

## **2010 NFHS Baseball Rules Interpretations**

*Note: The National Federation of State High School Associations is the only source of official high school interpretations. They do not set aside nor modify any rule. They are made and published by the NFHS in response to situations presented.*

**SITUATION 1:** While in the set position, F1 has his pitching hand hanging straight down in front of his body, stationary, as he gets the sign from the catcher.

**RULING:** The use of the “gorilla” stance in the set position is legal provided the arm is not moving. The batter, runner(s) on base, and coaches are able to view the pitcher and the ball and are not placed at a disadvantage. (6-1-3)

**SITUATION 2:** While in the set position, F1 has his pitching hand hanging straight down in front of his body, swinging back and forth, as he gets the sign from the catcher.

**RULING:** This is not legal and is an illegal pitch or a balk if there are runners on base. While this “gorilla” stance is legal if the pitching hand is stationary, it is illegal if the arm is swinging back and forth. (6-1-3)

**SITUATION 3:** While in the set position, F1 has his pitching arm resting on his thigh and his pitching hand is at rest in his lower abdominal area.

**RULING:** This is illegal. Having his pitching hand at rest in this area gives the offense little to no visibility of the baseball and action by the pitcher. (6-1-3)

**SITUATION 4:** R1 is at third base and is taking his lead a few feet down the line in foul ground. B2 hits a sharp ground ball that hits third base and caroms off the base and (a) hits R1 accidentally, or (b) R1 intentionally moves so that he is hit by the fair ball.

**RULING:** In (a), the ball remains live and in play. In (b), the ball is dead, R1 is out for his interference and other runner(s) are returned to the base they occupied at the time of the interference. B2 is awarded first base. (8-4-2k, 2-5-1e)

**SITUATION 5:** R1, with one out, is on second base and is off with the pitch as B2 hits a high foul fly ball near third base. As F5 moves in foul territory in an attempt to catch the foul fly, (a) R1 runs into him or (b) the head coach does not vacate his position in the coaching box and F5 contacts him in his attempt.

**RULING:** In both situations this is interference and the ball is immediately dead. In (a), R1 is declared out and in (b), B2 is declared out and R1 is returned to second base. (7-4-1f)

**SITUATION 6:** R1, on second base, rounds third and runs into F5 as he attempts to field a foul fly ball. This action occurred with (a) a count of 1-1; (b) a count of 1-2; or (c) two outs.

**RULING:** In all three instances, R1 is out for his interference. In (a), the batter returns to bat with a count of 1-2 and in (b), the batter returns to bat with a count of 1-2 as the pitch is treated as a foul for the batter’s count. In (c), B4 will lead off in his team’s next offensive half-inning. (7-4-1f)

**SITUATION 7:** B1 lays down a bunt that is fielded by F2 in fair territory a few feet in front of home plate. As B1 is 60 feet from home base, he is running outside the running lane with one foot completely in fair ground and not touching the lines of the running lane. F2 fields the ball and (a) attempts to throw to first but throws high into right field as he tries not to hit B1, or (b) does not attempt a throw.

**RULING:** B1 is required to be in the running lane the last 45 feet to first base when the ball is fielded and thrown from an area behind him. In (a), this is interference and B1 is out and the ball is declared dead. In (b), since there was no throw, there is no interference. F2 is not required to hit B1 to demonstrate that B1 is out of the running lane, but a throw must be made for the interference to be declared. (8-4-1g)

**SITUATION 8:** F1, while on the pitcher's plate in either the windup or set position, (a) adjusts his cap, or (b) shakes off the signal with his glove, or (c) shakes off the signal with his head.

**RULING:** In (a), (b) and (c) these are legal actions, provided these movements of the arms and legs were not associated with the pitch. (6-1-1, 6.1.2D case book)

**SITUATION 9:** R1, on third base, attempts to score on a squeeze play. B4 attempts to bunt, but misses the pitch and F2 comes up with the ball and gets R1 in a rundown between third and home. F2 eventually attempts to throw R1 out at third, but makes a bad throw into left field. R1 steps on third, but his momentum takes him several steps down the foul line behind third base. R1, seeing the bad throw, turns, misses third base as he advances to home. After R1 has touched home plate and enters the dugout, the defense calls "Time" and verbally appeals R1 missing third.

**RULING:** R1 is out on the valid defensive appeal. R1 must touch third base again on his way to home plate. (8-2-1, 8-2-6c)

**SITUATION 10:** The visiting team is wearing "quarterback-style" wristbands that have defensive plays listed under a Velcro flap. The pitcher is wearing a black wristband down near his fielding glove. The home coach claims that the wristbands are illegal, and all players must take them off.

**RULING:** Provided the wristbands are not dangerous, they are legal. If the plate umpire judges the wristband worn by the pitcher to be distracting, he would need to remove it. Otherwise, it is legal for the pitcher as well. (1-5-9, 6-2-1f, penalty)

**SITUATION 11:** R1 is on third and R2 on first with one out. B4 hits a sinking line drive to center field. R1 tags properly and goes home, while R2 is off with the hit. F8 makes a great catch. R2 is beyond second base as F8 throws back to first in an attempt to double up R2. The ball goes into the dugout with R2 still between second base and third base. R2 touches second base and goes back to touch first base.

