

## 2023 Newsletter Game Situations

### March

#### Situation 1:

With two outs, a runner on third, and a two-strike count, the batter strikes out, but the pitch gets away from the catcher. As it rolls to the backstop, A) the batter passes first, missing the base, and safely reaches second base; or B) touches first base and, because of an overthrow, advances to third base but misses second base. In both instances, the runner from third scored.

An appeal is made that the batter missed the base.

**Ruling:** A) The batter is declared out for missing first base, and the run does not score. B) The batter is declared out for missing second base, and the run scores.

A) **Rule 9-1, Article 1, Exception:** A run is not scored if the runner advances to home plate during action in which the third out is made as follows:

d. when a third out is declared on an appeal play resulting in a force out (this play takes precedence if enforcing it would negate a score).

B) **Rule 2-24, Article 1:** ...A force play is a play in which a runner (or two or three runners) loses the right to the base occupied and is forced to advance...

**Article 2:** ...For a given runner, a force play ends as soon as the runner touches the next base...

**Rule 2-63:** A timing play is a play when the last out of an inning is not the result of a force out... If a runner should touch home plate an instant before the last out (which is not a force out) is made, then the run would score.

### June

#### Situation 1:

With a 2-1 count on the batter, the plate umpire calls an illegal pitch, and the batter hits a popup. The popup lands in fair territory between home, the pitching circle, and third base. All players on the field think the illegal pitch is an immediate dead ball and nobody moves. The batter stays in the box, the pitcher stays in the circle, and no infielder goes to the ball. After a few seconds, the pitcher retrieves the ball, returns to the circle, and places her feet on the pitching plate ready to pitch.

**Ruling 1:** The ball remains live, and the batter is forced to run on a fair ball and therefore not entitled to home. Because she remains at a base she is no longer allowed to occupy, she is declared out. The offensive coach then has a choice of either the play, batter out, or a ball with the batter having a 2-2 count.

**Rule 24.1:** A force play is a play in which a runner loses the right to the base occupied and is forced to advance.

**Rule 5.2-a:** It is a delayed dead ball when an illegal pitch is delivered.

**Rule 8.3-7:** Two runners may not legally occupy the same base simultaneously. (The batter can no longer occupy home plate.)

### **Situation 2:**

The batter hits a fly ball to the outfield. She hits first base and turns towards second base. The coach believes the ball is caught and tells her nice try. She returns to first and starts towards the dugout, taking two steps towards home plate. The ball was not caught, and the coach yelled for her to return to first base. The ball is thrown to first base and the first baseman touches the base before the player returns.

**Ruling:** The runner is out on a force out. Because she returned towards the base she originally occupied, home, she does not need to be tagged.

**Rule 2-24:** If a forced runner, after touching the next base, except home, retreats for any reason towards the base she had first occupied, the force play is reinstated, and she may again be put out if the defense tags the base to which she is forced.

**Note:** The runner is not out for returning to home. Rule 8, "Batter-Runner and Runner," Section 2, "Batter-runner is out," Article 5 states the batter-runner is out for stepping back towards home plate to delay or avoid a tag by a fielder. In this circumstance, she did not step back to delay or avoid a tag, so Rule 2-24 applies and not Rule 8-2, Article 5.

### **Situation 3:**

In the top of the International Tied Breaker inning, the coach puts the last out on second base as the runner instead of the batter in front of the leadoff batter. After the first pitch, the defensive coach appeals the incorrect runner on second base.

**Ruling:** The runner on second base is out and restricted to the bench for the remainder of the game. She has entered the game in a different position than her position in the batting order and is an illegal substitute.

**Rule 2-57, Article 3:** An illegal substitute is a player who enters the game as a batter or runner in a different position.

**Rule 3-4, Article 1:** Illegal offensive or defensive players may be discovered by the umpire or either team after the ball becomes live and an illegal substitute has taken position as:

- a. a runner she has replaced or as a batter in the batter's box.

**Penalty: (Art. 1)** She is restricted to the dugout/bench for the remainder of the game.

**(Art. 1a, c)** She is also called out.

## **September**

### **Situation 1:**

With bases loaded and one out the batter hit a grand slam. After all runners have touched home the defense a) appeals the runner on first missed second base and the runner on second base missed third base or b) the runner on second base missed third base and the runner on first base missed second base. In both scenarios, all runners touched home.

