

2006 Baseball Rules Interpretations

SITUATION 1: With two outs in the bottom of the sixth inning, and runners on second and third base, the batter hits a fair ball to the fence in right center field. The runner at second base, knowing he will score easily, removes his helmet as he rounds third base. Both runs score as the batter stops at second base. **RULING:** This is a delayed ball situation, and both runs will count. At the end of playing action, the umpire will issue a warning to the team on offense and a subsequent violation shall result in ejection. Had the team been issued a prior warning, the runner, whose run would score, would be ejected from the game at the end of playing action. (1-5-1 Penalty)

SITUATION 2: S1 comes in to pitch for the starting pitcher. As S1 begins his warm-up pitches, the opposing coach complains that his red and blue glove is illegal and must be removed. **RULING:** The glove is legal as long as it does not contain the colors white and/or gray. If the plate umpire determines that the glove is distracting, the pitcher would be required to change it. (1-3-6, 6-2-1h)

SITUATION 3: With a runner on third, the defensive coach waits until the substitute pitcher has delivered a pitch for ball one to complain that the pitcher's black and tan glove is illegal and wants a balk declared, thereby scoring his runner. The glove has a small amount of white thread in the manufacturer's logo. **RULING:** The glove is illegal, not because it is multi-colored, but because of the white contained in the manufacturer's logo. The pitcher must either replace the glove or darken the white threads in the logo with a dark pen that is not distracting. There is no additional penalty. (1-3-6, 6-2-1f,h Penalty)

SITUATION 4: As the umpires gather at home plate for the pregame conference, the head coach of the visiting team is present, but the head coach of the home team refuses to attend, stating he is busy with last minute preparations. He sends his assistant coach and a team captain to represent his team at the conference. **RULING:** The pregame conference will not take place until both head coaches are in attendance. Only if the head coach is absent or ill may the assistant coach attend on his behalf. Team captains, while not required, may attend the pregame conference. (4-1-3)

SITUATION 5: With two outs and R1 on second base and R2 on first base, the pitcher delivers a wild pitch that goes to the backstop and rebounds quickly back toward home plate. The catcher scoops the ball into his glove using his mask held by his throwing hand. At the time the catcher scooped up the ball with his mask, R1 had rounded third, but R2 had not yet reached second base. **RULING:** This is a delayed dead ball. At the end of playing action, each runner will be awarded two bases from the base occupied at the time of the infraction; therefore, R1 will be awarded home and R2 will be awarded third base. (8-3-3c-1, 8-3-5a)

SITUATION 6: With runners on first and third and one out, the pitcher delivers a called strike that becomes lodged under the catcher's chest protector. **RULING:** The ball is

immediately dead. A strike is added to the batter's count. The runner on third is awarded home and the runner on first is awarded second base. (8-3-3d, 8-3-5b, 5-1-1g-4)

SITUATION 7: R1 is on second base with two outs. B4 is at bat with a 1-2 count. The pitch is a low curve that B4 attempts to check his swing, but the plate umpire properly declares, "Yes, he went." As the catcher picks up the blocked pitch, which rolled a few feet away from him, he sees R1 advancing to third base and throws there in time to retire R1 for the third out. Will B4 bat first in his team's next half-inning or will the player who follows him in the lineup be the one to bat? **RULING:** When the plate umpire declared the third strike, B4 became a batter-runner with the right to attempt to reach first base. The first batter in the team's next half-inning will be the player whose name follows that of B4, who completed his turn at bat in the preceding inning. (8-1-1b, 7-1-2)

SITUATION 8: The first batter of the game gets a single and ends up on first base. The next batter, B2, comes to bat and is wearing a different jersey number than the number listed on the lineup card. Following B2's single, and before the next pitch, the opposing team's coach appeals batting-out-of-order. **RULING:** While B2 is in technical violation of the rule that requires a player's name, shirt number and position to be on the lineup card, there is no penalty, since the batting-out-of-order rule requires that the name be in the proper order. The umpire should revise his lineup card accordingly and deny the batting-out-of-order appeal. (1-1-2, 7-1-1)

