

## CASE BOOK—2015

My fellow umpires, welcome to the 2015 Slow Pitch CASE BOOK. As you will see, there are no mechanics online at this time. Your State or Area Umpire-In-Chief will be able to give you those guidelines.

If you have any comments, need further interpretation or you would like a particular play or situation to be addressed, please send the information to [rick.robertson@usssa.com](mailto:rick.robertson@usssa.com) or mail to the following address:

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## 1 --- PLAYING FIELD

**1. Situation:** In the top of the 1st inning with the bases loaded and no outs, F1 says the pitching rubber is too close. The league director measures the distance of the pitching rubber to home plate and discovers it is off by 2 or 3 feet.

**Ruling:** Move the pitching rubber to the correct distance so that the Pitching Area will be correct as well and continue the game from that point.

**Rule:** 1-3B (This play or situation is not specifically covered in the book.)

**2. Situation:** When is a batter's foot considered to be inside the batter's box?

**Ruling:** The batter is considered to be in the batter's box when neither foot is in contact with the ground completely outside the line of the batter's box. It is permissible for the feet to be touching the boundary lines which form the batter's box, since the lines are part of the box. The batter may legally hit the ball with one foot in the box and the other foot in the air outside the box, and then making contact with the ground outside the box with the airborne foot.

**Rule:** 1-5, 3-Batter's Box, 3-Illegally batted ball

**3. Situation:** B1 takes a position in the batter's box with his rear foot directly on the back lines of the batter's box.

**Ruling:** This is legal since the lines are considered part of the batter's box.

**Rule:** 1-5, 3-Batter's Box

**4. Situation:** It has been common practice for many years for some coaches to put one foot outside the coach's box or stand astride or otherwise be slightly outside the coaching box lines. The coach shall not be considered out of the box unless the opposing manager complains, and the Umpire shall strictly enforce the rule and require all coaches (on both teams) to remain in the coach's box at all times. It is also common practice for a coach who has a play at his base to leave the coach's box to signal the player to slide, advance, or return to a base.

**Ruling:** This may be allowed if the coach does not interfere with the play in any manner.

**Rule:** 1-8, 5-8

**5. Situation:** F2's feet are inside the catcher's box, and he is reaching out and placing his catching hand and glove on the ground behind home plate.

**Ruling:** It is permissible providing the batter does not complain to the Umpire that the catcher's glove is distracting his concentration.

**Rule:** 1-6, 3-Catcher's Box, 5-1C, 5-7, 6-6A

## 2 --- EQUIPMENT

**1. Situation:** The words "Official Softball" are no longer clearly visible on the bat, but the bat meets all other criteria of a legal bat.

**Ruling:** The bat is legal.

**Rule:** 2-2C, 2-2L-2

**2. Situation:** R1 and R2 are on 2nd and 3rd respectively, with no outs. B3 has a count of 2-1. B3 then requests and is granted time and changes from a wooden bat to a metal bat.

**Ruling:** This is legal. B3 may use a wooden or metal bat as he so desired.

**Rule:** 2-2A-2B

**3. Situation:** B1 comes to the plate with a wooden bat which has no tape on the handle or an aluminum bat which does not have a safety grip.

**Ruling:** Both bats are illegal; B1 is not permitted to use such a bat.

**Rule:** 2-2

**4. Situation:** The on deck batter is using (a) metal bar with a taped handle (b) a donut attached to his bat to warm up.

**Ruling:** Both are illegal. (a) Umpires must remove the metal bar from the playing field. (b) Only bats, weighted bats, or USSSA approved bat weight attachments may be used when loosening up. Nothing like a donut or fan may be used when loosening up.

**Rule:** 2-2B

**5. Situation:** B1 swings and hits a ball that comes to rest on home plate.

**Ruling:** The Umpire should signal fair ball.

**Rule:** 2-4

**6. Situation:** The Umpire notices F7 has metal cleats on in the 3rd inning. F7 says he has no other shoes.

**Ruling:** This is not legal; F7 must change shoes. Metal cleats are not allowed. All players must wear shoes; therefore, F7 is removed from the game if he has no other shoes.

**Rule:** 2-9

**7. Situation:** During the course of the game, the Umpire notices R3, F6, and the coach are wearing batting helmets.

**Ruling:** Any player has the option to wear helmets if they so desire.

**Rule:** 2-11C

**8. Situation:** The Umpire notices that a female player is wearing a pair of large looped earrings.

**Ruling:** The Umpire can ask player to remove these earrings or any other exposed items that are judged to be dangerous or potentially dangerous by the Umpire, and may not be worn during the game.

**Rule:** 2-11B

**9. Situation:** B1 hits a line drive or ground ball which strikes pitchers plate and rebounds to foul territory between home and 1st base before touching anyone.

**Ruling:** This is a foul Ball.

**Rule:** 3-Foul Ball, Note

**10. Situation:** Third base becomes loose and moves partially into foul territory. On the next play, a batted ball bounces over the portion of the base in foul territory.

**Ruling:** It is a fair ball if the base is in a reasonable location.

**Rule:** 3-Fair Ball

**11. Situation:** The Umpire detects 1st base is not moored to ground.

**Ruling:** He shall declare "Time" as soon as no further play is imminent and order the immediate repair or replacement of the defective equipment.

**Rule:** 2-7, 10-9B

**12. Situation:** F1 is wearing a red, white and blue glove.

**Ruling:** This is legal. Multicolored gloves are legal for all players.

**Rule:** 2-8B

**13. Situation:** Who may wear a mitt?

**Ruling:** Only F2 and F3. All other fielders must wear gloves. The penalty for making a catch with an illegal glove is the catch will be nullified.

**Rule:** 2-8A, 8-7C, EFFECT 7C

**14. Situation:** F9 leaves his glove on the field in fair territory.

**Ruling:** Have a member of the team retrieve the glove and place it in dugout area.

**Rule:** 2-12

### 3 --- DEFINITIONS

*(The following official notes apply to paragraphs identified by definitions in R3).*

**1. Ball:** If the pitched ball touches the ground and bounces through the strike zone it is a "ball." If the batter swings at such a pitch, it is a strike. If the batter hits such a pitch, the ensuing action shall be the same as if he hit the ball in flight.

**Rule:** 3-Batted Ball

**2. Catch:** A catch is legal if the ball is finally held by a fielder, even though juggled, or held

by another fielder before it touches the ground. The determining factor will be if the ball was controlled in the glove hand or the throwing hand. Runners may leave their base the instant the first fielder touches a fly ball. A fielder may reach over a fence, railing, rope, or other line of demarcation to make a catch. He may jump on top of the railing, or canvas that may be in foul ground. No interference should be allowed when a fielder reaches over a fence, railing, rope, or into a stand to catch a ball. He does so at his own risk. When a batted ball or pitch is involved, the above definition of catch applies. For any other thrown ball, the term is used loosely to also apply to a pick-up or to the trapping of a low throw which has touched the ground. A fielder may be grasping the ball even though it is touching the ground while in the glove.

**Rule:** 3-Catch

**3. Situation:** F7 dives and catches a fly ball. Upon contacting the ground, he drops the ball.

**Ruling:** This is **not** a catch. If simultaneously or immediately following his contact with the ball, he collides with a wall, a fence, another person, or if he falls down and as a result drops the ball, it shall not be ruled a valid catch.

**Rule:** 3-Catch

**4. Situation:** F7 catches a fly ball in his glove. He takes the ball from his glove and while attempting a throw, drops the ball.

**Ruling:** This is a legal catch. The batter is out. Dropping the ball while attempting to throw it shall not invalidate the catch.

**Rule:** 3-Catch

**5. Situation:** B1 hits a line drive which, after passing F3, strikes the Umpire while the ball is over fair ground. The ball ricochets and is fielded by F4 before the ball touches the ground.

**Ruling:** This is not a catch. The ball, which strikes anything other than a defensive player while it is still in flight, is ruled the same as if it struck the ground. B1 would have to be thrown out or tagged out.

**Rule:** 3-Catch, 9-2K

**6. Fair Ball:** If a fly ball lands in the infield between home and 1st base, or home and 3rd base, and then bounces to foul territory without touching a player or Umpire and before passing 1st or 3rd base, it is a foul ball; or if the ball settles on foul territory or is touched by a player on foul territory, it is a foul ball. If any fielder fields such a

foul ball to 1st base, the batter is not out. If a fly ball lands in fair territory, it is a fair hit. A fair fly shall be judged according to the relative position of the ball and the foul line, including the foul pole, and not as to whether the fielder is on 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.

