

Little League

UMPIRE SCHOOL

RULES

INSTRUCTION

MANUAL

**PREPARED FOR THE 2008
REGIONAL**

LITTLE LEAGUE UMPIRE SCHOOLS

INCLUDES SUBSTANTIAL INFORMATION FROM THE FOLLOWING PUBLICATIONS:

"2008 Little League Baseball Official Regulations and Playing Rules"

"2008 Little League Softball Official Regulations and Playing Rules"

"2008 Little League Challenger Division Official Regulations and Playing Rules"

INSTRUCTIONAL DIVISION OF LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL

"The Right Call -- Casebook of Little League Baseball"

**PREPARED BY THE
LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL®, INCORPORATED**

“Rules Instruction Manual”



Rules are generally listed in this type as they appear in one of the respective rules books.
(Rule Numbers are listed in bold type.)

*[Programs listed are **CHALLENGER, TEE BALL, MINOR, MAJOR, JUNIOR, SENIOR & BIG LEAGUE.**
[Differences in **BASEBALL** and **SOFTBALL** programs are also included.]*

“The Right Call” Casebook: Entries are included from this Little League publication in the specific area of the book where it applies.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *These notes are not part of any Rulebook publication, but are helpful comments or explanations from the Little League Headquarters.*
- ⇒ *Included in this section will be rule interpretations, basic mechanics instruction and appropriate suggestions.*

NOTE: The use of “he/she” for Baseball participants and “she” for Softball participants does NOT preclude either gender from a program.

Exception: In girl’s softball, only girls are eligible. In boy’s softball, only boys are eligible.

LITTLE LEAGUE REGULATIONS

IV -- THE PLAYERS

Consult appropriate **Little League rulebook** for additional information.

All MINOR, MAJOR, JUNIOR & SENIOR BASEBALL & SOFTBALL Programs:

- (i) Every player on a team roster will participate in each game for a minimum of six (6) defensive outs and bat at least one (1) time.

PENALTY: The player(s) involved shall start the next scheduled game, play any previous requirement not completed for Section (i) and the requirement for this game before being removed.

The manager shall for the:

- A. First Offense - receive a written warning.
- B. Second Offense - a suspension for the next scheduled game.
- C. Third Offense - a suspension for remainder of the season.

NOTE 1: If the violation is determined to have been intentional, a more severe penalty may be assessed by the Board of Directors. However, forfeiture of a game may not be invoked.

NOTE 2: There is no exception to this rule unless the game is shortened for any reason at which time the Local League may elect not to impose a penalty on the manager/coach.

Minor League and Tee Ball: If a league uses 15 to 20 player rosters they may reduce the Mandatory Rule to three (3) defensive outs and one (1) at bat per game.

[BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL/SOFTBALL only: Mandatory-playing rule does not apply.]

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Play 10-1: Sean is a starter and plays inning #1. The manager takes Sean out of the game after one full inning and substitutes Andrew. Andrew plays the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th innings and bats twice. In the 5th inning the manager puts Sean back into the game. Sean bats and plays the 5th and 6th innings. **Ruling:** *It is not mandatory that a starter plays six consecutive defensive outs and bats once, before he/she is substituted for. A starter may re-enter after his/her substitute has played at least six consecutive outs and batted once.* **Play 10-2:** In the top of the 4th inning, Miranda is substituted for Sabrina. In the bottom of the 4th, with the home team winning, rain comes and the game is official and declared over. **Ruling:** *No penalty is assessed to the manager for not playing everyone six outs and one at bat. The game was ended by conditions the manager had no control over. The same ruling would apply to games shortened by darkness, light failure or time limit. However, any player who did not meet the mandatory play rule requirement, shall start the next game and play six consecutive outs and one at bat along with what he/she missed in the previous game before being replaced.*

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Responsibility for insuring that the Manager adheres to the elements of this rule rests with the Board of Directors. Every effort should be made to insure that players play the appropriate amount of time.*
- ⇒ *This rule is not protestable. Don't penalize the players for the incorrect actions (or lack of action) by the Manager.*
- ⇒ *If a game is shortened for any reason, the manager may not be held responsible unless his/her actions were intentional. However, the Board is still responsible for insuring the players fulfill their playing requirements.*

VI -- PITCHERS

(a) Any player on the team roster may pitch. (**NOTE:** There is no limit to the number of pitchers a team may use in a game.)

EXCEPTION: A player who has attained a league age twelve (12) is not eligible to pitch in the Minor League.

[CHALLENGER: Although use of the batting tee or coach pitch is strongly recommended, any player on the roster may pitch.]

(b) Players once removed from the mound may not return as pitchers; **Junior, Senior, and Big League Divisions only:** A pitcher remaining in the game, but moving to a different position, can return as a pitcher anytime in the remainder of the game, but only once per game.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Note the change in the wording effective for the 2007 season: "but only once per game." They can still move a pitcher to another position (remaining in the game) and bring him/her back to pitch later but only one time during that entire game. The limitation to "once per game" was inserted to protect the pitchers arm because it cools down and then when the pitchers fires back up again upon reentry to the pitching position it is very hard on the arm.*

(c) The manager must remove the pitcher when said pitcher reaches the limit for his/her age group as noted below, but the pitcher may remain in the game at another position.

League Age	17 – 18	105 pitches per day
	13 – 16	95 pitches per day
	11 – 12	85 pitches per day
	9 – 10	75 pitches per day
	7 – 8	50 pitches per day

EXCEPTION: If a pitcher reaches the limit imposed in Regulation VI (c) for his/her league age while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until that batter until any of the follow conditions occurs: 1. That batter reaches base; 2. That batter is put out; 3. The third out is made to complete the half-inning.

Note: A pitcher who delivers one or more pitches in a game cannot play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day.

(d) Pitchers league age 16 and under must adhere to the following rest requirements:

- If a player pitches 61 or more pitches in a day, three (3) calendar days of rest, and a game (see e. below), must be observed.
- If a player pitches 41 – 60 pitches in a day, two (2) calendar days of rest, and a game (see e. below) must be observed.
- If a player pitches 21 – 40 pitches in a day, one (1) calendar days of rest must be observed.
- If a player pitches 1 – 20 pitches in a day, no (0) calendar day of rest must be observed.

Pitchers league age 17-18 must adhere to the following rest requirements:

- If a player pitches 76 or more pitches in a day, three (3) calendar days of rest, and a game (see e. below) must be observed.
- If a player pitches 51 – 75 pitches in a day, two (2) calendar days of rest, and a game (see e. below) must be observed.
- If a player pitches 26 – 50 pitches in a day, one (1) calendar days of rest must be observed.
- If a player pitches 1 – 25 pitches in a day, no (0) calendar day of rest must be observed.

(e) A player may not pitch in consecutive games. **Exception** – League Age 16 and under – A player may pitch in consecutive games if 40 or less pitches were delivered in the previous game. League Age 17 – 18 – A player may pitch in consecutive games if 50 or less pitches were delivered in the previous game.

(f) Each league must designate the scorekeeper or another game official as the official pitch count recorder.

Instructor Comments:

⇒ *The “official pitch count recorder” can be the scorekeeper, a separate individual to just keep track of pitches, the home team manager/coach, but someone must be designated to keep track.*

- (g) The pitch count recorder must provide the current pitch count for any pitcher when requested by either manager or any umpire. However, the manager is responsible for knowing when his/her pitcher must be removed.
- (h) The official pitch count recorder should inform the umpire-in-chief when a pitcher has delivered his/her maximum limit of pitches for the game, as noted in Regulation VI (c). The umpire-in-chief will inform the pitcher’s manager that the pitcher must be removed in accordance with Regulation VI (c). However, the failure by the pitch count recorder to notify the umpire-in-chief, and/or the failure of the umpire-in-chief to notify the manager, does not relieve the manager of his/her responsibility to remove a pitcher when that pitcher is no long eligible.
- (i) Violation of any section of this regulation can result in protest of the game in which it occurs. Protest shall be made in accordance with Playing Rule 4.19.
- (j) A player who has attained the league age of twelve (12) is not eligible to pitch in the Minor League. (See Regulation V – Selection of Players)

NOTES:

1. The withdrawal of an ineligible pitcher after that pitcher is announced, or after a warm-up pitch is delivered, but before that player has pitched a ball to a batter, shall not be considered a violation. Little League officials are urged to take precautions to prevent protests. When a protest situation is imminent, the potential offender should be notified immediately.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *“Before a ball is pitched” means to a batter. When warming up, if a pitcher is discovered to be ineligible, he/she must be removed and the previous pitcher may not return. Once the manager/coach makes his/her intentions known by removing the original pitcher, the original pitcher may not return. If the ineligible pitcher is discovered “before a ball is pitched: remove the ineligible pitcher and a protest may not be filed, however, if the ineligible pitcher is discovered after “a ball is pitched” the ineligible pitcher is removed and the opposing team may protest, if desired. However, the protest must be made to the umpire before the umpire(s) leave the field at the end of the game.*

2. Pitches delivered in games declared “Regulation Tie Games” or “Suspended Games” shall be charged against pitcher’s eligibility.
3. In suspended games resumed on another day, the pitchers of record at the time the game was halted may continue to pitch to the extent of their eligibility for that day, provided said pitcher has observed the required days of rest.

Example 1: A league age 12 pitcher delivers 70 pitches in a game on Monday when the game is suspended. The game resumes on the following Thursday. The pitcher is not eligible to pitch in the resumption of the game because he/she has not observed the required three days of rest.

Example 2: A league age 12 pitcher delivers 70 pitches in a game on Monday when the game is suspended. The game resumes on Saturday. The pitcher is eligible to pitch up to 85 more pitches in the resumption of the game because he/she has observed the required three days of rest.

Example 3: A league age 12 pitcher delivers 70 pitches in a game on Monday when the game is suspended. The game resumes two weeks later. The pitcher is eligible to pitch up to 85 more pitches in the resumption of the game, provided he/she is eligible based on his/her pitching record during the previous days.

NOTE: The use of this regulation negates the concept of the “calendar week” with regard to pitching eligibility.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Umpires and Scorekeepers must be aware of the eligible and ineligible pitchers. Do not wait until the opposing manager complains.*
- ⇒ *A good rule of thumb for all umpires is to inquire during the pre-game conference with the managers, by asking, “Who is ineligible to pitch?” and then recording this information on the lineup card.*
- ⇒ *Don’t hold the game up because one team challenges the eligibility by trying to track down the official scorebooks or a board member. Note the challenge in the scorebook and get on with the game.*

VI -- PITCHERS (MINOR & MAJOR SOFTBALL)

This regulation applies only to the Little League (Majors) Division and Minor League.

(a) Any player on the team roster may pitch.

EXCEPTION: A player who has attained a league age of twelve (12) is not eligible to pitch in the Minor League.

[CHALLENGER: *Although use of the batting tee or coach pitch is strongly recommended, any player on the roster may pitch.*]

(b) **Little League (Majors) Division:** If a player pitches in more than one (1) inning, one calendar day of rest is mandatory. A player may pitch in a maximum of nine (9) innings in a **day**. A player may pitch in a maximum of eighteen (18) innings in a calendar week, Sunday through Saturday. Delivery of a single pitch constitutes having pitched in an inning.

Minor Division: If a player pitches in more than one (1) inning, one calendar day of rest is mandatory. A player may pitch in a maximum of six (6) innings in a game. A player may pitch in a maximum of six (6) innings in a calendar week, Sunday through Saturday. Delivery of a single pitch constitutes having pitched in an inning.

EXAMPLE -

If a player pitched in two or more innings on: (Column A); and is still eligible, that player can pitch again on (Column B):

Column A	Column B
Sunday	Tuesday
Monday	Wednesday
Tuesday	Thursday
Wednesday	Friday
Thursday	Saturday
Friday	Sunday
Saturday	Monday

(c) A pitcher remaining in the game, but moving to a different position, can return as a pitch anytime in the remainder of the game but only once in the same inning as she/he was removed.

(d) **Little League (Majors) Division:** Not more than five (5) pitchers per team shall be used in one game.

EXCEPTION: In case of injury to a fifth pitcher an additional pitcher may be used.

[MINOR LEAGUE: There is no limit of five pitchers in a game in Minors.]

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Injury to a fifth pitcher can also mean illness. If a team insists on using a sixth pitcher, a protest may be lodged and the local league Protest Committee will be required to meet and make a decision on the game.*

(e) Violation of any section of this regulation can result in protest of the game in which it occurs. Protest shall be made in accordance with **Playing Rule 4.19**.

NOTES:

1. The withdrawal of an ineligible pitcher after that pitcher is announced, or after a warm-up pitch is delivered, but before that player has pitched a ball to a batter, shall not be considered a violation.

Little League officials are urged to take precautions to prevent protests. When a protest situation is imminent, the potential offender should be notified immediately.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *"Before a ball is pitched" means to a batter. When warming up, if a pitcher is discovered to be ineligible, he/she must be removed, and the previous pitcher may not return. Once the manager/coach makes his/her intentions known by removing the original pitcher, the original pitcher may not return. If the ineligible pitcher is discovered "before a ball is pitched", remove the ineligible pitcher and a protest may not be filed. However, if the ineligible pitcher is discovered after "a ball is pitched" remove the ineligible pitcher and the opposing team may protest, if desired.*

- 2. Innings pitched in games declared “Regulation Tie Games” or “Suspended Games” shall be charged against pitcher’s eligibility for that week. **Note (1):** In suspended games resumed in a subsequent week, the pitchers of record at the time the game was halted may continue to pitch to the extent of their remaining eligibility for that game and calendar week, whichever is less. **(2)** Innings pitched in games that do not complete one (1) full inning shall not count towards a pitcher’s total for that particular pitching week.
- 3. **Little League (Majors) Division:** If doubleheaders are played, the limitation of nine (9) innings in a calendar day would apply to each pitcher. A pitcher who pitches in the first game may pitch in the second game provided that pitcher has eligibility remaining.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Umpires and Scorekeepers must be aware of the eligible and ineligible pitchers. Do not wait until the opposing manager complains.*

⇒ *A good rule of thumb for all umpires is to inquire during the pre-game conference with the managers, by asking, “Who is ineligible to pitch?” and then recording this information on the lineup card.*

⇒ *Don’t hold up the game because the eligibility is challenged by one team by trying to track down the official scorebooks or a board member. Note the challenge in the scorebook and get on with the game.*

- 4. There is no limit to the number of pitchers of a particular league age group on a team that can be used in a calendar week
- EXCEPTION:** A player who has attained a league age of twelve (12) is not eligible to pitch in the Minor League.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Nine innings in a calendar day can amount to a variety of innings configurations. A pitcher may start both games, relieve in both games, start one and finish the other, etc., as long as the nine-inning provision is followed.*

VI -- PITCHERS (JUNIOR, SENIOR & BIG LEAGUE SOFTBALL)

- (a) Any player on the team roster may pitch.
- (b) If a player pitches in less than five (5) innings, no rest is required. If a player pitches in five (5) or more innings, one (1) calendar day of rest must be observed. A player may pitch in a maximum of ten (10) innings in a day, and a maximum of thirty (30) innings in a calendar week, Sunday through Saturday. Delivery of a single pitch constitutes having pitched in an inning.