SITUATION 9: Following the first batter of the game, B2 comes to bat. After he singles to get on base, the opposing team's coach appeals batting-out-of-order, stating that while he has the correct jersey number as the lineup, it is not Smith who was listed, but a different player, Jones. **RULING:** The umpire-in-chief shall determine if B2 is Smith who was listed in the line-up or is indeed Jones as claimed by the opposing team's coach. If B2 is truly Jones, the batting-out-of-order appeal will be upheld and Smith will be declared out, with the next batter being the player who followed Smith in the lineup. Although the jersey number was correct, it was not the player listed by name, and hence there is batting-out-of-order. (7-1-1, 1-1-2)

SITUATION 10: Coach of Team A requests and is granted time for a defensive charged conference. As he goes to the mound to talk with his pitcher, he tosses a ball to his third baseman and tells him to begin warming up with his shortstop in case he is needed to pitch. The coach leaves the mound without removing the pitcher. **RULING:** This is not allowed. A charged conference permits a coach or his non-playing representative to confer with a defensive player or players but does not permit any warm-up pitches by a player who is not the pitcher. (3-4-1)

SITUATION 11: The batter, attempting to sacrifice a runner to second base, bunts the ball that subsequently strikes home plate and rolls out into fair territory. The batted ball, having a lot of backspin, then rolls back and comes to rest on top of home plate untouched. **RULING:** This is a fair ball as it settled or came to rest while upon fair territory. Home plate is located in fair territory. (2-5-1a, 1-2-6)

SITUATION 12: With R1 on third and R2 on second base and one out, B4 hits a line drive into the gap in right center field. R1 scores easily. R2 misses third base as he advances, but does touch home plate. B4 makes it to second base on an apparent double, but missed first base on his advance. After playing action is over, the defensive head coach is granted time and first appeals B4 missing first base and then appeals R2 missing third base. RULING: This is a legal appeal by the defense as the coach may verbally appeal a baserunning infraction when the ball is dead and may make multiple appeals. B4 would be declared out for the second out and R2 would be the third out. R1's run would count. (8-2-6c,f; 9-1-1)

SITUATION 13: With R1 on third and R2 on second base and one out, B4 hits a line drive into the gap in right center field. R1 scores easily. R2 misses third base as he advances, but does touch home plate. B4 makes it to second base on an apparent double, but missed first base on his advance. After playing action is over, the defensive head coach is granted time and first appeals R2 missing third base and then appeals B4 missing first base. RULING: This is a legal appeal by the defense as the coach may verbally appeal a baserunning infraction when the ball is dead and may make multiple appeals. R2 would be declared out for out number two and B4 would be the third out. No runs would score as B4's out is out number three and was made before he touched first base. The order in which appeals are made can be important in determining if runs will score. (8-2-6c,f, 9-1-1a)

SITUATION 14: In the bottom of the seventh inning, the visiting team leads 6-4. With the bases loaded and two outs, the batter hits a grand slam home run over the left field fence. B6, in his excitement, passes R3, who started the play on first base. At the time B6 passed R3, only R1 had touched home plate. RULING: When a batter hits a home run, each runner on base is awarded four bases, or home. While B6 is out for passing an unobstructed preceding runner, his third out is not a force out since he had touched first base. Therefore, three runs will score and the home team will win, 7-6. (8-3-3a, 9-1-1)

SITUATION 15: With a runner on third attempting to steal home, the pitch bounces off the plate, hits the catcher's chest protector and rebounds back in front of the plate in a nice soft arc. The batter, seeing the ball back in front of the plate, hits the ball for a soft fly ball that falls over the second baseman. The defensive coach argues that this is batter interference while the offensive coach counters that since the ball was still technically a pitch, the batter has the right to hit it. RULING: This is batter interference. If the play started with one out, the runner from third would be declared out. If the play started with two outs, the batter would be declared out. The batter has the legal right to strike the pitch as it comes across the home plate area. He no longer has the right to bat the ball once it has passed home plate and subsequently bounces or caroms off someone or something. (7-3-5c Penalty)