**Rule:** 3-Fair Ball, 3-Foul Ball

**7. Situation: (A) Force Play:**

**Example:** A Runner is on first, there is one out, and the ball is hit sharply to the first baseman who touches the base. The batter-runner is out. The force is removed at that moment and the runner advancing to 2nd must be tagged. If there had been a runner on 3rd or 2nd and either of these runners had scored before the tag-out at 2nd the run counts. Had the 1st baseman thrown to 2nd for the out and the ball then had been returned to 1st, the play at 2nd was a force out, making two outs, and the return throw to 1st ahead of the runner would have made three outs. In that case, no run would score.

**Rule:** 3-A Force Out

**Situation: (B) Not A Force Play**

**Example:** There is one out with runners on 1st and 3rd. The batter flies out. There are now two outs. The runner on 3rd tags up and scores, the runner on 1st tries to retouch before the throw from the fielder reaches the 1st baseman, but he does not get back in time and is out. This now makes three outs. If, in Umpire's judgment, the runner from 3rd touched home base before the ball was held at 1st base, the run counts.

**Rule:** 8-5, EFFECT Sec. 5 S-T

**8. Foul Ball:** The exact position of the ball determines whether it is foul or fair, not the position of the fielder's body when he touches the ball. Without touching a fielder, a batted ball hits the pitcher's rubber and rebounds over the catcher's head, or to foul territory between home and 1st, or between home and 3rd base. This is a foul.

**Rule:** 3-Foul Ball, Note

**9. Interference:** The question of intentional or unintentional interference shall be decided on the basis of a person's action.

**Example:** A bat boy, ball attendant, policeman, etc. who tries to avoid being touched by a



thrown or batted ball but still is touched by the ball would be involved in unintentional interference. If, however, he kicks the ball or picks it up or pushes it, that is considered intentional interference, regardless of what his thought may have been.

**Rule:** 3-Interference, B

**10. Situation:** The batter hits the ball to the shortstop, who fields the ball and throws wild past the 1st baseman. The offensive coach at 1st base, to avoid being hit by the wild thrown ball, runs in to F3, the batter-runner finally ends up on 3rd base. The question is asked whether the Umpire should call interference on the part of the coach. This would be up to the judgment of the Umpire and if the Umpire felt that the coach did all he could to avoid interfering with the play no interference need be called. If it appeared to the Umpire that the coach was obviously making it appear he was trying to interfere, the Umpire should rule interference.

There is a difference between a ball which has been thrown or batted into the stands and touching a spectator, thereby being out of play even though it rebounds onto the field, and a spectator going onto the field or reaching over, under or through a barrier and touching a ball in play or touching or otherwise interfering with a player. In the latter case, it is clearly intentional and shall be dealt with as intentional interference. The batter and runners shall be placed where, in the Umpire's judgment, they would have been had the interference not occurred. No interference shall be allowed when a fielder reaches over a fence, railing, rope, or into a stand to catch a ball. He does so at his own risk. However, should it spectator reach out on the playing field side of such fence, railing or rope, and plainly prevent the fielder from catching the ball then the batsman should be called out for the spectator's interference.

**Example:** A runner is on 3rd base with one out and the batter hits a fly ball deep to the outfield (fair or foul). A spectator clearly interferes with the outfielder attempting to catch the fly ball. The Umpire calls the batter out for spectator interference and the ball is dead at the time of the call. The Umpire decides that, because of the distance the ball was hit, the runner on 3rd base would have scored after the catch if the fielder had caught the ball which was interfered with; therefore, the runner is permitted to score. This might not be the case if such fly ball was interfered with only a short distance from home plate.

**Rule:** 3-Interference, B

**11. Offensive Interference:** In the event the batter-runner has not reached 1st base, all runners shall return to the base last occupied at the time of the pitch.

**Rule:** 3-Interference, 8-10D

**12. Obstruction:** If a fielder is about to receive a thrown ball, and if the ball is in flight directly toward and near enough to the fielder, such that he must occupy his position to receive the ball he may be considered "in the act of fielding a ball." It is entirely up to the judgment of the Umpire as to whether a fielder is in the act of fielding a ball. After a fielder has made an attempt to field a ball and missed it, he can no longer be in the "act of fielding" that ball. For example: An infielder dives at a ground ball and the ball passes him and he continues to lie on the ground and delays the progress of the runner he can be judged to have obstructed the runner.

**Rule:** 3-Obstruction

### **13. Playing Field Catch Situations:**

The playing field includes both fair and foul territory, and any other areas beyond the playing field that are defined as being outside the playing field (dead ball area). Any wall, fence, barricade, rope, wire, or a marked or imaginary line are considered a part of the playing field, hence any areas beyond these boundaries are outside the playing field. A fielder's status is determined by the location of the fielder's feet, and when a foot is touching a boundary line or the playing field inside the boundary line, the fielder has not left the playing field. However, if his foot or feet are in contact with the area beyond the boundary line, he is out of play. Umpires may use the following guides to determine the status of a fielder following the catch of a batted or thrown live ball: (1) It is a catch when the fielder catches the ball before he touches the dead ball area, (2) If, after making the catch, neither his feet nor body comes in contact with the dead ball area, the ball remains live; (3) if after making the catch either foot comes in contact with the dead ball area, the ball becomes dead; (4) if the ball is caught after the fielder has established a position outside the playing field, it is not a legal catch; (5) if in the air at the time of the catch, the area that he jumped from determines the status of the fielder. One must also keep in mind that whenever a dead ball follows a catch, there are instances when one or more runners may be awarded bases.

**14. Situation:** R1 is on 3rd and R2 is on 2nd. B1 hits a sacrifice fly and R1 tags and scores. The defense now decides to intentionally walk B2 and does so. The defensive team now decides to appeal that R1 left 3rd early.

**Ruling:** The defense lost their right to appeal when they intentionally walked B2 because even though no pitch has been thrown 3 balls have been issued.

**Rule:** 3-Appeal Play

**15. Situation:** F1 delivers a fairly delivered pitch to B1. This pitch comes inside and strikes B1's bat and goes into fair territory.

**Ruling:** This is a fair ball. No intent to hit the ball is necessary.

**Rule:** 3-Batted Ball

**16. Situation:** B1 steps on home plate as he hits the ball. The ball rolls foul.

**Ruling:** B1 is declared out. It doesn't make any difference whether the ball is hit fair or foul.

**Rule:** 3-Illegally Batted Ball

**17. Situation:** A batted ball first hits foul ground and, without touching any foreign object, rolls into fair territory between 1st and home, or 3rd and home, where it settles.

**Ruling:** This is a fair ball.

**Rule:** 3-Fair Ball

**18. Situation:** A batted ball first hits home plate and, without touching any foreign object, settles on fair ground between the pitcher's rubber and home plate.

**Ruling:** This is a fair ball.

**Rule:** 3-Fair Ball

**19. Situation:** B3 hits line drive or ground hit which; (a) strikes pitcher's plate; or (b) 2nd base. In either case, it rebounds to foul ground between home and 3rd before touching anyone.

**Ruling:** (a) Foul, (b) Fair hit.

**Rule:** 3-Foul Ball, 3-Fair Ball

**20. Situation:** B1 hits a ground ball which rolls along the 3rd baseline and is touched both outside and inside the line. The ball bounces directly over 3rd or touches 3rd. It settles on foul or fair ground.

**Ruling:** This is a fair ball.

**Rule:** 3-Fair Ball

**21. Situation:** F1 delivers a pitch to B1 but B1 has one foot touching home plate as he swings and misses pitch completely.

**Ruling:** A strike is called. This is not an illegally batted ball. The ball must be hit (fair or foul) to enforce the illegally batted ball.

**Rule:** 3-Dead Ball

**22. Situation:** Are line drives considered infield fly situations?

**Ruling:** No, because the ball must be hit upwards in the air to be an infield fly.

**Rule:** 3-Infield Fly

**23. Situation:** B4, in an attempt to be safe at first, slides and his momentum carries him past 1st base. Seeing this, F1 tags him with the ball.

**Ruling:** B4 is safe.

**Rule:** 3-Overslide

**24. Situation:** Is it necessary that the entire ball, when legally pitched and before it has touched the ground but not swung at, pass through the batter's strike zone to be called a strike?

**Ruling:** No. It is a strike when any part of the ball on a legal pitch enters the strike zone.

**Rule:** 3-Strike Zone

**25. Situation:** A pitch is over B1's head when it passes the plate. Because B1 is standing deep in the box the pitch is below the shoulders when it passes B1.