EXAMPLE -

If a player pitched in five or more innings on: (Column A): and is still eligible, that player can pitch again on (Column B):

Column A	Column B
Sunday	Tuesday
Monday	Wednesday
Tuesday	Thursday
Wednesday	Friday
Thursday	Saturday
Friday	Sunday
Saturday	Monday

- (c) A pitcher remaining in the game, but moving to a different position, can return as a pitcher, anytime in the remainder of the game, but only once in the same inning as she/he was removed.
 - (d) Not more than five (5) pitchers per team shall be used in one game.
- EXCEPTION:** In case of injury to a fifth pitcher an additional pitcher may be used.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Injury to a fifth pitcher can also mean illness. If a team insists on using a sixth pitcher a protest may be lodged and the local league Protest Committee will be required to meet and make a decision on the game.*

- (e) Violation of any section of this regulation can result in protest of the game in which it occurs. Protest shall be made in accordance with **Playing Rule 4.19**.

NOTES:

1. The withdrawal of an ineligible pitcher after that pitcher is announced, or after a warm-up pitch has been delivered, but before that player has pitched a ball to a batter, shall not be considered a violation. **Little League** officials are urged to take precautions to prevent protests. When a protest situation is imminent, the potential offender should be notified immediately.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *"Before a ball is pitched" means to a batter. When warming up, if a pitcher is discovered to be ineligible, he/she must be removed and the previous pitcher may not return. Once the manager/coach makes his/her intentions known by removing the original pitcher, the original pitcher may not return. If the ineligible pitcher is discovered "before a ball is pitched" remove the ineligible pitcher and protest may not be filed, however, if the ineligible pitcher is discovered after "a ball is pitched" the ineligible pitcher is removed and the opposing team may protest, if desired.*

2. Innings pitched in games declared "Regulation Tie Games" or "Suspended Games" shall be charged against pitcher's eligibility for that week. **Note (1):** In suspended games resumed in a subsequent week, the pitcher of record at the time the game was halted may continue to pitch to the extent of their remaining eligibility for that game and calendar week, whichever is less. **(2)** Innings pitched in games that do not complete one (1) full inning shall not count towards a pitcher's total for that particular pitching week.
3. If doubleheaders are played the limitation of ten (10) innings in a calendar day would apply to each pitcher. A pitcher who pitches in the first game may pitch in the second game provided that pitcher has eligibility remaining.
4. There is no limit to the number of pitcher of a particular league age group on a team that can be used in a calendar week.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Umpires and Scorekeepers must be aware of the eligible and ineligible pitchers. Do not wait until the opposing manager complains.*

⇒ *A good rule of thumb for all umpires is to inquire during the pre-game conference with the managers, by asking, "Who is ineligible to pitch?" and then recording this information on the lineup card.*

⇒ *Don't hold up the game because one team challenges the eligibility by trying to track down the official scorebooks or a board member. Note the challenge in the scorebook and get on with the game.*

XIV -- FIELD DECORUM

- (a) The actions of players, managers, coaches, umpires and league officials must be above reproach. Any player, manager, coach, umpire or league representative who is involved in a verbal or physical altercation, or an incident of unsportsmanlike conduct, at the game site or any other Little League activity, is subject to disciplinary action by the Local League Board of Directors (or by the district, if the Big League is administered as a district operation)..
- (b) Uniformed players, news photographers, managers, rostered coaches and umpires only shall be permitted within the confines of the playing field just prior to and during games. Batboys and/or batgirls are not permitted at any level of play. Except for the batter, base runners, and coaches at first and third bases, all players shall be on their benches in their dugouts or in the bullpen when the team is at bat. When the team is on defense, all reserve players shall be on their benches or in the bullpen. **[CHALLENGER: "Buddies" will be allowed within the confines of the playing field prior to and during games.]**

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Dugouts are not the area for anyone other than Players, Manager and rostered Coach (es). No scorekeepers or anyone else is allowed.*
- ⇒ *Players who are not in complete uniform are not allowed in the dugout unless that player is an injured player or a player that is not going to participate for the game (s,) in which case the requirement for a uniform will be waived.*

(c) Two adult base coaches are permitted.

Both coaches may be adult managers and/or coaches in the coaching boxes providing the requirements of having at least one adult in the dugout are met. See Rule 4.05(2).

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *While adult base coaches (es) are permitted, it is acceptable to use players as the base coach. However, the offensive team must have two base coaches in the coaches' boxes, before the ball is put into play by the umpire.*

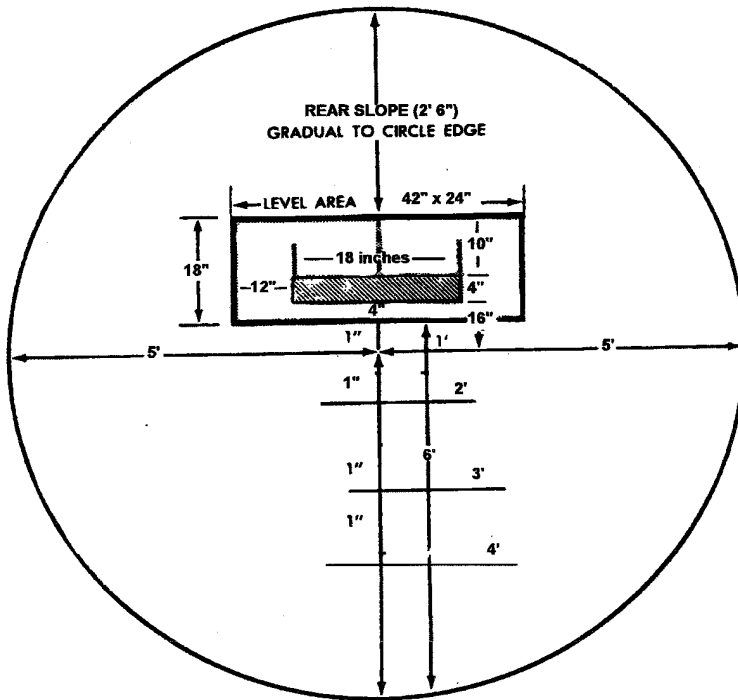
(d) A manager or coach shall not leave the bench or dugout except to confer with a player or an umpire and only after receiving permission from an umpire. (**EXCEPTION:** In Minor League and Tee Ball, managers and coaches may be on the field for instructional purposes, but shall not assist runners or touch a live ball. At least one adult manager or coach must be in the dugout at all times.)

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *The only time a Manager or Coach is permitted out of the dugout without permission is to coach in the coaching box.*
- ⇒ *This provision includes between innings and during any other break in the action. Managers and coaches are limited to the dugout unless serving as a base coach, talking with a pitcher during a charged conference, checking on an injured player, making a lineup change or discussing a rules decision with the umpire.*

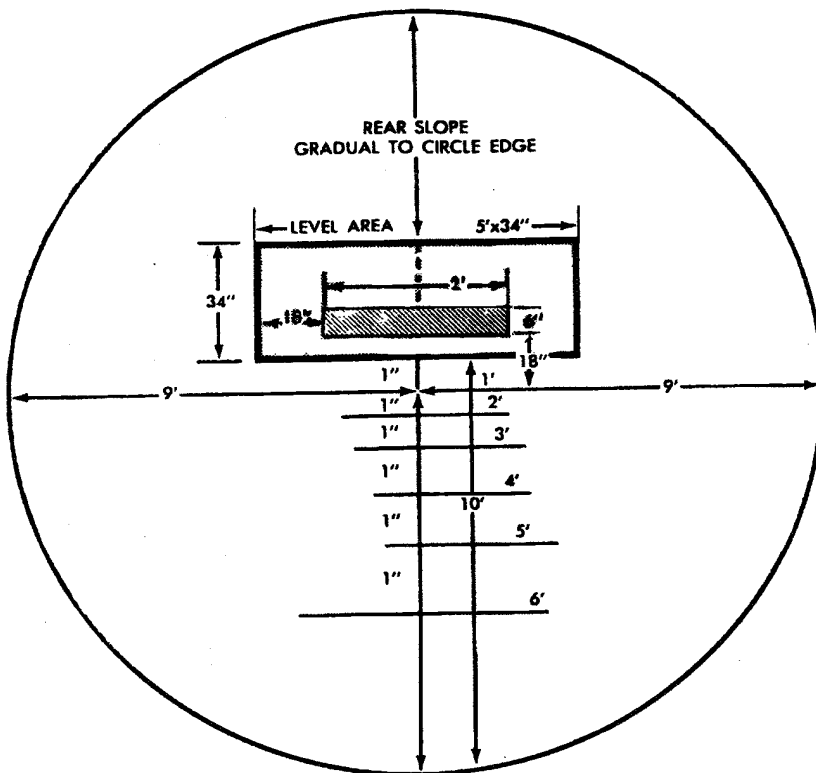
(e) The use of tobacco and alcoholic beverages in any form is prohibited on the playing field, benches or dugouts.

(f) Managers and coaches shall not warm up pitchers.



Little League Baseball
Pitching Mound Layout

Diagram 3



Senior/Big League
Baseball
Pitching Mound Layout

Diagram 4

Diagram No. 1

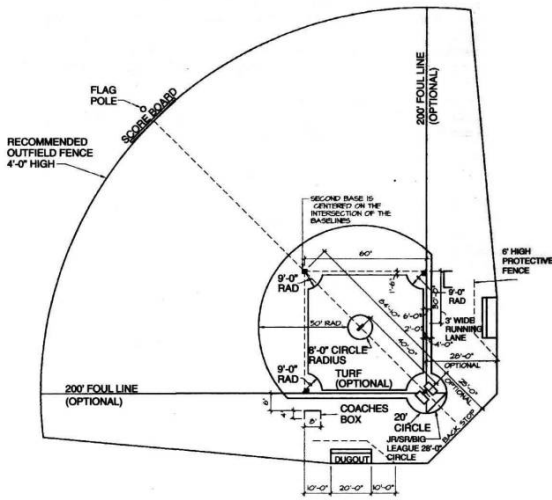


Diagram showing Tee Ball/Minor League/Little League Softball field layout. All dimensions are compulsory unless marked "optional" or "recommended."
 NOTE 1: The eight-foot (8') radius circle is to be properly marked — measured from the center of the front side of the pitcher's plate.
 NOTE 2: Tee Ball basepaths may be 50 feet.
 NOTE 3: Minor League pitching distance is 35 feet.

Diagram No. 2

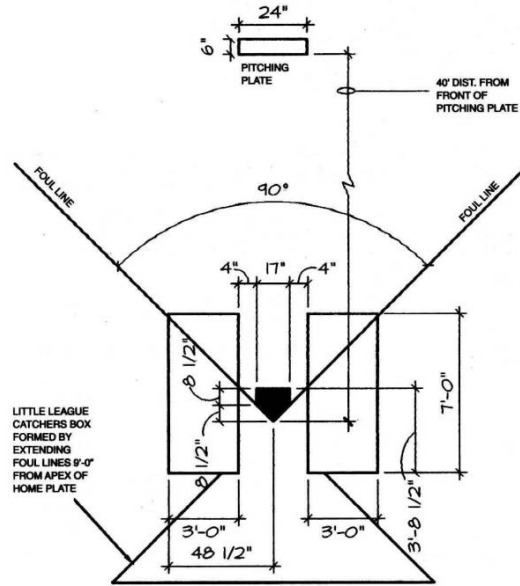


Diagram showing layout of batter's box and compulsory dimensions.

Little League Softball Diagrams

Diagram No. 2

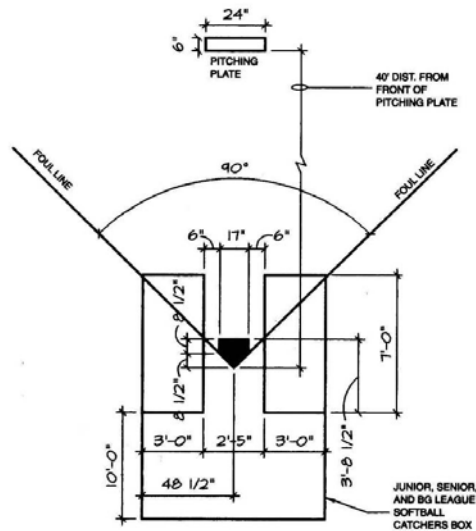
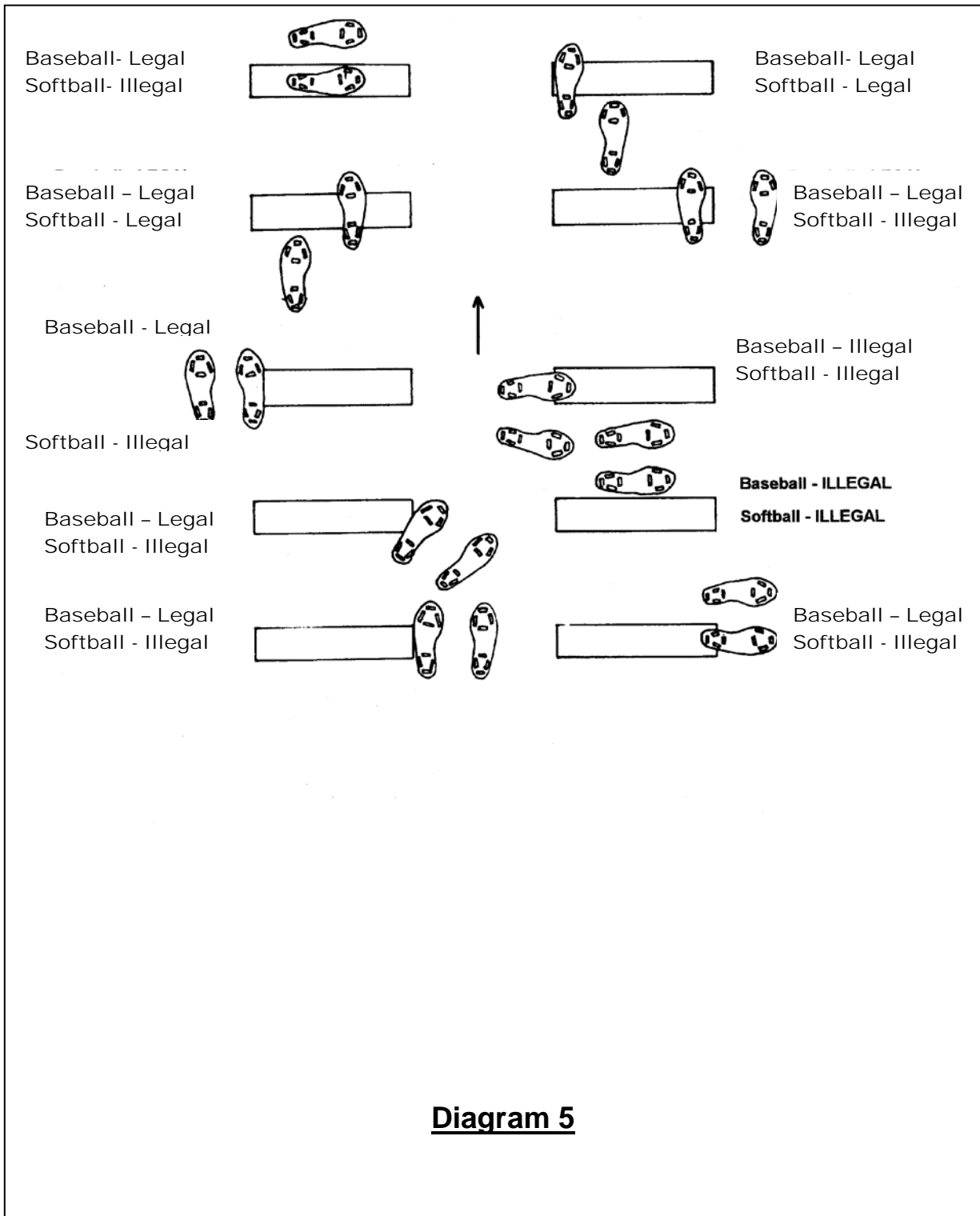


Diagram showing layout of batter's box and compulsory dimensions.

