstruction on F1 once contact is made without the ball.

(c) If the pitcher has the ball there is no obstruction, if the pitcher does not have the ball and R3 does not have access to the plate it is obstruction.

(d) Obstruction. Delayed dead ball. The umpire stops the play when the play has ended or R3 is called out.

CLARIFICATION: On a thrown ball, a defensive player cannot block a runner from a base or baseline unless the ball is in their possession. "About to receive" the ball does not apply. If the defensive player impedes the offensive player from achieving a base and they do not have the ball in their possession it is obstruction.

293. There is runner on 2nd when the batter hits a pitched ball on the ground toward the pitcher. The shortstop (a) moves in behind the pitcher to back him up or (b) attempts to make the play on the ball. In both situations the shortstop and R2, who is advancing to 3rd, collide. In the umpire's opinion the pitcher, and not the shortstop, could field the ball in (a) and in (b) the shortstop, and not the pitcher, could field the ball.

RULING: In (a) if the shortstop is not making a play then obstruction should be called and signalled.

(b) If the shortstop is attempting a play, R2 must avoid the infielder making the play or be called out for interference.

294. (FP) There is a runner at 1st who tries to steal 2nd on a pitched ball. The infielder receiving the throw from the catcher has to jump high into the air to retrieve the throw. The ball bounds into the outfield and the infielder falls onto R1. The players untangle slowly and the ball is returned to the infield. The base umpire is convinced R1 could have reached 3rd safely had the infielder not fallen on her.

RULING: By definition, the infielder has obstructed R1 at 2nd by inadvertently impeding R1's progress. The base umpire's judgment and obstruction call should be based on an act by the infielder to hold up the runner. Likewise the runner should make an attempt to advance. If the infielder grabs at R1, starts to get up and falls back down, rolls onto the runner unnecessarily or anything the umpire feels is beyond a natural attempt to get off the ground, it is obstruction time. Protect the runner any time a fielder takes advantage of a pile-up.

295. R1 is caught in a run down between 2nd and 1st. R1 is obstructed on his way back to 1st by an infielder who does not have possession of the ball. After the obstruction occurs, the ball is overthrown out of play.

RULING: R1 is awarded 3rd and is not required to retouch 1st before advancing to awarded bases.

296. There are runners at 2nd and 3rd. R3 gets caught in a run-down situation between home and 3rd. The third baseman without the ball obstructs R3, who is attempting to regain 3rd. The third baseman receives the ball and tags R3 out sliding into 3rd.

**RULING:** The umpire should call "Obstruction" and signal a delayed dead ball. "Dead Ball" would be called on the tag of R3. R3 is awarded 3rd and R2 is permitted to return to 2nd.

297. R3 is caught in a run down between home and 3rd. In an attempt to get back to 3rd, R3 is forced to run completely around a defensive player who is in the base path without the ball. R3 is thrown out at third. The offensive coach pleads with the umpire that the fielder's action is obstruction.

**RULING:** The ball is dead "Dead Ball" when the play ends or R3 is put out. R3 is not out and is awarded 3rd.

The act of standing in R3's way is obstruction even though R3 chose to run around the fielder rather than at the defensive player.

298. (FP) There are runners at 1st and 3rd. After the next pitched ball, the catcher throws the ball toward 3rd. R3 is caught in a run down. While R3 and the ball are in motion back and forth between home and 3rd, R1 legally advances to 3rd. R3 is then obstructed going back into 3rd. The defence then tags both runners claiming one of them is out.

**RULING:** If R1 and R3 are both standing on 3<sup>rd</sup>, R1 is out and R3 remains at 3<sup>rd</sup>. R3 has reattained 3<sup>rd</sup> so no obstruction and no dead ball. If R3 had not yet reached 3<sup>rd</sup>, the ball is dead, "Dead Ball", as soon as R3 is tagged out. R3 is awarded 3<sup>rd</sup> based on the obstruction call. R1 is returned to 2<sup>nd</sup> base.

299. R2 is caught in a run down between 2nd and 3rd. R2 is obstructed going towards 2nd. R2 is eventually tagged with the ball.

**RULING:** The base umpire should rule and call "Obstruction", and signal a delayed dead ball. The play will be allowed to continue until all play has ceased or R2 is called "Out". The ball is dead, "Dead Ball", as soon as R2 is tagged out. R2 is awarded 2nd base.

300. (FP) The catcher attempts to pick R1 off at 1st. R1 collides with the first baseman, who is standing in the base path, a split second before he catches the ball. R1 does not make it back to the bag and the infielder tags R1.

**RULING:** This is obstruction. The play is called once R1 is put out. The ball is dead, "Dead Ball", and R1 is awarded 1st.

**CLARIFICATION:** The fielder cannot block the player from the base unless he/she has the ball. About to receive the ball is not relevant in the obstruction rule.

301. The bases are loaded. At the start of the pitch one of the infielders is positioned in a direct line to the next base. Is it obstruction if the runner has to run around an infielder who is not making a play on the ball?

**RULING:** There is no penalty for the defensive players to position themselves in the baseline at the start of the pitch. If the ball is not hit to them for a play then it is an act of obstruction if a runner is forced to go around them while running to the next base.

302. There is a runner at 1st with two out when the batter hits a pitched ball for a double. R1 advances toward 3rd but an infielder stands in R1's way, and R1 has to go around the fielder. The batter-runner tries to stretch the double into a triple and is thrown "Out" at 3rd. The third out is made before R1 can touch home plate.

**RULING:** If the umpire judges that R1 would have scored prior to the out at 3<sup>rd</sup>. had he not been obstructed, then R1 is awarded home plate and the run scores.

**CLARIFICATION:** Contact is not required for an umpire to judge whether a runner is obstructed.

303. There is a runner on 1st. The batter hits the pitched ball in the air deep to the outfield. R1 is rounding 2nd when the infielder yells, "He caught it!" despite the fact that the ball fell in for extra bases and no fielder was close to catching the ball. When the infielder yells R1 breaks stride and hesitates before realizing the trick and continues around the bases. R1 is thrown out on a close play at home plate. Is the infielder guilty of obstruction?

**RULING:** The infielder is not guilty of "Obstruction". There is an onus on the coach, player and team mates to be aware of the ball status and location.

304. There are runners at 2nd and 3rd with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air to center field. The outfielder catches the fly ball. The runners legally tag and advance toward the next base. The outfielder's throw to home plate is cut off by the first baseman. However, the catcher fakes the reception of the ball and makes a swipe tag of R3 at home plate. In the meantime, the first baseman turns and throws the ball wildly toward 3rd in an attempt to retire R2. R2 scores on the errant toss.

**RULING:** The plate umpire should rule and call "Obstruction" by the catcher on R3, and signal a delayed dead ball. The ball remains live and in play. The entire sequence of plays stands and both runs count.

**INTERPRETATION:** R3 cannot be called out on an appeal if the fake tag caused R3 to miss the plate.

A warning should be given to both sides that the next fake tag is an ejection. If the runner is injured the defensive player is automatically ejected.



305. R2 is obstructed by a defensive player as he rounds 3rd. R2 continues toward home plate and deliberately crashes into the catcher who is waiting with the ball.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”. The runner is “Out” and ejected for deliberately crashing a fielder. The obstruction is ignored due to the interference call.

**INTERPRETATION:** A runner should never have been called out between 3rd and home. However, the award, due to the obstruction, does not give the runner the right to violate the deliberate crashing rule. In these situations, the interference rule supersedes the obstruction rule.

306. R2 is obstructed by a defensive player as R2 rounds 3rd. R2 continues toward home plate and flagrantly crashes into the catcher who is blocking the plate and has yet to receive the ball.

**RULING:** As soon as R2 deliberately crashes into the catcher the ball is dead “Dead Ball” and R2 is ejected from the game by the umpire. Because the catcher is guilty of obstruction, R2’s run would count.

**CLARIFICATION:** The umpire can award other runners the base or bases he felt they would have attained had there been no obstruction.

307. R2 is obstructed by a defensive player, and knocked off his feet, as he rounds 3rd. R2 continues toward home plate and flagrantly crashes into the catcher, who is waiting with the ball.

**RULING:** The umpire would rule and call “Obstruction”, signal a delayed dead ball, and the ball remains live. The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, and R2 is “Out” and ejected as soon as R2 crashes into the catcher. Other runners return to last base held at the time of the interference.

**INTERPRETATION:** The act of obstruction, not the degree, is what is important in this situation. However, none of the above still permits the runner to deliberately crash a fielder.

308. A thrown ball from the outfield draws the catcher into the base path of a runner trying to score. The ball and runner arrive simultaneously, causing contact between the catcher and runner. The catcher drops the ball and the runner scores. The contact is not intentional or flagrant.

**RULING:** The run counts. There is no obstruction or interference because the contact is viewed as incidental contact.

309. There is a runner on 1st. The batter hits the ball for a single to right field. R1 rounds 2nd and attempts to reach 3rd but crashes into the base umpire and is subsequently tagged “Out” by the third baseman.

**RULING:** R2 is “Out”, and the ball remains live. Contact by the umpire does not constitute obstruction.

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## More Than One Runner on Base

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310. The bases are loaded with none out. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air to the outfield. R3 advances toward and touches home plate. The fly ball is then caught. R3 hustles back to 3rd but fails to retouch home plate on his way back to third. Meanwhile, R2 has legally tagged and is also standing at third when R3 returns. The defence appeals 3rd by tagging R2, saying that the base belongs to R3. The defence also tags R3, saying that he did not retouch home plate.

**RULING:** R2 would be called “Out” because R3 is not forced to advance and is legally entitled to 3rd. R3 is also “Out” on the appeal because home plate does have to be retouched by R3 when on his way back to 3rd.

Order of appeal does make a difference. Note that R2 would not be out if the defence made a live ball appeal on R3, for not retouching home plate, before touching R2 at 3rd.

311. There are runners at 1st and 2nd when the batter hits a pitched ball on the ground to the shortstop. R2 stays at 2nd and R1 advances to 2nd when the infielder throws the ball to 1st, forcing out the batter-runner. The defence does not notice that both R1 and R2 are on second and the ball is thrown to the pitcher. No further play is apparent.

**RULING:** R2 is entitled to the base. Allow R1 an appropriate amount of time to attempt a return to 1<sup>st</sup> once the pitcher has the ball in the circle. If he does not, call “Dead Ball” and rule R1 out.

