

Softball Coaches Rules Interpretation March 1, 2023

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New and recent rule changes:

Rule 3-1-d: Removes the requirement to use tape to attachments added to grip

Rule 3-3-a: Creates common specifications for the 12" Fast Pitch ball for USA Softball, NCAA and NFHS. *This is effective in 2024.*

Rule 4-1-d & e

You can have a lineup of: Straight 9; Shorthanded 8 (out in the lineup for last spot); 10 using the EP; DP/Flex (10, batting 9); DP/Flex and EP (11, batting 10). Any player in the line-up can play defense. If you are using the Flex, that player must play defense or she is out of the game. (substitution for Flex). Defensively, substitutions for the pitcher and catcher must be reported. (also Flex). There is No penalty for unannounced substitutions, but it's a courtesy to let the umpire know. Umpire will relay to the other team's coach.

Rule 4-2: TDP and TRP:

Any eligible player on the official line-up, including available substitutes, may be used as a temporary replacement runner for an ADA player (temporary disabled player). This replacement does not count as a substitution for either player. Subject to the requirements of this rule, any player with a disability, including a diabetic condition, who needs to come out of the ball game while on offense or defense due to the disability, including when batting due to a sugar imbalance caused by diabetes, may have a replacement player substitute for the player until such time as the disability subsides. In order to qualify under this rule, the player with the disability must be disclosed and noted by the player's manager to the umpire at the home plate conference at the outset of play. In the umpire's discretion, the umpire may waive the requirement that the subject player be disclosed at the home plate conference at the outset of play. For purposes of this rule, the term disability shall be defined and construed consistent with the definition of disability in the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The following are points of clarification regarding Rule 4-2-L

TDP = Temporary Disabled Player

TRP = Temporary Replacement Player

To avoid potential abuse, any team with a potential TDP should notify the plate umpire at the pre-game conference. The plate umpire should note this accordingly on the line-up card.

1. The TDP's exit from the game is not considered a substitution for re-entry purposes for her.
2. The Temporary Replacement Player's (TRP) entry into the game is not considered a substitution for re-entry purposes for her.

3. The TRP must have re-entry eligibility to come in as a TRP. In other words, a player who has come out of the game twice may not enter as a TRP.
4. The TRP's eligibility for purposes of running is not limited based on her spot in the batting order. For example, a TRP who was originally in the 6 spot in the line-up and who has been substituted for, may come off the bench and enter the game as a runner in the 8 spot as a TRP.
5. The TRP's eligibility for purposes of batting is limited based on her spot in the batting order. For example, a TRP who was originally in the 6 spot in the line-up and who has been substituted for, may not come off the bench and enter the game as a batter in the 8 spot as a TRP.
6. If the TRP is a player who had not previously been in the game, she will not be "locked into" the spot in the line-up where she enters for the TDP. For example, if a substitute enters the game as a TRP in the 2 spot, she may enter the game as a substitute in the 5 spot later in the game.

If you have no subs, you have no eligibility for a TDP/TRP.

Jewelry Rule for all sports in NYS has changed to whatever the rule book for that sport says. Softball says: Exposed jewelry, which is judged by the umpire to be dangerous, must be removed and may not be worn during the game. Medical alert bracelets or necklaces are not considered jewelry. If worn, they must be taped to the body so the medical alert information remains visible. For us to decide it's dangerous, it should be dangerous. Large hoops etc.

Hair adornments: allowed but should be secured - if umpire judges it to be dangerous, they should alert the coach of their concern and call section but PLAY the GAME.

Bats: The official bat must bear either: ASA 2000, ASA 2004, or USA Softball



- *NOTE 1:* Bats with ASA 2013 certification marks are NOT approved for NYSPHSAA play
- *NOTE 2:* ASA/USA Softball certification marks are not required for softballs
 - .47 COR & 375 Compression