Junior, Senior and Big League Softball Batter's Box



OFFICIAL PLAYING RULES

1.00 -- OBJECTIVES OF THE GAME

1.01 -- Little League Baseball (Softball) is a game between two teams of nine players each, under direction of a manager and two (2) rostered coaches, played on a regulation **Little League** field in accordance with these rules, under jurisdiction of one or more umpires. **Tee Ball/Minor League Instructional Division** is a game between two teams, under the direction of a manager and not more than two rostered coaches, played on a regulation Little League field in accordance with these rules, under the jurisdiction of one or more umpires. **NOTE:** Competitive Minor Leagues and above may only use nine (9) players on defense. See Rules 4.16 and 4.17.

INSTRUCTORS COMMENTS:

⇒ *In Tee Ball and Minor League Instructional Divisions of Baseball and Softball the teams may place all or part of their rosters on the defensive field at the same time. Also, the League Board of Directors is responsible to decide how many players are listed on each team's rosters for these divisions. The League Board could elect to have 8 kids (or less) on each team and play all them at the same time, on the other hand they may elect to have 15 kids (or more) on each team and play them at the same time on defense. After all these programs are non-competitive and should be played as fun, instructional, and educational games. It will be up to the local league Board of Directors to approve the playing of the games with more than 9 players or less than 9 players on either or both teams. Remember these are instructional programs and should be treated as such.*

(JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL) 1.01 – Junior, Senior and Big League Baseball is a game between two teams of nine players each, under direction of a manager and two (2) rostered coaches, played on a regulation **Junior/Senior/Big League** field in accordance with these rules, under jurisdiction of one or more umpires.

1.02 -- The objective of each team is to win by scoring more runs than the opponent.

1.03 -- The winner of the game shall be that team which shall have scored, in accordance with these rules, the greater number of runs at the conclusion of a regulation game.

1.04 -- THE PLAYING FIELD. The field shall be laid out according to the instructions, supplemented by **Diagrams No. 1 and No. 2.**

The infield shall be a 60-foot square. (Tee Ball option: The infield may be a 50-foot square.)

[JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL: 90-foot square.]

[CHALLENGER: The infield shall be a 50 or 60-foot square.]

The outfield shall be the area between the two foul lines formed by extending two sides of the square, as in **Diagram 1.** The distance from home base to the nearest fence, stand or other obstruction on fair territory should be 200 feet or more **[JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL: 300 feet or more]**. A distance of 200 feet or more **[JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL: 300 feet or more]** along the foul lines, and to center field is recommended. The infield shall be graded so that the base lines and home plate are level.

The pitcher's plate shall be six inches **[JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL: ten inches]** above the level of home plate. The infield and outfield, including the boundary lines, are fair territory and all other area is foul territory. **(LITTLE LEAGUE SOFTBALL/JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE SOFTBALL)** the pitcher's plate shall be level with the ground.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Diagrams No. 3 and No. 4 indicate the configuration of the pitcher's mound, including the proper placement of the pitcher's plate the dimensions of the table and the front and rear slopes.*

⇒ *While not advisable, it is permissible for a game to be played with a mound less than six inches high in Little League Baseball and ten inches in Senior/Big League Baseball.*

⇒ *The use of a portable mound is acceptable in Regular Season games only.*

It is desirable that the line from home base through the pitcher's plate to second base shall run east-northeast.

It is recommended that the distance from home base to the backstop, and from the base lines to the nearest fence, stand or other obstruction on foul territory should be 25 feet or more (45 feet or more for Junior/Senior/Big League baseball). See **Diagram 1**.

When location of home base is determined, with a steel tape measure 84 feet, 10 inches [**JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL: 127 feet, 3-3/8 inches**] in the desired direction to establish second base. From home base, measure 60 feet [**JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL: 90 feet**] towards first base; from second base, measure 60 feet [**JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL: 90 feet**] towards first base; the intersection of these lines establishes first base. From home base, measure 60 feet [**JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL: 90 feet**] towards third base; from second base measure 60 feet [**JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL: 90 feet**] towards third base; the intersection of these lines establishes third base. The distance between first base and third base is 84 feet, 10 inches [**JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL: 127 feet, 3-3/8 inches**]. All measurements from home base shall be taken from the point where the first and third base lines intersect.

The catcher's box, the batter's box, the coaches' boxes, the three-foot runner's lane and the next batter's boxes shall be laid out as shown in **Diagrams 1 and 2**.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *In Major Division and below, there will be no need to lie out the "next batter's box", since there is no "on-deck position" in these Divisions. The on-deck batter remains in the dugout, and no one in the dugout will handle a bat while in the dugout.*

The catcher's box extends approximately 6 feet, 4-3/4 inches to the rear of home plate. It is determined by extending each foul line 9 feet beyond the back point of home plate.

[**JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL: The rear line of the catcher's box is 8 feet directly back from the point of home plate. It extends forward to the rear line of the batter's box. It is 3 feet 7 inches wide.**]

[**JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE SOFTBALL: The catcher's box shall be 10 feet in length from the rear outside corners of the batter's box and shall be 8 feet 5 inches wide.**]

The batter's box shall be rectangular, 6 feet by 3 feet [**JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL: 6 feet by 4 feet**] [**ALL SOFTBALL: 7 feet by 3 feet**] the inside line, if used, shall be parallel to and 4 inches [**JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL/SOFTBALL: 6 inches**] away from the side of home plate. It shall extend forward from the center of home plate 3 feet [**ALL SOFTBALL: 4 feet**] and to the rear 3 feet.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *If the foul lines, batter's box lines, or another lines are not correct, the umpire may choose a number of options: utilize the lines as placed; eliminate the lines; or re-line the field.*

The coaches boxes shall be 4 feet by 8 feet [**JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL: 10 feet by 20 feet**] and shall not be closer than 6 feet [**JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL: 10 feet**] from the foul lines.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Keep the coaches boxes at least the minimum from the foul line and your problems of interference will be lessened considerably.*

The foul lines and all other playing lines indicated in the diagrams by solid black lines shall be marked with chalk or other white material. Caustic lime must not be used.

The grass lines and dimensions shown on the diagrams are those used in many fields, but they are not mandatory. Each league shall determine the size and shape of the grassed and bare areas of its playing field.

1.05 -- Home base shall be marked by a five-sided slab of whitened rubber. It shall be a 12-inch square with two of the corners filled in so that one edge is 17 inches long, two 8-1/2 inches and two are 12 inches. It shall be set in the ground with the point at the intersection of the lines extending from home base to first base and to third base; with the 17-inch edge facing the pitcher's plate and the two 12-inch edges coinciding with the first and third base lines. The top edges of home base shall be beveled and the base shall be fixed in the ground level with the ground surface. The black beveled edge is not considered part of home plate.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *While it may be a surprise to some, home plate is entirely in fair territory. A ball hitting home plate can result in either a fair or foul ball, depending on what follows.*
- ⇒ *The black beveled edge is not part of home plate, only to assist or protect sliding players who are advancing to home plate.*

1.06 -- First, second and third base shall be marked by white canvas or rubber covered bags, securely attached to the ground. The first and third base bags shall be entirely within the infield. The second base bag shall be centered on second base. The base bags shall be not less than fourteen (14) nor more than fifteen (15) inches square and the outer edges shall not be more than two and one-fourth (2 1/4) inches thick, and filled with a soft material. Leagues are required to ensure that first, second and third bases will disengage their anchor.

NOTE (1): If the impact of a runner breaks a base loose from its position, no play can be made on that runner at that base, if the runner had reached the base safely. If there is continual action involving a subsequent runner, the base plate becomes the actual base for rendering of the umpire's decision. **NOTE (2):** Use of the "Double First Base" is permissible at all levels of play. See Rule 7.15.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *In situations where bases are not "anchored" (just thrown down) on the field, umpires should insure that the bases are correctly placed and remain entirely in fair territory.*

1.07 -- The pitchers plate shall be a rectangular slab of whitened rubber 18 inches by 4 inches [JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL/SOFTBALL: 24 inches by 6 inches]. It shall be set in the ground as shown in **Diagrams 1 and 3** [JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL: **Diagrams 2 and 4**], so that the distance between the front side of the pitcher's plate and home base (the rear point of home plate) shall be 46 feet [JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL: 60 feet, 6 inches] [JUNIOR: May be 54 feet.] [MAJOR/JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE SOFTBALL: 40 feet] [MINOR SOFTBALL: 35 feet].

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *A "step-down" version of a pitcher's plate is also acceptable. However, for purposes of the Pitching Rules (Rule 8.00), only the upper or elevated portion of this version is legally part of the plate.*

1.08 -- The league shall furnish player's benches, one each for the home and visiting teams. Such benches should not be less than twenty-five feet from the base lines. They shall be protected by wire fencing.

[MAJOR/MINOR BASEBALL/SOFTBALL & CHALLENGER] **NOTE (1):** THE ON-DECK POSITION IS NOT PERMITTED. **NOTE (2):** Only the 1st batter of each inning will be allowed out of the dugout at the start of that inning.

[JUNIOR/SENIOR BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL/SOFTBALL: The on-deck position is permitted.]

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Since there is no "on-deck position" in the Major Divisions and below, the next batter should be ready with a helmet on, but may not pick up a bat until it is his/her turn at bat. Umpires should allow the upcoming batter a few swings when he/she arrives at the plate.*
- ⇒ *At the start of the first inning and in between innings, only one batter is permitted out of the dugout with a bat, since there is only one batter due up. All other players must remain in the dugout.*

(BASEBALL) 1.09 -- The ball used must meet **Little League** specifications and standards. It shall weigh not less than five (5) nor more than five and one-fourth (5-1/4) ounces, and measure not less than nine (9) nor more than nine and one-fourth (9-1/4) inches in circumference. (Tee Ball: The ball may carry the words "Little League Tee Ball.")

NOTE: Little League Approved baseballs will have one of two (2) designations on them: RS – Regular Season Only or RS-T Regular Season and/or Tournament.

1.09 -- The softball used must meet Little League specifications and standards. The ball may be not less than 11-7/8" nor more than 12-1/8" in circumference and shall weigh not less than 6-1/4 ounces nor more than 7 ounces. **(TEE BALL/MINOR SOFTBALL) 1.09 --** The softball used must meet Little League specifications and standards. The ball shall be not less than 10-7/8" nor more than 11-1/8" in circumference and shall weigh not less than 5-1/2 nor more than 6 ounces.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *The 12 inch ball is legal in all divisions above the Minor Division. In the Tee Ball and Minor Divisions of softball the 11 inch ball is the ball to be used.*
- ⇒ *Optic yellow, orange or other colors of softballs are legal for use during regular season and tournament.*

1.10 -- The bat must be a baseball bat which meets **Little League** specifications and standards as noted in this rule. **[SOFTBALL: The bat must be a softball bat, which meets the following specifications:]** It shall be a smooth, rounded stick and made of wood or of material and color tested and proved acceptable to **Little League** standards. It shall not be more than thirty-three (33) inches **[34 inches for Junior; 36 inches for Senior and Big League [JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE SOFTBALL: thirty-four (34) inches]** in length, not more than two and one-quarter (2-1/4) inches **2 3/4 inches for Junior, and 2 3/4 inches for wood and 2 5/8 inches non-wood for Senior and Big League** in diameter, and if wood, not less than fifteen-sixteenth (15/16) inches in diameter (7/8 inch for bats less than 30") at its smallest part. Wood bats may be taped or fitted with a sleeve for a distance not exceeding sixteen (16) inches **(18 for Junior/Senior/Big League Baseball)** from the small end. A non-wood bat must have a grip of cork, tape or composition material, must extend a minimum of 10 inches from the small end. Slippery tape or similar material is prohibited. **Senior/Big League Baseball** a bat shall not weigh, numerically, more than three ounces less than the length (inches) of the bat (e.g., a 33-inch-long bat cannot be less than 30 ounces). All non-wood bats shall meet the BESR performance standard, and such bats shall be labeled with a permanent certification mark. **All divisions (Baseball & Softball):** White bats are prohibited. An illegal bat must be removed.

NOTE: (1) The traditional batting donut is not permissible.

(2) The bat may carry the mark "Little League Tee Ball."

(3) Beginning with the 2009 season, non wood bats used in divisions of Little League (league age 12 years old and younger) shall be printed with a BPF (bat performance factor) of 1.15 or less.

(4) Non-wood bats may develop dents from time to time. Bats that cannot pass through the approved Little League bat ring must be removed from play. The 2 1/4 inch ring must be used for bats in all softball divisions, and in the Tee Ball, Minor League and Little League Baseball divisions of baseball. The 2 3/4 inch bat ring must be used for bats in the Junior League. The 2 5/8 inch bat ring must be used for bats in the Senior League and Big League divisions of baseball.

"The Right Call" Casebook -- Ruling: Penalty for use of a bat that does not meet specifications is to remove it from the game. **Play 1-1:** Little League Baseball game: Ralph comes to bat with a bat marked "softball". **Ruling:** This would be an illegal bat and must be removed from the game. **Play 1-2:** Ralph comes to bat with a bat which is 34 inches long (always trying for that little edge). He hits a home run to deep center field; umpire notices that the bat is 34 inches long. **Ruling:** Home run stands, bat is thrown out. Umpire should make a mental note that Ralph's bat should be checked prior to his entering the batter's box for his next at bat. Colored bats are bats that come from factory stained a certain color (brown or black). Bats painted in the family garage or basements are not legal. Bats should be checked during an umpire's pre-game activities. Remove illegal bats at that time.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Instead of running your hands over the bat to check for dents, etc., use the bat ring provided to your league or received in with your Umpire Registry membership materials. If the bat does not pass through the Little League Baseball approved bat ring it is out of round and should not be used. Remove it and do not allow it in the game.*
- ⇒ *Make sure you make an effort to let everyone know that the baseball bats must have the BPF of 1.15 or less by 2009 and that it does not apply to softball bats. Starting in 2009 the bats used in Little League (Majors) baseball and below that do not have the BPF marking will be declared illegal and not allowed to be used.*
- ⇒ *Remember only a baseball bat may be used in a baseball game and only a softball bat may be used in a softball game.*

- ⇒ *Painted bats are not acceptable, unless the painting has occurred by the manufacturer.*
- ⇒ *At times, the sleeve of an aluminum bat is torn or is non-existent. The umpire must remove the bat for the safety of all. It is mandatory that aluminum bats be taped or fitted with a sleeve.*
- ⇒ *Nowhere within this rule does it indicate that hands are part of the bat. Hands are not part of the bat. See **Rules 6.05(f) and 6.08(b)** for additional verification.*
- ⇒ *While the traditional batting donut is not permitted, the sleeves that slide over the large end of the bat are acceptable.*
- ⇒ *When removing an illegal bat from play during the game, leave the bat with the official scorer until the game has concluded.*

1.11 --

- (a) (1)** All players on a team shall wear numbered uniforms identical in color, trim and style. **(LITTLE LEAGUE SOFTBALL/JUNIOR SOFTBALL/SENIOR SOFTBALL/BIG LEAGUE SOFTBALL:)** The wearing of hats or visors is optional for each player while on defense.
- (2)** The **Official Little League Shoulder Patch [JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL: Official Shoulder Patch] [SOFTBALL: Official Little League Softball Shoulder Patch]** must be affixed to the upper left sleeve of the uniform blouse. Patches are worn 3” below left shoulder seam on raglan sleeve; 1” below seam on set-in sleeve; over left breast on sleeveless style.
- (3)** Any part of the undershirt or tee shirt exposed to view shall be of a uniform solid color. A pitcher shall not wear any item on his/her hands, wrists or arms which may be distracting to the batter. **NOTE:** White long sleeve shirts are not permitted. **(LITTLE LEAGUE SOFTBALL/JUNIOR SOFTBALL/SENIOR SOFTBALL/BIG LEAGUE SOFTBALL:)** **(3)** Any part of the undershirt or tee shirt exposed to view shall be of a uniform solid color. A pitcher shall not wear any item on his/her hands, wrists or arms which may be distracting to the batter.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *In Softball, teams may wear uniform shorts, but in order to be uniform, each player must wear shorts.*
- ⇒ *In Softball, teams may wear hats, visors or they may choose to not wear any hats or visors. The wearing of hats or visors is optional for each player while on defense.*