312. There are runners at 1st and 2nd with one out. The batter hits the pitched ball to right field. R2, believing the ball will be caught, stays on 2nd. R1 believes the sinking line drive will not be caught and runs to 2nd. The right fielder dives for the ball, misses it, but fields it on one bounce. R1 and R2 stay put at 2nd and the BR rounds 1st and ends up on 2nd as well. The outfielder throws the ball to 2nd and the infielder tags R2, followed by R1, and finally the BR. Who is out?

**RULING:** R1 is “Safe” at second, while R2 and the BR are both “Out”.

R2 is forced to vacate 2nd and advance to 3rd when the ball was not caught. R1 is also forced to vacate 1st because the batter became a runner when the ball was not caught. The BR is not entitled to 2nd because R1 is only forced to advance as far as 2nd.

**CLARIFICATION:** The order of the tags is important. If the BR had been tagged first, they would be ruled out. However, R2 would now be entitled to 2nd base as the force of R1 to 2nd base no longer applies. If R2 and R1 are subsequently tagged, R1 would be ruled out and R2 would be safe at 2nd.

313. (FP) The bases are loaded. R1 advances to 2nd on a passed ball but the other two runners do not advance. The pitcher receives the ball in the eight foot circle and makes no play on any runner.

**RULING:** R1 is not entitled to the base. Allow R1 an appropriate amount of time to attempt a return to 1<sup>st</sup> once the pitcher has the ball in the circle. If he does not, call “Dead Ball” and rule R1 out.

314. There is a runner at 1st with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball for a single to right field. The fielder picks up the ball and throws it to the third baseman that catches R1 in a rundown between 2nd and 3rd. R1 retreats to 2nd and the BR advances to 2nd. R1 slides safely into 2nd as the infielder’s throw is late. The second baseman tags both R1 and the BR while they are standing on 2nd.

**RULING:** R1 is safe at 2nd while the BR is “Out” and the ball is live. Second base belongs to R1 until he has advanced to and touched 3rd.

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### **Outside Base Path**

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315. (FP) The runner at 1st attempts to steal 2nd on the next pitched ball. R1 runs out of the base line while advancing. The catcher throws the ball wildly into center field.

**RULING:** R1’s advance is legal. There is no penalty for running out of the base line unless it is done to avoid being tagged by the fielder who has the ball in his hand or glove.

316. The batter hits a pitched ball to the outfield for a double. The batter-runner runs toward 1st at a bad angle and so fast that the BR travels six feet from the base path between 1st and 2nd, before finally coming to a stop at 2nd. When the ball is returned to the infield, and “Time” is called by the umpire, the defence appeals that the batter-runner should be out for being out of the base path (imaginary line 1.0 m or 3 ft. to either side of a direct line between the bases).

**RULING:** R2 shall remain safe at 2nd. The imaginary direct line of the base path is established by the position of the runner and the base to which they are advancing once the defensive player receives the ball to attempt a play.

317. The batter hits a pitched ball to the outfield for a single. The batter-runner runs around 1st at a bad angle such that he travels eight feet from the base path between 1st and 2nd. The BR gets caught in a rundown situation before reaching 2nd and while still eight feet from the normal base path. The infielder, with the ball, reaches for but misses the BR, who is running directly at 2nd. The batter-runner arrives safely at 2nd.

**RULING:** The batter-runner shall remain safe at 2nd. The base path is established from each base to the position of the runner.

**CLARIFICATION:** A runner may not deviate more than three feet in order to avoid being tagged.

**NOTE:** An arm’s length is considered to be three feet, no matter what age group. If the runner changes course by more than

the defensive player's arm length, to go around the fielder, to avoid the tag, then they are out.

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### Passing a Preceding Runner

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318. There is a runner at 1st with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air to left field. The routine fly ball is dropped by the left fielder. The batter-runner, thinking the ball would be caught, runs past R1.

**RULING:** The batter-runner is "Out" as soon as he passes R1. The ball remains live, allowing play to continue.

**CLARIFICATION:** A runner is considered to have passed the runner when one foot is on the ground and in front of the preceding runner.

319. There is a runner at 1st. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air deep to left field. R1 advances half way toward 2nd and stops. The batter-runner rounds 1st and passes R1 before the ball is touched or caught by the outfielder.

**RULING:** The batter-runner is "Out" for passing R1. The ball is live. If the fly ball is caught and an appeal is made at 1st, R1 would be in jeopardy of being called out should R1 not return and legally tag-up.

320. There is a runner at 1st. The batter hits the next pitched ball for a single and R1 advances to 2nd and then toward 3rd. The outfielder's throw drives R1 back towards 2nd. The batter-runner has also advanced past 1st and is rounding 2nd when the two runners pass each other.

**RULING:** The batter-runner is "Out" as soon as he passes R1 and the ball remains live.

321. There is a runner at 1st with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball on a line to center field. The outfielder dives and misses the fly ball. R1 has already touched 2nd and is on his way toward third. The offensive coach felt the ball was caught, and waves R1 back. R1 retouches 2nd and heads for 1st. Meanwhile, the batter-runner has touched 1st and is headed for 2nd. R1 passes his team-mate mid-way between 1st and 2nd. R1 returns safely to 1st.

**RULING:** The batter-runner is "Out", as soon as he passes the preceding runner, R1. The ball remains live.

**RULE:** The runner passing the preceding runner is always the one called "Out".

322. The bases are loaded with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball for a home run. All runners touch the respective bases and score. However, R1 scores before R2. The batter-runner also missed 1st. A proper appeal is made at 1st.

**RULING:** Three out no runs score. The second out happened when R1 passed R2. The third out, which is the appeal at 1st, is a force out.

INTERPRETATION: With the appeal of the BR at 1<sup>st</sup> base, the BR is considered to not have reached 1<sup>st</sup> Base, and thus, no runs can score.

323. There are runners at 1st, 2nd and 3rd with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball for a home run. The BR passes R1 between 1st and 2nd and R1 fails to touch 2nd. R1 does touch 3rd and home though, and all other runners touch all bases legally. R1 is declared out on an appeal by the defence after all runners cross home plate. How many runs count?

RULING: Two runs score. The BR is “Out” as soon as he passes R1. R1’s out at second is not a force out because the BR was declared out for passing and the force is then removed on R1.

324. There are runners at 1st and 2nd with two outs. The batter hits the pitched ball in the air to right field. R1 and R2 believe there is only one out and remain on their respective bases. The batted ball clears the outfield fence in fair territory for a home run. The umpires notice that the batter-runner is between 1st and 2nd while R1 is still standing on 1st.

RULING: The batter-runner is “Out” for passing a preceding runner. Only runs scored before the passing by the BR would count.

325. The bases are loaded with two outs. The batter hits a pitched ball fair and over the outfield fence for a home run. All the runners touch the appropriate bases but the batter-runner passes R1 between 1st and 2nd. The base umpire properly rules the batter-runner “Out” for passing a preceding runner. At the time of the passing R3 had scored, and R2 was between 3rd and home plate. How many runs count?

RULING: Only R3’s run would count.

The play is still going on because of the home run after a “passing a preceding runner” rule enforcement. The third out is established when the batter-runner is called out and the inning is over. This is a timing play and only the runs that crossed home plate before the passing would count.

326. There is one out, with runners at 1st and 3rd. The batter hits a pitched ball over the outfield fence for a home run. While running the bases, the batter-runner is called out for passing R1 (a) between 1st and 2nd or (b) between 2nd and home. Later, R1 is ruled out on a missed base appeal at 2nd.

RULING: In both (a) and (b), R3’s run would count because R1 was not forced to advance once the BR was ruled out. R1’s out at 2nd is now a timing play.

INTERPRETATION: If the batter-runner passed R1 anywhere, then R1 is no longer forced to advance. In this situation, the second out is the passing by the BR, and the third out is the missed base, but not a force out, by R1 at 2nd.

R3’s runs counts as the last out of the inning was not a force out.

327. There is a runner on 1st. The batter hits a pitched ball through the infield and all the way to the outfield fence. Both R1 and the BR are standing on 3rd when the ball is returned to the infield. As the ball is relayed to third, R1 abandons the base and retreats toward 2nd but is tagged out before reaching the base.

**RULING:** Both the BR and R1 are out and the ball remains live. When R1 retreats past the BR then the BR is guilty of passing a preceding runner, even though it was R1 who was doing the moving. The BR is “Out” and the ball remains live. R1 is out for being tagged while off base.

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### **Physically Assisting a Runner**

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328. There is a runner at 1st. The batter hits a pitched ball for a single. R1 stumbles between 1st and 2nd. The batter-runner rounds 1st and continues toward 2nd. The batter-runner stops and helps R1 up and pushes R1 toward 2nd. R2 advances safely to 2nd and the batter-runner returns to 1st.

**RULING:** The ball is live and in play. The batter-runner is not out for physically assisting R1.

329. There is a runner at 3rd. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air to the outfield. The third base coach taps R3 on the leg when the outfielder catches the fair fly ball. R3 legally tags and easily scores.

**RULING:** The batter is “Out” on the fly ball catch and R3 is “Out” for the coach’s assistance as soon as they are tapped on the leg. The ball remains live and in play.

330. There is a runner at 1st and 3rd. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air to the outfield. The outfielder touches the fair ball but does not make the catch. The first base coach taps R1 when the fielder makes initial contact with the ball.

**RULING:** The umpire shall call “Coach’s assistance” as soon as the coach touches R1 and R1 is ruled “Out”. The ball remains live and in play.

331. There is a runner at 3rd. The batter hits a pitched ball above foul territory. The fielder touches the ball over foul territory and (a) does not make the catch, or (b) makes the catch. The third base coach taps R3 when the fielder makes initial contact with the ball.

**RULING:** The umpire shall call “Coach’s Assistance” as soon as the coach touches R3. R3 is “Out” and the ball remains live and in play. The batter is (a) awarded a strike on the uncaught foul fly ball, or (b) “Out”.

(SP) The batter would be “Out” if the uncaught foul ball is a third strike foul.

332. There is a runner at 3rd. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground between the shortstop and 2nd. The infielder does or does not touch the

ball. The base coach taps or pushes the runner at 3rd, as soon as the coach realizes the hit is a single.

**RULING:** The umpire shall call “Coach’s Assistance” as soon as the coach touches R3. R3 is “Out”. The ball remains live and in play.

333. The batter hits a pitched ball over the outfield fence for a home run. The third base coach slaps the batter-runner on the back and grabs him by the hand, as the runner rounds 3rd and propels the runner toward home plate.