Helmets: They shall have a non-glare (not mirror-like) surface

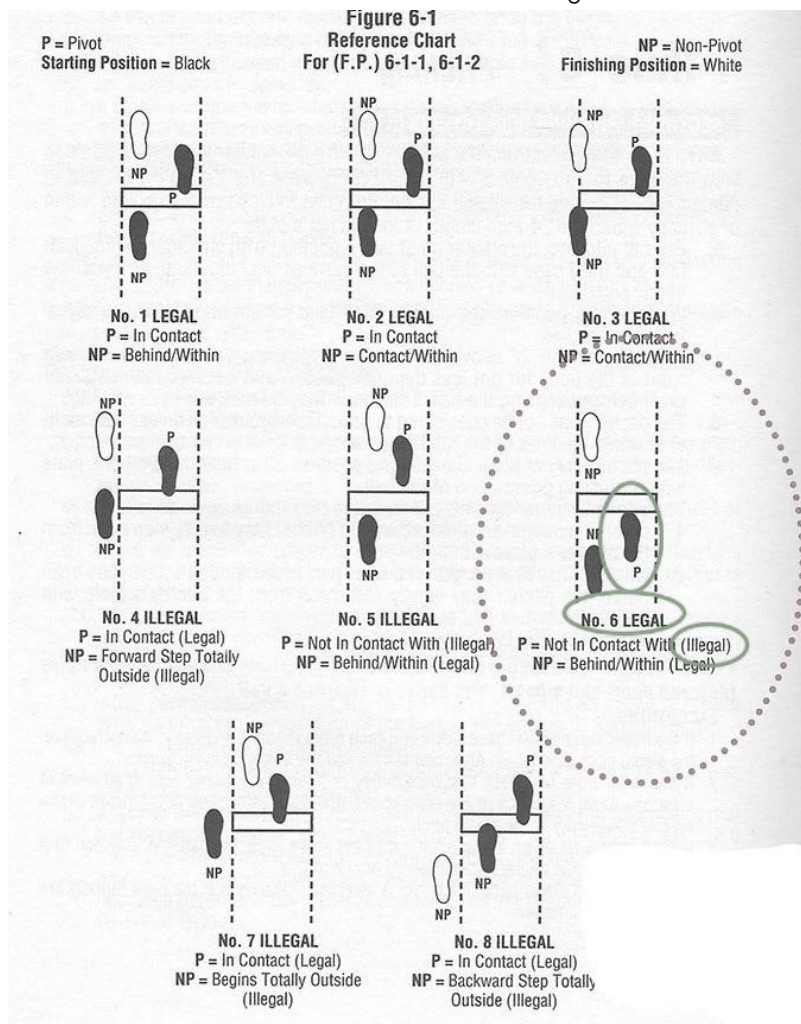
- The difference between "shiny" and "mirror-like" is apparent

Pitching: Leaping: Rule 6A-3-k Pushing off and dragging the pivot foot in contact with the ground or having both feet in the air is allowed. Allows the pitcher to have both feet in the air at the same time but must still stay within the 24" pitching plate. "Crow Hopping" is still illegal. Crow hopping into a leap is illegal.

*This rule change was meant to allow girls who get slightly airborne not to be called illegal. For the pitch to be illegal, a girl would have to have both feet in the air and land with her hands together thus starting the pitch from a new position. However, if they do land in a replant, as long as her hands are separated, and her arm stays in motion, this would not be a replant and would be a legal pitch.

Foot placement and movement: The pitcher shall take a position with her pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate and her non-pivot foot in contact with or behind the pitcher's plate. Pitcher is no longer required to start with both feet on the pitcher's plate. Pitcher must still be *within* 24-inch pitcher's plate

- "Within" means "no portion outside" behind the pitcher's plate
- "Within" means "touching" in front of the pitcher's plate



- The pitcher may step back regardless of whether she started with both feet on the pitcher's plate or with one foot behind the pitcher's plate

- *NOTE:* Once the hands have separated (beginning of the pitch) a step back is not permitted

Illegal pitch penalty: Eliminates the penalty of advancing a runner one base without liability to be put out from the effect of committing an illegal pitch. Penalty is limited to a "ball on the batter". What happens if an illegal pitch results in a hit-by-pitch? By rule, the hit-by-pitch penalty is enforced and the batter must take 1st base. *NOTE:* If the batter reaches 1st base and *all* other runners advance 1 base, the play stands. If a runner/batter-runner safely advances one base and elects to go beyond that one base, they are still considered to have advanced one base.

