



March 14, 2022

NFHS Softball Weekly Rule Interpretations

SITUATION 1: With no runners on base, two outs and a one ball two strike count, B3 squares to bunt, making contact with the ball. The batted ball contacts the plate bouncing up and then in (a), makes contact with the bat a second time while it is still in the batter's hands with the batter still within the batter's box. In (b), contacts the batter while the batter is still in the batter's box. In (c), contacts the batter's discarded bat that is in foul territory. In (d), contacts the batter's discarded bat, which is stationary in fair territory and the ball is first touched by F2 in fair territory. In all cases, B3 beats the throw to first base. **RULING:** In (a), (b), and (c), the ball is dead and by rule is a foul ball. B3 remains a batter since the batted ball is foul, B3 is ruled out since they bunted the ball foul for the third strike. In (d), the ball is fair, remains live and B3 is safe at first base. (1-8-3; 2-20-1a; 2-25-1f; 7-4-9; 8-1-1a)

SITUATION 2: With no runners on base and no outs B1 hits the ball to F6 who makes an errant throw pulling F3 into the path of B1, impeding B1's progress prior to having possession of the thrown ball. **RULING:** By rule, if F3 impedes the progress of B1 without possession of the ball or not in the act of making the initial play on a batted ball, F3 is guilty of obstruction. The umpire should verbalize obstruction and signal a delayed dead ball. If B1 is putout prior to reaching the base they would have reached had there been no obstruction, the umpire would signal and verbalize dead ball and award B1 the base they would have reached had there been no obstruction. (8-4-3b; 8-4-3b PENALTIES 1; Case Play 8.4.3 SITUATION F)

SITUATION 3: With no runner on base and no outs, B1 contacts F2's mitt on the swing but is still able to hit the ball to right center field. The plate umpire verbalizes obstruction and signals a delayed dead ball. B1, now the batter-runner misses first base on the way to sliding in safe at second base. After the ball is dead, F3 appeals that the batter-runner missed first base on the way to second. The umpire rules the batter-runner out on appeal. The offensive coach approaches the umpire insisting that since B1 was ruled out for not contacting first base that B1 did not reach first base safely and the team should have the option to enforce the catcher's obstruction. The umpire offers no option to the offensive coach since B1 had passed first base. **RULING:** Correct ruling. Once a runner has passed a base, the runner is considered to have reached that base (whether missing the base or not) and no options are given. (8-1-1d EFFECTS 2)

SITUATION 4: With bases loaded and two outs, B1 contacts F2's mitt on the swing but is still able to hit the ball to right center field. The plate umpire verbalizes obstruction and signals a delayed dead ball. B1, now the batter-runner misses first base on the way to sliding in safe at second base as R1, R2 and R3 all score on the play. After the ball is dead, F3 appeals that the batter-runner missed first base on the way to second. The umpire rules the batter-runner out on appeal for the third out of the inning and allows no runs to score on the play. The offensive coach approaches the umpire insisting that since B1 was ruled out for not contacting first base that B1 did not reach first base safely and the team should have

the option to enforce the catcher's obstruction. The umpire offers no option to the offensive coach since B1 had passed first base. **RULING:** Correct ruling. Once a runner has passed a base, the runner is considered to have reached that base (whether missing the base or not) and no options are given. No runs score when a third out is the result of an appeal resulting in a force out or an out on the batter-runner prior to reaching first base. (8-1-1d EFFECTS 2, 9-1-1 EXCEPTION d)