

MARCH 30, 2020 – USSSA SOFTBALL PLAYS

56. R1 is on second base with one out, and B2 has a count of 3 balls and no strikes. On the following pitch, R1 steals third base as B2 is awarded a base on balls. Before a pitch to the next batter, it is discovered that B2 used an altered or non-approved bat.

Ruling - DEAD BALL and B2 is declared OUT; R1's advance on the *non-batted* ball stands. The bat is removed from the team's possession. B2 and her head coach are also EJECTED (7.14.A, p 40)

57. The batter shatters her bat as a result of hitting a pitched ball. The bouncing batted ball rolls into foul territory before first base, then hits a piece of the broken bat, which causes the ball to change direction and roll fair. The infielder then picks up the ball in fair territory and throws the batter-runner out at first.

Ruling - DEAD BALL and NO VIOLATION. If a batted ball, while on or over foul territory touches the person of an umpire, a player or *any object foreign to the natural ground*, it is a **foul ball** (3.FOUL BALL.D, p 21)

Note: if the ball had hit the bat pieces in *fair* territory and stayed fair then it would be a fair ball. If after hitting the bat pieces in fair territory, the ball rolled foul and was touched or settled in foul territory, it would be a foul ball

58. There are no runners on base. The pitcher commits an illegal act and the pitched ball makes contact with the batter, who did not swing at the pitch.

Ruling - DELAYED DEAD BALL is signaled and ILLEGAL PITCH is called, followed by a DEAD BALL when the pitched ball hits the batter. The batter is awarded first base, unless the contact was in the strike zone or the batter intentionally moved to get hit by the pitch. In those cases, a BALL is awarded to the batter (8.4.D, p 43)

59. R1 is on first base with no outs. B2 hits a pitched ball through the infield and all the way to the outfield fence. Both R1 and B2 are standing on third base when the ball is returned to the infield. As the ball is relayed to third, R1 abandons the base and retreats toward second base but is tagged out before reaching the base.

Ruling - LIVE BALL. Both R1 and B2 are out. When R1 retreats past B2 toward second base, B2 is guilty of passing a preceding runner, even though it was R1 who was doing the moving. B2 is out on the passing and the ball remains live. R1 is out for being tagged while off base (8.18.O, p 52)

60. The batter hits a pitched ball on the ground close to the foul line in fair territory. The infielder throws her glove at the batted ball and a) misses the ball, or b) makes contact with the ball.

Ruling - in a), NO VIOLATION and the ball is live if it remains fair. In b), DELAYED DEAD BALL is signaled. If the batter and all runners do not safely advance at least three bases, then at the end of playing action the bases shall be awarded; otherwise, the infraction is ignored (8.14.B.1, p 47; 8.14.D NOTE 1, p 48)

61. R1 is on third base and R2 is on first base with one out. B4 hits a ground ball to F3 who fields the ball, touches first base and then throws the ball to F6 covering second base, where R2 is tagged out. In the meantime, R1 scores before the tag on R2.

Ruling - R1's run counts because the third out of the inning is *NOT A FORCE OUT*, and she scores before the third out is recorded on R2. For a given runner (in this case, R2), a force play ends when **a following runner (B4) is put out** (3.FORCE PLAY, p 21)

62. The batter steps across home plate to the other batter's box while the pitcher is off the pitcher's plate.

Ruling - NO VIOLATION. The movement of the batter is LEGAL because the pitcher is not in the pitching position. To be "in the pitching position", the pitcher must be in contact with the pitcher's plate and have possession of the ball (7.10, p 39)

63. B2 slides into home plate and rolls her ankle. She leaves the game in the third inning. The team has no substitutes and is now playing shorthanded with eight players. In the fifth inning the coach attempts to re-enter B2.

Ruling - ILLEGAL; even though B2 may have a re-entry left, an Absent Player *may not return to the lineup* unless she left the game pursuant to the Blood Rule (5.2.A.2, p 30)

64. R1 is on third base with one out. F5 is playing in front of R1 looking for the bunt. R1 is hit (unintentionally) by B3's fair batted ball near third base in fair territory. The defense cannot recover the deflected ball in time to play on R1, and R1 scores easily.

Ruling - LIVE BALL and NO VIOLATION. When a runner is hit with a fair batted ball after it is touched or has passed an infielder, except the pitcher, and the umpire judges that another infielder had no opportunity to make a play, the runner is not out and the ball remains live (8.18.N NOTE 2, p 52)

65. A batter hits a pitched ball on a line drive which hits the pitcher's plate and rebounds back toward the catcher, who catches the ball on the fly; the catcher then throws the batter-runner out at first base.

Ruling - NO CATCH - ball status depends on the **location of the ball when first touched by F2**. When the batted ball hit the pitcher's plate it is no longer in flight, so the batter is not out on the catch by F2. If first touched on or over fair territory, the ball is a LIVE BALL, FAIR and the play on the batter-runner stands. If first touched over foul territory, the ball is DEAD and a FOUL BALL (3.FAIR BALL.A, p 20; 3.FOUL BALL.A, p 21; [3.IN FLIGHT](#), p 22)

NOTE -- position of a fielder's feet:

1) is **irrelevant** in determining **fair/foul** status -- it's **where the ball is that matters**

2) but DOES determine **live ball/dead ball status** involving dead ball lines, dugouts, etc