**Ruling:** The pitch is ruled a ball since it is to be judged as it crosses over home plate.

**Rule:** 3-Strike Zone, 7-4A

**26. Situation:** F2 has the ball in his glove when he tags R5 with the glove. Ball does not come in contact with R5.

**Ruling:** Touching with the glove or hand which holds the ball is the same as touching with the ball. R5 is out.

**Rule:** 3-Tag

**27. Situation:** F3, while lying on the ground with the ball in his right hand tags 1st base with his left hand prior to B1 reaching 1st base.

**Ruling:** B1 is out; this is a legal touch.

**Rule:** 3-Tag

## 4 --- THE GAME

**1. Situation:** The Tournament Director decides that the field is playable despite steady rain. In the 4th inning, the Umpire calls the game declaring ground unfit for play.

**Ruling:** The game is called. After a game has been started, the Umpire shall be the sole judge as to the fitness of the ground, or the intensity of the weather, for continued play.

**Rule:** 4-2

*(The following three plays concerning a regulation game apply to league games. Tournament games are normally 7 inning ball games).*

**\*2. Situation:** At the end of the 4th inning, the score is V2 and H1. There is no score in 1st half of the 5th, but in the last half of the inning H scores (a) 1 run or (b) 2 runs. In either case, game is called for rain when only one or two are out.

**Ruling:** In either case, it is a regulation game. In (a) it is a tie game, but all records count. In (b) H is the winner.

**Rule:** 4-3C

**\*3. Situation:** At the end of the 5th inning, the score is V5 and H4. In the 6th inning, V does not score and H has scored one run with 2 outs remaining when the game is called because of rain. Does the score revert to that at the end of the last completed inning?

**Ruling:** No. It is regulation tied game.

**Rule:** 4-3D

**\*4. Situation:** In the last half of the 6th inning, with R1, R2, and R3 on 3rd, 2nd, and 1st bases, respectively, B4 hits a home run, tying the score 9 to 9. The rain begins (cloud burst) and the game is called.

**Ruling:** The game is ruled a 9 to 9 tie.

**Rule:** 4-3D

**5. Situation:** B1 hits a fair untouched fly ball over the fence for a home run. B1 fails to touch first base. The defense makes a proper appeal.

**Ruling:** B1 is out. However, on those programs limiting home runs a home run will be charged for any untouched fair fly ball hit over the fence in fair territory, whether runs score or not.

**Rule:** 4-8A, Effect-3

**6. Situation:** R1 is on 3rd, R2 is on 2nd, and B3 singles to left field. R1 misses home plate, R2 follows and does touch home plate. R1, realizing his error now retouches home plate. The defense makes a proper appeal on R1. (a) 1 out (b) 2 outs

**Ruling:** (a) R1 is out and R2's run counts. (b) R1 is out and R2's run does not count. R1's out was the third out of the inning.

**Rule:** 4-7 EFFECT

**7. Situation:** In the Men's "E" program, B1 hits an untouched fly ball that hits the top of the fence and bounces over.

**Ruling:** This is a home run, and B1 is out and is ejected **offensively and it is an inning ending out**. Each subsequent time that position in the lineup is due to bat, the batter shall automatically be called out.

**Rule:** 4-8C

**Note:** Clarified in the Rule Book that the defensive team may walk the preceding batter or multiple batters to get to the position or positions in the lineup that is an out due to hitting a home run There are no base appeals when this results in the third out in an inning.

**8. Situation:** In the Men's "D" program, B1 hits a long fly ball to left field. F7 reaches to catch the ball, but the ball hits his glove and causes ball to go over the fence.

**Ruling:** This should be ruled a four base award and not included in the total of over-the-fence home runs because it was touched

**Rule:** 4-8A EFFECT

**9. Situation:** With 2 outs, R1 is on 3rd and R2 on 1st when B5 singles to short center. R1 goes home. R2 delays the advance to 2nd but touches 2nd base. R2 is then put out on an overslide, the out being made after R1 touches home plate.

**Ruling:** The run scores. The force ended as soon as R2 touched 2nd.

**Rule:** 4-5, 3-Force Out

**10. Situation:** The manager reenters a starting player but fails to announce this reentry to the Umpire at the time of reentry. The opposing team appeals this failure to the Umpire.

**Ruling:** This is legal. There is no penalty for unannounced proper reentry.

**Rule:** 5-3C

**11. Situation:** R1 is on 3rd base and R2 is on 1st base with two outs. B5 hits a ground ball to F4, who chases R2 toward 1st base and tags him. (a) Before R1 scores. (b) After R1 scores.

**Ruling:** The run does not count in (a) or (b), because the 3rd out was a force out.

**Rule:** 4-6B

**12. Situation:** A team starts with 12 players (using the new AH Rule). In the 4th inning F3 and F4 are injured. They have no other substitutes and coach says we have enough to play defense until our sub gets here.

**Ruling:** In selected programs teams may play short handed.

**Rule:** See specific Program Rules 11, 12 and Programs listed on ISTS (Exception: Playing short handed is not permitted in these programs Men's Major, Men's "A" "16", Slow Pitch Overhand.) We now allow teams to bat 12 and have two Additional Hitters. (Exception, Men's "A" and Men's "Major" Rule-5-6

**13. Situation:** In the 2nd inning, the coach wants to protest the Umpire's call on a foul ball.

**Ruling:** This is not allowed nor even considered as the Umpire's judgment cannot be protested.

**Rule:** 4-11A-1,10-8B

**14. Situation:** In tournament play an ineligible player on the visiting team is discovered and protested with 2 outs in the bottom of the 7th inning with home team losing 6-1.

**Ruling:** The home team wins the game 7-0, the game is forfeited, and visiting team is removed from the tournament. The visiting team is placed last in the standings and forfeits all awards, etc.

**Rule:** 4-11-A5

**15. Situation:** A run shall not score during a play in which the third out is made by the batter-runner before he touches 1st base.

**1-Example:** There is one out, R1 is on 2nd, and R2 is on 1st. The batter, B3, hits safely. R1 scores. R2 is out on the throw to the plate. Two outs. But B3 missed 1st base. The ball is thrown to 1st, an appeal is made, and B3 is out. Three outs. Since R1 crossed the plate during a play in which the third out was made by the batter-runner before he touched 1st base, R1's run does not count.

**Ruling:** Following runners are not affected by an act of a preceding runner unless two are out.

**Rule:** 4-7 EFFECT, EFFECT 8-5 S-T-4

**2-Example:** There is one out with R1 on 2nd and R2 on 1st. The batter, B3, hits home run inside the park. R1 fails to touch 3rd on his way to the plate. R2 and B3 score. The defense holds the ball on 3rd, appeals to the Umpire, and R1 is out.

**Ruling:** R2 and B3's runs count.

**Rule:** 8-5U, EFFECT 5 S-T-5

**3-Example:** There is one out, R1 is on 3rd and R2 is on 2nd. The batter, B3, flies out to center field. Two outs. R1 scores after the catch and R2 scores on a bad throw to the plate. But, on appeal R1 is judged to have left 3rd before the catch and is out.

**Ruling:** There are three outs and no runs.

**Rule:** 8-5T, EFFECT 5 S-T-2

**4-Example:** There are two outs the bases are full and the batter hits a home run over the fence. The batter, on appeal, is declared out for missing 1st base.

**Ruling:** There are three outs and no run counts.



**Rule:** 4-6A, EFFECT 5 S-T-4 (Here is a general statement that covers: When a runner misses a base and a fielder holds the ball on a missed base, or on the base originally occupied by the runner if a fly ball is caught, and appeals for the Umpire's decision, the runner is out when the Umpire sustains the appeal; all runners may score if possible, except that with two out, the runner is out at the moment he misses the bag, if an appeal is made, as applied to the following runners.)

**5-Example:** There is one out with R1 on 3rd and R2 on 1st. B3 flies out to right field. Two outs. R1 tags up and scores after the catch. R2 leaves early and attempts to return to 1st but the right fielder's throw beats him to the base. Three outs. But, R1 scored before the throw to catch R2 returning to 1st base, hence R1's run counts. It was not a force play.

**Rule:** EFFECT 8-5 S-T-5

**16. Situation:** (Forfeiture) Sometimes a game shall be forfeited by an Umpire, only the Umpire-In-Chief has the authority to forfeit a game after exhausting all means to prevent it. Impress upon the manager a forfeit is a no-win situation, and advise him it is best to finish the game under protest. Consult your partner before making the final decision.

**Ruling:** The score of a forfeited game for the records is 7-0 favor of the team not at fault.

**Rule:** 4-9

**17. Situation:** B9 is injured while running to 1st base in the 6th inning. Since the home team has no substitute, B9 goes to his position in right field where he leans against the fence and remains there for the rest of the game.