- (b)** A league must provide each team with a distinctive uniform. Uniforms are the property of the league.
- (c) (1)** Sleeve lengths may vary for individual players, but the sleeves of each individual shall be approximately the same length.
- (2)** No player shall wear ragged, frayed or slit sleeves.
- (d)** No players shall attach to a uniform tape or other material of a different color than the uniform.
- (e)** No part of the uniform shall include a pattern that imitates or suggests the shape of a baseball or softball.
- (f)** Glass buttons and polished metal shall not be used on a uniform.
- (g)** No player shall attach anything to the heel or toe of the shoe other than a toe plate.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *The toe plate may be plastic, leather, aluminum or other material acceptable to the umpire.*

- (h)** Shoes with metal spikes or cleats are not permitted. Shoes with molded cleats are permissible. **JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL: (h)** Shoes with metal spikes or cleats are permitted.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Frequently, shoes with removable spikes or cleats are used. These would be acceptable if, when removed, no metal remains exposed. If so, the shoes must be replaced.*
- ⇒ *The molded cleats may be made of many substances other than rubber. Insure that the shoes are safe to all participants.*
- ⇒ *Junior, Senior and Big League Baseball allows metal spikes or cleats. No other division of Little League Baseball or Softball permits the use of metal cleats. No agreement can be made to alter or ignore this rule.*

- (i) Managers and coaches must not wear conventional baseball/softball uniforms or shoes with metal spikes, but may wear cap, slacks and shirt. **[JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL/SOFTBALL: Managers and coaches may wear conventional baseball/softball uniforms or cap, slacks and shirt. They may not wear shoes with metal spikes.]**

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *In Majors & Minors, managers and coaches are allowed to wear jerseys and hats similar to their respective team's jersey, but may not wear uniform pants or similar.*
- ⇒ *The wearing of shorts by managers and coaches shall be administered by the local jurisdiction, whether it is local league, district, section, division, state, region or World Series. Managers and coaches may wear the conventional uniform in the Junior/Senior and Big League Baseball/Softball levels.*

- (j) Players must not wear watches, rings, pins, jewelry or other metallic items.

EXCEPTION: Jewelry that alerts medical personnel to a specific condition is permissible.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Players may wear Medic Alert necklaces or bracelets.*
- ⇒ *Managers, coaches, players & umpires may not wear pins in their hats.*

- (k) Casts may not be worn during the game.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *The word "Plaster" has been removed from this rule to include other types of casts that can be just as dangerous to the game participants.*
- ⇒ *Players, managers and coaches with casts may not coach in the coaches' box, not only out of concern for the injured player, manager or coach, but also for the safety of those around him/her.*
- ⇒ *Umpires should not umpire while wearing a cast for the very same safety concerns.*

(BASEBALL) 1.12 -- The catcher must wear a catcher's mitt (not a first baseman's mitt or fielder's glove) of any shape, size or weight consistent with protecting the hand.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Whether the catcher is a right-handed or left-handed catcher, a catcher's mitt must be worn.*
- ⇒ *A left-handed catcher may not wear a mitt designed for a right-handed catcher, unless the mitt is specifically designed to be worn on either hand.*

(SOFTBALL) 1.12 -- The catcher must wear a mitt of any shape, size or weight consistent with protecting the hand. This may be a first baseman's mitt or a fielder's glove.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *A catcher may wear any glove or mitt that will protect the hand.*

1.13 -- The first baseman may wear a glove or mitt not more than 12 inches long from top to bottom and not more than eight inches wide across the palm, measured from the base of the thumb crotch to the outer edge of the mitt. The glove may be of any weight.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *In Baseball, only the first baseman may wear a first baseman's mitt.*
- ⇒ *In Softball, the first baseman and the catcher may wear a first baseman's mitt.*

1.14 -- Each fielder, other than the first baseman and the catcher, may wear a glove not more than 12 inches long nor more than 7-3/4 inches wide (8 inches Softball), measured from the base of the thumb crotch to the outer edge of the glove. The glove may be of any weight.

1.15 --

- (a) The pitcher's glove shall be of one solid color other than white or gray, or if multi-colored white and light gray shall not be included in the colors.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Multi-colored gloves are allowed to be worn by the pitcher. This also includes the manufacturer's label, or the lacing of the glove, unless, in the umpire's judgment, these would prove to be distracting to the batter. The umpire can remove a glove from the game if he/she thinks the glove is a distraction to the batter. Rule of thumb: If it's a distraction to you it is a distraction to the batter.*

(b) No pitcher shall attach to the glove any foreign material of a color different than the glove. The pitcher may wear a batting glove on the non-pitching hand under the pitcher's glove provided the batting glove is not white, gray or optic yellow.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *If the pitcher wears a batting glove he/she may not then rub the ball while still wearing the batting glove. He/she is only permitted to rub up the ball between the bare hands.*

(c) No pitcher shall wear sweat bands on the wrists.

"The Right Call" Casebook -- Ruling: A pitcher may not use a white or light gray glove. Ribbons, key chains, etc. (foreign materials) may not be attached to a glove of the pitcher. By definition, foreign material is material not attached to the glove by the manufacturer. Sweat bands of any color, size, or shape are not allowed on either arm (not just the wrist) of a pitcher.

(SOFTBALL) (d) A pitcher may not wear a catcher's mitt or first baseman's mitt.

1.16 -- Each league shall provide in the dugout or bench of the offensive team six (6) (seven (7) helmets in JR/SR/BL) protective helmets which must meet **NOCSAE** specifications and standards. Use of helmet by the batter, all base runners and base coaches is mandatory. Use of a helmet by an adult base coach is optional. Each helmet shall have an exterior warning label. The helmets provided by each league must meet **NOCSAE** specifications and bear the **NOCSAE** stamp as well as an exterior warning label as noted above. **NOTE:** Helmets may not be painted and may not contain tape or decals unless approved in writing by the helmet manufacturer.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Painting helmets at home in the garage is extremely dangerous. Some paints will cause a chemical break down of the helmets causing them to become soft or brittle. Painting helmets can also hide cracks. Painting helmets should be done by a licensed company that will offer the league a warranty or by the manufacturer of the helmet.*
- ⇒ *Chinstraps are not mandatory, unless they are attached to the helmet. If chinstraps are included as part of the helmet, they must be worn properly.*
- ⇒ *Insure that players wear properly fitted helmets.*
- ⇒ *If a player, during play, removes his/her helmet or causes his/her helmet to come off, he/she shall **NOT** be called out.*

1.17 -- All male players must wear athletic supporters. Male catchers must wear the metal, fiber or plastic type cup, and a long-model chest protector. Female catchers must wear long or short model chest protectors. **[JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL/SOFTBALL: long or short model chest protector]** All catcher's must wear chest protectors with neck collar, throat guard, shin guards and a catcher's helmet, all of which must meet **Little League** specifications and standards. Catcher's helmet must meet **NOCSAE** specifications and standards and bear the **NOCSAE** stamp. All catchers must wear a mask, "dangling" type throat protector and catcher's helmet during infield/outfield practice, pitcher warm-up and games. **NOTE (1):** Skullcaps are not permitted. **NOTE (2):** Helmets may not be painted and may not contain tape or decals unless approved in writing by the helmet manufacturer.

"The Right Call" Casebook -- Ruling: Male players must wear athletic supports. Male catchers must wear the metal, fiber or plastic cup type. At all levels of play, catchers must wear a catcher's helmet, not skullcap. Definition of catcher's helmet is one that covers both ears, as well as the back of the head partially down the neck. Wearing of a catcher's helmet with mask and throat guard is required during games, pitcher warm-up and any form of infield or infield/outfield practice. **Comment:** Female catchers and catchers in JR/SR/BL do not require long model chest protector. However, male catchers in Little League (Majors) are required to wear a long model chest protector.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Insure that the equipment fits properly and is worn correctly.*

- ⇒ *During infield or outfield warm-up, the player standing next to the coach with the bat must wear the catcher's helmet, mask and throat guard.*
- ⇒ *The warm-up catcher must wear athletic supporter (if male), catcher's helmet, mask, throat guard and catcher's mitt (baseball, only). It is not necessary to wear chest protector & shin guards to warm-up the pitcher.*
- ⇒ *The extended mask does not satisfy the throat guard requirement. The "dangling" throat guard must be an attachment to the mask (hockey style as well) that sufficiently protects the throat.*
- ⇒ *The athletic supporter requirement for male players may not be substituted by use of brief-type underwear.*
- ⇒ *Agreements can never be made to allow the usage of skullcaps in any division.*

2.00 -- DEFINITION OF TERMS

ADJUDGED is a judgment decision by an umpire.

An **APPEAL** is an act of a fielder in claiming a violation of the rules by the offensive team.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Not all appeals have to be made verbally, but it must be an act that is unmistakably and clearly indicated by the defensive player as an appeal to the umpire. When there are multiple runners and it is possible more than one runner could be appealed, the player must indicate to the umpire, which of the runners is being appealed. This can be accomplished by the umpire asking, "Which runner?" Whenever a defensive player is trying to make an appeal and especially if he/she seems to be confused, help the player to give you the information you need for them to make a viable appeal by asking questions, etc. This can be accomplished by asking pertinent questions without giving away, one way or the other, what your ruling will be. You are not helping them or giving an advantage to either team by doing this. If the ball is dead, just remind them that the ball is dead and that nothing can happen while the ball is dead.*

A **BACKSTOP** is the barrier erected behind the catcher in order to allow the catcher to retrieve passed balls easily.

(JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL) A **BALK** is an illegal act by the pitcher with a runner or runners on base, entitling all runners to advance one base. A **BALK** is not called in the Little League (Majors) Division, Minor League or Tee Ball. (See Rule 8.05 – Illegal Pitch.)

[SOFTBALL: There is no balk in softball.]

[CHALLENGER: There shall be no balk in the Little League Challenger Division.]

A **BALL** is a pitch which does not enter the strike zone in flight and is not struck at by the batter.

INSTRUCTORS COMMENTS:

⇒ *If the pitch touches the ground and bounces through the strike zone it is a "ball." If such a pitch touches the batter, he/she shall be awarded first base. Junior/Senior/Big League: If the batter swings at such a pitch after two strikes, the ball cannot be caught, for the purposes of Rule 6.05(b) and 6.09(b). If the batter hits such a pitch, the ensuing action shall be the same as if he/she hit the ball in flight.*

A **BASE** is one of four points which must be touched by a runner in order to score a run; more usually applied to the canvas bags and the rubber plate which mark the base points.

A **BASE COACH** is a team member in uniform or an adult manager and/or coach, who are stationed in the coach's box at first and/or third base to direct the batter and the runners. **NOTE:** Two (2) adult base coaches are permitted at all levels. See rule 4.05(2) for restrictions.

INSTRUCTORS COMMENTS:

⇒ *If a team decides to use just one adult base coach there is no requirement which coacher's box an adult coach may occupy a simple rule of thumb is that the box they start the inning occupying is the box they finish the inning occupying. Do not allow the base coaches to move from 1st to 3^d and back again depending on the location of runner(s). Furthermore, an adult manager or coach is only permitted to occupy the 1st and/or 3^d base coaches box if there is at least one other adult manager or coach in the dugout (See Rule 4.05(2))*

A **BASE ON BALLS** is an award of first base granted to batters who, during their time at bat receive four pitches outside the strike zone.

"The Right Call" Casebook -- Ruling: Do not grant a request for time out until batter-runner reaches first base and forward movement has stopped with no attempt is being made to proceed to second base.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *It is acceptable for a batter-runner to overrun first base on a base on balls. He/she cannot be tagged out when overrunning first base unless he/she makes an effort to advance to second base or fails to return to first immediately.*

(CHALLENGER) BASE RUNNER - Base runners must stay in contact with the base until the ball is hit. When players have advanced as far as possible without being put out or having been retired, the umpire shall call "time" in preparation for the next batter.

A **BATTER** is an offensive player who takes a position in the batter's box.

BATTER-RUNNER is a term that identifies the offensive player who has just finished a time at bat until that player is put out or until the play on which that player becomes a runner ends.

The **BATTER'S BOX** is the area within which the batter must stand during a time at bat.

The **BATTERY** is the pitcher and catcher.

The **BATTING ORDER** is the list of current defensive players (and the Designated Hitter in Big League) in the order in which they are to bat. **Exceptions:** In all divisions, the batting order may contain the entire roster of players. In **Tee Ball**, the batting order shall contain the entire roster of players.

(CHALLENGER) BATTING ORDER shall be the players listed in the order they are to bat. The batting order shall contain the entire roster of players.

(CHALLENGER) BATTING OUT OF ORDER - The scorekeeper shall inform the manager that a player has batted out of order. There shall be no penalty and that player shall not have another turn at bat, but shall resume the normal position next time up.

BENCH OR DUGOUT is the seating facilities reserved for players, substitutes, one manager and not more than two coaches when they are not actively engaged on the playing field. Batboys and/or batgirls are not permitted.

"The Right Call" Casebook -- Ruling: Bench or dugout is not for additional coaches or a scorekeeper.

(CHALLENGER) A BUDDY is a coach or **Little League** player permitted on the field to assist a disabled **Little Leaguer** with playing skills.

A **BUNT** is a batted ball not swung at, but intentionally met with the bat and tapped slowly. The mere holding of the bat in the strike zone is not an attempted bunt. (**Tee Ball:** Bunts are not permitted. Batters are not permitted to take a half-swing. If the umpire feels the batter is taking a half-swing, the batter may be called back to swing again.)

[CHALLENGER: A Bunt is not permitted. Batters are not permitted to take a half-swing. If the umpire feels the batter is not taking a full swing he/she may be called back to swing again.]

"The Right Call" Casebook -- Comment: The key words are "intentionally met with the bat." **Comment:** If no attempt is made to make contact with a ball outside the strike zone while in the bunting stance, it should be called a ball. An effort must be made to intentionally meet the ball with the bat.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *When the batter squares around in a "bunt position", there is no need for the batter to pull the bat back. If the pitched ball is out of the strike zone, it shall be called a "ball".*

A **CALLED GAME** is one in which, for any reason, the umpire-in-chief terminates play.