Metal cleats are PERMITTED in VARSITY, JV, but NOT PERMITTED in MODIFIED or due to field restrictions (turf fields, such as at the NYSPHSAA FINALS)

Rule changes recently and confusion rules:

- **Batter's foot** must be completely out of the box on bat ball contact or any part of the foot touching home plate on bat ball contact for them to be called out.
- There's no clock counting down between innings.
- Intentional walks must be pitched
- No requirement for numbers on front of jersey
- On a bunt attempt, batters do not have to pull bat back. They can not move the bat toward the pitch, but if the bat is stationary, it's whatever the pitch is, ball or strike.

Difficult situations - Where to place runners for base awards:

1 base awards: pitched ball blocked or out of play; unintentional catch and carry; fielder loses possession of ball and goes out of play

*** 2 bases (most common base award):** fielder's thrown ball that goes out of play - award given from base reached at time of release of throw; thrown ball touched with detached equipment; intentional catch and carry; ground rule double

3 bases: batted ball touched or caught with detached equipment

4 bases: home run; touched or caught with detached equipment when it would have gone over fence for HR

DP/Flex - no flip flops - the Flex can only play offense for the DP (this is a substitution for the DP). The DP can play defense for anyone. Whoever she is playing defense for will become a temporary offense only player (OP) and will still hit, but not play defense. However, if the DP plays defense for the Flex, this is a substitution for the Flex. All players (starters and subs) get one re-entry into the game. If a player is removed from the game a second time, they are done for the day.

SLIDING: There is no must slide rule. Runners can go back, go around, jump over, slide, or give themselves up. We can't dictate what runners must do. But they can't stand up and crash into a fielder with or without the ball..

Obstruction/Interference: If there is a collision between fielder and runner it could be one of three things: Interference, obstruction, or nothing but a wreck. Fielder has the ball, or is in the act of fielding a batted ball, it's interference. Fielder doesn't have the ball, or isn't in the act of fielding a batted ball, it is likely obstruction. The thrown ball, the runner and the fielder's glove all get there at the same time, and the fielder has the ball, it's probably nothing.

Courtesy runners (CR) run for the pitching or catching position, not the player playing that position. So #24 is catching in the second inning, and #1 is the CR for the catching position. In the third inning, #5 is now the catcher. #1 can not be a CR for #24, because she's not the catcher of record anymore. In the top of the first, the pitcher and catcher of record is the one listed in the lineup. After that, it's the one who last played that position when you were on defense. The courtesy runner must be someone who hasn't been in the game yet. Once that player enters the game, they can not be a CR. Lastly, if someone is a CR for the catching position, they can not be a CR for the pitching position. Each position must have their own CR.

CONFERENCES:

A conference is any time you call time out for a noticeable delay of the game and give instructions to your team.

For example:

- calling the batter over to the third base coaches box
- going out to the circle to talk to your defense
- having the catcher come to the dugout to get instructions and then pass them along to the defense at the circle

The defense shall not be charged with a conference if the pitcher is removed from the pitching position,

provided the defense makes the pitching change known to the umpire(s) prior to conducting an *actual* conference OR there is no noticeable delay that would meet the rationale for limiting conferences. Any clear delay that allows for the discussion of strategy or additional time for a relief pitcher to warm-up should result in a charged conference, provided all other criteria for a charged conference are met, regardless of whether a pitching change is made. Umpires shall consider the length of the actual delay and timing of the notification rather than the location of the coach at the time the coach notifies the umpire of the change of pitchers. During a new pitcher's warm-ups, the coaches (on both offense and defense) are permitted to confer with their team members without being charged with a charged conference, provided they are ready to play without undue delay once the warm-ups are completed.

Conferences are the same in all levels. But it is NOT the same as MLB or baseball. On offense, you get 1 conference per offensive inning to talk to your batter, and/or runners. You are not allowed another that offensive half inning, but you can do another one next time you are up to bat.

On defense, you are allowed 3 in 7 innings to go out and talk to your pitcher or defense. After you take the third, if you take another, the pitcher is removed from the pitching position for the rest of the game. Your conferences reset and you get 1 defensive conference per every inning in extra innings (starting in the top of 8th).

Tie breaker starts in top of 10th for Varsity. No tie breakers usually in JV ball. Whoever is due up last that inning goes to 2nd base. You can sub for her, and if she is the pitcher or catcher of record, you can have a courtesy runner for her (as long as you have eligible CR).

Run rule is 12 run lead, after at least 5 at bats by the losing team. Run rules can't be called in the top of an inning.