**October 2023 Game Situations**

1. **With two outs, R1 is on second base and R2 is on first base, B4 hit a home run. As R1 is rounding third base she is celebrating and missed the base. The third base coach reaches out and grabs R1’s arm pulling her back to touch third base. How many runs scored?**
2. One
3. Three
4. Two
5. None

The ball is dead having gone out of play on the homerun. However, by grabbing the player and pulling her back to third base, the coach took away an appeal opportunity for the defense. Thus, the rule that only another runner can assist a teammate on the bases is still in effect. R1 is out without the need for the defense to appeal because the coach assisted her. This is the third out. No runner can score if the third out is made by declaring the preceding runner out on appeal.

**Rule 2, “Definitions,” SECTION 1, “APPEALS,”**

**ART 2…**Types of appeals:

1. Missing a base, either advancing or returning (live or dead-ball appeal).

**Rule 8, “Batter-Runner and Runner,” SECION 6, “THE RUNNER IS OUT,”**

**ART 5…**Any offensive team member, other than another runner, physically assists the runner.

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

**ART 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:

1. By the preceding runner who is declared out on an appeal play.

**2. With R1 on first base, B2 is at bat with a 0 ball - 2 strike count and no outs. R1 takes leads on the pitch. B2 is out on a foul tip but runs towards first base. As R1 is diving back to first base, B2 collides with F3 attempting to catch a thrown ball from F2 to tag R1.**

A)B2 is awarded first base; R1 is forced to advance to second base.

B) B2 is declared out for interference; R1 remains at first base.

C) B2 has struck out and is charged with interference; R1 is declared out as the runner closest to home.

D) B2 has struck out; R1 remains at first base.

E) B2 is declared out for interference; R1 is awarded second base.

The correct answer is C). The batter struck out on the foul tip, and retired. By running to first base and colliding with the first baseman, they have created interference. Because they are already out, they cannot be put out again.

**Rule 2, “Definitions,” SECTION 32, “INTERFERNCE (OFFENSE)**

**ART 1…** Interference is an act (physical or verbal) by a member of the team at bat who illegally impedes, hinders, or confuses a fielder…

**Rule 8, “Batter-runner and Runner,” SECTION 6, “THE RUNNER IS OUT”**

**ART 16…**” Any coach or member of the offensive team, other than the runner interferes with a defensive player’s opportunity to make a play. This includes but is not limited to:

1. After being declared out or after scoring, a runner interferes with a defensive player’s opportunity to make a play on another runner.

**3. There's one out with R1 on second base and R2 on first base. B6, with a 1-1 count, hits a popup. The plate umpire declares infield fly. Just as the F6 is preparing to catch the ball, R1, who has begun to run, collides with her. The ball is dropped and rolls foul because of the collision.**

A)Foul ball, R2 returns to second base and B6 bats with a 1-2 count.

B) B6 is out on the infield fly, immediate dead ball and R2 is out on interference

C) Immediate dead ball, R2 is out on interference, foul ball, B6 bats with a 1-2 count

D) Immediate dead ball, R2 is out, B6 is awarded first base, R2 advances to second base because of B6 being awarded first base

The correct answer is B). The batter was declared out on the infield fly while the ball was still live so the out stands. Then R1 interfered with F6 catching the popup, and at that point the ball is dead immediately. The interference occurred while the ball was over fair territory, and under 2-20-1 g. the ball is defined as a fair ball. R1 is out on interference. The infield fly and interference outs end the half inning.

The definition in 2-20-1g. was added and the one in 2-25-1e. revised by the National Federation of High Schools (NFHS) in 2023 to clarify the ball’s status at the point of interference. The ball does not have to be touched to be fair, it only needs to be over fair territory when the interference occurs. Technically, an interference could result in the defensive players never having a chance to touch the ball.

To be a foul ball, the interference would have to occur while the ball is over foul territory per the revised definition of a foul ball in 2-25-1e. The interference occurred while the ball was over fair territory and after it was dead rolling foul had no effect.

Here is the rationale NFHS had for the rule change.

**Rationale:** The ball’s status is determined at the point of interference. If an offensive player interferes with the defensive player while the ball is in fair territory, the ball is dead. Adding this language to the definition section mirrors the foul ball definition in Rule 2-25-1e.

1. **“Definitions,”**

**SECTION 20, “FAIR BALL,”**

**ART 1… A fair ball** is a batted ball that: *(Original bold)*

g. **while over fair territory**, an offensive player interferes with a defensive player attempting to field a batter ball. *(Emphasis added)*

**SECTION 25 “FOUL BALL, FOUL TIP,”**

**ART 1…** Foul Ball. A foul ball is a batted ball that:

1. While over foul territory, an offensive player interferes with a defensive player attempting to field a batted ball;

**SECTION 30, “INFIELD FLY RULE,”**

Infield fly rule is, when declared by the umpire, a fair fly (not including a line drive or an attempted bun) that can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort when runners are on first and second or all three bases are occupied and before there are two outs in the inning.

**SECTION 32, “INTERFERENCE (OFFENSE),”**

**Art 1…**Interference is an act (physical or verbal) by a member of the team at bat who illegally impeded, hinders or confuses any fielder…

**SECTION 47, “’PLAY BALL,’ MAKE A PLAY, INITIAL PLAY”**

**Art 2…Make a play—**

1. Any action by a fielder who is attempting to catch or gain control of a batted or thrown ball.

**ART 3…Initial Play—** A fielder is considered to be making an initial play on a fair batter ball when the fielder:

1. Has reasonable chance to catch the ball in flight or catch the ball in flight after being touched by another fielder.

**8, “Batter-Runner and Runner,”**

**SECTION 2, “BATTER-RUNNER IS OUT,”**

The batter-runner is out when:

**ART 9…** The batter-runner hits an infield fly. (2-30)

**SECTION 6, “THE RUNNER IS OUT,”**

A runner is out when:

**ART 10…**The runner interferes:

1. With a fielder attempting to make the initial play on a fair batter ball. (2-47)

**4. R1 is on first base and attempts to steal second base. In the catcher's attempt to throw out R1, the throwing arm contacts the plate umpire. R1 reaches second base. The correct call is:**

A) This is a delayed dead ball. If R1 reaches second base safely, R1 is permitted to stay at second base.

B) There is a delayed dead ball, and if R1 is thrown out, the play stands.

C) This is a delayed dead ball. If R1 reaches second base safely, R1 must return to first base.

D) B and C

E) A and B

The correct answer is D). This is a delayed dead ball. When the plate umpire interferes with a catcher making a throw on an attempt to steal a base, the out stands if it is made. If the runner is safe, she is returned to the base occupied before the interference.

**8, “Batter-Runner and Runner,” SECTION 5, “RUNNER MUST RETURN TO THE LAST BASE,”**

**ART 6…**(F.P.) The plate umpire or any part of the plate umpire’s clothing interferes with the catcher’s attempt to throw out a runner stealing or an attempted pick off play.

**PENALTY: (ART 6) This is a delayed dead ball at the time of the interference. If the runner is ruled out the ball remains live. If the runner is not out, the runner must return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch. It is not interference if, on a passed ball or wild pitch, the umpire gets hit by a thrown ball from the catcher or if the contact is made with the catcher trying to retrieve the ball. The ball would remain live.**