**RULING:** The coach’s actions are not considered physically assisting. He has not assisted a runner that was on base and is simply congratulating the batter on the HR. Common sense must prevail.

334. There is a runner at 3rd with one or two out. The batter hits the pitched ball in the air to deep center field. R3 is assisted by the coach while the batted ball is in flight. The base umpire has noticed the coach’s interference. The batted ball falls over the fence for a home run.

**RULING:** R3 is “Out” due to the “Coach’s Assistance” and the ball remains live. If R3 is the second out, the batter is entitled to the home run. If R3 is the third out of the inning then the batter’s run does not count.

335. There is a runner at 2nd. The batter hits a pitched ball for a single to the outfield. R2 falls down between 2nd and 3rd and the third base coach runs up the line, in the direction of home plate, in an effort to distract the defence and gain additional time so that R2 can scramble safely into 3rd. The defensive player receiving the outfielders throw is momentarily distracted by the coach’s action and is late in throwing the ball toward 3rd. R2 is safe at 3rd.

**RULING:** The coach’s actions are considered interference. The ball is dead, “Dead Ball” and the runner closest to home plate is called “Out”. Other runners would return to the last base held at the time of the interference.

336. There is a runner at 3rd with two outs. The batter hits a pitched ball for a single. R3 advances toward home and misses the plate. R3 heads toward the dugout but his team mates physically push him back toward home plate. R3 safely retouches home before the defensive team can appeal.

**RULING:** R3 is ruled out as soon as his teammates assist him and the run would not count.. The ball remains live.

337. The bases are loaded with two out. The batter hits a pitched ball for a double. R3 and R2 both advance to home plate. However, both runners miss home plate. R3 and R2 notice each other’s mistake. R2 tells R3 to return to home plate so that R3 touches the plate before R2 touches.

**RULING:** R3’s touch of home plate is not considered legal because the succeeding runner (R2) was ruled safe at home and is deemed to have scored unless appealed.

338. The bases are loaded with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball for a double. R3 and R2 both advance to home plate. However, R2 misses home. R3 notices R2's mistake and physically assists by pushing R2 back towards home plate.

RULING: R2 is "Out" for being physically assisted by someone other than a runner. The ball remains live and in play.

Even though R3 was a runner before the batted ball, he is not considered a runner after scoring but rather a coach. Physical assistance by an on-deck batter and/or player from the bench is also considered coaching assistance.

339. There is a runner at 2nd with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball for a double. R2 advances to home plate. However, R2 misses home. The on-deck batter notices the running error and physically assists by pushing R2 back towards home plate.

RULING: R2 is "Out" for being physically assisted by a non-runner. No appeal is necessary. The on-deck batter physically assisted another runner who has not yet scored a legal run. The ball remains live and in play.

340. The score is tied in the bottom of the seventh inning with the bases loaded and 2 outs. The batter walks on five pitches bringing home the winning run. The batter joins in the celebration for a few minutes and is then pushed or helped to 1st by the coach or other team members. The defence appeals that the batter should be ruled out for being assisted.

RULING: The BR would be ruled out and R3's run would not score.

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### **Retouching Bases After: (a) A Succeeding Runner Scores (b) Advancing One or More Bases**

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341. R2 has crossed home plate to score and is closely followed by R1 who (a) touches home plate or (b) fails to touch home plate. R2 has also failed to touch home plate on his initial pass.

RULING: In (a) R2 is not capable of legally touching home plate because R1 has touched the plate. R2 would be declared out if appealed by the defence.

(b) R2 cannot return to touch home plate because the runner behind him (R1) has scored. R1 missing the plate has no bearing because a runner is deemed to have touched a base unless appealed. R1 could return to touch home plate. Both runners would be out if appealed properly by the defensive team.

342. There is a runner at 1st that leaves the base as soon as the pitcher releases the ball. The batter hits the pitched ball in the air to the outfield. R1 proceeds past 2nd and is between 2nd and 3rd when the fly ball is caught. While R1 is still between 2nd and 3rd, the outfielder throws the ball toward



1st in an attempt to make a live ball appeal. The outfielder's throw is high and the ball goes out of play.

R1 is (a) between 2nd and 3rd returning to 2nd, or (b) standing on 2nd, or (c) between 2nd and 1st, or (d) between 2nd and 3rd advancing toward 3rd at the time the ball goes out of play. R1 returns, touches 1st and takes her award of bases, retouching all bases in proper order. The defence properly appeal R1 leaving 1st early.

**RULING:** In all situations the ball is dead. "Dead Ball", as soon as the ball goes out of play.

In situations (a, b, c) R1 is awarded 3rd - two bases from the base the runner is returning to (1st). R1 is ruled safe on the defence's appeal. In each situation (a, b, c) R1 can return to re touch 1st.

In situation (d) R1 is awarded home - two bases from the time of the throw. R1 is ruled out on the defence's appeal. R1 cannot return to touch 1st base unless s/he was in the act of returning (running in the direction) when the ball was ruled dead.

**CLARIFICATION:** A runner may return to touch a base left too soon or missed even when the ball is dead. The rule allows the runner to return regardless where she is when the ball becomes dead. It does not pertain to a situation when the ball does not go out of play. If the ball has not gone out of play and a runner is at a base she may not return when "dead ball" is called and signalled.

The award of bases for a runner returning to retouch a base missed or left too soon when the ball is dead will be two bases from the last base the runner returns to (a runner may continue to return even after the ball is dead). If a runner is not returning to a base she is awarded two bases from the last base touched at the time of the throw. No appeal may take place by the defence until the runner has completed his/her base-running obligations.

**TIP:** Umpires need to check the location of runners once an umpire calls and signals "Dead Ball" for the ball out of play. Do not immediately make base awards.

343. There is a runner on 1st when the batter hits a pitched ball for a single. R1 rounds 2nd and seeing the ball thrown to 3rd, returns to 2nd. R1 touches and over slides 2nd as the ball goes back into the outfield. R1 gets up and advances safely to 3rd but fails to touch 2nd on the way to 3rd. The defence appeal R1 at 2nd for not retouching.

**RULING:** R1 is ruled safe at 2nd on the appeal.

There is no violation for not retouching 2nd base.

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## Squeeze Play (FP)

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344. There are runners at 2nd and 3rd. The batter squares to bunt the next pitched ball. R3 advances toward home when the pitcher releases the ball. While the pitched ball is on the way to the plate, the catcher stands up and bumps into the batter while the batter's bat is making contact with the pitched ball. The ball is tapped fair. (a) R3 scores, R2 advances safely to 3rd, and the batter-runner is safe at 1st, or (b) one of the above runners does not advance at least one base safely.

**RULING:** In both (a, b) the ball is dead immediately, "Dead Ball". The batter is awarded 1st because of the "Obstruction", and R3 is awarded home plate due to the "Illegal Pitch" call by the umpire. R2 is awarded third.

**TIP:** The pitcher shall be charged with an illegal pitch when there is a runner at 3rd trying to score by means of a squeeze play (bunts or swings bat to make contact) or a steal, and the catcher or any other infielder steps on, or in front of home plate, without possession of the ball, or touches the batter or the bat. "Obstruction" shall also be called and the batter awarded 1st.

This situation is different from other obstruction, because the umpire does not allow the play to continue. A plate umpire should not be waiting to see if all runners advance one base, or waiting until the obstructed runner is played on, or waiting to see if we can offer the coach a resulting option. Waiting would only add to confusion.

Remember that the play is stopped immediately, "Dead Ball," by the plate umpire.

345. There is a runner at 3rd. R3 leaves 3rd legally on the next pitched ball. The batter squares to bunt (a squeeze play). The pitched ball touches the sleeve of the batter and the catcher (a) misses the ball allowing R3 to score, or (b) catches the ball and either tags R3 for an out or misses R3.

**RULING:** In both (a, b) the ball is dead "Dead Ball", as soon as the batter is hit with the pitched ball. The batter is awarded 1st and R3 returns to 3rd.

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### **Stealing Base**

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346. (SP) There are runners at 1st and 3rd. The batter has a count of one ball and one strike. On the next pitched ball, R1 waits until the ball reaches home plate and then runs toward 2nd. The batter does not swing at the high outside pitch and the catcher throws the ball to the second baseman, trapping R1 between bases.

**RULING:** The ball is dead after every pitched ball that is not hit. The plate umpire shall call "Dead Ball" as soon as the catcher throws the ball to the second baseman. R1 and R3 return to their respective bases and the batter is awarded an additional ball because the catcher did not return the ball

directly to the pitcher. The batter's count is now three balls and one strike.

**NOTE:** Base stealing is illegal in SP; however, the runner is not out. Since the ball is dead on balls and strikes, he is returned to the base held at the time of the pitch. Because a runner may not steal, he may not be picked off either. A runner may be called out for failure to keep in contact with a base to which he is entitled until a legally pitched ball is batted, touches the ground or has reached home plate.

347. There is a runner at 2nd. The batter takes a called strike three for the first out of the inning. Meanwhile, R2 has moved off 2nd and is standing between the bases when the catcher returns the pitched ball to the pitcher who has his feet close to the pitcher's rubber. R2 makes no attempt to move in either direction.

**RULING:** (FP) R2 must immediately return to 2nd or advance toward 3rd, once the pitcher has possession of the ball in the eight foot circle. Failure to do so would result in R2 being called "Out".

(SP) The ball is dead after every pitched ball not hit. R2 is not out and must return to 2nd.

348. (SP) There is a runner at 1st. The batter has a count of one ball and one strike. The pitcher delivers a ball which the batter does not swing at and the catcher misses. The pitched ball rolls back to the screen.

- (a) Prior to the next pitched ball, or
- (b) After the next pitched ball, or
- (c) After several pitched balls to the same batter, or
- (d) After the next batter takes his place in the batter's box, the umpire notices that R1 is now standing at 2nd.

**RULING:** In all cases, the umpire sends R1 back to 1st. Under no circumstances is a runner allowed to steal a base.

**INTERPRETATION:** This not an appeal which gets nullified after the next pitch. This is an illegal advance and umpire error in not immediately returning the runner to 1<sup>st</sup> base.

349. The runner at 1st leaves the base before the pitcher releases the ball (FP), or before the pitched ball reaches home plate (SP). Does the defence have to appeal 1st for R1 to be declared out by the base umpire?

