

Softball Rules Interpretations - 2020

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softball

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RULES BOOK CORRECTIONS: (Underlining shows additions; ~~strikethrough~~ shows deletions.)

2-4-3: Damaged Bat – A bat that was once legal but is broken, cracked, dented, rattles or has sharp edges that might deface the ~~bat~~ ball. Damaged bats shall be removed from the game without penalty as in Rule 7-4-2 PENALTY NOTE; **6-1-1 (Playpic 6):** The caption for figure 6 is incorrect in the rules book. It is legal for a pitcher to have just the toe of the pivot foot touching the pitcher's plate and non-pivot foot behind the pitcher's plate.

UMPIRES MANUAL CORRECTIONS: (Underlining shows additions; ~~strikethrough~~ shows deletions.)

Plate Mechanics (Page 23): If the ball is near the foul line and lands in ~~fair~~ foul territory untouched, give a deadball signal and verbal call of "foul" or "foul ball;" **Plate Mechanics (Page 25):** ...If not, the head coach of the offended team is given the option of taking the result of the play, or having a ball awarded to the batter ~~and all runners advanced one base~~. If an illegal pitch hits a batter, the batter is awarded first base and all runners are advanced one base only if forced ~~as a result of the illegal pitch~~.

SITUATION 1: A bat that has an audible rattle is brought to the umpire's attention. The umpire rules the bat illegal and calls the batter out. **RULING:** This is an incorrect ruling. Bats that are damaged are removed from the game without penalty. (1-5-1c, 7-4-2 NOTE)

SITUATION 2: During the first inning, the umpire notices B3's bat has a crack and it is removed from the game without penalty. Later in the sixth inning, the umpire notices that B3 is coming to bat with the same cracked bat that was removed from the game in the first inning. The umpire believes since the infraction was caught before the batter entered the batter's box that this is a minor infraction and warns the batter, informing her she will be ejected if the bat is attempted to be used again. **RULING:** This is the correct ruling. Attempting to utilize a piece of equipment that has previously been removed from the game is behavior not in accordance with the spirit of fair play. Whether the offender is ejected or warned in this case is umpire judgment. This offense could be ruled more than minor and an ejection for the first offense would be supported by the rules. (1-5-1c, 3-6-13c, 7-4-2 NOTE)

SITUATION 3: The pitcher from Team A steps onto the pitcher's plate with the heel of her pitching foot against the front edge of the pitcher's plate. The umpire rules this illegal stating that part of the pivot foot must be on top of the pitcher's plate. **RULING:** This is an incorrect ruling. The pivot foot is only required to be in contact with the pitcher's plate. It is legal if the pitcher wishes to "heel up to" the pitcher's plate by having just the heel of her pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate. (6-1-1)

SITUATION 4: With one out, R1 on third base and R2 on second base, B5 hits a deep fly ball that is caught by F9. Prior to F9 touching the ball, R1 begins to advance toward home while R2 legally tags and is safe at home on a close play. Once the ball is dead the defense appeals that R1 left early on the caught fly ball. The umpire rules R1 is out and R1's run nullified but allows R2's run to count since she touched home plate prior to the appeal being made. **RULING:** This is an incorrect ruling. Since R1 was ruled out on appeal for the third out of the inning, no run can be scored on this play. (9-1-1 EXCEPTION c)

SITUATION 5: With no outs, B2 has a 1 ball-1 strike count and R1 on second base. The pitch is low and gets by F2 as R1 attempts to steal third base. F2, in a rush to retrieve the ball, throws her helmet and stops the ball. F2 then throws the ball to F5 to retire R1. The umpire rules that R1 is awarded third base and B2 is awarded first base. **RULING:** This is an incorrect ruling. Since the batter has not completed her turn at bat, she is not awarded any bases on this play. R1 should be awarded third base – one base from the time of the pitch since it was a pitched ball – and B2 would remain at bat with a 2 ball-1 strike count. (8-4-3d)

SITUATION 6: With no outs, B2 has a 3 ball-1 strike count and R1 on first base. The pitch is low and gets by F2 as R1 attempts to steal second base. F2, in a rush to retrieve the ball, throws her helmet and stops the ball. R1 seeing that F2 has retrieved the ball returns to first base. The umpire rules that R1 is awarded second base and B2 is awarded first base. **RULING:** This is a correct ruling. Since the pitch was ball four the batter has now completed her turn at bat and should be awarded first base and R1 should be awarded second base – one base from the time of the pitch since it was a pitched ball. (8-4-3d)