**Ruling:** This is legal.

**Rule:** 5-1A

**18. Situation:** (Protest) Many times Umpires allow a protest to come about because of their unwillingness to take the time to listen to a manager who feels he has a legitimate complaint. During the discussion be calm and listen to the points raised by the objecting manager or coach. If the Umpires are in error, they should not hesitate to change and make the correct decision. If a formal protest is to be made, it must be before the next pitch. Further discussion of the play is useless.

**Rule:** 4-11

**19. Situation:** (Suspended Game) The most important thing to remember is the **safety** of all participants of the game. When the playing conditions reach the point where an injury can result, the game should be delayed. Whenever lightning is evident, the game must be stopped. Always consider the safety of the players. You, the Umpire, have the authority to resume play at anytime, even though there might be a slight drizzle and if the field is fit to play on. Do not be intimidated by the fans, or players regarding your judgment to resume play.

**Rule:** 4-10

## 5 --- PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTES

**1. Situation:** B1 hits ball to the outfield where it is touched by F7 as he reaches through the plane of the foul line with his feet inside fair territory.

**Ruling:** Foul ball, decision is judged in relationship of the ball to the foul line.

**Rule:** 7-5, EFFECT 2

**2. Situation:** F5 positions himself on foul ground prior to the pitcher delivering a pitch.

**Ruling:** This is not legal. When observed, or brought to the attention of the Umpire, the offender must be positioned in fair territory or be removed from the game.

**Rule:** 5-1A

**3. Situation:** With 2 outs, S1 replaces batter B6. Before S1 finishes his time at bat, a runner is called out to end the inning. S1 is not charged with a time at bat.

**Ruling:** S1 became a player as soon as he was announced by manager or took his place in batter's box.

**Rule:** 5-3A, B-1

**4. Situation:** S1 takes his position in batter's box. If S1 is replaced after taking his place in the batter's box, but before any pitches have been thrown, can he reenter the ball game later in the game?

**Ruling:** This is illegal. As soon as he entered the batter's box he was officially in the game as an official player.

**Rule:** 5-3B-1

- 5. Situation:** The defensive team replaces pitcher (Smith) with a new pitcher (Jones). Jones throws one warm-up pitch. The defense now tries to replace Jones.
- Ruling:** This is not legal. Jones must pitch to one batter until that batter has completed his turn at bat, or the side has been retired.
- Rule:** 5-3D (Note: This rule is designed to prevent stalling in time limit games.)
- 6. Situation:** In the second inning, F1 (Smith) is removed from the pitching position because of the second conference with the pitcher in an inning by a representative from the bench. In the fourth inning the manager returns Smith to the pitching position.
- Ruling:** This is illegal. Smith was removed from the pitching position because of the second conference in an inning, thus he is removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game. He may participate in the game in another position
- Rule:** 5-3E, 5-5B, 6-13
- 7. Situation:** B4 twists his ankle sliding into 2nd base; the managers agree to courtesy runner with injured player returning to field next inning.
- Ruling:** This is illegal. There is no courtesy runner, only a pinch runner. He cannot return to game.
- Rule:** 5-3A, 5-3B-3, (Except Masters Program) See Program listed on ISTS
- 8. Situation:** F9 is removed from game in 3rd inning and returns to field as 3rd base coach.
- Ruling:** This is legal. Coaching is not playing in the game.
- Rule:** 5-8
- 9. Situation:** Team A's manager substitutes Jones for Smith in the 4th inning. In the 5th inning, Smith reenters, but fails to report to both the scorekeeper and the umpire. Team B's manager now protests.
- Ruling:** There is no penalty for unreported proper reentry.
- Rule:** 5-5, EFFECT 5A
- 10. Situation:** B5 was substituted for in the 3rd inning by S1. In the 5th inning B5 reenters the game in B7's position in the batting order. While he is batting with a 1 ball and 1

strike count, the defensive team protests.

**Ruling:** B5 is ejected and a proper substitute enters and assumes the 1 ball and 1 strike count. Note: If B7 has not been reentered before, he may return to his proper batting position with a 1 ball and 1 strike count.

**Rule:** 5-5B, EFFECT 1A

**11. Situation:** B5 has completed his turn at bat in above situation. No pitch has been made to the succeeding batter and the defensive team protests.

**Ruling:** B5 is called out and is ejected from the game. All base runners, if they have advanced, must return to the base occupied at the time the improper reentry took a position in the batter's box.

**Rule:** 5-5B, EFFECT 1B

**12. Situation:** B5 has completed his turn at bat in above situation. One pitch has been made to the succeeding batter and the defensive team protests.

**Ruling:** All play will stand as played, but B5 is ejected from the game.

**Rule:** 5-5B, EFFECT 1C

**13. Situation:** R1 is on second. S1 bats for B6 but neither S1 nor the coach reports the substitute to the Umpire. S1 doubles and R1 advances home. The coach of defensive team informs the Umpire that the substitute did not report. What is the penalty?

**Ruling:** There is no penalty for unannounced substitutes.

**Rule:** 5-3C

**14. Situation:** Team A has only 10 players and player Jones is ejected for arguing. They have no substitute. What is the ruling?

**Ruling:** They can go down to 9 and take an out in that spot in the line up.

**Rule:** 5-1, 11, 12, 13

**15. Situation:** Team B turns in a lineup with 12 batters. Is this legal?

**Ruling:** Yes

**Rule:** 5-6

**16. Situation:** The home team has an 8 year old boy sitting in the dugout while his father is playing. Can he stay there?

**Ruling:** No

**Rule:** 5-9

**17. Situation:** The batter hits the ball to the 3<sup>rd</sup> baseman and while he is running to 1<sup>st</sup> base, the throw is wild and hits him in the head. The runner is dizzy and disoriented after reaching 1<sup>st</sup> base safely.

**Ruling:** He should be immediately removed from the game and not allowed to return until cleared in writing by an appropriate health care professional.

**Rule:** 5-4D Note: See USSSA policy regarding Federal, State, and Local Law Concussions.

## 6 --- PITCHING RULE

**1. Situation:** F1 delivers a pitch from his glove.

**Ruling:** This is not legal.

**Rule:** 6-1 (Note: This is treated as an unfairly delivered pitch)

**2. Situation:** F1 has tape on either his fingers or his hand.

**Ruling:** This is illegal.

**Rule:** 6-1 (Note: Tape should be removed at the start of the game. If midway through the game it is discovered, and a team complains, good judgment should be used by the Umpire.)

**3. Situation:** F1 walks onto the mound and delivers a pitch without presenting the ball in front of his body for at least one second.

**Ruling:** This is an unfairly delivered pitch. If not swung at by the batter, it shall be declared a ball by the Umpire.

**Rule:** 6-4A, 6-9A, EFFECT 6-9A-E

**4. Situation:** F6 replaces F1. How many throws are permitted for his warm-up?

**Ruling:** Three.

**Rule:** 6-2 (Note: If the pitcher returns that same inning he gets no warm-up pitches. This is a National U.I.C. Interpretation.)

**5. Situation:** F1 comes to a one second stop, then takes the ball in his pitching hand over the top of his head and down and around in a windmill type action.

**Ruling:** This is legal. A windmill delivery is legal if all other aspects of the pitching rule are followed.

**Rule:** 6-4, EFFECT A-D

**6. Situation:** Once the pitcher begins his delivery motions, the Umpire may call "Time" under which of the following situations: (a) batter requests time, (b) batter steps out of box, (c) a ball comes on field near home plate, or (d) a cloud of dust comes toward home.

**Ruling:** No time is granted in (a) or (b), but time out may be granted in (c) or (d).

**Rule:** 6-4E, F

**7. Situation:** After one warning, F1 again delivers a pitch with excessive speed. The plate Umpire orders that F1 must be removed from the game. The manager attempts to change F1 to an outfield position, but the Umpire rules that the pitcher cannot participate in any position for the remainder of the game.

**Ruling:** This is incorrect. F1 shall be removed from the pitcher's position for the remainder of the game but may continue in the game in any other position.

**Rule:** 6-5, EFFECT 5A-C

**8. Situation:** A pitch is delivered with the catcher outside the boundaries of the catcher's box.

**Ruling:** This is an unfairly delivered pitch.

**Rule:** 6-6A

**9. Situation:** A quick pitch is an unfairly delivered pitch. The Umpire will judge a quick pitch as one delivered before the batter is reasonably set in the batter's box.

**Ruling:** If the pitch is not struck at, it is a ball.

**Rule:** 6-9D

**10. Situation:** R1 is on 1st base; there is 1 out and the count is two balls and one strike. The Umpire has already warned the pitcher about excessive speed pitches. The pitcher pitches a "fast ball" overhand to the batter. The batter swings and misses.

