

## 2008 NFHS Baseball Rules Interpretations

**SITUATION 1:** With runners on first and second and no outs, the batter bunts a slow roller down the third-base line. The third baseman, seeing that he has no play on any of the runners, starts blowing on the ball from his hands and knees, trying to make the ball go foul. The ball eventually rolls into foul territory where it comes to rest. **RULING:** This is a fair ball. The fielder is using artificial means to induce the ball to become foul. As soon as a fielder blew on the ball, it would be judged to be the same as if he had touched it. So, if the ball was on fair ground when he blew on it, the ball is fair; if the ball was over foul ground when he blew on it, it would be foul. (2-5-1, 2-16-1)

**SITUATION 2:** A sharp line drive is hit to the second baseman. The impact of the ball takes the glove off the second baseman's hand, and the glove lands on the ground with the ball still in the pocket of the glove. The second baseman retrieves the glove and takes the ball out of the pocket. Is this a catch or must the ball be thrown to first base in an attempt to record the out? **RULING:** This is not a catch. To record the out on the batter-runner, the second baseman would need to throw the ball to first in an attempt to obtain the force out. A catch is an act of a fielder gaining secure possession in his hand or glove of a live ball in flight and firmly holding it. (2-9-1)

**SITUATION 3:** A fly ball hit deep to right field along the foul line hits the right fielder on the head. The ball then bounces off his head and, in flight, goes over the outfield fence, but does so on the foul side of the foul pole. Is this a home run? **RULING:** No, this is a ground-rule double. A home run is a fair ball that goes over a fence in flight in fair territory. (8-3-4a)

**SITUATION 4:** With the bases loaded and two outs and a 3-2 count, the runners are off with the pitch. The pitch is ball four, but the runner from first slides into second and his momentum carries him over and past the base. The catcher makes a quick throw to second base and the tag is applied for the third out before the runner from third trots home and touches the plate. Does the run count? **RULING:** Yes, the run does count. Each runner may, without liability to be put out, advance one base when he is forced to vacate his position on the bases due to the batter being awarded a base-on-balls. The runners advance past the bases to which they are entitled at their own risk. All runners are awarded one base, and as long as all the bases are touched appropriately, the run would count. (8-1-2a, 8-1-1c, Awards Table)

**SITUATION 5:** With runners on second and third, the batter receives ball four on a pitch that bounces in the dirt. The ball caroms off the catcher's shin guards and goes into the visiting team's dugout. What bases are to be awarded? **RULING:** The batter is awarded first base due to the base-on-balls, and the runners are awarded one base due to the pitch entering a dead-ball area. At the end of the awards, the batter-runner will be on first base, the runner from second will be on third, and the runner from third will have scored. (8-1-2a, 8-1-1c, 8-3-3d)

**SITUATION 6:** While on the pitcher's plate in the windup position, the pitcher has both hands at his side or both hands together in front of his body. He brings his pitching hand to his mouth and then distinctly wipes it off. **RULING:** This is an illegal pitch. Each runner on base would be awarded one base. If the bases were empty, a ball would be awarded to the batter. (6-1-2 Penalty)

**SITUATION 7:** While on the pitching plate in the stretch position, the pitcher has the ball in his glove hand and his pitching hand is at his side or has hands together in front of his body. He brings his pitching hand to his mouth, distinctly wipes it off and returns it to his side. **RULING:** This is an illegal pitch by the pitcher. A balk will be called if there are runners on base. If the bases are empty, a ball will be awarded to the batter. (6-1-3 Penalty)

**SITUATION 8:** While off the pitcher's plate, the pitcher goes to his mouth with his pitching hand, distinctly wipes it off and then legally engages the pitcher's plate. **RULING:** This is legal. (6-1, 6-2-1e)

**SITUATION 9:** With (a) the bases empty, or (b) runners on first base and second base, the pitcher goes to his mouth with his pitching hand while off the pitcher's plate, but does not wipe it off. He next places his pitching hand on the ball. **RULING:** In both (a) and (b), while off the pitching plate, the pitcher may request to have a new ball from the plate umpire with no penalty. If the pitcher, without having received a new ball from the plate umpire subsequently engages the pitcher's plate, a ball would be awarded to the batter. (6-2-1e Penalty)

**SITUATION 10:** The lineup submitted by the visiting team does not have any substitutes listed. In the second inning, the visiting team coach attempts to substitute for the center fielder. The coach of the home team complains that there were no substitutes listed, this is illegal. **RULING:** This is legal. While it is encouraged and a benefit to both teams to have all substitutes listed on the line-up card, it is not mandatory. There is no penalty. The umpire-in-chief will allow the substitution and notify the opposing team and the official scorekeeper. (1-1-2, 10-2-3d, j)