A **CATCH** is the act of a fielder in getting secure possession in the hand or glove of a ball in flight and firmly holding it before it touches the ground providing such fielder does not use cap, protector, pocket or any other part of the uniform in getting possession. It is not a catch, however, if simultaneously or immediately following contact with the ball the fielder collides with a player or with a wall, or if that fielder falls down, and as a result of such collision or falling, drops the ball. It is not a catch if a fielder touches a fly ball which then hits a member of the offensive team or an umpire and then is caught by another defensive player. If the fielder has made the catch and drops the ball while in the act of making a throw following the catch, the ball shall be adjudged to have been caught. In establishing the validity of the catch, the fielder shall hold the ball long enough to prove complete control of the ball and that release of the ball is voluntary and intentional. A catch is legal if the ball is finally held by any fielder, even though juggled, or held by another fielder before it touches the ground. Runners may leave their bases the instant the first fielder touches the ball.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Play 2-1: A legal catch occurs when a fielder holds the ball: (a) in his/her hands; (b) under his/her arm; (c) in his/her cap; (d) in his/her glove. **Ruling:** (a) Yes; (b) No; (c) No; (d) Yes. **Play 2-2:** Batter hits a fly to center field. The center fielder gets the ball in his/her hand(s) but drops it: (a) when he/she falls to the ground and rolls over; (b) when he/she collides with a fielder or a wall; (c) when he/she starts to throw to the infield. **Ruling:** In (a) and (b), it is not a catch. In (c), it is a legal catch if the ball was held long enough for the center fielder to regain his/her balance but is then dropped in a motion associated with an intended throw. Thus providing the fielder has complete control of the ball and that release of the ball is voluntary and intentional.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *When the rule states that the player may not use “any part of the uniform” in gaining possession, it means to gain possession by utilizing a part of the uniform. Trapping the fly ball against the uniform or chest protector is okay if the player gains and maintains possession in the hand or glove or both.*
- ⇒ *Runners may advance the instant the fly ball is touched by a defensive player.*
- ⇒ *For safety and the fact that it is a “Dead Ball Area”, a fielder may not enter the dugout to make a catch.*

The **CATCHER** is the fielder who takes position back of the home base.

The **CATCHER'S BOX** is that area within which the catcher shall stand until the pitcher delivers the ball.

A **COACH** is appointed to perform such duties as the manager shall designate.

[TBALL: Defensive coaches are permitted on the field for instructional purposes. Coaches are not permitted to touch a live ball but they may instruct players.]

[TBALL: Offensive coaches are permitted in the coaching box and at home plate for instruction but they are not permitted to assist base runners.]

[MINOR BASEBALL/SOFTBALL: Option may be adopted to allow Manager and coaches on field.]

[IN ALL DIVISIONS OF BASEBALL/SOFTBALL: Two adult base coaches are permitted.]

(SOFTBALL) CROW HOP is defined as the act of a pitcher who steps, drags or hops off the front of the pitcher's plate, replants the pivot foot, establishing a second starting point, pushes off from the newly established starting point and completes the delivery. (Illegal Pitch - see **Softball - Rule 8.05**)

A **DEAD BALL** is a ball out of play because of a legally created temporary suspension of play.

The **DEFENSE (or DEFENSIVE)** is the team, or any player of the team, in the field.

A **DOUBLE HEADER** is two regularly scheduled or rescheduled games, played by the same team(s) on the same day.

A **DOUBLE PLAY** is a play by the defense in which two offensive players are put out as a result of continuous action, providing there is no error between putouts.

(a) A force double play is one in which both putouts are force plays.

(b) A reverse force double play is one in which the first out is made at any base and the second out is made by tagging a runner who originally was forced, before the runner touches the base to which that runner was forced.

(SOFTBALL) DROPPED BALL is a ball which slips from the pitcher's hand after the pitcher takes a position on the pitcher's plate, or goes directly from the pitcher's hand straight to the ground during the pitcher's motion. This can be while the pitcher is just standing on the pitcher's plate; during the back swing or up to the delivery of the pitch in the windmill motion. A drop is distinguished from a pitch in that a pitch must have lift and carry past the release of the hip and a drop slips from the hand and/or goes straight and direct to the ground. Penalty: See Rule 8.07(a).

DUGOUT (see definition of "**BENCH**")

A **FAIR BALL** is a batted ball that settles on fair ground between home and first base, or between home and third base, or that is on or over fair territory when bounding to the outfield past first or third base, or that touches first, second or third base, or that first falls on fair territory on or beyond first base or third base, or that while on or over fair territory touches the person of an umpire or player, or that, while over fair territory, passes out of the playing field in flight.

NOTE: A fair fly shall be adjudged according to the relative position of the ball and the foul line, including the foul pole, and not as to whether the fielder is on fair or foul territory at the time such fielder touches the ball.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Play 2-3: Batted Ball settles on home plate. *Ruling: Fair ball.* **Play 2-4:** Batted ball first hits foul ground and without touching any foreign object, rolls into fair territory between first and home, or third and home, where it settles. *Ruling: Fair ball.*

FAIR TERRITORY is that part of the playing field within, and including the first base and third base lines, from home base to the bottom of the playing field fence and perpendicularly upwards. Home plate, first base and third base and all foul lines are in fair territory.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Umpires shall not make a verbal call on a fair ball, simply a point into fair territory.*
- ⇒ *Note that there are no foreign objects in fair territory, only in foul territory.*

A **FIELDER** is any defensive player.

FIELDER'S CHOICE is the act of a fielder who handles a fair grounder and, instead of throwing it to first base to put out the batter-runner, throws to another base in an attempt to put out a preceding runner. The term is also used by scorers **(a)** to account for the advance of the batter-runner who takes one or more extra bases when the fielder who handles the safe hit attempts to put out a preceding runner; **(b)** to account for the advance of a runner (other than by stolen base or error) while a fielder is attempting to put out another runner; and **(c)** to account for the advance of a runner made solely because of the defensive's team indifference. (Undefended steal).

A **FLY BALL** is a batted ball that goes high in the air in flight

A **FORCE PLAY** is a play in which a runner legally loses the right to occupy a base by reason of the batter becoming a runner. (NOTE: Confusion regarding this play is removed by remembering that frequently the “force” situation is removed during the play. Example: Runner on first, one out, ground ball hit sharply to first baseman, who touches the bag and the batter-runner is out. The force is removed at that moment and runner advancing to second must be tagged. If there had been a runner at second or third, and either of these runners scored before the tag-out at second, the run(s) would count. Had the first baseman thrown to second and the ball had been returned to first the play at second would have been a force-out, making two outs, and the return throw to first would have made the third out. In that case, no run would score.)

INSTRUCTORS COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Another example is: Not a force out. One out. Runner on first and third. Batter flies out. Two out. Runner on third tags up and scores. Runner on first tries to retouch before throw from fielder reaches first baseman, but does not get back in time and is out. Three outs. If, in umpire's judgment, the runner from third touched home before the ball was held at first base, the run counts.*
- ⇒ *A force play exists any time that a runner is forced off of a base due to the batter becoming a runner. Thus, a runner being tagged out running from first to second on a ground ball is a force out.*

A **FORFEITED GAME** is a game declared ended by the umpire-in-chief in favor of the offended team by the score of 6 to 0 [**JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL/SOFTBALL: 7 to 0**], for violation of the rules. [**TEE BALL/CHALLENGER: There shall be no forfeits in the Little League Challenger Division.**]

A **FOUL BALL** is a batted ball that settles on foul territory between home and first base, or between home and third base, or that bounds past first or third base on or over foul territory, or that first falls on foul territory beyond first base or third base, or that while on or over foul territory, touches the person of an umpire or player, or any object foreign to the natural ground.

NOTE (1): A foul fly shall be judged according to the relative position of the ball and the foul line, including the foul pole, and not as to whether the fielder is on foul or fair territory at the time the fielder touches the ball.

NOTE (2): In Tee Ball, the ball is foul if it travels less than 15 feet in fair territory from home plate. The ball is also foul if the batter hits the tee with the bat.

[CHALLENGER: Identical to conventional baseball with two exceptions: (1) the ball is foul if it travels less than 15 feet in fair territory from home plate, and (2) the ball is foul if the batter hits the tee with the bat causing the ball to fall from the tee.]

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Comment: Remember when you call “foul”, you live with that call. You cannot change a foul call after it is made.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *The above situation is correct for a ball on the ground. Once you make a call of “Foul Ball” when the ball is on the ground, it is foul forever. However, if the ball is in the air, it may still be caught for an out and the ball would remain alive and in play.*
- ⇒ *There is nothing in this rule to suggest that the batted ball must travel higher than the batter’s head to be an out. If not a foul tip or a rebound (See **Rule 2.00-Foul Tip**), the ball is a foul ball and can be caught for an out.*
- ⇒ *On a caught fly ball in foul territory, runners may legally tag up and advance.*

FOUL TERRITORY is that part of the playing field outside the first and third base lines extended to the fence and perpendicularly upwards.

A **FOUL TIP** is a batted ball that goes sharp and direct from the bat to the catcher’s hands and is legally caught. It is not a foul tip unless caught and any foul tip that is caught is a strike, and the ball is in play. It is not a catch if it is a rebound, unless the ball has first touched the catcher’s glove or hand. A foul tip can only be caught by the catcher.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Foul tip can only be caught by the catcher. **Play 2-5:** Pitched ball goes sharply from the bat into the catcher’s mask and is then caught by the catcher. **Ruling:** Foul ball. To be declared a foul tip, ball must go directly to the catcher’s glove or hand; it may rebound off the mask or chest and still be a foul tip.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *The ball is alive and in play on a foul tip. Runners may advance as well as being thrown out on a foul tip.*
- ⇒ *A rebound would be a ball batted sharply to the catcher that does not hit the mitt first, but is finally held by the catcher. This would not be a catch, but simply a foul ball, dead ball.*

A **GROUND BALL** is a batted ball that rolls or bounces close to the ground.

The **HOME TEAM** is the team which takes the field first at the start of the game. Adopted schedules will determine which team this will be.

ILLEGAL (or ILLEGALLY) is contrary to these rules.

(MAJOR/MINOR BASEBALL) An **ILLEGAL PITCH** is (1) a pitch delivered to the batter when the pitcher does not have the pivot foot in contact with the pitcher’s plate; (2) a quick return pitch, or any other act meeting the criteria established in Rule 8.05.

(JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL) An **ILLEGAL PITCH** is (1) a pitch delivered to the batter when the pitcher does not have the pivot foot in contact with the pitcher’s plate; (2) a quick return pitch. An illegal pitch with runners on base is a balk.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL

- ⇒ *Please note that an illegal pitch (one of two listed) is a balk with runners on base. The criteria used under Rule 8.05 to call a balk cannot be used to call an illegal pitch when there are no runners on base.*
- ⇒ *The penalty for an illegal pitch with no runners on base is a ball to the batter. With runners on base, do not call a ball on the batter, call a balk and advance the runner(s) one base.*

(SOFTBALL) An **ILLEGAL PITCH** is (1) a pitch delivered to the batter when the pitcher does not have the pivot foot in contact with the pitcher’s plate; (2) when the pitcher delivers the pitch with a foreign substance applied to the ball. Rosin can be applied to the hand; (3) a quick return pitch; (4) a pitch not made in accordance with the pitching rule. **PENALTY:** The pitch shall be called a ball, unless the batter reaches first base safely on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batter, fielder’s choice, or otherwise, and all base runners advance at least one base safely, in which case the play stands and the illegal pitch is nullified.

An **ILLEGALLY BATTED BALL** is one hit by the batter with one or both feet on the ground entirely outside the batter's box.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Play 2-6: Batter hits fair ball while the front of his/her foot is on home plate and his/her heel is on the batter's box line. **Ruling:** Fair ball. Batter is not out. His/her foot is not entirely outside of the batter's box. **Play 2-7:** Batter hits fair or foul ball with his/her foot entirely outside the batter's box. **Ruling:** Batter is declared out. Rule 5.09(d).

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Stepping on home plate when batting the ball is not an out, unless, in the judgment of the plate umpire, the batter's foot is on the ground entirely outside the batter's box when making contact with the ball.*
- ⇒ *The batter is out, regardless whether the ball is batted fair or foul.*
- ⇒ *If the batter is trying to get out of the way of a very wild pitch and the ball hits his/her bat while the batter's foot is outside the box, he/she shall not be out. The umpire should let the play run out.*
- ⇒ *An Illegally Batted Ball is the plate umpire's call. Resist requests to have the base umpire make the call.*

INELIGIBLE PITCHER – Applies to regular season violations of Regulation VI. (See also Rule 4.19.)

INELIGIBLE PLAYER – Applies to regular season violations of regulations regarding league age, residence (as defined by Little League Baseball, Incorporated) and participation on the proper team within the Local League. (See also Rule 4.19.)

INFIELD is that portion of the field in fair territory, which includes areas normally covered by infielders.

An **INFIELDER** is a fielder who occupies a position in the infield.

An **INFIELD FLY** is a fair fly ball (not including a line drive nor an attempted bunt) which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort, when first and second, or first, second and third bases are occupied before two are out. The pitcher, catcher and any outfielder stationed in the infield on the play shall be considered infielders for the purpose of this rule.

When it seems apparent that a batted ball will be an infield fly, the umpire shall immediately declare "Infield Fly" for the benefit of the runners. If the ball is near the baseline, the umpire shall declare "Infield Fly, if Fair."

The ball is alive and runners may advance at the risk of being caught or retouch and advance after the ball is touched, the same as on any fly ball. If the hit becomes a foul ball, it is treated the same as any foul.

NOTE (1): If a declared Infield Fly is allowed to fall untouched to the ground, and bounces foul before passing first or third base, it is a foul ball. If a declared Infield Fly falls untouched to the ground, outside the baseline, and bounces fair before passing first or third base, it is an Infield Fly.

NOTE (2): The Infield Fly Rule does not apply in Tee Ball.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *In judging "ordinary effort" by an infielder, an umpire (any umpire) must evaluate the relative age group of the players, not the individual ability of the respective player. "Ordinary effort" will change from division to division.*
- ⇒ *Whether the ball is an infield fly or not is solely the judgment of the umpire and may not be protested. However, if the umpires forget to call the Infield Fly because of absent-mindedness the situation must be corrected. The defense must not be allowed to get a double play when the Infield Fly should have been called. Make the belated call and get the situation corrected the way the rule was intended.*
- ⇒ *Generally, the Infield Fly is first called by the plate umpire if the infielder is moving in; in cases where the ball is even with the infielder or the infielder is moving back, the base umpire can initiate the call.*
- ⇒ *When one umpire calls "Infield Fly," all umpires working the game call it.*
- ⇒ *There cannot be an Infield Fly on a bunt or a line drive, regardless if the other criteria have been met.*
- ⇒ *When an infield fly is called, runners may advance at their own risk. If on an infield fly rule, the infielder intentionally drops a fair ball, the ball remains in play despite the provisions of Rule 6.05(k). The infield fly rule takes precedence.*

“The Right Call” Casebook -- The infield dirt and the outfield grass do not form a boundary line for infield fly purposes. An outfielder can catch a declared infield fly. **Play 2-8:** Runners on first and second, one out. Batter hits a fly ball that is called for by the left fielder. The left fielder is between the shortstop and third baseman, just one step onto the grass. **Ruling:** Umpire should call "Infield Fly, the batter is out."

IN FLIGHT describes a batted, thrown, or pitched ball, which has not yet touched the ground or some object other than a fielder. If the pitch touches the ground and bounces through the strike zone, without being struck at by the batter, it is a "ball". If such a pitch touches the batter, that batter shall be awarded first base. **JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE** – If the batter swings at such a pitch after two strikes, the ball cannot be caught for the purpose of Rule 6.05(b). If the batter hits such a pitch, the ensuing action shall be the same as if the ball was hit in flight.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- A ball must pass through the strike zone in flight to be a strike. Any pitched ball that touches the ground and bounces through the strike zone is called a ball. A pitched ball that bounces and hits the batter is a dead ball and the batter is awarded 1st base.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *A batted fly ball that is deflected over the fence shall be ruled a home run, since, by definition, it left the playing field “in flight.”*
- ⇒ *In Juniors, Seniors & Big League, a third strike pitch that is “short-hopped” by the catcher is considered to be not caught “in flight”. In cases where the runner would be able to run to first, he/she must be retired to be out.*

IN JEOPARDY is a term indicating that the ball is in play and an offensive player may be put out.

