

NYSSO RULES & MECHANICS REMINDERS

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DP/FLEX & COURTESY RUNNERS

An eligible courtesy runner may be used for the pitcher or catcher. When a DP bats for the pitcher or catcher, a courtesy runner may not be used. There are times where the DP will play defense, either by dropping to 9 players or using an "Offensive Player." When determining whether a runner is entitled to have a courtesy runner, the simplest question to ask is, "Did the pitcher or catcher bat her way on to base?"

VIDEO RECORDING

Video recording/taping from the dugout/team area is prohibited. Teams may use video recording/taping devices outside of the dugout/team area, but are prohibited from going to or viewing any such device during the game.

COACH'S STATEMENT 1

"Teams can't huddle on the field when they come off on defense."

REALITY 1

There is no rule prohibiting the team that just came off of defense from huddling near their dugout between innings. As long as they are ready to bat without delay, leave them alone.

COACH'S STATEMENT 2

"All Easton bats are illegal."

REALITY 2

Bats that meet the specifications of the rules and are not on the banned bat list are legal. No manufacturer has been "singled out."

COACH'S STATEMENT 3

"The pitcher who warmed up is required to pitch to one batter."

REALITY 3

There is no "must pitch to" rule in USA Softball. You may find such a requirement in baseball rulebooks or NFHS rulebooks, but no such rule exists in USA Softball; therefore, there is no applicable rule to NYSPHSAA.

PLAY 1: With 1 out and R3 on 3rd base, B4 attempts a suicide bunt. R3 comes across the plate to score. F2 fires to 1st base to retire B4. B4 is declared out for 3-foot lane interference. Does R3's run count or is she returned to 3rd base?

RULING 1: On 3-foot lane interference, runners are returned to the base last held at the time of interference, not time of pitch. *Note: NCAA officials should consult their rulebooks for a different interpretation.*

PLAY 2: With 2 outs and R3 on 3rd base, B4 attempts a suicide bunt. R3 comes across the plate to score. F2 fires to 1st base to retire B4. B4 is declared out for 3-foot lane interference. Does R3's run count?

RULING 2: R3's run does not score. The final out of the inning was on the BR prior to safely advancing to 1st base.

PLAY 3: With R1 on 1st base, B2 bunts up the 1st base line. F3 charges and fields the ball. As F3 attempts to apply the tag on B2, B2 steps back toward home plate. At the time B2 steps back toward home plate, R1 had rounded 2nd base. What is the proper ruling?

RULING 3: When the BR steps back toward home plate in an attempt to avoid or delay a tag, the ball is dead. This is considered a form of interference. Runners are returned to the base last held at the time of the interference, not time of pitch. *Note: NCAA officials should consult their rulebooks for a different interpretation.*

PLAY 4: With R1 on 1st base, B2 receives a base-on-balls. F2 requests time to speak with F1. Once time is granted, R1 and R2 run over to their 3rd base coach. Is this permitted?

RULING 4: There is no rule prohibiting a base runner from leaving her base to confer with a base coach during a non-charged defensive conference. With that said, umpires must be diligent in assuring to break up any such conferences without excessive delay.

CONFERENCES

Umpires must record all conferences – that means BOTH offensive and defensive conferences. There is no excuse for not recording conferences. Place the lineup cards in your lineup cardholder in such a manner that you can quickly and easily record the conferences without delaying resumption of play.

SUBSTITUTIONS

The plate umpire, not the scorekeeper, is responsible for reporting all changes to the opposing team. Do not walk over to the opposing team's dugout to report the change. Loudly and clearly state the change from the home plate area and resume play. If there is an official scorekeeper, report the change to the opposing team and then to the scorekeeper. The opposing team gets the courtesy of the change before the scorekeeper does.

WHO COVERS 3RD - R2 TAG-UP

With R2 on 2nd base, B3 hits a long fly ball to F8, who catches the fly ball. The base umpire is responsible for the tag-up. The plate umpire is responsible for the play at 3rd base if R2 advances. The plate umpire must get out from behind home plate, move toward the pitcher's circle to observe play and move to 3rd base clearly ahead of R2 to be waiting and in position for a call at 3rd base. *Exception:* If the plate umpire is pinned on the line for fair/foul and/or catch/no catch down the right field line, the plate umpire must communicate to the base umpire to pick up this responsibility.

WHO COVERS 3RD – R2 ON 2ND – OUTFIELD HIT

With R2 on 2nd base, B3 hits a low line drive to left field. F7 fields the ball on one hop and fires to 3rd base for a play on R2. Who makes the call? The plate umpire is responsible for this play for multiple reasons. First, the plate umpire is not responsible for any play at the plate. Second, this is not a force play. Third, this is not the first throw by an infielder. Therefore, the umpires divide up responsibility and cover the plays accordingly.

ANOTHER WILD PITCH

Plate umpires shall not provide the catcher with a new ball on wild pitches and retrieve the original ball. It is unprofessional for an umpire to run to a backstop to chase errant pitches. That practice does nothing to provide an incentive for the pitcher to throw decent pitches or the catcher to catch/stop them.

ARGUMENT ESCALATION

If you engage in an amicable conversation with a coach and the conversation becomes heated, you've done something wrong. Either avoid the conversation to begin with or learn to respectfully address coaches. If multiple coaches have a problem with you, then there is probably a problem with you. "Umpires get into more trouble for the things they say and how they say them than for any judgment call on the field."

SIGNALING OUTS

Umpires are permitted to "sell" outs with their left arm. That is to accommodate left handed umpires who find it awkward to sell an out with their right arm. However, when signaling a routine "hammer" out, umpires must use their right arm.

3-0 and 0-2 PITCHES

Do not expand the strike zone on a 3-0 pitch. The pitcher has failed to throw a strike in 3 pitches and the batter has avoided swinging at a ball 3 times. So if this happens a 4th time, why would you reward the pitcher and penalize the batter? The batter has earned a base on balls and the pitcher gave it to her. Put her on base and get the next batter up. Likewise, if a pitcher throws a strike on an 0-2, don't "ball" it by calling the pitch too quickly. 0-2 strikes supposed to fool the batter, not the umpire.