**SITUATION 11:** Baker, who is not listed on the lineup card as a starter or as a substitute, comes in to play left field but does not report. When he comes to bat in the next half-inning, the opposing team argues that since he was not listed on the lineup and that since he did not report, he is an illegal substitute and cannot participate. **RULING:** There is no penalty for not listing the substitutes and Baker may participate. As an unreported substitute, the umpire-in-chief will enter him on his lineup card and notify both teams and the official scorer. (1-1-2, 2-36-2, 3-1-1)

**SITUATION 12:** As the pitcher moves to attempt a pickoff at first base, the first baseman drops his knee and entirely blocks the runner from getting back to first base. **RULING:** This is obstruction. A fielder who is not in possession of the ball must provide the runner access to the base he is attempting to reach. The runner will be awarded second base for the obstruction. (2-22-3, 8-3-2)

**SITUATION 13:** Without the ball in possession, the catcher sets up in the base path, but does allow access to part of home plate. As the ball and the runner converge at home simultaneously, the runner contacts the catcher. **RULING:** As long as the umpire judges that the catcher provided access to the plate for the runner, this is not obstruction. With the play in motion and the timing such that it is about to occur, a fielder may be in the base path without the ball, provided he allows the runner access to the base or home plate. (2-22-3)

**SITUATION 14:** With a lazy, one-hop single to the right fielder, the batter rounds first base with no intention or action of advancing to second base. As he takes a few easy strides past first

base, he contacts the first baseman who is partially in his path. **RULING:** Since the batter was making no attempt to advance to second base, the first baseman did not hinder him or change the pattern of the play. As a result, obstruction would not be called. Any benefit of the doubt would be given to the batter-runner if there was a question in the covering umpire's mind. (3-22-1)

**SITUATION 15:** With the pregame conference ready to begin, the home team head coach is in the bullpen and refuses to attend. He sends his assistant coach and a captain to be present. The assistant coach provides his team's lineup and verifies to the umpire-in-chief that his team is properly equipped. **RULING:** The umpire-in-chief will accept the assistant coach's verification and conclude all needed activity at the pregame conference. The head coach will be restricted to the dugout for the remainder of the game. (3-2-4 Penalty, 4-1-3a)

**SITUATION 16:** With the game time at hand, the head coach of the visiting team is caught in traffic and is not present at the field. The assistant coach represents the team at the pregame conference. **RULING:** This is permissible. When the head coach arrives at the game, he may resume normal coaching activity. (3-2-4)

**SITUATION 17:** In the third inning, a substitute pitcher comes to relieve the starting pitcher. After a couple of pitches have been delivered, the umpire-in-chief notices that the reliever's glove has white on it. **RULING:** The umpire shall have the pitcher remove the glove and obtain a legal one before he continues to pitch. (1-3-6)

**SITUATION 18:** With runners on second and third, the pitcher makes a great catch of a line drive hit back up the middle. The opposing coach notices that his glove has a large manufacturer's logo that is white. He complains to the umpire-in-chief. **RULING:** Upon discovery, the glove used by the pitcher that includes the colors white and/or gray shall be removed. The out stands and there are no subsequent base awards. (1-3-6)

**SITUATION 19:** The umpire-in-chief notices that the head coach coaching at third base is not in the coach's box. The coach is not gaining an advantage or causing any problems. **RULING:** There is no violation. If the umpire believes that the coach was gaining an advantage for his team, he would require the coach to be within the confines of the coach's box. (3-2-1)

**SITUATION 20:** With the bases empty, the visiting team is at bat and the assistant coach in the first base coach's box is wearing a dual flap helmet while the head coach in the third base coach's box is wearing a hard liner under his team cap. The home team coach complains to the umpire-in-chief that both coaches must wear the same type of protective helmet in accordance with MLB rules. **RULING:** The NFHS has not mandated that adult coaches shall wear protective head gear while occupying a coach's box. It is the prerogative of the respective coach to wear such protective equipment. The NFHS is conducting research to determine if protective head gear should be required and, if so, which type (hard liner, flapless, one-flap, dual flap) would be most effective. However, it is mandatory that when occupying a coach's box, a coach shall wear the team cap and that players/students wear a batting helmet that meets the NOCSAE standard and has dual ear flaps. (3-2-1, 1-5-1, 1-4-1)