An **INNING** is that portion of a game within which the teams alternate on offense and defense and in which there are three putouts for each team. Each team's time at bat is a half-inning. It will be held that an inning starts the moment the third out is made completing the preceding inning. (**Minor League Only** – A five-run limit is to be imposed, which would complete the half inning.)

[TBALL: The offensive side is retired when three outs are made or when all players on the roster have batted one time.]

INTERFERENCE

(a) Offensive interference is an act by the team at bat which interferes with, obstructs, impedes, hinders or confuses any fielder attempting to make a play. If the umpire declares the batter, batter-runner or a runner out for interference, all other runners shall return to the last base that was, in the judgment of the umpire, legally touched at the time of the interference, unless otherwise provided by these rules.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Interference does not have to be intentional for it to be called.*
- ⇒ *When a fielder “errs” on a play, he/she could still be considered as being in the “act of fielding a ball” if he/she is able to pick up the ball within one step or stride from his/her position. If, however, he/she must move farther than that, he/she would be considered as “chasing an erred ball” and he/she would be liable for a possible obstruction call.*

(b) Defensive interference is the act by a fielder which hinders or prevents a batter from hitting a pitch.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *This is most often committed by the catcher but could be committed by any defensive player.*

(c) Umpire's interference occurs (1) when an umpire hinders, impedes or prevents a catcher's throw attempting to prevent a stolen base, or (2) when a fair ball touches an umpire on fair territory before passing a fielder.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Only the plate umpire may interfere with the catcher and only on a cleanly caught ball or a pitched ball that doesn't cause the catcher to move from his/her position. If the catcher errs on the ball, the umpire will be considered part of the field, and no interference results.*
- ⇒ *A fair batted ball touching a base umpire should only occur during a Juniors, Seniors or Big League Baseball game, since on a sixty-foot diamond, the base umpire will be behind the infielders at the time of the pitch.*

(d) Spectator interference occurs when a spectator reaches out of the stands or goes on the playing field, and touches a live ball.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *This can only occur on or over the playing field, either fair or foul. In or over the stands, it can not be interference.*

(e) On any interference the ball is dead.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- A ball is not always dead on an interference, i.e. catcher’s interference, batter’s interference, plate umpire’s interference. **Play 2-9:** Bat strikes catcher’s glove during the swing, however, the batter still manages to stroke a clean single. **Ruling:** Ignore catcher’s interference because the batter reached first safely. **Note:** If any other runner(s) are on base, they too must advance safely at least one base to ignore interference.

The **LEAGUE** is a group of teams who play each other in a pre-arranged schedule under these rules for the league championship.

(SOFTBALL) LEAPING is an act by the pitcher when both feet become airborne on the initial move and push from the pitcher’s plate. (Illegal Pitch - See **Softball - Rule 8.05**).

LEGAL (or LEGALLY) is in accordance with these rules.

A **LINE DRIVE** is a batted ball that goes sharp and direct from the bat to a fielder without touching the ground.

A **LIVE BALL** is a ball which is in play.

The **MANAGER** is a person appointed by the president to be responsible for the team's actions on the field, and to represent the team in communications with the umpire and the opposing team.

(a) The manager shall always be responsible for the team's conduct, observance of the official rules and deference to the umpires.

(b) If a manager leaves the field, that manager shall designate the coach as a substitute and such substitute manager shall have all the duties, rights and responsibilities of the manager.

[TBALL: Defensive coaches are permitted on the field for instructional purposes. Coaches are not permitted to touch a live ball but they may instruct players.]

[TBALL: Offensive coaches are permitted in the coaching box and at home plate for instruction but they are not permitted to assist base runners.]

[MINOR Baseball & Softball: Option may be adopted to allow Manager and coaches on field.]

OBSTRUCTION is the act of a fielder who, while not in possession of the ball, impedes the progress of any runner. A fake tag is considered obstruction. **NOTE:** Obstruction shall be called on a defensive player who blocks off a base, base line or home plate from a base runner while not in possession of the ball.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Obstruction is the act of: (a) a defensive player or team member which hinders or prevents a batter from striking or hitting a pitched ball; (b) a fielder, while: (1) not in possession of the ball; (2) not in the act of fielding a batted ball, impedes the progress of a base runner or batter-runner who is legally running bases. **Play 2-10:** Batter hits a line drive into right center. Sensing a double, he/she immediately sprints toward 2nd. As he/she rounds first the 1st baseman steps into the base path and collides with the batter-runner. The batter-runner gets himself together and continues to 2nd where he/she is tagged out by a perfect throw from the center fielder. **Ruling:** *Obstruction, delayed dead ball, on the first baseman. Call time and award batter-runner 2nd base.*

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *It is quite simple now for the umpires to rule on obstruction...if the defense does not have the ball and impedes the progress of any runner it shall be called obstruction. It makes no difference if the defense is fielding a thrown ball or waiting for the ball, if the defensive player does not have the ball in his/her possession it is obstruction if they impede the progress of any runner.*

⇒ *“Train wrecks are still going to happen and are not to be considered as obstruction. Example: Throw from the shortstop to the 1st baseman in an attempt to get a batter-runner out pulls the 1st baseman down the line toward home plate and the 1st baseman and the batter-runner collide. This is a train wreck because the defensive player is doing what he/she should be doing (fielding the ball) and the batter-runner is doing what he/she should be doing (running the bases).*

⇒ *Most actions related to obstruction concern who has the right-of-way. The defense has the right to the baseline on a batted ball or when he/she already has the ball in his/her possession. The offense has the right to the baseline in all other occasions, including on a thrown ball.*

⇒ *A “fake tag” is a dangerous play and must not be allowed to continue. In addition to the calling of obstruction, the player and team should be warned. Further instances could result in ejection.*

⇒ *There is a difference between a "decoy" and a "fake tag." A decoy results in confusing the base runner who is not watching his/her base coaches. A fake tag results in the player sliding when he/she doesn't have to slide.*

OFFENSE is the team, or any player of the team, at bat.

OFFICIAL RULES. The rules contained in this book.

OFFICIAL SCORER. See **Rule 10.00** in the "What's the Score" publication.

An **OUT** is one of the three required retirements of an offensive team during its time at bat.

OUTFIELD is that portion of the field in fair territory which is normally covered by outfielders.

An **OUTFIELDER** is a fielder who occupies a position in the outfield, which is the area of the playing field most distant from home plate.

OVERSLIDE (or OVERSLIDING) is the act of an offensive player when the slide to a base, other than when advancing from home to first, is with such momentum that the player loses contact with the base.

A **PENALTY** is the application of these rules following an illegal act.

The **PERSON** of a player or an umpire is any part of the body, clothing or equipment.

A **PITCH** is a ball delivered to the batter by the pitcher.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *All other deliveries of the ball by one player to another are thrown balls.*

A **PITCHER** is the fielder designated to deliver the pitch to the batter.

The Pitcher's **PIVOT FOOT** is that foot which is in contact with the pitcher's plate as the pitch is delivered.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *The pivot foot for a right-handed pitcher would be his/her right foot; left-handed pitcher, left foot.*

"PLAY" is the umpire's order to start the game or to resume action following any dead ball.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Failing to call "Play" can result in considerable confusion when an attempt is made to pick off a runner. The home plate umpire **MUST** make sure to put the ball back into "play" after every dead ball interruption of play.*

⇒ *"Play" is not automatic simply because the pitcher brings the ball back to the mound.*

(CHALLENGER) PROTEST - There shall be no protests in the **Little League Challenger Division**.

A **QUICK RETURN** is a pitch made with obvious intent to catch a batter off balance. It is an illegal pitch.

[BASEBALL: Check Rule 8.05(e)] [SOFTBALL: Check Rule 8.05(c)]

REGULATION GAME. See **Rules 4.10** and **4.11**.

INSTRUCTORS COMMENTS:

⇒ *The home team leads 4-2 after three innings. In the top of the fourth, the Visitors score a run but are retired with the bases loaded. At that point, a cloudburst causes the umpire to call the game. Is this a legal contest? **Ruling:** Yes, the home team wins, 4-3. Home team scores four runs in the bottom of the second inning. In the top of the sixth inning, the Visiting team scores four runs on a grand slam home run. At this point, the game is called on account of rain. **Ruling:** Home team wins the game 4-0. (Umpires - make this call from your car phone as you clear the complex gate).*

A **RETOUCH** is the act of a runner returning to a base as legally required.

A **RUN (or SCORE)** is the score made by an offensive player who advances from batter to runner and touches first, second, third and home bases in that order.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *If no appeal of the runner is made, a runner is considered to have touched a base if he/she moves past the base.*

A **RUNDOWN** is the act of the defense in an attempt to put out a runner between bases.

A **RUNNER** is an offensive player who is advancing toward, or touching, or returning to any base.

"SAFE" is a declaration by the umpire that a runner is entitled to the base for which that runner was trying.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *This should not be confused with the "safe" signal (hands outstretched), which could be indicating decisions by the umpire such as, "No Interference," "No Catch," "No Obstruction," or "No Tag." This signal would not indicate that the base runner is entitled to anything other than continuing as a base runner.*

(BASEBALL) SET POSITION is one of the two legal pitching positions.

(CHALLENGER) SIDE RETIRED - When the offense has batted through the roster, or when a predetermined number of runs have been reached, or when three outs are recorded.

A **STRIKE** is a legal pitch which meets any of these conditions -

- (a) Is struck at by the batter and missed;
- (b) Is not struck at, if any part of the ball passes through any part of the strike zone;
- (c) Is fouled by the batter when there is less than two strikes;
- (d) Is bunted foul (the batter is out and ball is dead, if the batter bunts foul on the third strike);

"The Right Call" Casebook -- Ball bunted foul after the batter has two strikes is a dead ball, batter is out.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Bunting foul on the third strike is an out and the ball is dead, unless the batted ball is caught in the air. If the ball is caught in the air, the ball remains alive and in play.*

- (e) Touches the batter's person as the batter strikes at it (dead ball);

"The Right Call" Casebook -- If, while swinging, the ball strikes the batter, it is a dead ball, strike.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *This further demonstrates that hands are part of the batter's person, not part of the bat.*

- (f) Touches the batter in flight in the strike zone; or

"The Right Call" Casebook -- A batter that leans across the plate is now in the strike zone. If that batter is hit with a pitch that is in the strike zone, it is called dead ball, strike.

- (g) Becomes a foul tip (ball is live and in play).

NOTE: In Tee Ball, the Local League will determine whether or not strikeouts will be permitted

(CHALLENGER) STRIKE OUT - The local league will determine whether or not Strike Outs will be permitted.

The **STRIKE ZONE** is that space over home plate which is between the batter's armpits and the top of the knees when the batter assumes a natural stance. The umpire shall determine the strike zone according to the batter's usual stance when that batter swings at a pitch.

"The Right Call" Casebook -- Strike Zone, over home plate (17") and between the batter's arm pits and top of his/her knees. Beware of the batter who tries to give the impression of a small strike zone by squatting. As the umpire, you must decide his/her normal position when he/she swings. Once you determine his/her normal stance, call that strike zone. **Comment:** "Think Strikes!" Borderline pitches should be called strikes. This encourages the offensive team to become more aggressive while at bat and provides for a more exciting game. This is not unfair to one side or the other since the two teams switch sides each half inning.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Remember that the strike zone always remains over home plate. It doesn't matter where in the box the batter stands.*
 ⇒ *Occasionally, managers will ask the umpire at the pre-game conference, "What's your strike zone?" Resist the urge to be too sarcastic, but the correct response would be, "Exactly as it indicates in the rule book." What you call is your business; however, the explanation should always be the legal strike zone.*

A **SUSPENDED GAME** is a called game which is to be completed at a later date.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Rule 4.10(d) has been modified to allow for games after the first inning has been completed, but before the game has become regulation, to be suspended games.*

A **TAG** is the action of a fielder in touching a base with the body while holding the ball securely and firmly in the hand or glove; or touching a runner with the ball or with the hand or glove holding the ball, while holding the ball securely and firmly in the hand or glove.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Tagging or touching a player could include long hair on the player or a jacket "flapping in the breeze." See Rule 2.00-Touch.*

A **THROW** is the act of propelling the ball with the hand and arm to a given objective and is to be always distinguished from the pitch.

A **TIE GAME** is a regulation game which is called when each team has the same number of runs.

"TIME" is the announcement by the umpire of a legal interruption of play, during which the ball is dead.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Managers and players may ask for "Time" to be called, but only the umpire may call "Time."*

⇒ *Umpires should resist the urge to call "Time" whenever the batter wishes time to get set in the batter's box. Seldom will a pitcher begin his/her delivery while the batter is getting ready. If he/she does, then call "Time".*

⇒ *Holding up one hand is the same as calling "Time." Some umpires incorrectly raise one hand up as if to say "No Pitch." There are only two time periods that we must consider: "Time" indicates that the ball is dead. Otherwise, the ball is alive and in play.*

TOUCH. To touch a player or an umpire is to touch any part of the player or umpire's body, clothing or equipment.

A **TRIPLE PLAY** is a play by the defense in which three offensive players are put out as a result of continuous action, providing there is no error between putouts.

A **WILD PITCH** is one so high, or low, or wide of the plate that it cannot be handled with ordinary effort by the catcher.

(BASEBALL) WIND-UP POSITION is one of the two legal pitching positions.

3.00 GAME PRELIMINARIES

3.01 -- Before the game begins the umpire shall -

- (a) require strict observance of all rules governing team personnel, implements of play and equipment of players;
- (b) be sure that all playing lines (heavy lines on **Diagrams No. 1 and No. 3 [JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL: Diagrams No. 2 and No. 4]**) are marked with non-caustic lime, chalk or other white material easily distinguishable from the ground or grass;
- (c) receive from the league a supply of baseballs which meet Little League specifications and standards; The umpire shall be the sole judge of the balls to be used in the game;
- (d) be assured by the league that additional balls are immediately available for use if required;
- (e) have possession of at least two alternate balls and shall require replenishment of such supply of alternate balls as needed throughout the game. Such alternate balls shall be put in play when -
 - (1) a ball has been batted out of the playing field or into the spectator area;
 - (2) a ball has become discolored or unfit for further use;
 - (3) the pitcher requests such alternate ball.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *A good practice is for the umpire to rotate the balls into the game constantly to insure that the balls are worn at the same rate. This lessens the chance of a "brand new" ball being used at a strategic point in the game.*

3.02 -- No player shall intentionally discolor or damage the ball by rubbing it with soil, rosin, paraffin, licorice, sandpaper, emery paper or other foreign substance.

PENALTY: The umpire shall demand the ball and remove the offender from the game. In case the umpire cannot locate the offender, and if the pitcher delivers such discolored or damaged ball to the batter, the pitcher shall be removed from the game at once.

"The Right Call" Casebook -- No player shall intentionally discolor or damage the ball, etc. **Comment:** Umpire demands the ball and removes that player who is intentionally discoloring or damaging the ball. Key word is intentionally. Rule of thumb for Little League players is to issue a warning to offender and manager before ejection.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Just because umpires in Little League are instructed to warn for this violation does not mean that warnings should be issued for all violations of the rules.*
- ⇒ *This includes rubbing the ball in the dirt or picking up dirt from the mound and rubbing it on the ball.*
- ⇒ *In preparing the ball for play, the umpires should never rub dirt on the ball while on the field. If a new ball comes into play, roll it down the baseline to your partner to rub up. The ball will collect enough dust to remove the shine, thus preparing the ball for play.*

(MINOR/MAJOR/JUNIOR/SENIOR BASEBALL/SOFTBALL)

3.03 -- A player in the starting line-up who has been removed for a substitute may re-enter the game once, in any position in the batting order, provided:

1. his or her substitute has completed one time at bat and;
2. has played defensively for a minimum of six (6) consecutive outs.

