

NYSSO RULES INTERPRETATIONS

For immediate dissemination to all chapters with the requirement that each chapter immediately disseminate the following to all of their members:

JEWELRY

Play 1: The umpire crew notices a player in the line-up who has tape, Band-Aids, etc., on both ears. What are umpires supposed to do?

Ruling 1: “If an umpire suspects that a player is covering up jewelry ... in the presence of the head coach, ask the player if she has covered up jewelry. If the player states that she does have jewelry on, she must remove it before she is eligible to play. If the player states that she does not have jewelry on, accept her statement as truthful. If you later discover during the game that the player was wearing jewelry, the player and head coach will be subject to penalties for unsportsmanlike conduct.

Note 1A: Umpires do not direct players to remove the tape.

Note 1B: Umpires must use common sense, good judgment and thoughtful reasoning in making any decision. NYSSO does not box umpires in with regard to how to handle the situation of a player who is subsequently found to be wearing jewelry after saying she wasn't. Umpires will handle the situation in accordance with the rules, common sense, good judgement and thoughtful reasoning. However, umpires will not make up penalties not supported by the rule book (e.g., “restricted to the bench.”) Violating the jewelry rule and lying about it is unsporting conduct. Umpires have the discretion to issue warnings, eject violators, eject head coaches, etc... Umpires are paid to handle situations. This is a situation that needs handling.

APPEAL PLAYS

Play 2: With R3 on 3rd base, B4 hits a grounder to F4. R3 easily beats the errant throw to the plate. The ball ends up against the backstop. However, R3 clearly misses home plate. F1 states to you, the plate umpire, “The runner missed home.” What do you do?

Ruling 2: The plate umpire should state, “Your appeal is denied.” This is an improper appeal. The pitcher is attempting to make a live ball appeal, but she is not doing so properly. In order to make a live ball appeal, the defender in possession of the ball must either tag the runner or step on the base.

Note 2: When appropriate, a dead ball appeal (not a live ball appeal) may be made without the ball.

INFIELD FLY

Play 3: With R2 on 2nd base and R1 on 1st base, B3 hits a high fly ball within the infield. The ball is easily catchable by F3. The ball lands untouched in fair territory before 1st base and kicks into foul ground where it settles or is first touched.

Ruling 3: By definition (in all softball and baseball codes), this is a foul ball. One of the criteria for an infield fly is that the ball be fair. Since runners aren't forced to advance on a foul ball, how can a foul ball result in an infield fly?

Play 4: With R2 on 2nd base and R1 on 1st base, B3 hits a high fly ball within the infield. The ball is easily catchable by F3. The ball lands untouched in fair territory beyond 1st base and kicks into foul ground where it settles or is first touched.

Ruling 4: By definition (in all softball and baseball codes), this is a fair ball. All other elements of an infield fly are met. The proper ruling is an infield fly.

Play 5: With R2 on 2nd base and R1 on 1st base, B3 hits a high fly ball within the infield. The ball is easily catchable by F3. The ball lands untouched in foul territory before 1st base and rolls into fair territory before 1st base where it settles or is first touched.

Ruling 5: By definition (in all softball and baseball codes), this is a fair ball. All other elements of an infield fly are met. The proper ruling is an infield fly.

ON-DECK CIRCLE

Play 6: The on-deck batter from the 3rd base dugout would like to use the on-deck circle on the 1st base side.

Ruling 6: The on-deck batter may only do so if the batter is batting left-handed. She may not use the 1st base side if the batter is batting right-handed, because that means she would be facing the “open side” of the batter. That isn’t permissible when using the “opposite” on-deck circle.

Play 7: The on-deck batter from the 3rd base dugout would like to use her “own” on-deck circle on the 3rd base side.

Ruling 7: An on-deck batter is always permitted to use the on-deck circle on her side regardless of the “open side” of the batter. In other words, an on-deck batter may always use her own circle, regardless of whether the batter is batting left-handed or right-handed.

PITCHER’S PLATE

Play 8: As F1 stands on the pitcher’s plate and takes her sign from F2, the plate umpire clearly sees that the pitcher’s right foot is in contact with the pitcher’s plate, but breaks the plane of the 24 inch pitcher’s plate. In other words, the left portion of her right foot is touching the plate, but the remainder of her foot is outside the 24” plate.

Ruling 8: Illegal pitch. At the time of the pitch, the pitcher’s feet must be within the pitcher’s plate, not merely in contact with it.

PITCHING REQUIREMENTS

Play 9: After F1 takes her sign from F2, F1 merely taps the ball to the outside of her glove.

Ruling 9: Illegal pitch. For at least 20 years, NYSPHSAA has required the pitcher to bring the ball within or at least partially within the glove. The purpose of the modification was to avoid a quick pitch as well as a “touch and go” and to give consistency to the rule at a time of ambiguity.

RUNS SCORING ON INTERFERENCE PLAY

Play 10: R3 occupies 3rd base with one out. R3 breaks for the plate on a squeeze play as B5 bunts a fair ball in front of home plate. R3 touches home plate. Then, B4 illegally interferes with the throw going to 1st base (i.e., commits three-foot lane interference).

Ruling 10: R3 scored prior to B4 committing three-foot lane interference. Score the run. Call B4 out.

Note 10: On this same play, if there had been two out already and B4 is called out for interference, then R3's run would not count. That is because the third out of the inning was called on the BR before reaching 1st base.

INTERPRETER ON FIELD

Play 11: An interpreter is on the field next to 2nd base assisting R2. The interpreter interferes with F4 making a play.

Ruling 11: An offensive interpreter on the field should be treated as if she was the runner who she is assisting.

Note 11: A defensive interpreter on the field would be subject to the same obstruction penalties as a defensive player.

ILLEGAL BAT ATTACHMENT

Play 12: B1 comes to bat, when the plate umpire notices a device attached to the knob of the bat. This device is able to record information regarding the swing.

Ruling 12: This device is illegal for multiple reasons. First, it is not an approved attachment under the rules. Therefore, the bat is, by definition, altered. Second, it is an illegal electronic device.

CHANGING A FOUL TO FAIR CALL

Play 13: With no runners on base, B1 hits an aerial ball down the 1st base line. The base umpire properly turns toward the outfield, straddles the line and calls "Foul" right after the ball landed. Unfortunately, the ball landed in fair territory. The ball then rolls out of play, beyond the outfield fence, which does not connect to the fence going down the field. The umpire crew gets together and there is no doubt whatsoever that the ball was fair.

Ruling 13: The only permissible change of a foul call to a fair call in NYSPHSAA is an over-the-fence home run. That is because the ball only becomes dead when it has left the field of play. Player reaction is not a concern.

Note 13: An over-the-fence home run is different than the "book rule double" situation in the play above. The primary difference and justification for ruling differently is that the ball becomes dead when the umpire rules "foul" as opposed to when it leaves the field of play over the fence. The issue here is that defensive players may have reacted to the foul call. Therefore, the defense was placed in jeopardy by the umpires.