**Ruling:**

For a), when the runner going from first base to second base is declared out first, the runner going from second base to third base is no longer forced to run. That means that the last out of the inning made at third base was a timing out. One run of the four counts because the runner originally on third base had scored before the final, timing out was made on the runner advancing from second base to third base.

In b), the runner going from second to third base was put out first so that is a force out. Then, the runner advancing from first base to second base was also put out on a force out which was the third out of the inning. In this scenario, no runs are scored, even though the runner originally on third base scored before the appeals. The reason is a run cannot score on a third, force out at any base.

In both scenarios, the batter reaching home on her homerun would not score because a preceding runner had been declared the third out.

**Rule 2, “Definitions,” 63, TIMING PLAY:** A timing play is a play when the last out of an inning is not the result of a force out and the exact time of the out may or may not allow a run to score. If a runner should touch home plate an instant before the last out (which is not a force out) is made, then the run would be scored.

**Rule 2, 24, “FORCE PLAY, Article 1:** A force play is a play in which a runner loses the right to the base occupied and is forced to advance.

**Rule 9, “Scoring and Record Keeping,” Section 1, “HOW A TEAM SCORES,”**

**Exception:** A run is not scored if the runner advances to home plate during action in which the third out is made as follows:

b. by another runner being forced out.

f. when a runner crosses home plate after a preceding runner is declared the third out.

**Situation 2:**

The Flex player a) comes to bat for the DP in the top of the third inning without reporting to the umpire or b) comes to bat for a player other than the DP in the top of the third inning without reporting to the umpire. In both scenarios the ball is made live.

**Ruling:** In scenario a), the DP has left the game and the FLEX player is an unreported substitute. The coach is given an unsportsmanlike conduct warning. If a second unreported substitute enters the game, the coach is restricted to the bench.

For scenario b), the FLEX has entered the lineup in a position other than the DP. This is an illegal substitute. The player is out and restricted to the bench for the remainder of the game.

**Rule 2, “Definitions,” Section 57, “Substitute, Unreported, Illegal”**

**ART 2...Unreported Substitute** An unreported substitute is a substitute who has a legal right to participate in the game but has not reported to the umpire to participate. (3-3-4, 3-6-7).

**Rule 3, “Players, Substitutes, and Coaches,” Section 3, “Substituting”**

ART 4...A substitute or courtesy runner shall not enter the contest unreported (3-6-7 PENALTY 8-9-7)

**Rule 3, Section 6, "Bench and Field Conduct,"**

ART 7...Players and substitutes shall not enter the contest unreported.

**PENALTY: [...] (ART 7) The head coach is also restricted to the dugout/bench for the remainder of the game for a second violation.**

**Rule 3, Section 4, "Illegal Substitute,"**

**ART 2...**Illegal offensive players may be discovered:

...when in the batter's box, THE BALL IS LIVE (*emphasis added*) and/or before the batter-runner reaches first base, or is put out and before a pitch is delivered to the next batter on either team.

**PENALTY: (ART 2) The illegal substitute is restricted to the bench/dugout for the remainder of the game. (Art 2a, b) The player is called out.**

**Situation 3:**

With R1 on third base and no outs, B2 is at bat. After a wild pitch that gets past F2, R1 is more than halfway home when F2 retrieves the ball and throws it to F1 who is covering home. F1 stares down R1 who starts slowly walking back toward third base. As F1 walks towards the pitcher's circle, she continues to watch R1 walking back toward third base. Once F1 enters the pitcher's circle she looks away, and R1, who is 3-4 feet from third base, stops and immediately attempts to advance to home where she is safe. The defensive coach objects saying this is a violation of the look back rule.

**Ruling:**

The runner is safe at home. The look-back rule was not in effect as the runner walked to third base the pitcher was not in the pitcher's circle. Once the pitcher enters the pitcher's circle, the runner can stop once, which she did, and return to third base or attempt to go home.

**Rule 8, "Batter-Runner and Runner," Section 7, "Lookback Rule,"**

**ART 1...**The look-back rule will be in effect when the ball is live, ...and the pitcher has possession of the ball within the pitcher's circle.

**ART 2...**The runner(s) may stop once, but then must immediately return to the base or attempt to advance to the next base.