[MINOR Programs only -- OPTION: If a league uses 15 to 20 player rosters they may reduce the elements of this rule to one time at bat and three (3) consecutive outs.]

3. pitchers once removed from the mound may not return as a pitcher; (**JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL**) A pitcher remaining in the game, but moving to a different position, can return as a pitcher anytime in the remainder of the game, but only once per game. (**LITTLE LEAGUE/JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE SOFTBALL**) A pitcher remaining in the game, but moving to a different position, can return as a pitcher anytime in the remainder of the game, but only once in the same inning as he/she was removed.
4. only a player in the starting line-up may re-enter the game;
5. a starter, (S1) re-entering the game as a substitute for another starter (S2) must then fulfill all conditions of a substitute (once at bat and six defensive outs) before starter (S2) can re-enter the game.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Umpires are responsible for not allowing a starter to re-enter the game illegally. If a situation exists where a starter has re-entered too soon and it is not discovered until play has resumed, we have a possible protest. If discovered then, the re-entering starter is removed (since he/she re-entered improperly), the substitute has already left the game (albeit improperly) and the re-entering starter cannot return again in the game (since he/she already re-entered, improperly). The manager has "burned" two players when the umpire could have stopped it.*
- ⇒ *There are times when a starter cannot re-enter. If the player who substitutes for a starter fails to complete the necessary requirements, the starter may not return.*
- ⇒ *If a game is suspended and resumed later, managers must be aware that the resumption of a suspended game is considered the same game. A starting player removed (whether it's for an injury or otherwise) before the suspension may re-enter when the game is resumed. Also, if a player is not in attendance or not on the team before the suspension, the player may enter during the resumption if he/she is then in attendance.*

NOTE: (1) When two or more substitute players of the defensive team enter the game at the same time, the manager shall, immediately before they take their positions as fielders, designate to the umpire-in-chief such player's positions in the teams batting order and the umpire-in-chief shall notify the official scorer. The umpire-in-chief shall have authority to designate the substitute's places in the batting order, if this information is not immediately provided.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Umpires are responsible for the lineup, and should insure that players are entered into the proper position.*

NOTE: (2) If during a game either team is unable to place nine (9) players on the field due to illness, injury or ejection, the opposing manager shall select a player previously used in the line up to reenter the game, but only if use of all eligible players has exhausted the roster. A player ejected from the game is not eligible for re-entry.

"The Right Call" Casebook -- Play 3-1: Abel is the home team's lead-off hitter. He/she bats in the bottom of the first; plays defensively the first and second inning. In the top of the third, Abel is replaced by Irwin who also bats and plays defense in the third and fourth innings. The home team manager re-enters Abel into the number five spot in the batting order. **Ruling:** Legal. *Both players may be in the line-up at the same time because the requirements of 3.03 have been met.* **Comment:** *Ensuring you abide by 3.03 in a called game, any player on a team's roster is eligible to participate when the game is resumed. This includes players who are absent, injured, or added to a roster after the game is called and before it is resumed.*

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *If a player, other than the pitcher, is substituted for an injured player that substitute shall be allowed five warm-up throws. (See Rule 8.03 for pitchers.)*

(BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL/SOFTBALL)**3.03 – Big League**

- (a) Any player in the starting lineup, including the designated hitter, who has been removed for a substitute may re-enter the game once, provided he/she occupies the same batting position as he/she or she did in the starting lineup.
- (b) A pitcher, withdrawn for a substitute, may not re-enter the game as a pitcher. (**EXCEPTION:** A pitcher may re-enter the game as a pitcher, if withdrawn for a pinch-hitter or pinch-runner, and then returned to the game at the beginning of the next half inning.)
- (c) (**BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL**) A pitcher remaining in the game, but moving to a different position, can return as a pitcher anytime in the remainder of the game, but only once per game. (**BIG LEAGUE SOFTBALL**) A pitcher remaining in the game, but moving to a different position, can return as a pitcher anytime in the remainder of the game, but only once in the same inning as he/she was removed.

Big League Designated Hitter Rule:

1. At the beginning of a game, each manager may list on the lineup card a designated hitter to bat throughout the game for a designated player in the regular lineup.
2. Only a player not in the regular batting order may be used as a designated hitter.
3. In the event a manager decides to use the designated hitter as a defensive player, the player must then remain in the same position in the batting order, unless otherwise replaced by a substitute. If so, the player for whom the designated hitter was batting must be removed from the game. Such player may re-enter the game once, but only in the batting order position of the former designated hitter, who must be removed.
4. This rule does not change the regular rule governing the use of pinch-hitters.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ The designated hitter and the player for whom he/she is batting occupy the same position in the batting order. If the DH is entered on defense, the player who was being hit for will be removed from the game. The two players may not occupy different positions in the batting order unless, as a result of injury or illness, the team does not have nine players remaining.

(CHALLENGER) 3.03 through 3.08 do not apply.

3.04 -- A player whose name is on the teams batting order may not become a substitute runner for another member of the team. "Courtesy runner" not permitted. (See **Rule 7.14**)

INSTRUCTORS COMMENTS:

⇒ This rule is intended to eliminate the practice of using so-called courtesy runners. No player in the game shall be permitted to act as a courtesy runner for a teammate. No player who has been in the game and has been taken out for a substitute shall return as a courtesy runner. Any player not in the lineup, if used as a runner, shall be considered as a special pinch runner. (See **Rule 7.14**) Otherwise, treat it as a substitution and the previous batter must stay on the bench until the sub plays six defensive outs and bats once.

3.05 --

- (a) The pitcher named in the batting order handed to the umpire-in-chief, as provided in **Rules 4.01 (a)** and **4.01 (b)** shall pitch to the first batter or any substitute batter until such batter or any substitute batter is put out or reaches first base, unless the pitcher sustains injury or illness, which in the judgment of the umpire-in-chief, incapacitates the pitcher from further play as pitcher.
- (b) If the pitcher is replaced, the substitute pitcher shall pitch to the batter then at bat, or any substitute batter, until such batter is put out or reaches first base, or until the offensive team is put out, unless the substitute pitcher sustains injury or illness, which in the judgment of the umpire-in-chief, incapacitates the pitcher from further play as a pitcher.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Starting pitchers and relief (substitute) pitchers must pitch to at least one batter or retire the side. **Play 3-2:** Line-ups are given to the umpire-in-chief at home plate. Visiting team scores ten runs in the top half of the first inning. Visiting team manager, sensing an easy victory, decides to pitch his/her second best pitcher instead of his/her ace. **Ruling:** *His/her ace must pitch to at least one batter. As umpire-in-chief, do not permit the manager to make the change until the first batter is put out, reaches first base, or the side is retired.*

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ There are circumstances such as **Rule 6.06(b)**, **Softball 7.13**, and a pickoff play in **Juniors, Seniors and Big League Baseball**, where an entering relief pitcher may retire the side without pitching to a batter and not be charged with an inning of pitching. **SOFTBALL:** The pitcher in this case would be charged with an inning pitched and he/she will be recorded as one of the five pitchers used in the game.
- ⇒ Umpires should insure that when receiving the lineup prior to the game that two pitchers are not listed on a team's lineup. If this happens, get it corrected immediately, before it becomes a problem.

3.06 -- The manager shall immediately notify the umpire-in-chief of any substitution and shall state to the umpire-in-chief the substitute's place in the batting order.

3.07 -- The umpire-in-chief after having been notified, shall immediately announce, or cause to be announced, each substitution.

3.08 --

(a) If no announcement of a substitution is made, the substitute shall be considered to have entered the game when -

(1) if a pitcher, the substitute takes position on the pitcher's plate and throws one warm-up pitch to the catcher;

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ This provides, of course, that the pitcher is an eligible pitcher. If not, do not allow him/her to pitch.
- ⇒ This also includes if the player throws a pitch to any other player serving in the capacity of a warm-up catcher.

(2) if a batter, the substitute takes position in the batter's box;

(3) if a fielder, the substitute reaches the position usually occupied by the fielder being replaced and play commences;

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *This would allow for a player to warm-up the pitcher in between innings without entering the game. Please note that the pitcher is the only defensive player who has an additional restriction (warm-up pitch).*

(4) if a runner, the substitute takes the place of the runner being replaced.

(b) Any play made by, or on, any of the above mentioned unannounced substitutes shall be legal.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Comment: If you, the umpire, notice a new batter coming up to the plate to hit, ask him/her if they are a substitute for someone. Be aware of what's going on. This will keep you out of ticklish situations and away from un-called for delays.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *If the umpire notices that the substitutions are not legal before they assume the position on the field, the umpire should inform the manager and prevent the substitution from taking place.*
- ⇒ *If a substitute batter enters the batter's box and is not announced, this is considered an “unannounced substitution”, not batting out of turn. If announcers are used, the announcer should only announce the batter who is physically standing in the batter's box, not the player who is due up to bat.*

3.09 -- Players, managers and coaches of the participating teams shall not address, or mingle with spectators, nor sit in the stands during a game in which they are engaged. Managers or coaches must not warm up a pitcher at home plate or in the bullpen or elsewhere at any time. They may, however, stand by to observe a pitcher during warm-up in the bullpen.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Ruling: The time-honored practice of managers or coaches hitting infield and/or outfield practice is allowable.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *The manager or coach may pitch batting practice as well. However, the responsibility of warming up pitchers is only that of one of the players. This includes before and during games.*
- ⇒ *Players, managers and coaches should not be allowed to carry on a conversation with anyone outside the limits of the playing field.*

3.10 --

- (a) The managers of both teams shall agree on the fitness of the playing field before the game starts. In the event that the two managers cannot agree, the president or a duly delegated representative shall make the determination.
- (b) The umpire-in-chief shall be the sole judge as to whether and when play shall be suspended during a game because of unsuitable weather conditions or the unfit condition of the playing field; as to whether and when play shall be resumed after such suspension; and as to whether and when a game shall be terminated after such suspension. Said umpire shall not call a game until at least thirty minutes after play has been suspended. The umpire may continue suspension as long as there is any chance to resume play.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Comment: After the game starts, the umpire-in-chief will decide when to suspend, when to resume, or when to terminate the game.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Prior to the game, the duly delegated representative of the president will probably be either the league's Safety Officer or, if necessary, the game umpire.*
- ⇒ *After the umpires assume responsibility for the game, no one, including the president, the Safety Officer, or either manager, may terminate play.*
- ⇒ *The thirty-minute wait is not necessary if, in the umpire's judgment, there is no chance to resume play.*
- ⇒ *In determining whether to continue, it's best for the umpire to call a game too early, rather than too late. See Rule 4.10 and 4.11 for further information. If you do not feel you can complete an inning, it's best not to start it.*

3.11 -- Double Headers

Little League (Majors) Division: A team may play one (1) doubleheader in a calendar week. No team shall play three games in a day. (Except under condition of **Rule 4.12.**)

Minor League and Tee Ball: No team shall be scheduled to play two games in one day. (See **Rule 4.12.**)

[JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL/SOFTBALL: Double-headers are permitted.]

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Minors: two teams may complete a suspended game, and then play the regularly scheduled game.*
- ⇒ *Double-headers may be played (in divisions it's allowed) between the same two teams or different teams. One team may play two games, even if the games are against two different opponents.*

3.12 -- When the umpire suspends play, "Time" shall be called. At the umpire's call of "Play" the suspension is lifted and play resumes. Between the call of "Time" and the call of "Play" the ball is dead.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *If there is not a good reason for "Time" to be called, umpires should not call "Time," especially if the request is made by the defense in an effort to stop runners from advancing.*

3.13 -- The local league will establish ground rules to be followed by all the teams in the league.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Comment: Once ground rules are established, the league should put them in writing. This will alleviate most ground rule type problems.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Ground rules concern the physical layout of the facility (what is in play and what is out of play) and should not be confused with the **Playing Rules**. Leagues are not allowed to change the **Playing Rules** unless options are specifically listed in these rules (**Rule 4.04, 4.10(e), Minor Regulation VIII**).*

3.14 -- Members of the offensive team shall carry all gloves and other equipment off the field and to the dugout while their team is at bat. No equipment shall be left lying on the field, either in fair or foul territory.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Frequently, this becomes a problem in the Junior, Senior and Big League level, near the on-deck position. Unnecessary equipment on the field can result in an interference call by the umpire, leading to either an award of bases or an out call, depending on the team at fault.*

3.15 -- No person shall be allowed on the playing field during a game except uniformed players, managers and coaches, umpires and news photographers authorized by the league. In case of intentional interference with play by any person authorized to be on the playing field, the ball is dead at the moment of the interference and no runners on base may advance. Should an overthrown ball accidentally touch an authorized person, it will not be considered interference and the ball will remain live.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *News photographers authorized to be on the playing field should not be setting any equipment on the field. A ball in play that gets caught up in any equipment must be declared dead.*

3.16 -- When there is spectator interference with any thrown or batted ball, the ball shall be dead at the moment of the interference and the umpire shall impose such penalties as in the umpire's opinion will nullify the act of interference.

APPROVED RULING: If spectator interference clearly prevents a fielder from catching a fly ball, the umpire shall declare the batter out.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Comment: If a player reaches into dead ball area and a spectator interferes, a call of interference is not made. If a spectator reaches into a live ball area and interferes, a call of interference is made.

INSTRUCTORS COMMENTS:

⇒ *There is a difference between a ball which has been thrown or batted into the stands, touching a spectator thereby being out of play even though it rebounds onto the field and a spectator going onto the field or reaching over, under or through a barrier and touching a ball in play or touching or otherwise interfering with a player. In the latter case it is clearly intentional and shall be dealt with as intentional interference as in Rule 3.15. Batter and runners shall be placed where in the umpire's judgment they would have been had the interference not occurred.*

⇒ *No interference shall be allowed when a fielder reaches over a fence, railing, and rope or into a stand to catch a ball. He/she does so at his/her risk. However, should a spectator reach out on the playing field side of such fence, railing or rope, and plainly prevent the fielder from catching the ball, then the batter should be called out for the spectator's interference. **Example:** Runner on third base, one out and a batter hits a fly ball deep to the outfield (fair or foul). Spectator clearly interferes with the outfielder attempting to catch the fly ball. Umpire calls the batter out for spectator interference. Ball is dead at the time of the call. Umpire decides that because of the distance the ball was hit, the runner on third base would have scored after the catch if the fielder had caught the ball which was interfered with; therefore, the runner is permitted to score. This might not be the case if such fly ball was interfered with a short distance from home plate.*

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *The dugout area is treated differently than the spectator's area. A player may reach into the dugout area and, if someone causes him/her to miss the ball, interference may be called.*

3.17 -- Players and substitutes shall sit on their team's bench or in the dugout unless participating in the game or preparing to enter the game.

No one except eligible players in uniform, manager and not more than two rostered coaches shall occupy the bench or dugout. When the batters or base runners are retired, they must return to the bench or dugout at once. Batboys and/or batgirls are not permitted. The use of electronic equipment during a game is restricted. No team shall use electronic equipment, including walkie-talkies, cellular telephones, etc for any communication with on-field personnel, including those in the dugout, bullpen, or field.