**RULING:** This is not an appeal play. The base umpire should call and signal, "Dead Ball", and declare R1 "Out" for the "Lead-Off". The pitched ball is ruled "No Pitch" on the batter.

350. (FP) There is a runner at 3rd who leaves the base after the pitch to the batter. The pitcher, after receiving the throw back from the catcher, fakes R3 back to 3rd. While the ball is still live and held by the pitcher, the catcher and shortstop meet near the pitcher's plate to consult on the next pitch

selection. R3 sees that home plate is not covered and leaves 3rd in an attempt to score.

**RULING:** R3 is “Out” at 3rd for a lead-off. Since R3 returned to 3rd, he is required to remain on that base until the ball is delivered by the pitcher on the next pitch.

**TIP:** (a) If any player other than the pitcher has the ball in the circle the advance of runners is legal and the ball remains live.

(b) Any time the catcher leaves the vicinity of home plate the plate umpire should immediately call “Time” to avoid the above situation and difficult “Out” ruling.

351. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground for a single. R2 advances to and stands on 3rd while the BR advances slightly past 1st toward 2nd and stops. In the meantime, the outfielder has retrieved the batted ball and throws it back to the infield. The infielder then throws the ball to the pitcher who is standing in the eight foot circle (FP). The BR now retreats back to 1st and R2 steps off 3rd while the pitcher still has possession of the ball.

**RULING:** (FP) The ball is dead “Dead Ball”, R2 at 3rd is “Out” for a “Lead Off” and the batter-runner remains at 1st.

(SP) There is no eight foot circle in Slo-Pitch and no out in this situation. The ball is dead “Time” as soon as the ball is returned to the infield and all play has ceased.

352. There are runners at 1st and 2nd. The batter hits a pitched ball for a single. R2 advances to 3rd and stops. R1 also advances to 3rd and stops. The ball is thrown to the pitcher who is standing in the eight foot circle.

**RULING:** The pitcher should be given time to play on the runners. If R2, who is legally at 3rd, leaves while the pitcher has the ball in the eight foot circle, then he is “Out” for a “Lead off”.

R1, the runner illegally at 3rd, must be given an opportunity to return to 2nd. If he leaves 3rd while the pitcher has the ball in the eight foot circle, the return is legal and he is not out. However, if the runner in motion back to 2nd stops or reverses his direction, without being played on, R1 is ruled “Out”.

**TIP:** Patience is the key for the umpire in this situation. Always allow extra time for the defence to play on one of the runners at 3rd. Patience will also give the incorrect offensive player the same opportunity to correct the running error. If by chance, “Time” is called in error, return R1 to 2nd.

353. A runner at 1st advances to and occupies 2nd on a hit by the batter. However, the batter-runner also advances to 2nd. Both runners are standing at 2nd when the ball is returned to the pitcher in the pitcher’s circle. The defence appeals that they want one of the runners called out since two players cannot occupy the base at the same time.

**RULING:** Appeal is not needed here. The BR is not entitled to 2<sup>nd</sup> and within an appropriate amount of time must return to 1<sup>st</sup> otherwise he/she will be ruled “Out”.

**CLARIFICATION:** R1 is entitled to 2<sup>nd</sup> as he/she is not forced to advance any farther. Should R1 start to advance to 3<sup>rd</sup> while the pitcher has the ball in the circle, he/she would be ruled “Out”.

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### **Stepping Back Toward a Base or Home**

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354. There is a runner on 2<sup>nd</sup>. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground slowly to the first baseman. The infielder picks up the ball and goes to tag the batter-runner. The BR stops and does not move. R2 is between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> when the BR is tagged out. Is the ball dead and does R2 return to 2<sup>nd</sup> because the BR stopped between home and 1<sup>st</sup>?

**RULING:** The ball remains live and in play. The batter-runner may stop between home and 1<sup>st</sup> to draw or delay a tag. The rule says he may not step back to delay or avoid a tag.

355. There is a runner at 3<sup>rd</sup> with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground toward the first baseman who fields the ball cleanly. The infielder then attempts to tag the batter-runner who has stopped in the three foot path. The batter-runner steps back just before he is tagged with the ball, and (a) before R3 can touch home, or (b) after R3 touches home plate.

**RULING:** The ball is dead “Dead Ball”, and the batter-runner is “Out” as soon as the batter-runner steps back toward home plate. In (a) and (b) R3 returns to 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**CLARIFICATION:** When a batter-runner steps back toward home plate in an effort to avoid or delay a tag by a fielder, the ball is dead. The fielder need not apply the tag. The mere movement of stepping back is enough indication for the umpire(s) to call “Dead Ball”. All runners return to the last base touched at the time of the pitch.

356. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air to right field. Thinking the ball would be caught, the batter-runner stops short of 1<sup>st</sup> and starts back toward home. The outfielder drops the fly ball and the BR proceeds back to 1<sup>st</sup>.

**RULING:** Since the batter-runner did not move backward to avoid a tag or a play on her, the BR is not called out.

357. There is a runner at 1<sup>st</sup> with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground toward the second baseman. The infielder scoops up the ground ball and attempts to tag R1. R1 steps back toward 1<sup>st</sup> in an attempt to avoid the tag. The infielder does not make the tag because he judges that R1 should be out for stepping backwards. The ball is then thrown toward 1<sup>st</sup> in an effort to retire the batter-runner.

**RULING:** The ball remains live and in play. R1 is not out for stepping backwards.

The stepping backwards rule only applies when the batter-runner is between home and 1st.

358. Bases loaded, none out. Grounder hit to F5 who steps on 3<sup>rd</sup> for the out on R2. He then throws to F3 who is off the bag. As F3 attempts to tag the approaching BR, the BR steps back towards home plate. The plate umpire calls "Dead Ball", calls the BR out, and returns all runners to the base they held at the time of the pitch, including R2. The defensive coach comes out and insists the ruling is inappropriate as the offense has gained an advantage by his losing an out on the play. Is the umpire's ruling correct?

RULING: The ruling is not correct. The out on R2 is retained.

359. (FP) The runner at 1st is off with the release of the pitched ball. The batter bunts the ball. The first baseman fields the batted ball and attempts to tag the batter-runner. R1 rounds 2nd as the batter-runner stops and then steps backward to avoid the tag.

RULING: The ball is dead, "Dead Ball", as soon as the batter-runner steps backward. The batter-runner is "Out". R1 returns to first base. All runners return to last base touched at the time of the pitch.

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### Switching Base Runners

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360. None out, bases loaded. Offence calls time and the coach huddles with all his runners. After the conference, R3 goes to 1st while R1 goes to 3rd. B4 hits a double scoring the original R1 (from 3rd) and R2. The original R3 is now at 3rd while B4 is on 2nd. The defence now appeals that the offence switched runners.

RULING: R1 is ruled out and his/her run is nullified. R3 is ruled out. 2 out, R2's run still counts, and B4 remains at 2nd. Head coach is ejected.

361. One out, bases loaded. Offence calls time and the coach huddles with all his runners. After the conference, R3 goes to 1st while R1 goes to 3rd. B4 hits a double scoring the original R1 (from 3rd) and R2. The original R3 is now at 3rd while B4 is on 2nd. The defence now appeals that the offence switched runners.

RULING: No runs count! Started the play with one out and R1 and R3 are both declared out and the order of their out is determined by the location of the runners immediately after the switch. R1 being closest to home is the first to be declared out. R3, still on base, is the preceding runner to R2 and the last out of the inning. It is not a timing play. Head coach is ejected.

CLARIFICATION: Appeal may be made until BOTH runners are in the dugout or the inning is over.

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## Tag-Up, Missed Base, Over sliding

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362. There are runners at 1st and 2nd. The batter hits a pitched ball above foul territory which is caught by the right fielder. On the caught foul fly both runners tag and advance to the next base. Is this legal?

RULING: Runners can advance on any caught fly ball, fair or foul.

CLARIFICATION: Runner can legally leave the base when the ball is first touched on a caught fly ball.

363. There are runners on 1st and 2nd with one out. The batter hits the pitched ball in the air to the outfield where the right fielder catches the ball. R1 and R2 advance one base safely. However, R1 left 1st before the first touch. The ball is thrown to the infield where the ball is tossed to 1st to appeal R1 leaving early. Meanwhile, R2 at 3rd sprints for home plate while the live ball appeal is being made at 1st. The appeal is completed and the first baseman throws the ball wide of the catcher in an attempt to retire R2.

RULING: R1 is “Out” at 1st on the appeal for leaving early. The ball is live due to the continuous play and R2’s advance is legal. R2’s run would not count if the appeal for out number three was completed before R2 could touch home plate, because the play is a timing play.

364. The batter hits a pitched ball for a triple but misses 2nd. The pitcher, while in the 8-foot circle and without first notifying the umpire(s), quickly attempts to make a live ball appeal at 2nd and subsequently drops the ball. R3 advances toward home plate and scores.

RULING: R3’s run counts unless the defence completes the legal appeal. R3 would then be called “Out”.

TIP: The succeeding or subsequent appeal is not considered a second appeal because the outcome of the initial appeal was not ruled on by the umpire.

365. A runner at 1st positions himself with the back foot behind and the front foot in contact with the white portion to get a running start on a fly ball.

RULING: The runner has assumed a legal tag up position. The ball remains live.

366. There is a runner on 2nd. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air to the outfield. R2 stands behind 2nd and not in contact with the bag to get a running start before the ball is caught. After the ball is caught, R2 advances touching 2nd on his way toward 3rd.

RULING: R2 is “Out”, and the ball is live. Runner(s) cannot position themselves behind, and not in contact with a base, in an effort to get a running start on any fly ball.

367. There is a runner at 2nd. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air to the outfield. R2 stands behind 2nd and not in contact with the bag to get a running start. The fly ball is dropped by the outfielder. After the ball is touched, R2 advances touching 2nd on his way toward 3rd.

**RULING:** The ball is live. R2 is “Out”. The ruling covers any fly ball. The ball need not be caught for this rule to be in effect.

368. There are runners at 1st and 3rd. Both runners position themselves behind and not in contact with the base (orange portion at 1st) to get a running start on a fly ball.

**RULING:** Both R1 and R3 are called “Out” immediately and the ball is live.

**NOTE:** More than one runner shall be ruled “Out” in situations where more than one runner is off base to attempt a running start on a fly ball.

369. There is a runner at 3rd with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball to deep center field. R3 believes the ball will not be caught and scores. The outfielder catches the fly ball. R3 retreats to 3rd and beats the relay throw from the outfield.