**Ruling:** This is an unfairly delivered pitch. The batter is out and the pitcher is removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.

**Rule:** 6-5A, EFFECT 5A-C

**11. Situation:** F1 intentionally bounces the ball after taking a position on the pitcher's plate. He then pitches the ball immediately to catch the batter off balance.

**Ruling:** This is an unfairly delivered pitch. If not swung at by the batter, it shall be declared a ball by the Umpire.

**Rule:** 6-9D, EFFECT 9A-E

**12. Situation:** F1 accidentally drops the ball while on the pitcher's plate.

**Ruling:** There is no penalty as he has gained no advantage.

**13. Situation:** Time is out. The Umpire announces play ball. The defensive team makes proper appeal.

**Ruling:** The ball is live only for the purpose of making an appeal; therefore, runners cannot advance.

**Rule:** 6-12, EFFECT 12

**14. Situation:** F1, when making an appeal, throws the ball with his foot in contact with pitching rubber.

**Ruling:** The position of pitcher's foot on, or stepping off, the pitcher's plate has no bearing on making an appeal.

**Rule:** 6-12 (Note: It is not necessary for the pitcher to throw or carry the ball to the base or runner he is appealing. The Umpire shall make his ruling on the announcement.)

**15. Situation:** The batter gets a base hit and tries to stretch it to a double. The 2<sup>nd</sup> baseman has the ball and is clearly waiting to tag the batter runner. He fails to slide and runs into the 2<sup>nd</sup> baseman and the ball falls to the ground.

**Ruling:** Runner is out as he did not slide or try to avoid contact.

**Rule:** 8-5V

## 7 --- BATTING

**1. Situation:** The Umpire shall not direct the attention of any person to the presence in the batter's box of an improper batter. This rule is designed to require constant vigilance by the players and managers of both teams.

**Ruling:** There are two fundamentals to keep in mind: When a player bats out of turn, the proper batter is the player called out. If any improper batter bats and reaches base or is out and no appeal is made before a pitch to the next batter, that improper batter is considered to have batted in proper turn and establishes the order that is to follow.

**Rule:** 7-1

**2. Situation:** With R1 on 1st, B7 is next on the batting list, but B8 erroneously takes his place. The error is discovered by the opposing team and reported to the Umpire; (a) after B8 has received 1 strike, or (b) B8 has received base on balls, or (c) after B8 has hit a foul which is caught or has made a safe hit to advance R1, or (d) after a pitch has been delivered to B9.

**Ruling:** In (a) B8 is replaced by B7 who assumes the no balls, one strike count. In (b) and (c) B7 is out. B8 is removed from the base and bats again with no balls or strikes. R1 must return to 1st. In (d) no correction is made, B7 and B8 do not bat again until their regular time.

**Rule:** 7-1 EFFECT A-E

**3. Situation:** The batting order is B1, B2, B3, and B4. If B3 erroneously bats in place of B1 and the batting infraction is not detected by anyone before a pitch to the next batter, is B2 or B4 the next correct batter?



**Ruling:** B4 is the correct batter since his name follows that of B3. Neither B1 nor B2 may legally bat until their time comes again as listed.

**Rule:** 7-1

**4. Situation:** With none out and R1 on 2nd, improper batter B4 hits the ball safely to the outfield and reaches 2nd. R1 advances home, but he misses 3rd base en route. F5 obtains the ball and properly appeals the infraction by R1 to the Umpire. The Umpire declares R1 out. Prior to a pitch being made, the team in the field discovers that B4 was not the proper batter and so informs the Umpire.

**Ruling:** B2 is declared out, since the discovery by the defensive team was prior to the next pitch following the safe hit. The appealed out on R1 is rescinded and he is returned to 2nd. B3 is the next proper batter.

**Rule:** 7-1, EFFECT A-E

**5. Situation:** With two outs, B1 is batting and has a two ball, one strike count. R1 is called out for leaving first base early.

**Ruling:** This goes as a no-pitch, and R1 is called out. B1 will be the first batter in the next inning, and all previous balls and strikes will be canceled.

**Rule:** 6-7B, 7-1E, 8-5A

**6. Situation:** B1 swings at and hits a pitched ball while one foot is touching the ground completely outside the lines of the batter's box. The ball goes directly into the stands behind home plate.

**Ruling:** This is an illegally batted ball and the batter shall be declared out. Hitting the ball fair or foul is of no consequence.

**Rule:** 3-Illegally Batted Ball, 7-2A, 9-3F

**7. Situation:** B1 hits a ball for a single with a bat 35 inches long.

**Ruling:** This is an illegal bat. If appealed by the defensive team or observed by the umpire, the batter is called out and all other base runners must return to the base held before the pitch.

**Rule:** 2-2, 7-2B, 9-3F

**8. Situation:** B1 bunts the ball toward 3rd base, but it rolls foul.

**Ruling:** B1 is out.

**Rule:** 3-Bunt, 7-2C

**9. Situation:** B1 swings at a pitched ball, and the ball hits his hand while holding the bat.

**Ruling:** A strike shall be called, and the ball is declared dead. The hand is not considered part of the bat.

**Rule:** 7-3C

**10. Situation:** R3 is at 3rd base with one out. B5 has one strike and one foul (excluding the Men's Major). He hits a long foul fly to left field which is caught. R3 tags and scores from 3rd.

**Ruling:** B5 is out. R3 must return to 3rd as the ball is dead.

**Rule:** 7-2D-1

**11. Situation:** B1 hits a double to center field. The Umpire notices the bat has been altered, e.g., the baseball bat has been honed down to softball size. (a) No appeal; (b) appeal.

**Ruling:** In both (a) and (b) the ball is declared dead, B1 is called out, and he is ejected. The altered piece of equipment must be removed from the game and the incident reported to the Tournament Director/State Director.

**Rule:** 3-Alterd Bat, 7-2B EFFECT

**12. Situation:** R1 is on 2nd. B2 chops down on pitched ball. F1 throws out R1 advancing to 3rd.

**Ruling:** B2 is out for chopping down on ball. This is a dead ball and R1 is returned to 2nd.

**Rule:** 7-2C, 9-3G

**13. Situation:** R1 is on 3rd base and there is 1 out. The batter hits a fly ball in foul territory and the first base coach is standing completely inside the coach's box. F4 drops the ball when he contacts the coach.

**Ruling:** The batter is out. The coach must vacate the area to allow F4 to catch the ball. The coach's box does not provide the coach a safe haven.

**Rule:** 7-2G

**14. Situation:** F1 releases a pitch to B1. B1 steps out of the batter's box and requests time.

**Ruling:** The Umpire declares a strike on B1.

**Rule:** 7-3F EFFECT

**15. Situation:** B1, for whatever reason, steps out of the batter's box. The Umpire declares "Play Ball," but B1 delays entering the batter's box.

**Ruling:** After 10 seconds the Umpire shall declare "Dead Ball" and a strike shall be called on B1.

**Rule:** 7-3G EFFECT

**16. Situation:** B1 has a count of one strike. While F1 is off the rubber, B1 steps across home plate to the other batter's box.

**Ruling:** This is legal. It is only when the pitcher is in position and ready to pitch that the batter may not step across the plate in front of catcher to the other batter's box.

**Rule:** 7-2E

**17. Situation:** With one out and R1 on 1st, B3 hits a fly ball. F4 holds the ball in his hands but intentionally drops it for an attempted double play.

**Ruling:** The Umpire should immediately announce B3 is out. The ball is dead.

**Rule:** 7-2H, EFFECT

**18. Comment:** On the infield fly rule, the Umpire is to rule whether the ball could ordinarily have been handled by an infielder—not by some arbitrary limitation such as the grass or base lines. The Umpire must also rule that a ball is an infield fly even if handled by an outfielder if, in the Umpire's judgment, the ball could have been as easily handled by an infielder. The infield fly is in no sense to be considered an appeal play. The Umpire's judgment must govern, and the decision should be made immediately. When an infield fly rule is called, runners may advance at their own risk. If, on an infield fly rule call, the infielder intentionally drops a fair ball, the ball remains in play despite the provisions in Rule 7-2.

**Rule:** 7-2 I-J, EFFECT 2 I-J (The infield fly rule takes precedence.)

**19. Situation:** The bases are loaded. B4 hits a line drive fair that passes 3rd, hits the 3rd baseman's glove and then lands in foul ground.

**Ruling:** This is a fair ball.

**Rule:** 7-5, EFFECT 2 and 4

**20. Situation:** With one out, R1 is on 2nd and R2 is on 1st when B4 hits an infield fly. The base runners are of the opinion two were out and they start running as soon as the ball is hit. F4 fails to catch the infield fly and both runners cross home base.