SITUATION 16: R1 on first attempts to advance on a fly ball hit to right field by B2. Seeing F9 catch the fly ball, R1 attempts to return to first and is obstructed by F4 who is standing in the basepath. RULING: This is obstruction by F4. The base umpire properly declares "That is obstruction," and signals a delayed dead ball. When making an

obstruction award, two conditions must be met. First, the obstructed runner will be awarded the base or bases he would have made, in the umpire's judgment, had the obstruction not occurred. Secondly, the award must be a minimum of one base beyond his position on base when the obstruction occurred. Although R1 would have only acquired first base had the obstruction not occurred, that award does not meet the additional condition of a minimum of one base beyond the base occupied at the time of the obstruction. Since R1 occupied first base at the time of obstruction, he will be awarded second base. (8-3-2)

SITUATION 17: R1, moving from first base on a hit and run, is obstructed by F4 as he nears second base. The base umpire properly declares "That is obstruction," and signals a delayed dead ball. He judges at that moment that R1 would have made third base had the obstruction not occurred. R1, despite the obstruction, makes third and attempts to score where he is thrown out at home. The third base coach argues that because of the obstruction, R1 should be allowed to go back to third and have his out nullified.

RULING: Obstruction of a runner is ignored if the obstructed runner acquires the base he would have made had the obstruction not occurred and that award satisfies the condition of a minimum of one base beyond his position on base at the time of the obstruction. Since R1 did acquire third base, the base the umpire judged he would have made had there been no obstruction, and that award satisfies the one base minimum requirement, the obstruction is ignored. R1's out at home stands. (8-3-2)

SITUATION 18: With a runner on first and the pitcher struggling in the top of the fifth inning, S1 comes to the mound and begins to throw his warm-up pitches. His coach announces to the plate umpire the change, who marks it on his lineup card and announces to the home scorekeeper. After only four warm-up pitches, the defensive coach decides he wants a different player to pitch. The visiting coach argues that since the ball had not yet been made live, the substitution had not been made and he can change his mind.

RULING: Once the umpire-in-chief has accepted the change, marked it on his lineup and announced the change, the substitution is in effect. The substitute pitcher must pitch until the batter then at bat, or any substitute for that batter, is put out or reaches first base, or until a third out has been made. Therefore, the coach cannot change his substitute pitcher until the pitching conditions have been met. The only exception to this requirement would be if the substitute pitcher became incapacitated or guilty of flagrant unsportsmanlike conduct. If there had been no announcement of the substitution, the unreported substitution would be considered to have been made when the pitcher took his place on the pitcher's plate and the ball was made live. (3-1-1, 3-1-2)

SITUATION 19: R1 is on first base with no outs. B2 smashes a one-hopper to F6, who flips the ball to F4 to quickly retire R1. F4 then relays the ball to first in an attempt for a double play, but the ball strikes R1, who is in the baseline and less than halfway to second. The ball ricochets into short right field and B2 reaches first safely. RULING: The play stands. This is not a violation of the force-play slide rule by R1. Unless R1 intentionally made a move to interfere with the thrown ball, the ball stays live and in play. (8-4-2b, 8-4-2g)

SITUATION 20: With a comfortable lead in the fifth inning, the home coach takes his starting pitcher out of the game and rests him. In the seventh inning, with the game now on the line, the coach wants to bring the starting pitcher back into the game to pitch. The visiting coach argues that, while the player may re-enter the game, he cannot come back to pitch since he has been removed as a pitcher. RULING: Any of the starting players may be withdrawn and re-entered once. As long as the starting pitcher faced one batter, was not removed because his team had more than three defensive charged conferences, and his replacement did not take more than eight warm-up pitches, he may return as a pitcher. (3-1-2 Note, 3-1-3)