**RULING:** R3 is safe at 3rd because he beat the throw to third on the live ball appeal.

R3 must retouch home plate on the way back to 3rd. If R3 did not retouch home and the defence appeals the missed retouch then R3 would be out.

370. There is a runner on 3rd. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air to right field. R3 does not tag and advances toward home. R3 touches home plate and then, thinking the ball may be caught, retouches home, and retreats to 3rd. The outfielder is unable to catch the fly ball. R3 seeing this, during his retreating steps, goes directly to the dug-out, figuring he has scored a run. The defence appeals that R3 committed an illegal running infraction.

**RULING:** R3 has scored a legal run. Even though R3’s actions are confusing, they are legal. Retouching home does not negate a run.

**CLARIFICATION:** A run legally scored cannot be nullified if a runner legally touches 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and home. The run cannot be nullified by subsequent action of the runner, such as, but not limited to, an effort to return to third in belief that the runner had left the base early before a caught fly ball.

371. (FP) The batter hits a pitched ball for a double but misses 1st on his way to 2nd. The defence does not indicate an appeal is going to be made and the pitcher, with possession of the live ball, enters the eight foot circle. The pitcher steps onto the pitching plate and without verbally stating anything, steps back off the rubber. The runner, thinking an appeal is going to be made, attempts to retrace his steps toward 1st.



**RULING:** R2 is “Out” for a lead off because the pitcher has the ball in the eight foot circle. The stepping back off the pitcher’s rubber must not be interpreted as an indication to appeal.

If the defence gives some verbal indication an appeal is going to be made, the umpires should call and signal “Time”.

372. The batter hits a pitched ball over the outfield fence for a home run. As the BR is running the bases, she stops between 2nd and 3rd, thinking she may have missed 1st. The BR goes back and retouches 2nd and then 1st, which she retouches and completes her advance around the bases touching the remaining bases in proper order.

**RULING:** The home run is legal. Whether the BR missed 1st or not, when she returned, she did so properly by retouching 2nd and then 1st.

373. There are runners at 1st and 2nd with two outs. The batter hits a pitched ball for a double scoring both R2 and R1. However, R2 missed 3rd, but returns to 3rd just before an appeal is made.

**RULING:** R2 may not return to 3<sup>rd</sup> after a following runner (R1) has scored. R2 is “Out” on the appeal and both runs do not count because no succeeding run can count after a previous runner is the 3rd out of an inning.

374. The bases are loaded with two outs. The batter hits a pitched ball fair and over the outfield fence for a home run. All the runners touch the appropriate bases but the batter-runner misses 2nd. After all play has ceased, the defence makes a proper dead ball appeal on the batter-runner missing 2nd. The base umpire properly rules the batter-runner “Out”. How many runs count?

**RULING:** Three (3) runs count. All runners had crossed the plate before the appeal was made at 2nd.

**AFTER ALL PLAY HAS CEASED:**

The defence would not be allowed to make a dead ball appeal on any runners until after all runners had an opportunity to touch awarded bases, including home plate.

**EXAMPLE 1:** Runner on 2nd. The batter hits a pitched ball toward the shortstop that scoops up the ball and throws it out of play. R2 is awarded home and the BR is awarded 2nd. The BR touches 1st and is standing on 2nd when R2 misses home plate. The defence may make a dead ball appeal immediately on R2 missing home.

**EXAMPLE 2:** Runner on 2nd. The batter hits a pitched ball toward the shortstop that scoops up the ball and throws it out of play. R2 is awarded home and the BR is awarded 2nd. The BR touches 1st and is not yet standing on 2nd when R2 misses home plate. The defence may not make a dead ball appeal on R2 missing home plate until after the BR is standing on 2nd.

**EXAMPLE 3:** The bases are loaded. The batter hits a home run. All runners touch their respective bases except R1 who fails to touch 3rd. The defence may not make a dead ball appeal on R1 missing 3rd until after all runners, including the BR, had an opportunity to touch all their respective bases, including home plate. In other words the defence must wait until the runners preceding and succeeding R1 are given the opportunity to touch all awarded bases as described by “after all play has ceased.”

375. The bases are loaded with two outs. The batter hits a pitched ball fair and over the outfield fence for a home run. All the runners touch the appropriate bases but the runner from 1st misses 3rd. After all play has ceased, the defence makes a proper dead ball appeal on R1 missing 3rd. The base umpire properly rules R1 “Out”. How many runs count?

**RULING:** Two runs count. Even though all runners had crossed the plate before the appeal was made at 3rd, BR’s run would not count, because the last out of the inning is the result of a preceding runner being declared out.

376. The bases are loaded with two outs. The batter hits a pitched ball fair and over the outfield fence for a home run. All the runners touch the appropriate bases but the runner from 1st misses 2nd. After all play has ceased, the defence makes a proper dead ball appeal on R1 missing 2nd. The base umpire properly rules R1 “Out”. How many runs count?

**RULING:** No runs would count.

Even though the other runners had touched home plate before the appeal, the runs would not count if the last out of the inning is the result of any runner being forced out. In this situation, R1 is forced to at least touch 2nd because the batter became a batter-runner. Likewise, R3 is forced to touch home, R2 is forced to touch 3rd, and the batter-runner is forced to touch 1st.

**EMPHASIS:** If an appeal is honoured at a base to which a runner was forced to advance and the out is a force out, no runs would score if it was the last out of the inning. If a forced runner, after touching the next base, retreats for any reason towards the base he had last occupied, the force play is reinstated and he may again be put out if the defence tags the base to which he is forced. Note that there cannot be a force out if the batter does not become a batter-runner.

377. There are runners at 1st and 3rd with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball for extra bases and R3 scores. The batter misses 1st on his way toward 2nd. R1 touches 2nd and 3rd, but misses home plate or steps on the SP strike mat. The defensive team appeal the missed bases. How many runs score?

**RULING:** No runs score if R1 missing home is appealed before the batter missing 1st. A run does not count if the third out of the inning is a force out.

378. On a close play at the plate R2 slides into home missing the plate. The catcher also misses with the tag. What should the plate umpire do?

**RULING:** The umpire should hesitate slightly and if no tag is made, signal and call “Safe” so that the runner and the catcher can hear the call.

If the runner tags the plate before the catcher appeals then the runner would be safe and the umpire would again call and signal “Safe”.

If an appeal is made by tagging either the runner or the plate, the runner would be called “Out” on the appeal.

**CLARIFICATION:** A runner is deemed to have touched a base after he has passed the base even if he missed the base. The defence would have to appeal the missed base before the next pitch to get an out.

379. There is a runner at 2nd when the batter hits the pitched ball for a single toward right field. R2 attempts to score and on the play at the plate the catcher misses the tag and R2 misses home plate. The plate umpire correctly signals and verbalizes “Safe” and the catcher then chases R2 into the dugout area where R2 is tagged.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, as soon as the catcher enters the dugout. The batter-runner is awarded one base from the last base touched at the time the ball became dead. If a proper appeal is made, then R2 is “Out”. If an appeal is not completed before the next pitch (legal or illegal), R2’s run counts. The catcher following the batter into the dugout is determined to have carried the ball unintentionally out of play.

**TIP:** In cases where intent to appeal is previously known by the umpire(s), and the runners are on their respective base (not off base), then “Time” should be called to allow for a dead ball appeal.

380. R1 is attempting to steal 2nd. The shortstop, that has caught the catcher’s thrown ball, misses tagging R1. However, R1 slides past the base and does not maintain contact with the base.

**RULING:** The base umpire’s initial ruling and call is a no call. The base umpire should wait until the play is completed before ruling on the steal. R1 would be out or safe, depending on whether he is tagged while on or off the base.

381. The batter-runner over slides or overruns 1st (a) during an advance from home plate after batting, or (b) on returning to 1st after attempting to advance to 2nd. In each situation the batter-runner is tagged with the ball while he is off base.

**RULING:** The batter-runner in (a) is “Safe”, (b) is “Out”.

**CLARIFICATION:** A runner is in jeopardy and can be put out if legally tagged when overrunning 2nd or 3<sup>rd</sup>.

382. The batter hits a pitched ball deep to the outfield. The BR tries to stretch the hit into a triple and, in a close play at 3rd, he and the third baseman collide and the BR’s helmet is knocked off. The ball rolls in one direction and the BR in the other. The infielder finds the ball and attempts to tag the BR as he dives back toward 3rd. The BR grabs his helmet, lunges toward the base, and reaches base safely by holding only his helmet on the base. Meanwhile, the infielder tags the runner on the arm. Out or safe?

**RULING:** The batter-runner is “Out” because the runner should not gain an advantage by using detached equipment.

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### **Three Foot Path**

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383. The batter hits a pitched ball fair and runs toward 1st but fails to stay in the three foot path.

**RULING:** The batter-runner’s actions are ignored unless such actions interfere with a thrown ball.

**INTERPRETATION:** The three foot path is to prevent interference and provides a protective haven for the batter-runner. The idea is for the batter-runner to be in this path if the runner does not want to be called “Out” for interference.

384. The batter hits a pitched ball, on the ground, out in front of home plate. The batter-runner runs in fair territory and toward the three foot line. Before the batter-runner reaches the three foot path (the first 30’ from home plate), the catcher’s throw toward 1st hits the batter-runner in the back.

**RULING:** If a batter-runner is hit with a thrown ball before the three foot path, the batter-runner is not out. It does not matter whether the batter-runner is in foul or fair territory as long as the batter-runner did not intentionally interfere with the thrown ball.

385. There is a runner on 3rd. The batter bats the ball on the ground and the first baseman fields the fair ball between home and 1st. The second baseman is covering 1st and is in position to receive the throw from the infielder. However, the thrown ball hits the batter-runner while he is entirely in the three foot path, in foul territory.

**RULING:** The batter-runner is not interfering because he is in the prescribed base path. The ball remains live.

386. There are runners at 1st and 3rd with one out. The batter hits or bunts (FP) the pitched ball fair. The ball dribbles along the ground slowly toward the pitcher who fields the ball and throws it toward the infielder covering 1st. The batter, who is now running adjacent to the three foot line in fair territory toward 1st, is hit by the thrown ball.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, as soon as the batter-runner is hit by the thrown ball. The batter-runner is ruled “Out” for interference. The runners, R3 and R1, return to the last base touched at the time of the pitch.