**Ruling:** B4 is out for hitting infield fly but the runs count, because runners may advance at their own risk.

**Rule:** 7-2, EFFECT I-J

**21. Situation:** There is one out. R1 is on 2nd and R2 is on 1st. B4 hits infield fly to F6. The Umpire immediately calls, "Infield fly—if fair, batter is out!" F7 charges in and calls for ball. F6 steps out of way just in time for F7 to drop fly ball and all Runners advance.

**Ruling:** B4 is out on the infield fly rule, and R1 and R2 advances are legal. F7's attempt to field the ball has no bearing on an infield fly rule application; the fly could be easily handled by an infielder, in this case, F6 being that infielder.

**Rule:** 3-In Jeopardy, 7-2

**22. Situation:** B1 hits a long fly ball to left field. (a) B1 carries his bat to 1st base and the left fielder drops the ball. (b) B1 now discards his bat and runs to 2nd base.

**Ruling:** B1 is out in both (a) and (b).

**Rule:** 8-4G

**23. Situation:** B1 takes his stance with his feet wide apart causing his shoulders to be lower than if he were standing with his feet closer together.

**Ruling:** If it is a natural batting stance, it is to be called a strike. The ball, before touching the ground, must enter the area over home base between the top of the batter's shoulders and his knees. The Umpire will regard the strike area as it would be in

the batter's natural stance even if the batter takes an unnatural crouch in order to reduce the size of his strike zone.

**Rule:** 3-Strike Zone, 7-3A, EFFECT 7-3A

**24. Situation:** With one strike, B3 strikes at and misses the next pitch. The ball strikes his arm or person.

**Ruling:** In this case, B3 is out.

**Rule:** 7-3B

**25. Situation:** When the batter is in the batter's box and the pitcher has the ball at the pitcher's plate or in the pitching area the pitcher must deliver the pitch within five seconds. The batter is not at liberty to step out of the batter's box at this time.

**Ruling:** The Umpire may call time if there is a delay in game action or, in the judgment of the Umpire, weather conditions warrant an exception.

**Rule:** 6-4E

**26. Situation:** When the pitcher begins his delivery motion, he does not go through with his pitch because the batter has left the batter's box. This shall not be illegal pitcher's action.

**Ruling:** Both the pitcher and batter have violated a rule. The Umpire shall call time, and both the batter and pitcher shall start over from scratch. (No Penalty)

**27. Situation:** When the pitcher begins his delivery motion, the batter steps out of the batter's box and the pitcher delivers the pitch.

**Ruling:** The Umpire shall rule such a pitch a strike.

**Rule:** 7-3F, EFFECT 7- 3F

**28. Situation:** A batted ball comes to rest on the chalk line between home base and 1st base.

**Ruling:** This is a fair ball since the chalk line is part of fair ground.

**Rule:** 7-5, EFFECT 2

**29. Situation:** A line drive to right field touches the foul line mark and bounces to foul ground

where it (a) strikes the fence and rebounds to F9, or (b) bounces into the stands after which it rebounds to F9.

**Ruling:** In (a) the ball remains live. In (b) it became dead when it touches in the stand and 2 bases are awarded the batter and each runner in advance of the base occupied at the time of the pitch.

**Rule:** 8-7B

**30. Situation:** B3 hits the ball. While the ball is in flight or is bouncing near to, but outside the path from home to, 1st, F3 drops the ball while having one or both feet on fair ground.

**Ruling:** This is a foul ball. The position of the ball at time of touching it is the determining factor.

**Rule:** 7-5, EFFECT 2

**31. Situation:** B1 hits a ground ball to the shortstop, but the shortstop cannot field the ball cleanly and B1 reaches first base and rounds the base. The shortstop now tries to throw B1 out at first base but throws the ball into a dead ball area.

**Ruling:** B1 is awarded third base.

**Rule:** 8-9E

**32. Situation:** R1 is on third base and R2 is on second. B1 gets a base hit to left field. R1 misses home plate and R2 crosses home plate. R1 returns to and touches home plate. The defense appeals that R1 missed home plate.

**Ruling:** R1 is declared out.

**Rule:** 8-9A-3

**33. Situation:** R1 is on first base. B1 gets a base hit to right field. R1 rounds second base and dislodges the base which lands five feet from its original position. B1 runs to the spot where second base was originally located. A defensive player tags B1 with the ball.

**Ruling:** B1 is safe in this situation.

**Rule:** 8-12 K, EFFECT 12K

**34. Situation:** R1 is at second base with two outs. B1 grounds to shortstop who, in turn, throws out B1 at first base for the third out. R1 continues around third base and crosses home plate. The first base coach asks the first base Umpire to appeal to the Plate Umpire because he contends that the first baseman wasn't touching first base. The appeal is made and the plate Umpire calls B1 safe. What happens to R1?

**Ruling:** R1 scores.

**Rule:** National UIC interpretation

**35. Situation:** What is the ball-strike count on the batter when he first enters the batter's box?

**Ruling:** In all adult slow pitch programs (except the one-pitch program), the batter first enters the batter's box with a no ball and no strike count.

**Rule:** 3 Batter, 8-3A, 7-2D Note: Actually not stated as such in Rule Book: batter walks on 3 balls and is out after 2 strikes.

## 8 --- BASE RUNNING

**1. Situation:** R1 is on 1st base and there is 1 out. The batter hits a "one-hopper" to F3. F3 tags R1 who is standing on the base and then tags the base with the ball before the batter-base runner arrives at first.

**Ruling:** R1 is out and so is batter-base runner. There are now 3 outs.

**Rule:** 8-1, 8-5M

**2. Situation:** R1 is on 3rd, R2 is on 2nd, R3 is on 1st, and there is one out. The score is tied and the home team is batting in the bottom of the 7th inning. The batter gets a base hit to center field. R1 advances to home. R2 and R3 begin to celebrate their victory and enter their dugout. The batter-runner touches first. All defensive players leave fair territory except the pitcher. The pitcher retrieves the ball, touches 3rd, appealing R2 did not advance and touches 2nd appealing R3 did not advance.

**Ruling:** R2 and R3 are called out on appeal. Since these are force outs, the run does not score. The game is still tied as we go to the top of the 8th inning.

**Rule:** 3-Appeal Play, 8-1, 8-5Q

**3 Situation:** R1 is on first base. B1 hits a ground ball to F4. F4 runs towards R1 in an attempt to tag R1 out. R1 stops and backs up toward first base to avoid F4's attempted tag.

**Ruling:** R1 is not out!

**Rule:** National UIC.

**4. Situation:** B1 hits a high fly ball to F7. B1 goes directly to his dugout or a dead ball area. F7 fails to catch B1's fly ball. B1 now goes safely to first base.

**Ruling:** This is not legal. B1 is not automatically out for entering a dead ball area.

**Rule:** 8-4H

**5. Situation:** A batted ball that is deflected by a fielder in fair territory and hits a runner or an Umpire while still in flight and then caught by an infielder shall not be a catch.

**Ruling:** The ball shall remain in play with all runners being in jeopardy.

**Rule:** 8-2, EFFECT 2-2

**6. Situation:** R1 at 1st base. B2 hits a ground ball that strikes the base Umpire before passing a fielder.

**Ruling:** The ball is dead. R1 advances to 2nd base, and B2 is awarded 1st base.

**Rule:** 8-2, EFFECT 2-1

**7. Situation:** R1 is on 2nd. B2 swings at a pitch and hits the catcher's glove and ball. (a) hit to F9 who catches it and R1 advances to 3rd and in (b) the ball is hit to F1, who throws out R1 attempting to advance to 3rd.

**Ruling:** In both (a) and (b), since base runners have not succeeded in advancing at least one base and batter did not reach 1st safely, the catcher's obstruction is enforced. The ball is dead, and the base runners return to the base held at the time of the pitch. The batter is awarded 1st base. The runners can advance if forced to by the batter becoming a base runner.

**Rule:** 8-3 C, EFFECT 3C

**8. Situation:** B1 hits a slow spinning chopper toward 1st base. As B1 is running towards 1st, in fair territory, he is struck by his own batted ball while clearly out of the batter's box.

**Ruling:** B1 is out in this case.

**Rule:** 8-4A



**9. Situation:** After hitting the ball, B1 runs to 1st but fails to stay in the 3 foot lane.

**Ruling:** Running out of this lane is ignored unless such an act might interfere with a fielder or infielder's throw. The purpose of the 3 foot lane is to prevent interference.