**RULING:** The ball is dead and R1's run will count. R2 will be awarded two bases from the base he had at the time of the pitch (first base), so he will be awarded third base. If the defense properly appeals R2 being beyond second base at the time the ball went dead, R2 will be declared out. R1's run would still count. (5-1-1g-3, 8-2-5, 8-2-6d-1, 8-4-2q)

**SITUATION 12:** With no outs, B1 has a 2-1 count when his nose begins to bleed. He is not able to get it stopped and as a result cannot finish his at-bat. The team has no substitutes available. His coach believes that the batter next up in the order can assume his count.

**RULING:** B2 cannot assume B1's count. With no substitutes available, B1 is declared out and B2 will come to bat with one out. An out will be called each time that spot in the batting order comes to bat. When an eligible substitute becomes available, the team may return to playing with nine players. (4-4-1f, Note 1, Note 2)

**SITUATION 13:** R1 is on third and R2 is on second with no outs. Both runners attempt a double steal. As R1 gets into a rundown between home and third, R2 advances and stays on third base. With R2 on third base, R1 commits interference during the rundown.

**RULING:** The ball is dead immediately. R1 is declared out for the interference. R2 will be kept at third base since he had legally reached third at the time of the interference. (8-2-9, 8-2-8)

**SITUATION 14:** With R1 on third base and no outs, B2 hits a pop fly in fair territory in front of home plate. The catcher misses the ball completely, never touching it, and the backspin on the ball causes it to move back toward home where it strikes R1 in fair territory. The ball continues to move into foul ground, where it comes to rest. The offensive head coach claims R1 is not out since the batted ball “passed” an infielder.

**RULING:** The ball is dead immediately and R1 is declared out for being contacted by a fair batted ball. B2 is awarded first base. The action of the ball in this situation is not considered to be “passing” an infielder. Had the ball contacted R1 in foul ground, the ball would be dead immediately, R1 would be returned to third and B2 would remain at bat. (8-4-2k, 5-1-1f-1)

**SITUATION 15:** With one out, R1 is on third base and R2 is at second base when B4 misses the sign for the squeeze bunt. B4 hits a high chopper near first base as R1 touches home plate. F3 fields the ball, touches first to retire B4 and sets to throw to third in an attempt to put out R2 who got a late start going to third base. As F3 releases the throw, B4 intentionally reaches out and hits his arm for obvious interference.

**RULING:** R2 is declared out for the third out due to B4’s interference. R1’s run will count as he had legally acquired home before the interference occurred. (8-4-2g, 8-2-9, 5-1-1e)

**SITUATION 16:** The head coach requests “Time” and goes to the mound for a visit. He removes F1 and brings in S1 to pitch from the bullpen. The coach remains at the mound talking with S1 as he takes his eight warm-up throws. The opposing head coach claims that this is a charged conference because the defensive coach stayed at the mound until S1 had completed his warm-up throws.

**RULING:** There is no charged conference to be recorded on the defensive team since F1 was removed as the pitcher. As long as the head coach leaves when S1 completes his warm-up throws and does not delay the game, no defensive conference will be charged. (3-4-1)

**SITUATION 17:** With R1 on first attempting to steal second base, B2 swings and misses as the ball hits the catcher’s mitt and pops up in the air. B2’s follow-through hits the ball to the backstop.

**RULING:** This is batter interference and the ball is declared dead. B2 is out and R1 is returned to first base. (7-3-5c penalty)

**SITUATION 18:** With R1 on first, a pitch hits the catcher’s shin guards and is deflected toward the dugout. R1 had left first base headed for second as F1 released the pitch and is standing on second base when the deflected pitch rolls into the dugout. R1’s head coach argues that R1 should be awarded third base.

**RULING:** R1 is awarded one base from where he was at the time of the pitch. R1’s award is second base and he will remain at second, and not be advanced to third base. (8-3-3d, 8-3-5b)

**SITUATION 19:** Bases are loaded with two outs and a 1-1 count on B6. The scoreboard has a 0-2 count. The plate umpire gives the correct count and verbally states “1-1.” B6 swings and misses the next

pitch to make the count 1-2, but F2, thinking it is strike three, tosses the ball toward the mound as the infield players begin to leave the diamond. The third-base coach has his runners running and all of them cross home plate. The visiting defensive head coach protests that the runs should not score since the scoreboard was in error and it put them at a disadvantage.

**RULING:** The umpires did not err on the play and both teams are responsible to know the count and the number of outs. The play stands and all three runs count. (10-2-3g)

**SITUATION 20:** Two outs, R3 at second base. On a 1-2 pitch, R3 attempts to steal third base as the batter attempts to check his swing. R3 is thrown out at third base for the third out. The defense now wants to appeal the check-swing on B4 so that if he went around, he struck out and would not come back to bat in the next half-inning. U1 checks with the base umpire and U2 confirms that B4 did indeed swing at strike three.

**RULING:** Since B4's out is a "fourth" out, the defense may select the out which is most to its advantage. B4 is out for out No. 3 and the batter following him in the lineup will bat first in the next half-inning. (2-20-2, 9-1-1d)