387. The catcher drops a pitched ball that has been ruled strike three and retrieves the ball directly in front of home plate. The batter runs toward 1st straddling the line on the left side of the three foot path. The batter-runner is hit with the catcher’s thrown ball, on (a) the left shoulder which is outside the three foot path and in fair territory, or (b) the right shoulder which is inside the three foot path in foul territory.

**RULING:** In (a) the ball is dead, “Dead Ball” and the batter-runner is “Out” for being outside the prescribed three foot path in fair territory.

(b) The batter-runner is not out. The batter-runner is hit by the ball on the part of the body which is in the three foot path.

388. The catcher drops a pitched ball that has been ruled strike three and retrieves the ball directly in front of home plate. The batter runs toward 1st straddling the line on the right side of the three foot chute. The batter-runner is hit with the catcher’s thrown ball on the right shoulder which is outside the three foot chute.

**RULING:** The batter-runner is not ruled “Out” for being outside the prescribed three foot chute and the ball is live.

**CLARIFICATION:** The offense should not be penalized for an errant throw by the defense. A thrown ball striking the BR does not necessarily constitute interference. The umpire will judge whether they feel the BR interfered with the throw or the fielder receiving the throw.

389. The batter hits or bunts (FP) a pitched ball on the ground toward 1st. The ball rolls along the line. The first baseman rushes toward the slow moving ball. The batter-runner avoids the infielder, who is straddling the foul line, by stepping out of the three foot path. The batter-runner is now running in (a) fair or (b) foul territory, outside the path.

**RULING:** In (a, b) the batter-runner is not out for running outside of the three foot path when trying to avoid interfering with the infielder who fielded the ball.

390. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground toward 3rd. The third baseman fields the ball and throws it toward 1st. The first baseman has to come off the base and toward home in an effort to make the catch. The first baseman and the batter-runner collide in (a) fair territory, or (b) foul territory, inside the three foot path.

**RULING:** In (a) the ball is dead, “Dead Ball”. The batter-runner is “Out” for interference.

The throw being off target has no consequence. The defensive player must be given a chance to make the catch.

When the infielder is denied that opportunity, due to the batter-runner being out of the three foot path, you have interference.

(b) This is a simple collision or incidental contact. No obstruction and no interference, and the ball remains live.

391. The catcher fields a batted ball in front of home plate. The catcher throws the ball toward 1st. The batter-runner, running outside the three foot path in fair territory, obstructs the first baseman's view of the thrown ball. The first baseman does not see the ball and misses catching the ball.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, "Dead Ball". The batter-runner is "Out" for "Interference". Any other runners would return to the last base touched at the time of the pitch.

**INTERPRETATION:** The fielder must be given a clear view of the thrown ball from a routine fielding position at 1st. The ball does not have to make contact with the batter-runner for the batter-runner to be out.

**TIP:** In this situation the catcher must throw the ball to have interference considered. If the runner is running away from the fielder there must be a throw.

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### **Touched By Ball or Force Out**

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392. The infielder falls down in an attempt to field a ground ball. The infielder slaps or kicks the ball towards 1st while in the prone position. The first baseman picks up the ball in his glove before the batter-runner touches 1st. The offence questions the legality of the slapping or kicking motion.

**RULING:** The batter-runner is "Out". The actions of the infielder are acceptable.

393. The batter hits a ground ball toward the first baseman. The infielder dives and fields the batted ball with his glove. While still lying on the ground, with the ball in his glove, the first baseman touches 1st with his bare hand prior to the batter-runner reaching 1st.

**RULING:** The batter-runner is "Out". In a force situation, a fielder can legally touch a base for an "Out" with any part of their body while in possession of the ball.

394. The batter hits a ground ball toward the second baseman. The infielder snares the ball but the force of the hit entangles the ball in her glove webbing. In desperation the second baseman tosses her glove with the ball in it to the first baseman. The first baseman touches 1st before the batter-runner. Is the BR out?

**RULING:** The batter-runner is "Out". The second baseman fielded the ball legally. The action of tossing the glove does not violate any rule. If the first baseman has control of the glove and ball, the BR would be out.

395. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground toward the second baseman. The infielder scoops up the ball and throws it toward 1st. The first baseman has the ball in the mitt and his foot is on the base, when the batter-runner runs into the first baseman who drops the ball.

**RULING:** The batter-runner is “Out” and the ball is live, unless the umpire judges that the collision was deliberate interference in which case the ball would be dead.

**CLARIFICATION:** If the ball and runner arrive together, at the same time, and the ball is dislodged (momentarily held by the defensive player - bang, bang play), then the runner would be considered “Safe” unless the runner deliberately forced the ball free (i.e. used his hand to knock the ball from the fielder’s glove).

396. The bases are loaded. The first baseman catches a hard hit ball on a short hop. The first baseman then touches 1st and then R1 who is still standing on the base.

**RULING:** The batter-runner is “Out” as soon as the fielder touches 1st. The out on the batter-runner removes the force play and R1 is not forced to advance to 2nd. R1 is “Safe” at 1st.

**CLARIFICATION:** In order for the defence to get a double play, the first baseman should have touched R1 and then stepped on 1st.

397. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground. The batter-runner beats out the infielder’s throw but misses 1st in crossing the base. Even though the first baseman catches the ball while in contact with 1st, the base umpire rules the batter-runner “Safe”.

**RULING:** The base umpire’s judgment is correct. When a batter-runner beats a throw to 1st and misses the base, she shall be ruled “Safe”. The runner is not called out unless the defence appeals the missed base before the batter-runner touches the base. The runner is safe based on the fact the runner is not out until appealed.

398. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground slowly toward the first baseman that is playing behind 1st. The infielder picks up the ball in the glove and runs toward 1st. Just as he touches the single white base, the BR unintentionally collides with him. The ball pops out of the infielder’s glove before or after the players fall to the ground.

**RULING:** The batter-runner is “Out” any time after the first baseman steps on the base ahead of the batter-runner. Dropping the ball happened after the force out was made.

If the contact between the BR and the fielder is simultaneous with the fielder stepping on the base then the runner would be safe.

399. There are runners at 1st and 3rd with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground toward the first baseman who scoops up the ball and touches 1st before the batter-runner. The infielder then (a) tags R1 with

the ball, or (b) throws the ball to 2nd where R1 is tagged out, or (c) throws the ball to 2nd where the fielder touches 2nd. Prior to the tag on R1, R3 had touched home plate.

**RULING:** The batter-runner is “Out” number two. R3’s run counts in all situations.

In (a) R1 is “Safe” on 1st. R1 is not forced to advance to 2nd because the batter is no longer a runner, which makes 1st an unoccupied base.

(b) R1 is “Out” on the tag.

(c) R1 is not out unless tagged by the ball, while off base. R1 is not forced to advance to 2nd because the batter is no longer a runner.

400. The shortstop or second baseman pivots across 2nd in an attempted double play. The infielder loses the ball as he attempts to pull the ball from his glove.

**RULING:** R1 is “Out” at 2nd. The fielder’s attempt to remove the ball from the glove is considered the beginning of the attempt to make a throw.

401. The catcher has possession of the ball in her hand when she tags the runner with the back of the hand. The ball does not come in contact with the runner.

**RULING:** The runner is “Out”. Touching a runner with the hand or glove which holds the ball is the same as being touched with the ball.

402. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground toward 1st. The infielder picks up the ball in the glove and runs toward the baseline and tags the advancing batter-runner with the ball. The fielder juggles and then drops the ball after the tag.

**RULING:** The batter-runner is “Safe”. The first baseman did not have control of the ball and did not voluntarily release the ball.

**NOTE:** If the ball comes out of the glove and goes out of play the ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, and runners are awarded one base from the moment the ball goes out of play.

403. There are runners at 2nd and 3rd when the batter hits a pitched ball on the ground to the shortstop who fields the ball and makes a throw to home plate. R3 is trapped between third and home in a run down. The third baseman, with the ball in her possession, runs toward R3 and makes the tag. After making the tag, the third baseman loses her balance, stumbles and falls to the ground. The ball pops free of her grasp. Is R3 out on the tag or should R3 be ruled safe since the ball was dropped?

**RULING:** The runner is out—if the fielder lost the ball due to the tagging action then the runner is safe. In this case the tag is applied and the fielder only loses the ball after falling to the



ground. In this situation it is not the same as a catch. Contact with the ground caused the ball to drop not contact with the tag on the runner.

“After” must have some statute of limitation and means the ball is dropped as a direct result of the fielder making the tag. In order to rule a runner safe there must be a cause and effect relationship between the tag and the dropped ball. If the fielder clearly has possession of the ball at the time of the tag and immediately after (sufficient time to establish and maintain secure possession during the tagging process) then the runner is “Out”.

404. The first baseman fields a ground ball in fair territory. In a race to 1st, the first baseman lunges and legally tags the batter-runner on the hip prior to the BR touching 1st. The fielder’s momentum causes him to fall to the ground where the ball pops out of his glove.

RULING: The runner is out. The tag is applied and control is established. Contact with the ground caused the ball to drop out of the glove. This is different than a fielder catching the ball and falling to the ground.

405. The batter beats out a fair batted ball by sliding into and touching 1st. The batter-runner’s momentum causes the batter-runner to lose contact with the base. The first baseman then tags the batter-runner with the ball.

RULING: The base umpire should rule the batter-runner “Safe” at 1st. The over sliding action is ruled the same as over running the base. The batter-runner would only be in jeopardy if the runner attempted to advance toward 2nd.

CLARIFICATION: A runner is only in jeopardy of being put out if a runner over slides 2nd or 3rd base and is subsequently tagged with the ball while off the base.

406. There are runners at 1st and 3rd with two outs. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground to the shortstop that fields the ball and then drops it. The infielder recovers the ball and throws it to 2nd. R1 beats the infielders throw to 2nd but over-slides the base and is tagged with the ball. R3 scores before R1 is tagged out. Does the run count?

RULING: R3’s run does count. The force out on R1 is removed when R1 touches 2nd. This is now a timing play and if the runner from 3rd scored before the tag, the run would count.

407. There is a runner on 1st with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball sharply to the gap in deep right field. R1 leaves 1st at the crack of the bat, touches and rounds 2nd on her way to third when the right fielder dives for the sinking line drive and “one hops” the ball into her glove. R1, thinking the fielder has made the catch, turns and starts back to 1st retouching 2nd on the way. The offensive coach motions and yells at R1 when she is half way between 2nd and 1st, for R1 to go back to 2nd as the fly ball was trapped. R1 reverses direction and makes a head first slide into 2nd just as the ball

arrives from the outfield. The thrown ball is caught by the infielder who is standing on 2nd just before R1 slides into the base.