**Rule:** 8-4 I

**10. Situation:** A runner is on third and there are no outs. A fly ball is hit to the outfield. The coach goes over and puts his hand on the runner to indicate when he should leave third. The fly ball is (a) caught, (b) not caught.

**Ruling:** In both (a) and (b) the runner is called out and the ball remains live and in play.

**Rule:** 8-5L, EFFECT 8-5 L-R

**11. Situation:** A runner who is judged to have hindered a fielder attempting to make a play on a batted ball is out whether it was intentional or not. If, however, the runner has contact with a legally occupied base when he hinders the fielder, he shall not be called out unless, in the Umpire's judgment, such hindrance, whether it occurs on fair or foul territory is intentional. If the Umpire declares the hindrance intentional, the following penalty shall apply: With less than two out, the Umpire shall declare both the runner and batter out. If, in a run-down play between 3rd base and home plate, the succeeding runner has advanced and is standing on 3rd base when the runner who is in the run-down is called out for offensive interference, the Umpire shall send the runner standing on 3rd base back to 2nd base. This same principle applies if there is a run-down between 2nd and 3rd base and succeeding runner has reached 2nd (the reasoning is that no runner shall advance on an interference play and a runner is considered to occupy a base until he legally has reached the next succeeding base).

**Rule:** 8-5B, EFFECT 5B

**12. Situation:** B1 draws a walk and on the way to 1st base, the base coach directs him to the bench (B1 never reached 1st base) and calls for a substitute. A proper substitute then comes to 1st base.

**Ruling:** While there is no penalty to the original batter for leaving the playing field in this situation, the substitute base runner may be appealed out since the original runner never touched 1st base.

**Rule:** 8-4, EFFECT 4 G-H, 3 Appeal Play, 6-12

**13. Situation:** B1 draws a walk and enters the dugout to hang up his bat before continuing on his way to 1st base.

**Ruling:** There is no penalty to the batter in this situation

**Rule:** 8-3, EFFECT 3 A-B, 8-4, EFFECT 4 G-H

**14. Situation:** With R1 on 3rd, R2 at 2nd, and R3 at 1st, the ball batted by B4. It hits R2 before passing an infielder. R1 runs home and R3 is tagged on his way to 2nd.

**Ruling:** The ball became dead when it hit R2. R2 is out and B4 is also out if the Umpire believes the interference by R2 may have prevented a double play involving B4. R1 returns to 3rd. If B4 is not declared out, R3 is awarded 2nd since the base where R3 was at time of the pitch is occupied. If B4 is declared out, R3 returns to 1st.

**Rule:** 8-5C

**15. Situation:** R1 is on 1st base. B1 hits a ground ball to the 2nd baseman. R1 runs in to the 2nd baseman and that prevents him from fielding the ball. If the interference is ruled intentional, the immediate succeeding runner is also out.

**Ruling:** R1 is called out for interference, and B1 is awarded 1st base.

**Rule:** 8-5 B, EFFECT 5B

**16. Situation:** R1 is on 1st base. B1 hits a ground ball toward 1st base. R1 intentionally sticks his leg out to deflect the ball away from the 1st baseman.

**Ruling:** R1 is out, and the ball is dead. B1 is awarded 1<sup>st</sup> base.

**Rule:** 8-5D, EFFECT 5 B-E

**17. Situation:** The batter or a base runner continues to advance to the next base after he has been put out. He shall not, by that act alone, be considered as confusing, hindering, or impeding the fielders.

**Ruling:** Interference, all play stops.

**Rule:** 8-5F, EFFECT 5 F-K

**18. Situation:** R1 on 1st, R2 on 2nd, and R3 on 3rd. There are no outs. A ground ball is hit to 3rd base. The 3rd baseman fields the ball and steps on 3rd, forcing out R2, who was on 2nd base. The 3rd baseman then throws home but the ball is thrown away. R1 advances toward 3rd, R2 rounds 3rd (even though already out) and runs home. The 1st baseman fields the overthrown ball and throws home to get R2.

**Ruling:** R1 is called out; The ball dead.

**Rule:** 8-5F, EFFECT 5 F-K

**19. Situation:** With R1 on 1st, B2 hits the ball. The throw to 3rd drives R1 back to 2nd. B2 has now rounded 2nd and discovers he is in advance of R1. He runs back and finally reaches 1st without being tagged out.

**Ruling:** B2 is out as soon as he passes R1, but the ball remains live until Umpire calls "time."

**Rule:** 8-5P

**20. Situation:** (a) The batter hits the ball out of park or ground rule double and misses 1st base (ball is dead)—he may return to 1st base to correct his mistake before he touches 2nd but if he touches 2nd and returns to 1st and the defensive team appeals he is declared out at 1st. (b) The batter hits ball to shortstop who throws the ball out of play. The batter is awarded 2nd base on the overthrow. Even though the Umpire has awarded the runner 2nd base on the overthrow, the runner must touch 1st base before he proceeds to 2nd base. These are appeal plays. An appeal should be clearly intended as an appeal, either by a verbal request by the player or an act that unmistakably indicates an appeal to the Umpire. A player, inadvertently stepping on the base with a ball in his hand, would not constitute an appeal. An appeal cannot be made during time out.

**Rule:** 6-12, 8-9 EFFECT 9A-2

**21. Situation:** R1 is on 1st base and there is 1 out. The pitcher makes a legal delivery from his non-gloved hand. During the delivery, F1 throws his glove in the air to distract the batter. The glove lands on the ground beside F1. The batter hits the ball sharply up the middle. The ball hits the glove and goes into foul territory between home and first before passing 1st base.

**Ruling:** In this case, R1 is awarded home, the batter-runner is awarded 3rd.

**Rule:** 8-6H, EFFECT 6H-1

**22. Situation:** There are no outs, and R1 is on 2nd base. R2 is on 1st base. B3 flies out deep to

the right field corner of the park. Both runners tag up and advance two bases each. R1 has left 2nd base before ball was touched by F9. Before time is called by the Umpire, the ball is thrown to F4 where proper appeal is made and an out is called. While R2 pulled up at 3rd base, he notices the lapse of F4 in making appeal and breaks for home plate and scores.

**Ruling:** This is a legal advance. The ball is live. R1 is called out for leaving base too soon.

**Rule:** 8-5T, EFFECT 5S-T

**23. Situation:** R1 is on 3rd and R2 is on 2nd with one out when B4 hits a fly ball to F7, who catches the ball. R1 leaves 3rd before ball is touched by F7 who throws ball wildly into the stands in an attempt to make a double play on R1 at home base. R2 reaches 3rd on the throw and the Umpire awards him home. After a new ball is thrown to F1, he makes a legal appeal and throws the ball to F5, who touches 3rd while in possession of the ball.

**Ruling:** R1 is declared out and the runs scored by both R1 and R2 are canceled.

**Rule:** 6-12, 8-5T, EFFECT 5S-T

**24. Situation:** The fact a runner is awarded a base or bases without liability to be put out does not relieve him of the responsibility to touch the base he is awarded and all intervening bases. For example: A batter hits a ground ball which an infielder throws into the stands, but the batter-runner missed 1st base. He may be called out on appeal for missing 1st base after the ball is put in play even though he was "awarded" 2nd base. If a runner is forced to return to a base after a catch, he must retouch his original base even though, because of some ground rule or other rule, he is awarded additional bases.

**Rule:** 8-9, EFFECT 9D, 8-7, EFFECT 7A-G

**25. Situation:** A fly ball is hit by B2 and comes down near the field enclosure with F2 and F8 attempting a catch. A Spectator touches the ball in flight while it is: (a) in front of the wall, or (b) over the stand.

**Ruling:** Any batted ball touched in flight by a spectator immediately becomes a dead ball. If, in the judgment of the Umpire, the ball could have been caught by a fielder, and was not over the stand, the batter is declared out when the spectator interference occurred, and all runners must return to the bases they legally occupied at the time of the pitch. If a spectator prevents a fair ball from going over the fence in flight, the batter and all base runners are awarded home. If a foul fly ball is touched in flight over a stand, the ball becomes dead immediately and no catch can be allowed.

**Rule:** 3-Blocked Ball, 3 Interference, 8-7A

**26. Situation:** R1 is on 1st with one out, and B3 is batting. B3 hits long fly ball to F9. R1 runs halfway to 2nd. F9 catches the ball and, in turn, falls over the fence. R1 continues on to 2nd without returning to tag 1st. After the Umpire puts ball in play, F1 appeals that R1 failed to tag up.

**Ruling:** R1 is out. When F9 caught the ball and fell over the fence, R1 was awarded 2nd. However, the award of the base does not negate the requirement to tag up on a fly ball that has been caught.

