

2013 NFHS Softball Rules Interpretations

Publisher's Note: The National Federation of State High School Associations is the only source of official high school interpretations. They do not set aside nor modify any rule. They are made and published by the NFHS in response to situations presented.

CORRECTIONS, RULES BOOK:

- Page 36: Rule 3-6-1 Penalty - delete the word Penalty after "See also 7-4-2"
- Page 56: Rule 7-3-2 should read as follows: A batter shall not permit a pitched ball, that is only partially in the batter's box, to touch her. An attempt to avoid being hit by the pitch is required. PENALTY: (Art. 2) The batter remains at bat (pitch is a ball or strike), unless the pitch was strike three or ball four. (8-1-2f)
- Page 68: Rule 8-6-18 Penalty - correct (Art. 20, 21) to read (Arts. 17, 18)
- Page 81: Softball Rules by State Association Adoption; third reference down should be 1-3-3. Note instead of 1-3-6 Note.
- Page 82: Hit Batter Awards (8-1-2 Penalty 1) - Third sentence down, eliminate the wording "no attempt is made to avoid being hit or"
- Page 82: Points of Emphasis - second sentence, replace baseball with softball

CORRECTIONS, CASE BOOK:

- Page 7: 1.5.2 Situation A - Ruling should read "Provided the device is against or over the knob (not used as a "choke-up" device) and securely attached, this would be legal."
- Page 8: top of page, at the end of the sentence, replace "bas" with bat.
- Page 8: 1-5-2 Situation C - fifth line down in the Ruling, replace "bas" with bat.
- Page 41: 6-2-2 Situation C, New Ruling - In (a), the coach of the team at bat has the option of the play or the penalty for an illegal pitch. In (b) and (c), since the batter and all runners advanced at least one base, the illegal pitch is nullified and no option is given to the offended team.

SITUATION 1: The pitcher, while standing on the pitcher's plate taking her signal from the catcher, tosses the ball back and forth between her glove and pitching hand several times. Once she receives the signal, she then brings her hands together and pitches the ball. **RULING:** The ball must remain in one hand or the other while the pitcher takes or simulates taking the signal. If she is tossing the ball back and forth from one hand to the other while taking the signal, it would be considered an illegal pitch (for not taking the signal with the ball being held in one or the other). The illegal pitch would be called the first time the pitcher's hands come together and then separate while tossing the ball back and forth. **COMMENT:** If the pitcher flipped the ball back and forth between the hand and glove without actually bringing the hands together, then held the ball in the hand or glove while taking the signal and started the pitch, her actions would be legal. (6-1-1a,b)

SITUATION 2: With R1 on third base and R2 on first base, B3 hits the ball to F3, who throws home. The throw carries F2 into the plate umpire. F2's arm strikes the umpire while attempting to throw to third, causing a wild throw into left field. **RULING:** This is not considered interference. Play would continue. (5-1-1f1; 8-5-6)**COMMENT:** Since this has happened during playing action, the umpire is considered part of the playing field. Umpires should do everything possible to avoid contact with the offense or defense, but there are times when contact simply cannot be avoided.

SITUATION 3: A pitcher uses a drying agent but fails to wipe it off before touching the ball. **RULING:** The pitcher does not need to wipe the drying agent off her hands. The only restriction is not to apply it directly to the ball. (6-2-2)

SITUATION 4: With R1 on third base, F2 attempts to return the ball to F1 but her arm strikes the umpire in the mask and the throw goes into the dugout or into center field allowing R1 to score. **RULING:** The umpire should call "time" and return R1 to third base. In this situation there was no apparent play; F2 was simply returning the ball back to F1. The umpire should have both the offense and the defense reset and continue play. (10-2-3m)

SITUATION 5: A pitcher places her hands in the dirt; however, she does not wipe the dirt from her hands before touching the ball. **RULING:** The pitcher does not need to wipe the dirt from her hands before going to the ball. Dirt is NOT a foreign substance; it is part of the field. The pitcher cannot, however, rub the ball into the dirt and deface it. (6-2-2)

SITUATION 6: If the batter reaches first base safely and each other runner advances at least one base, the illegal pitch is ignored. **RULING:** All action stands and the illegal pitch is cancelled. (6-1-1 Exception)

SITUATION 7: Is the stinger attachment legal for the knob? **RULING:** Yes, provided it is covering the knob and the umpire has inspected the bat to ensure it is safely attached. (1-5-2a)

SITUATION 8: The coach gives the runner, who has been walked, a "high five" on her way to first base. **RULING:** Legal, as long as the coach has not assisted the batter-runner by pulling or pushing her. (2-32-1; 8-6-5)

SITUATION 9: The umpire discovers a bat that has a knob flush with the handle. **RULING:** Legal. (1-5-1; 1-5-2a)

SITUATION 10: The coach, standing in the coach's box, is in possession of an iPad that she uses as a scorebook. **RULING:** Legal. (2-13; 3-6-10)

SITUATION 11: The runner positions herself behind and not in contact with a base to get a running start on any fly ball. **RULING:** The base umpire should signal the out when the violation occurs and the ball remains live. (8-6-20)