**RULING:** R1 is “Safe” as no tag was made.

**CLARIFICATION:** As R1 had legally attained 2<sup>nd</sup> and did not retouch 1<sup>st</sup>, they are still considered to have attained 2<sup>nd</sup>, therefore no force play at 2<sup>nd</sup>.

## **RULE 9 – DEAD BALL OR BALL IN PLAY**

There are numerous situations contained in this casebook which clarify the rules which are reviewed under Rule 9. The following additional examples are a brief review of dead ball, ball in play, and delayed dead ball.

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### **Dead Ball**

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1. There is a runner at 1st. The batter illegally bats a pitched ball on the ground to the shortstop and the second baseman obstructs R1 advancing toward 2nd.

**RULING:** The umpire should rule “Dead Ball” on the illegally batted ball and the batter is “Out”. The obstruction is ignored because it happened after the dead ball call. R1 must return to 1st.

2. There is a runner at 1st. The batter hits a pitched ball on a line toward the shortstop who allows the ball to hit his glove and then drop to the ground.

**RULING:** The batter is “Out”, and the ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, because of the intentionally dropped ball. R1 is returned to 1st.

3. The batter swings at a pitched ball and hits the ball fair. The pitched ball contacted part or all of the batter’s hand while he was holding the bat.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, and a “Strike” is called on the batter. The batter’s hands are not considered part of the bat.

4. The batter hits a pitched ball over the outfield fence for a home run. The batter-runner falls down as he attempts to run the bases and is injured. The batter-runner is unable to continue to play.

**RULING:** A substitute runner shall be permitted for the batter and that player shall be allowed to circle the bases so that the home run can be allowed.

5. (FP) A bunted ball, rolling along the third baseline in foul territory, is ruled “Foul” by the plate umpire. After the foul call and signal, the bunted ball rolls into fair territory before the base and is touched by the infielder.

**RULING:** The plate umpire’s call stands. The batted ball remains a “Foul Ball”.

**CLARIFICATION:** Once a foul ball is called it cannot be changed.

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## Ball in Play

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6. A pitched ball is hit hard on the ground. The batted ball deflects off the second baseman and makes contact with the base umpire.

RULING: The ball remains live and in play. This is not umpire's interference because the ball touched or passed an infielder before the ball contacted the umpire.

7. The batter hits a pitched ball for a single to right field. The batter-runner attempts to stretch the hit into a double. The outfielders throw hits the base umpire and allows the batter-runner to arrive safely at 2nd.

RULING: The batter-runner is "Safe" at 2nd. There is no interference when an umpire is struck by a thrown ball.

8. The batter hits a pitched ball on a line shot which deflects off 1st and hits a photographer, who has been assigned to the game, in foul territory. The batter-runner tries to stretch the hit into a double but is thrown "Out" at 2nd.

RULING: The batter-runner is "Out". The ball remains live and in play after it hits a photographer assigned to the game.

CLARIFICATION: When a photographer/media is on the playing field, the plate umpire should inform both team managers (preventative umpiring), that the ball is live and in play should a batted or thrown ball hit a photographer assigned to the game. The ball would still remain live even if the umpire failed to inform the managers.

NOTE: Media authorized to be on the playing field must not use tripods but are permitted to use a monopod. All media personnel must be able to move to avoid being hit by an overthrow or batted ball. Should they accidentally be hit, the ball remains live. All photographic equipment must be on the photographer. No equipment can be left on the ground.

9. There are runners at 1st and 2nd with none out. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air to the outfield where the fielder catches the fly ball. R2 tags properly and advances toward 3rd. R1 left 1st before the ball was touched by the outfielder. Before "Time" is granted because there is continuous action by the defence, the ball is thrown to 1st where a proper live ball appeal is made for out number two. R2, at 3rd, notices the infielder delaying in making the appeal and advances toward home plate.

RULING: A legal advance and the ball is live.

10. There is a runner at 1st with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball for a double. R1 scores but misses 2nd. The ball is returned to the infield and the umpire calls "Time". The pitcher receives the ball in the eight foot circle and the umpire says "Play Ball". The pitcher quickly, and without prior notification to the umpire, throws the ball toward 2nd to appeal R1 missing

the base. While throwing the ball toward 2nd, the batter-runner advances toward 3rd.

**RULING:** (FP) A legal advance by the batter-runner at 2nd. R1 would be declared “Out” when the live ball appeal is completed.

(SP) There is no eight foot circle in Slo-Pitch. The ball is dead “Time” as soon as the pitcher throws the ball to 2nd. The BR at 2nd cannot advance to 3rd.

11. The umpire on a close play at 3rd calls a runner safe. The third baseman in reaction to the safe call, complains and then bumps the umpire and is quickly ejected. During the confrontation, R2 advances toward home. The third baseman, after his ejection, now throws the ball to the catcher who tags R2 for an out. Is R2 really out or is the ball dead after the infielder is ejected?

**RULING:** F5’s actions warrant an ejection. The umpire should wait until all play has ceased before administering the ejection. In this case R2 would be out and, after play has ceased, F5 would then be ejected.

If the umpire does call TIME prematurely after being bumped, the umpires should award R2 the base he would have attained if TIME had not been called. In this case, it would be likely that the umpires would place R2 back on 3<sup>rd</sup> base.

12. R3, one out. Batter hits a pitched ball in the air to shallow left field. In disgust the batter throws his bat against the backstop. The outfielder drops the ball and R3 a) scores or b) is thrown out at home.

**RULING:** The umpire should allow the play to continue until all play is complete. In a) R3’s run will count while in b) R3 will be ruled out. Once play is complete the umpire will call TIME, eject the BR and ask the coach to provide a substitute who will be placed at the base the BR had attained when TIME was called.

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### **Delayed Dead Ball**

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13. A runner is obstructed while running the bases. The runner is thrown out at the base she would have reached had she not been obstructed.

**RULING:** The base umpire should call “Obstruction”, and signal a Delayed Dead Ball with the left arm. The umpires shall rule the ball dead, “Dead Ball”, when the runner is called out. The runner is awarded the base she would have reached had she not been obstructed.

14. A runner is obstructed while running the bases. The runner advances to and is thrown out at the base beyond the base she would have reached had she not been obstructed.

**RULING:** The base umpire should call “Obstruction”, and signal a “Delayed Dead Ball” with the left arm. Because the runner tried to advance beyond the base the umpire would have awarded her, the umpire shall rule the runner “Out”. The ball remains live.

15. The pitcher commits an illegal act while delivering the ball to the batter.

**RULING:** The plate or base umpire should call “Illegal Pitch” and signal a “Delayed Dead Ball” with the left arm.

16. R1, R2. The BR hits a ball deep to left field and is obstructed rounding first base. R2 scores easy but the ball is thrown home to make a play on R1. The BR returned to and touches first base after being obstructed. As the play is made on R1 at the plate the BR runs to second base. The catcher throws to second base and the BR is called out. Is the out call correct or is the BR returned to first base or perhaps second base because s/he cannot be called out between the bases where s/he was obstructed?

**RULING:** The BR should be awarded second base as that is the base they would have originally obtained had there been no obstruction. The fact that the BR returned to first base does not nullify the protection they are entitled to as a result of the obstruction.

**CLARIFICATION:** A runner is in jeopardy if they successfully advance to the base they would have attained had there been no obstruction and a subsequent play is made on another runner.

## **RULE 10 - UMPIRES**

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### **Duties**

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1. The bases are loaded. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air to center field. The two outfielders, trying to make the catch, collide and both are injured. All the runners advance and cross home plate before the defence can retrieve the batted ball.

**RULING:** All four runs count. The ball does not become dead when a player is injured during a batted or thrown ball. “Time” shall not be granted by the umpire(s) until no further play is possible.

**EXCEPTION:** Play will be stopped “Time” when, in the umpire’s judgment, a serious injury occurs which may put the player(s) in danger. If the umpire stops the play due to the injury he can award runner/s bases he thinks they would have achieved had the play been allowed to continue.

2. The batter hits a pitched ball down along the first base foul line. The pitcher quickly grabs the ground ball and lunges toward the batter-runner. The ball

is accidentally stuffed into the back pocket of the runner who continues around the bases until he scores or is tackled by the fielders.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, “Dead Ball”, and the batter-runner is awarded 1st, one base from the time of the blocked ball.

3. A defensive player, except the catcher, is standing in foul territory when the ball is pitched to the batter. The umpire(s) did notice the infraction, but not until the pitcher released the pitched ball. The batter hits the pitched ball (a) to the outfield, or above the infield for an out, or assisted out by any fielder, or (b) for a single.

**RULING:** In (a) the ball is dead “Dead Ball” as soon as the defence makes an out, and a “No pitch” is declared. The batter bats again assuming the count before the no pitch.

(b) The single would stand. The umpires shall not penalize a team for an infraction of a rule when imposing the penalty would be to the advantage of the offending team.

4. There are none out with runners at 1st and 3rd. An illegal substitute bats and hits a pitched ball on the ground. The defensive team turns the double play on R1 and the batter-runner. In (a) R3 stays at 3rd, or (b) R3 scores. The offensive coach notifies the plate umpire that the batter was illegal and appeals that the batter should be out, R1 should return to 1st, and R3 remain at 3rd.

**RULING:** In (a, b) the plate umpire will not nullify the hit to move R1 back to 1st. The hit resulted in a double play and both R1 and the BR are “Out”. In (a) R3 did not advance as a result of the hit and remains at 3rd. In (b) R3’s run counts. Once the offending team brought the illegal substitute to the attention of the umpire he becomes a legal substitute. All actions prior to this are legal.

**NOTE:** The illegal substitute appeal is only made by the non-offending team while the illegal substitute is in the game. If the offending team brings it to the umpires attention prior to an appeal the player becomes a legal substitute. It should be noted that all outs obtained on an illegal substitution appeal stand.

5. (FP) There is a runner at 1st with one out. An illegal player hits a pitch ball on the ground. The defence turns a double play. The offensive coach notifies the umpire the illegal player is his DP who was not on the line-up card to start the game. He wants the umpire to call his illegal player out and return R1 to 1st base

**RULING:** The play stands because once the coach brings the illegal player to the attention of the umpire he becomes a legal substitute for the scheduled next batter. The umpire should explain to the coach he has not used a DP and the player is simply an illegal substitute for the player who was to bat after the last batter.