**Rule:** 8-9, EFFECT 9D

**27. Situation:** R1 is on third base and there is one out. B5 hits a fly ball to F9, and the ball is legally caught for an out. The Umpire notices the fly ball was caught with a 1st baseman's glove.

**Ruling:** The out is voided and B3 awarded 1st, R1 is awarded home. Remove illegal piece of equipment from game.

**Rule:** 8-7C, EFFECT 7C

**28. Situation:** With R1 on 2nd and R2 on 1st base, B3 hits a fly ball in shallow right field area between F3, F4, and F9. All three fielders converge on the ball that was hit by B3. R1 is beyond 3rd, R2 beyond 2nd and B3 beyond 1st when F4 throws to home base (or 3rd base). The ball bounces into dead ball area.

**Ruling:** Each runner (including the batter) is awarded two bases from the base he occupied when the ball left the hand of F4.

**Rule:** 8-7F, EFFECT 7F

**29. Situation:** F9 leaps high in the air, catches the ball and his momentum then takes him over the fence with the ball still in his possession.

**Ruling:** This is a valid catch, the ball is dead, and each runner on base is awarded one base.

**Note:** When a fielder makes a valid catch and then unintentionally carries the ball into a dead ball area, the catch is good, the ball is dead and with runners on base and less than 2 outs, each runner is awarded 1 base from wherever they were at the time of the pitch, or 2 bases, if the fielder intentionally carries the ball into a dead ball area.

**Rule:** 8-7A-1

**30. Situation:** No runners are on base. B4 hits a ball between the outfielders. While rounding 1st, B4 is obstructed by the 1st baseman. The base Umpire signals an obstruction occurred as B4 continues toward 3rd base. It is a close play at third, but the thrown ball by the outfielder gets by the 3rd baseman. B4 continues onto home base where he is put out. The offensive team appeals because of the obstruction by 1st baseman.

**Ruling:** The Umpire declares B4 would have been out at 3rd had the 3rd baseman handled the throw, so he is awarded 3rd base because of the obstruction. From that point he is in jeopardy. Therefore, B4 is out at home.

**Rule:** 8-7E, EFFECT 7E

**31. Situation:** With R1 on 1st, B2 hits safely to right field. An overthrow to 1st: (a) goes into the stand, or (b) strikes the enclosing wall and rebounds to the catcher. In going to 3rd, R1 misses 2nd base and has passed 2nd, or is approaching 2nd, when the ball leaves the hand of F9. The ball is then thrown to 2nd base for an appeal.

**Ruling:** In (a) if R1 has reached 2nd by the time the throw leaves the hand of F9, R1 is awarded home. If the appeal is properly made when the ball becomes live, it should be allowed and the run scored by R1 is canceled. If R1 has not reached 2nd by the time the throw leaves the hand of F9, the proper appeal should be allowed and enforced. In (b) R1 is out since ball did not become dead and no bases are awarded.

**Rule:** 8-7F, EFFECT 7F 1-2

**32. Situation:** No runners are on base. B1 hits the ball to F10 who, in turn, throws it to F3 to put out B1. B1 is already past first base when ball is released by F10. The ball bounces past F3 and into the stands.

**Ruling:** In this case, B1 is awarded third base.

**Rule:** 8-7F, EFFECT 7F-2

**33. Situation:** B1 hits and overruns 1st base. In coming to a stop, he turns toward 2nd but makes no attempt to advance, or feint and advance, but returns to touch 1st.

**Ruling:** B1 may return without liability of being put out.

**Rule:** 8-8B

**34. Situation:** R4 is on 1st with one out. B5 hits a line drive to the infield; R4 leaves 1st base at the crack of the bat. The shortstop jumps and catches the ball, then seeing the runner off 1st, overthrows 1st base and the ball goes into the dead ball area. The Umpire signals dead ball and awards R4 2nd base. (a) R4 returns to 1st base to retag the base, then goes to 2nd. (b) R4 goes directly to 2nd base without retagging 1st.

**Ruling:** (a) R4 has attained 2nd base legally. (b) R4 is in jeopardy for not tagging the base; he must retouch on the award. This is an appeal play by the defense.

**Rule:** 8-9D, EFFECT 9D

**35. Situation:** With R1 on 2nd, B2 hits the ball to F6 who is playing deep. The batted ball is touched by F6 and deflected so that it rebounds into R1.

**Ruling:** The ball touching R1 is ignored since the ball has been handled by a fielder.

**Rule:** 8-12H

**36. Situation:** With R1 on 2nd, R2 on 1st, and no one out, B3 hits a ground ball or infield fly ball and it strikes R1 who is: (a) near 2nd, or (b) standing on 2nd. In both cases, ball has not passed an infielder.

**Ruling:** On a ground ball in (a) R1 is out, and the ball is dead; B3 is awarded 1st base. In (b) R1 is not out, and the ball remains live. On an infield fly in (a) R1 is out, and B3 is out and the ball is dead. In (b) R1 is not out, but B3 is out and the ball remains live.

**Rule:** 8-5C

## 9 --- BALL IN PLAY AND BALL DEAD

**1. Situation:** B1 hits a line shot which hits 1st base and ricochets off the base and hits a photographer assigned to take pictures of the game. F2 backs up the play and throws out B1 who is advancing to 2nd.

**Ruling:** B1 is out. The ball remains in play when it strikes a photographer who has been assigned to the game.

**Rule:** 9-2E

**2. Situation:** B1 singles to right field. In attempting to stretch it in to a double, the thrown ball from F9 strikes the base Umpire and this allows B1 to safely reach 2nd.

**Ruling:** It is not a cause for interference when an Umpire is struck by a thrown ball. B1 is safe at 2nd base.

**Rule:** 9-2J

**3. Situation:** R1 is on 1st when the batter hits a line drive off the pitcher's foot, which ricochets and strikes R1 advancing to 2nd. The second baseman was (a) unable to make a play on the ball or, (b) in position to play the ricocheted ball and make an out.

**Ruling:** In (a) and (b) there is no violation and the ball remains live.

**Rule:** 9-2K

**4. Situation:** With the batter in the batter's box, the pitcher delivers a pitch which is not hit. The batter steps out of the box, the catcher returns the ball to the pitcher who delivers another pitch. The batter has not requested time. What is the Ruling?

**Ruling:** No pitch—ball was delivered while the ball was dead and not in play. On each pitched ball and strike not batted, the ball is dead. The ball is not again put in play until the pitcher has the ball and the batter is in the batter's box.

**Rule:** 9-1, 9-3D, 6-7A

## 10 --- UMPIRES

**1. Situation:** After the game has started, spectators overflow to the vicinity of a foul line and interfere with the usual overthrow conditions.

**Ruling:** The Umpire-In-Chief should call both captains/or coaches together and state ground rules which may be necessary to cover special conditions.

**Rule:** 10-9B, 10-10A

**2. Situation:** It is the last of the 7th inning, and the score is tied 0-0. There is one out and R1 is on 3rd base. The catcher tips the batter's bat as he grounds out to 1st base. R1 scores. The Umpire signals obstruction by catcher.

**Ruling:** The Umpire invokes 10-9C EFFECT 9C. Ignore the obstruction. The home team



wins score 1-0.

**Rule:** 8-3C, EFFECT 3C

**3. Situation:** With runners on 1st and 3rd and one out, the batter hits a fly to right field. Both runners, thinking the ball will fall safely, leave early. The fielder makes a fine catch and throws the ball to 1st base before runner originally on 1st base can return. The team in the field then realizes runner also left 3rd base too soon and throws the ball to that base and appeals for a fourth out. The team at bat claims the team in the field already elected to throw the ball to 1st base for the 3rd out and since runner on 3rd crossed plate before ball was played to 1st, the run counts.

**Ruling:** The run would have counted if the team did not make an appeal to 3rd base. If there is more than one appeal during a play that ends a half-inning, the defense may elect to take the one that gives it the advantage. The purpose of honoring a 4th out appeal is to nullify a run that has scored.

**Rule:** 10-9C

**4. Situation:** With a two Umpire system: One Umpire is not at the ball park at game time, and a replacement Umpire is found. The originally scheduled Umpire arrives 15 minutes after the start of the game and takes the place of the replacement Umpire.

**Ruling:** This is illegal. Umpires cannot be replaced during the playing of the game unless they become incapacitated.

**Rule:** 10-7

**5. Situation:** During a USSSA sanctioned softball game, can an Umpire wear a mask behind home plate?

**Ruling:** If the Umpire feels comfortable with the mask, he may wear a mask in the USSSA program.

**6. Comment:** Only the plate Umpire may declare a game forfeited.

**Rule:** 10-4J