



2019 NFHS SOFTBALL RULES INTERPRETATIONS

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CASE BOOK CORRECTIONS:

(Underlining shows additions; ~~strike-through~~ shows deletions.)

8.4.3 SITUATION N: Rule reference 8-4-3ed PENALTY; 8.4.3 SITUATION O: Rule reference 8-4-3ae.

SITUATION 1: During a game, a bat is brought to the umpire that does not have the 2000 or 2004 ASA certification mark but does have another organization's marking. The coach of the team at bat claims that since it has been approved by an organization it is acceptable to be used in NFHS play. The umpire rules this bat to be a non-approved bat and penalizes accordingly. **RULING:** This is the correct ruling. For NFHS play, bats must have either the 2000 or 2004 ASA certification mark shown below. (1-5-1d)



SITUATION 2: During a game, the umpire notices that the face/head protection of a player on defense has an eye shield attached to it with tape. Upon further inspection, the umpire notices that the edges of the shield are rough and splintered. When asked, the player tells the umpire that her dad modified a motorcycle face shield to fit her face/head protection. The umpire requires the player to remove the shield from the face/head protection, allowing her time to do so before play continues. **RULING:** This is the correct ruling. Shields attached to face/head protection must be designed for use

with the face/head protection and be attached as intended by the manufacturer. (1-8-4)

SITUATION 3: The pitcher from Team A steps onto the pitcher's plate, simulates taking a signal, then brings her hands together. With her hands together, she raises her hands up over her head while taking a step backward, separating her hands after the step backward has ended and then continuing to pitch the ball. The umpire calls this an illegal pitch, ruling that any step backward must begin prior to any motion that is part of the windup. **RULING:** This is an incorrect ruling. Any step backward must begin prior to the start of the pitch, which is when the hands separate after they have been brought together. (6-1-2a, b)

SITUATION 4: With no outs, a 3-2 count and R1 on second base, the pitcher is called for an illegal pitch. B2 swings and misses the ball that is not caught by the catcher. Seeing the ball dropped, B2 runs to first base and is thrown out prior to reaching first base. R1, who was stealing on the pitch, is safe at third base. The umpire awards B2 first base on the illegal pitch and, since R1 was safe on the play, allows her to remain at third base. **RULING:** This is an incorrect ruling. Since the batter was not safe at first base, on an illegal pitch the coach on offense should receive his or her choice of the play or the penalty (6-1-1 PENALTY EXCEPTION 2). **COMMENT:** In this case, the result of the play would be R1 on third base and B2 being called out. If the coach elects to take the penalty, a ball is awarded to B2, which would result in ball 4, placing B2 on first base and R1 would be returned to second base.

SITUATION 5: With no outs, a 1-1 count and R1 on first base, the pitcher is called for an illegal pitch. B2 swings and misses the ball. R1, who was stealing on the pitch, is thrown out at second base. The umpire rules that since R1 was stealing on the pitch she would remain out, but awards the batter a ball for the illegal pitch. **RULING:** This is an incorrect ruling. Since the batter was not safe at first base and all runners did not advance at least one base, on an illegal pitch the coach on offense should receive his or her choice of the play or the penalty (6-1-1 PENALTY EXCEPTION 2). **COMMENT:** In this case, the result of the play would be B2 at bat with a 1-2 count and R1 remaining out. If the coach elects to take the penalty, a ball is awarded to B2 (2-1 count) and R1 would be returned to first base.

SITUATION 6: With no outs, R1 on third base and R2 on first base, B3 is at bat with a 3-1 count. The umpire calls an illegal pitch as B3 swings and misses. R2 was stealing second base on the pitch and is thrown out at second base, but R1 is safe stealing home. The umpire rules that since R1 advanced safely, the illegal pitch is nullified, R1 scores, R2 is out at second and B3 remains at bat with a 3-2 count. **RULING:** This is an incorrect ruling. Since the batter was not safe at first base and all runners did not advance at least one base, on an illegal pitch the coach on offense should receive his or her choice of the play or the penalty (6-1-1 PENALTY EXCEPTION 2). **COMMENT:** In this case, the result of the play would be R1 scores, R2 is out and B3 remains at bat with a 3-2 count with one out. If the coach chooses to take the penalty, a ball is awarded to B3, which would result in ball 4, placing B3 on first base

and forcing R2 to advance to second base and R1 returning to third base.

SITUATION 7: The coach of the team at bat asks the umpire to examine the left fielder's mitt claiming that it has three colors, which would make it illegal. Upon inspection it is found that the main part of the mitt is gray with blue in the inner part of the mitt. There is also red piping and lacing, and the manufacturer's logo is also red. The umpire rules the mitt is three colors and is not allowed to be used. **RULING:** This is an incorrect ruling. This mitt is two colors, gray and blue. Piping is viewed the same as lacing and can be any color other than the color of the ball. The manufacturer's logo is allowed to be any color. (1-4-1a)

SITUATION 8: Following a double by R2, B3 comes to bat with R1 on third base and R2 on second base and no outs. The coach of the team on defense asks the umpire to intentionally walk B3. After B3 is awarded the intentional walk, the coach comes back out of the dugout and asks to appeal R2 missing first base on the previous play. Since a pitch has not been thrown, the umpire rules R2 out on appeal. **RULING:** This is an incorrect ruling. Since an intentional walk is considered a time at bat, for purposes of an appeal it is considered the same as throwing a pitch. No appeal of the previous play can be made after an intentional walk has been awarded (2-65-2). **COMMENT:** All appeals (missing a base, leaving a base early on a caught fly ball, batting

out of order, attempting to advance after overrunning first base) are designed to allow the defense to gain an advantage from an infraction by the offense. Throwing a pitch (legal or illegal) or requesting an intentional walk are both actions by the defense that remove its chance to appeal a play. Just as the act of throwing the next pitch has always been, it is also incumbent upon the defense to ensure it does not want to appeal any actions on the previous play prior to requesting an intentional walk.