CLARIFICATION: The umpires should not penalize a team for an infraction of a rule, when imposing the penalty would be to the advantage of the offending team.

6. There is one out with runners at 1st and 3rd. An illegal re-entry or substitute bats. The illegal player hits a pitched ball on the ground and the defensive team turns the double play on R1 and the batter-runner. In (a) R3 stays at 3rd, or (b) R3 scores. The offensive coach notifies the plate umpire that the batter was illegal and appeals that the batter should be out. R1 and R3 should return to their respective bases.

RULING: In both (a, b) the plate umpire will not nullify the hit to move R1 back to 1st. The hit resulted in a double play, for the second and third out.

TIP: Even though R3 advanced and scored the run would not count, because the third out was a force out situation. The defensive team can appeal this situation and keep the outs they obtained on the play. In this particular play they would get three outs.

7. The defensive or offensive team does not like the base umpire's call. They feel he may have been blocked from seeing the play and request that he ask his partner for the correct ruling.

RULING: An umpire may consult with fellow umpire(s) at any time. However, the final decision shall rest with the umpire whose exclusive authority it was to make the call, and who requested the opinion of the other umpire(s).

8. The umpires have checked the bats and helmets before the game started, and have notified the team managers that some illegal bats and cracked helmets should not be used. The umpires notice one of the players using the same illegal equipment previously removed at some point during the game.

RULING: The player using the illegal equipment is ejected for continued use of illegal equipment and ruled ineligible.

INTERPRETATION: The player must be in the on deck circle, in a defensive position, is a runner, or at bat to be considered in violation of the continued use of illegal equipment rule.

9. There are runners at 1st and 2nd with none out. The batter hits the pitched ball to the outfield. The base umpire, seeing that the batted ball is dropping fast, stands still to watch for the potential trapped ball. The base umpire signals safe and calls "No catch" just before the plate umpire signals and calls the batter "Out" on the fly ball catch. All runners advance one base safely and the defence appeals 2nd and 1st for the runners leaving early.

RULING: The initial call and signal should have been made by the plate umpire. The initial call and signal by the base umpire is now the official call (the runners are ruled safe on the appeal). Even though the base umpire made an error in mechanics, this does not negate his call. The play would stand.

10. Two umpire system. There are runners at 1st and 2nd when the batter hits a pitched ball for a double. R2 is advancing toward home and R1 is heading for 3rd. The plate umpire hesitates at home and then moves toward 3rd when he sees the ball being thrown to 3rd. The base umpire sees the plate umpire at home and turns to move and cover the play at 3rd. Each umpire makes simultaneous calls and signals which are opposite to one another. What do you do?

**RULING:** In both FP and SP, the plate umpire's call and signal is official because it is the plate umpire's call to make.

11. There is a runner at 2nd with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball to the outfield for out number two and R2 legally advances to 3rd. The second baseman incorrectly assumes there are three out and tosses the ball to the base umpire. The umpire grabs the ball momentarily and then drops it to the ground and the runner at 3rd advances toward home. The second baseman picks up the ball and (a) throws out the runner at home, or (b) is not in time to throw out the runner at home. Does the play at the plate count?

**RULING:** The fielder erred in throwing the ball to the umpire who immediately put the ball to the ground. The ball remains live, it is not considered blocked. a) The runner is out and b) the runner scores.

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## Judgment

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12. The batter steps out of the batter's box without "Time" being granted by the plate umpire. What should you do as the plate umpire?

**RULING:** (a) If the batter steps out before the pitcher's required stop, simply indicate with your arm and hand for the pitcher "Not to Pitch".

(b) If the batter steps out during the pitcher's required stop, shout "Time" immediately and move briskly from out behind the catcher to the opposite side of the batter. Warn the batter he cannot request time once the pitcher is on the rubber and has come to his pause.

(c) If the batter steps out during the pitcher's delivery, the pitched ball remains live and declare a "Ball" or "Strike" depending on whether or not the pitch was in the strike zone or hits the strike mat.

**TIP:** In case (c), when the batter vacates the batter's box they also take the strike zone with them because the batter's stance establishes the top and bottom of the strike zone. The strike mat remains in force. If the pitcher commits an illegal pitch due to the batter calling "Time" do not penalize the pitcher. Call "No pitch" and warn the batter. A repeat offence could result in the ejection of any member of the team.



13. There is a runner at 1st and 3rd with one out. The batter hits a pitched ball to the outfield where the ball is caught for out number two. Both runners legally tag and advance to the next base. The plate umpire anticipates the throw to home and settles in for the play as the relay throw is made. The on deck batter collides with the plate umpire as the umpire moves into position and just as the ball is coming to the plate. The plate umpire gets twisted around and does not see the play. The base umpire also does not see the play at home because he is watching R1. The teams are patiently waiting for a call?

RULING: The plate umpire allows R3 to score and should call and signal "Safe". The basic premise is the runner is safe until the umpire sees the runner put out. In all cases when an umpire goes down, the play shall not be stopped until all current play has ended.

14. (FP) There is a runner at 3rd. The plate umpire, without calling "Time", turns his back on the field and sweeps off home plate. R3 attempts to score and collides with the plate umpire.

RULING: When the plate umpire made the move to sweep home plate, "Time" is judged to have been called. The ball is dead and R3 is sent back to 3rd.

15. (FP) R3 moves off 3rd after a pitch to the batter. The pitcher, after receiving the ball back from the catcher, legally plays R3 back to 3rd. While the ball is live, an infielder, pitcher and catcher meet inside the eight foot circle to consult. R3, seeing home plate unprotected, leaves 3rd and touches home plate.

RULING: Whenever players move from their position to meet "TIME" should be called and signalled by the umpire. This is preventative umpiring and may protect R3 from being called out for a lead-off because the pitcher has the ball in the eight foot circle.

16. (FP) R1 steals 2nd with the pitch. The catcher throws the ball to 2nd, as the plate umpire calls the pitch ball four. The throw is in time and the base umpire calls R1 out. As R1 leaves for the dugout, the base umpire realizes the batter has been walked and R1 is entitled to 2nd. The defence tags R1 after he leaves the base and before he can safely return.

RULING: Reverse the call and place R1 on 2nd because the base umpire called R1 out in error.

17. The batter hits a pitched ball in the air deep to the outfield. The base umpire goes out, as the batted ball appears to be a home run, and signals a home run. The batter-runner sees the call and slows up going around 2nd. The outfielder picks up the ball after it lands in fair territory and throws the ball to an infielder who relays the ball to the catcher. The batter-runner is called out on a close play at the plate.

**RULING:** Once the umpire incorrectly signalled home run the ball is dead. The umpire placed the runner in jeopardy by his actions so he should not be called out. Send the runner back to 3rd base or possibly even home if it would have easily been attained.

18. There are runners on 2nd and 3rd with one out. The batter hits the next pitched ball on the ground to the shortstop. The infielder scoops up the ground ball and attempts to tag R2 who is advancing toward 3<sup>rd</sup>. R2 stops to avoid the tag and steps backward toward 2nd. The base umpire incorrectly calls "Dead Ball" and rules R2 out for stepping backwards toward a base. The offence protests the game. What is your ruling?

**RULING:** The protest is valid. "Do Over," send runners back to 2nd and 3rd and have the batter go back to bat with the count that was in effect before the last pitch.

The umpire has misinterpreted a rule in this situation and has incorrectly called the runner out. At the same time, he took away an opportunity for the defence to get a possible double play or at a least a non-protestable out call at 1st.

19. Visiting team ahead in the bottom of the seventh inning by one run with a runner at third and two outs. The batter bunts (FP) or hits (SP) a pitched ball on the ground. The ball rolls out towards the pitcher's plate slowly. Simultaneously a second ball from another diamond or another source lands about a foot from the originally hit ball. Four players converge on the hit ball (the catcher, pitcher, 1st baseman and 3rd baseman). The players have a chance for a play for an out at 1st base. No umpire has called time yet. One of the defensive players picks up one of the balls and makes a play on the BR at 1st for an out. In the mean time R3 has scored to tie the game. What is your ruling?

**RULING:** The umpire correctly did not call time when the second ball appeared. Play should be allowed to continue until all play has ceased. The umpire crew should then conference. The first thing that needs to be determined is whether the correct ball was thrown to 1st.

If the correct ball was played to 1st then the BR is out and R3's run would not count.

If the umpires are unable to determine which ball was thrown or if the incorrect ball was thrown, the call must be R3 back to 3rd and the batter goes back to bat with the ball and strike count prior to the last pitch.

20. (FP) There is a runner on 2nd with two outs and the batter has a count of one ball and one strike. The plate umpire calls the next pitch a strike and makes a zipper action reserved for third strike calls. R2 steps off 2nd and the catcher throws the ball to an infielder who tags R2 out.

**RULING:** R2 is not out. The umpire's actions placed the runner in jeopardy so put the runner back to second base.

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## Signals

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21. The batter is not ready to assume the batting position. However, the pitcher is standing on the pitcher's plate ready to pitch.

**RULING:** The plate umpire should indicate to the pitcher to hold the pitch by signalling with an outstretched arm (opposite to the batter) along with the palm of the hand facing the pitcher.

## RULE 11 - PROTESTS

1. The defensive team protests that a run should not count because the play was a third out, force out.

**RULING:** The protest is valid since it involves a rule interpretation.

2. The offensive team protests the base umpire's call at 1st base.

**RULING:** The protest is denied since it involves the base umpire's judgment.

3. The offensive team protests the plate umpire's call that a batted ball was fair or foul.

**RULING:** The protest is denied since it involves the plate umpire's judgment.

4. R1 is obstructed, and then played on, while attempting to reach 2nd. The base umpire rules obstruction and returns R1 to 1st. The offensive manager lodges a protest.

(a) Before a pitch to the batter, or

(b) After a pitch to the batter, or

(c) At the end of the game.

**RULING:** In (a) the protest is accepted.

(b, c) the protest is denied since it was not made before the next pitch, legal or illegal.

**CLARIFICATION:** In (a) the coach may question the umpire's interpretation of the rule, believing that the umpire should be awarding 2<sup>nd</sup> base as that is where they would have reached if they had not been obstructed.

# Softball Canada

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(Include "Casebook" in the subject line and all the information requested below.)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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Please check one:

Umpire

Coach

Player

Other

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**RULE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **SECTION:** \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the Situation:

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