**December**

**Situation 1:**

R1 is on third base and R2 is on first base with one out. B1 hits a fly ball to centerfield. R2 on first base leaves the base on contact and arrives at second base as the fly ball is caught by the centerfielder, F8. R3 tags and heads home on the initial touch. F8 throws home but R1 is safe. Then F2 throws to first base and R2 is declared out for the third out.

**Ruling:**

R2 is out on an appeal and the inning finished with the third out made at first base. The R1 run counts because the third out was a timing out, not a force out as many believe.

**Rule 2, "Definitions"**

## **Section 24, "Force Play"**

**ART.3...**If a batted ball is caught before it touches the ground there can be no force play(s).

## **Section 63, "Timing Play"**

A timing play is a play when the last out of an inning is not the result of a force out and the exact time of the out may or may not allow a run to score. If a runner should touch home plate an instant before the last out (which is not a force out) is made, then the run would be scored.

### **Situation 2:**

B4 is at bat with a 1-2 count, and a) while standing still and completely in the batter's box gets hit in the hands, b) swings, hits a grounder off her hands, and safely reaches first base, c) swings, hits the ball with the bat, and her foot contacts the ball while that foot is partially outside the batter's box but still on the line; and d) swings, hits the ball with the bat and her foot contacts the ball in fair territory with her foot completely out of the batter's box.

**Ruling:** In all four scenarios there is an immediate dead ball, and a) the batter is awarded first base as long as she did not make an obvious attempt to get hit by the pitch; b) the batter has swung and not hit the ball with the bat, hands are not part of the bat, she is out on strike three; c) foul ball, at bat resumes with a 1-2 count; and d) batter is out on interference for touching a ball in live-ball territory.

## **Rule 8, "Batter-Runner and Runner," Section 1, "The Batter Becomes a Batter-Runner,"**

**ART. 2...**A batter is awarded first base when:

b. (F.P.) a pitched ball not swung at nor called a strike, that is entirely within the batter's box, and it strikes the batter or clothing. No attempt to avoid being hit by the pitch is required. However, the batter may not make an obvious attempt to get hit by the pitch.

## **Rule 7, "Batting," Section 2, "Strikes, Balls, and Hits,"**

**ART.1...**A strike is charged to the batter when:

g. a pitched ball contacts the batter while swinging at the ball or the batter is hit by the pitch that is in the strike zone (dead-ball strike)

### **Rule 7, Section 2, ART. 1**

f. a batted ball contacts the runner in the batter's box (foul ball)

## **Rule 8, Section 2, "Batter-Runner Is Out"**

**ART. 7...**The batter-runner interferes:

e. by making contact with a fair batter ball before reaching first base.

### **Situation 3:**

R1 is on second base when B2 hits a ground ball between F6 and second base. F6 does not have a play on the ball. As R1 heads to third base, F6 is in her basepath causing R1 to stop, take two steps to the side and continue. F8 throws to home and a) R1 is tagged out two steps from the plate or b) R1 is tagged out 10 feet from home plate.

### **Ruling:**

In both scenarios, bases would be awarded based on the umpires' judgement. In a) if the umpires believe the additional time from stopping and the two sidesteps caused R1 to delay her arrival at home plate, she would be awarded home. For scenario b), R1 is too far to be awarded home plate. An obstructed runner cannot be put out between the bases where she was protected. If the umpires were protecting the runner to home, then she would be returned to third base. If the umpires were protecting the runner to only third base, then she would be out.

## **Rule 8, "Batter-Runner and Runner," SECTION 4, "RUNNERS ENTITLED TO ADVANCE"**

**ART 3...** A runner is entitled to advance without liability to be put out when:

b. a fielder not in possession of the ball or not making an initial play on a batted ball, impedes the progress of a runner or batter-runner who is legally running bases.

**PENALTIES: (Art. 3b) When an obstruction occurs (including a rundown), the umpire will signal a delayed dead ball. The ball will remain live.**

**If the obstructed runner is put out prior to reaching the base that would have been reached had there not been obstruction, a dead ball is called and the obstructed runner and each other runner affected by the obstruction will be awarded the base or base which would have been reached in the umpire's judgment, had there not been obstruction. An obstructed runner may not be called out between the two bases where the runner was obstructed.**