NOTE: In Tee Ball and non-competitive Minor Leagues, all players on the roster may be given a defensive position. Only one player may occupy the catcher's position in Tee Ball.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *In Tee Ball and non-competitive Minor Leagues, a league may elect to use the entire roster while a team is on offense or defense. Also, if less than 9 are at the game site they may play the game with less than 9 as well.*
- ⇒ *Injured players, managers and coaches are not allowed on the playing field if they may present a possible danger to other players or themselves.*
- ⇒ *Injured players may be permitted in the dugout. Uniform requirements of an injured player would be at the most a team uniform shirt and hat.*

3.18 -- The local league shall provide proper protection sufficient to preserve order and to prevent spectators from entering the field. Either team may refuse to play until the field is cleared.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Comment: Managers are not responsible for the actions of the spectators. You cannot forfeit a game because of spectator actions.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *The responsibility for actions of the spectator's falls to the league's Board of Directors, never the manager.*
- ⇒ *The umpire may suspend play until the actions are corrected (see rule 9.01(f)), but never forfeit or threaten to forfeit a game.*
- ⇒ *Leagues may not write a rule that shifts responsibility to anyone other than the board.*

4.00 -- STARTING THE GAME

4.01 -- The umpires shall proceed directly to home plate where they shall be met by the managers of the opposing teams, just preceding the established time to begin the game. In sequence -

- (a) the home team manager shall give the batting order in duplicate to the umpire-in-chief;
- (b) next, the visiting manager shall give the batting order in duplicate to the umpire-in-chief;
- (c) the umpire-in-chief shall make certain that the original and duplicate copies are the same, then provide a copy of each batting order to the opposing manager. The original copy retained by the umpire-in-chief shall be the official batting order.
- (d) as soon as the home team's batting order is handed to the umpire-in-chief, the umpires are in charge of the playing field and from that moment have sole authority to determine when a game shall be called, halted or resumed on account of weather or the conditions of the playing field.

[TBALL: Batting orders need not be exchanged between managers prior to the start of the game.]

NOTE: Rostered players who arrive at the game site after a game begins may be inserted in the lineup, if the manager so chooses. This applies even when a suspended game is resumed at a later date.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *At the pre-game conference only the two managers and the umpires should be present to discuss the ground rules and lineups. Leave the other coaches in the dugout.*
- ⇒ *Don't have the home team take the field until the pre-game conference has concluded and the manager has returned to the dugout.*
- ⇒ *The official lineups are the responsibility of the Plate Umpire, no one else.*
- ⇒ *Even in situations where the managers have presented a lineup to the Scorekeeper well in advance of game time, the lineups do not become official until the umpire receives it just prior to the start of the game.*
- ⇒ *Obvious errors in the batting order, which are noticed by the umpire-in-chief before he/she calls "Play" for the start of the game, should be called to the attention of the manager of the team in error, so the correction can be made before the game starts. Teams should not be "trapped" later by some mistake that obviously was inadvertent and which can be corrected before the game starts.*
- ⇒ *Changes made with the umpire prior to the game are simply changes in the starting lineup, not substitutions. Thus, when a player, who is scheduled to be a starter, is injured during infield warm-up, he/she may be replaced in the starting lineup. If he/she enters the game later, he/she is a substitute, not a re-entering starter.*

4.02 -- The players of the home team shall take their defensive positions, the first batter of the visiting team shall take a position in the batter's box, the umpire shall call "Play" and the game shall start.

4.03 -- When the ball is put in play at the start of, or during a game, all fielders other than the catcher shall be in fair territory.

- (a) The catcher shall be stationed directly back of the plate. The catcher may leave that position at any time to catch a pitch or make a play except that when the batter is being given an intentional base on balls, the catcher must stand with both feet within the lines of the catchers box until the ball leaves the pitcher's hand.

PENALTY (MINOR/MAJOR BASEBALL): Illegal pitch - ball called on the batter (with a runner or runners on base - see Rule 8.05).

PENALTY (JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL): A balk with a runner or runners on base – see Rule 8.05).

PENALTY (SOFTBALL): No pitch.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Comment: Make sure the catcher is out of the box when you call a balk (or illegal pitch). Don't guess. If a shadow of a doubt exists, give the catcher the benefit of the doubt.

- (b) The pitcher, while in the act of delivering the ball to the batter, shall take the legal position.

(c) Except the pitcher and the catcher, any fielder may be stationed anywhere in fair territory.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *When holding a runner on first base, especially in Juniors, Seniors and Big League Baseball, the first baseman will sometimes have his/her left foot entirely in foul territory. Do not allow this to occur. Both feet must be in fair territory. Penalty for having at least one foot on the ground entirely in foul territory is not a balk. Simply warn the player to move into fair territory and that further occurrence can result in his/her ejection from the game.*

4.04 -- The batting order shall be followed throughout the game unless a player is substituted for another. Substitutes must take the place of the replaced player's position in the batting order except as covered in **Rule 3.03**. A league may adopt a policy of a continuous batting order that will include all players on the team roster present for the game batting in order. If this option is adopted, each player would be required to bat in his/her respective spot in the batting order. However, a player may be entered and/or re-entered defensively into the game anytime provided he/she meets the requirements of mandatory play. **NOTE 1:** The continuous batting order is mandatory for all Tee Ball and Minor League Divisions. **NOTE 2:** For the Tee Ball and Minor League Division (and when the continuous batting order is adopted for other divisions) when a child is injured, becomes ill or must leave the game site after the start of the game the team will skip over him/her when his/her time at bat comes up without penalty. If the injured, ill or absent player returns they are merely inserted into their original spot in the batting order and the game continues. Also, if a child arrives late to a game site and if the manager chooses to enter him/her in the lineup (See Rule 4.01 NOTE) they would be added to the end of the current lineup.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *When utilizing the Continuous Batting Order (CBO) and a player gets injured, becomes ill or must leave the game site after getting on base the policy should be to use the last out of the previous inning as a runner for that player.*

[MINOR Baseball & Softball: A local league may adopt a format using the complete roster as the batting order. The side may be retired if three (3) outs occur or when a team bats through their roster.]

[CHALLENGER: The batting order shall be followed throughout the game.]

4.05 -- The offensive team shall station two coaches on the field during its time at bat, one near first base and one near third base. The coaches shall not leave their respective dugouts until the pitcher has completed his/her preparatory pitches to the catcher. Base coaches shall -

(1) be eligible players in the uniform of their team; or an adult manager and/or coach. Both base coaches may be adult managers or coaches.

Both coaches may be adult managers and/or coaches in the coaching boxes providing the requirements of having at least one adult in the dugout are met. See Rule 4.05(2).

(2) be an adult manager or coach, only if there is at least one other adult manager or coach in the dugout.

(3) remain within the base coaches' boxes at all times, except as provided in Rule 7.11;

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Base coaches must vacate any space that is needed by the defensive fielder who is attempting to make a play on a batted or thrown ball (rule 7.11).*

(4) talk to members of their own team only.

An offending coach shall be removed from the coach's box.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Ruling: Once an inning starts, coaches are locked into the box they choose. In other words, don't allow that adult to continually change from first to third and back again.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *It is common practice for a coach who has a play at his/her base to leave the coach's box to signal the player to slide, advance or return to a base. This may be allowed if the coach does not interfere with the play in any manner.*

⇒ *The rules provide that there must be base coaches. This is not an option. Do not put the ball in play until both coaches are in their respective coaches boxes.*

- ⇒ *In cases where there is only one adult present with a team, by rule that one adult may **NOT** leave the dugout to coach in the coaches boxes.*
- ⇒ *Interference by a coach does not have to be intentional to be called by the umpire.*

4.06 -- No manager, coach or player, shall at any time, whether from the bench or the playing field or elsewhere -

(1) incite, or try to incite, by word or sign, a demonstration by spectators;

INSTRUCTORS COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *This includes firing up the crowd against the umpires or opposing team. The penalty is ejection from the game.*

(2) use language which will in any manner refer to or reflect upon opposing players, manager, coach, an umpire or spectators;

INSTRUCTORS COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Language from anyone that reflects badly upon opposing players, manager, coach, an umpire or spectators. Penalty is ejection.*
- ⇒ *Most teams, particularly infielders, chatter ("Hey, batter, batter") when the ball is being delivered. This is usually acceptable, and has not caused any problems in local leagues. Do not, however, allow any player, especially the catcher, to yell "Swing" at the batter when the ball is being delivered.*
- ⇒ *Umpires should be alert to a manager or coaches' action toward players of his/her own team as well. If the behavior warrants the adult's removal, do so.*

(MINOR/MAJOR BASEBALL) **(3)** in the umpire's judgment any member of the offensive team makes any move calculated to cause the pitcher to commit an illegal pitch;

(JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL) **(3)** in the umpire's judgment any member of the offensive team makes any move calculated to cause the pitcher to commit a balk;

First warn the player and/or manager. If continued, remove the player and/or manager from the game or bench. If such action causes a balk, it shall be nullified.

"The Right Call" Casebook -- Comment: Stop this maneuver immediately as it will cause you a lot of heartburn.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *This could involve many acts, such as the batter stepping out of box or raising his/her hand toward the pitcher, the base coach yelling "Go" or "Balk", the base runner yelling, or the manager yelling "Time" from the dugout.*
- ⇒ *The base runner clapping his/her hands or kicking the dirt is normally not a problem and should be ignored.*

(4) no fielder shall take a position in the batter's line of vision, with deliberate intent to distract the batter. The offender shall be removed from the game.

"The Right Call" Casebook -- Example: First baseman or third baseman crowding a batter in an obvious bunt situation. Another example would be a shortstop or second baseman jumping up and down and waving their arms during the pitch.

4.07 -- When a manager, coach or player is ejected from a game, they shall leave the field immediately and take no further part in that game. They may not sit in the stands and may not be recalled. A manager or coach ejected from a game must not be present at the game site for the remainder of that game. Any manager, coach or player ejected from a game is suspended for his or her team's next physically played game and may not be in attendance at the game site from which they are suspended.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *In Little League programs, if the player will not cause a disturbance for the remainder of the game, it's acceptable, and advisable, to leave him/her in the dugout. At least he/she will be supervised there. However, the player will take no further part in the game, including serving as a base coach or warming up other players.*

⇒ *A manager or coach ejected from the game will leave the area completely and immediately. Should he/she fail to do so, the game may be suspended until compliance occurs. Furthermore, managers, coaches and players that are ejected may not attend the next game the team physically plays, even as a spectator. Ensure that a report is sent to the League's UIC and the President outlining exactly what caused the ejection.*

4.08 -- When the occupants of a player's bench show violent disapproval of an umpire's decision, the umpire shall first give warning that such disapproval shall cease. If such action continues -

PENALTY: The umpire shall order the offender out of the game and away from the spectator's area. If the umpire is unable to detect the offender or offenders, the bench may be cleared of all players. The manager of the offending team shall have the privilege of recalling to the playing field only those players needed for substitution in the game.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *If you cannot determine who is causing the disturbance, after warning, remove the manager. He/she is responsible for his/her team's actions.*

4.09 -- HOW A TEAM SCORES

(a) One run shall be scored each time a runner legally advances to and touches first, second, third and home base before three players are put out to end the inning.

EXCEPTION: A run is not scored if the runner advances to home base during a play in which the third out is made (1) by the batter-runner before touching first base; (2) by any runner being forced out; or (3) by a preceding runner who is declared out because that runner failed to touch one of the bases (appeal play).

APPROVED RULING: One out, Jones on third, Smith on first and Brown flies out to right field for the second out. Jones tags up and scores after the catch. Smith attempted to return to first but the right fielder's throw beat "Smith" to the base for the third out. But Jones scored before the throw to catch Smith reached first base. Hence, Jones' run counts. It was not a force play.

"The Right Call" Casebook -- Play 4-1: One out...runners on first and second. Batter smashes a double to left field. Runner from second scores but runner from first is thrown out at the plate. The batter advances to second safely BUT is declared out on appeal for missing first base. Does the run score??? **Ruling:** No! The runner crossed the plate on a play in which the batter-runner made the third out before he/she touched first base.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Numerous situations can develop that will nullify runs. The umpire should remember the basic elements of this rule and particularly the three exceptions. Generally, any run that scores during a play in which the third out is made by one of the three exceptions will not count.*

(b) When the winning run is scored in the last half inning of a regulation game, or in the last half of an extra inning, as a result of a base on balls, hit batter or any other play with the bases full which forces the runners to advance, the umpire shall not declare the game ended until the runner forced to advance from third has touched home base and the batter-runner has touched first base.

"The Right Call" Casebook -- Comment: When the winning run is forced in, it is important for the umpire to be aware of each runner's legal obligation, including the batter-runner. (1) If the winning run is forced in as the result of a batted ball, all runners including the batter-runner are obligated to touch their next bases. The BR must advance to and touch 1st base, and any other runner forced must advance to and touch his/her next base. If any such forced runner fails to do so, a force out appeal play is in order; and if it is sustained for the third out, no run shall count since the third out was, in effect, a force out. If this appeal force out is not the third out, the runner shall be declared out but the winning run scores. (2) If the winning run is forced in as the result of an award (e.g. base on balls, hit batsman, catcher interference), the runner from third is required to advance to and touch home and the batter-runner is required to advance to and touch first base before the game is over. The other runners on base are not required to touch their next bases when the winning run is forced in as the result of an award.

4.10 --

(a) A regulation game consists of six **[JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL/SOFTBALL: seven]** innings, unless extended because of a tie score, or shortened (1) because the home team needs none of its half of the sixth inning or only a fraction of it; or (2) because the umpire calls the game.

(b) If the score is tied after six [JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL/SOFTBALL: seven] complete innings, play shall continue until (1) the visiting team has scored more total runs than the home team at the end of a completed inning; or (2) the home team scores the winning run in an uncompleted inning.

(c) If the game is called, it is a regulation game -

- (1) if four [JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL/SOFTBALL: five] innings have been completed;
- (2) if the home team has scored more runs in three and a half innings [JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL/SOFTBALL: four and a half innings] than the visiting team has scored in four [JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL/SOFTBALL: five] completed half-innings;
- (3) if the home team scores one or more runs in its half of the fourth [JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL/SOFTBALL: fifth] inning to tie the score.

(d) If a game is called before it has become a regulation game, but after one (1) or more innings have been played, it shall be resumed exactly where it left off. **NOTE:** All records, including pitching, shall be counted.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *This could result in many more continued games. Umpires should review the Tie Game procedures with regards to lineups, substitutions and pitching eligibility when the game is resumed.*

(e) If after four (4) innings [JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL/SOFTBALL: five (5) innings], three and one-half innings [JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL/SOFTBALL: four and one-half innings] if the home team is ahead, one team has a lead of ten (10) runs or more, the manager of the team with the least runs shall concede the victory to the opponent.

NOTE (1): If the visiting team has a lead of ten (10) runs or more, the home team must bat in its half of the inning. **(2):** The Local League may adopt the option of not utilizing this rule.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *This rule is not an option for either manager.*

⇒ *Please remember that the game must complete enough innings to be considered a regulation game.*

⇒ *The home team and visiting team are treated differently. If the visiting team scores enough runs to take a 10-run lead, the game continues until the home team has completed an equal number of innings; if the home team takes a 10-run lead, after it has become a regulation game, the game must stop immediately.*

[MINOR Baseball & Softball: A local league may impose a time limit on Minor League games regardless of the number of innings played.]

(f) **Tee Ball:** The local league may determine appropriate game length but shall not exceed 6 innings. It is recommended that Tee Ball games be 4 innings or 1-1/2 hour time limit.]

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Play 4-2: The home team leads 4-2 after three innings. In the top of the fourth, the Visitors score a run but are retired with the bases loaded. At that point, a cloudburst causes the umpire to call the game. Is this a legal contest? **Ruling:** Yes, the home team wins, 4-3. **Play 4-3:** Home team scores four runs in the bottom of the second inning. In the top of the sixth inning, the Visiting team scores four runs on a grand slam home run. At this point, the game is called on account of rain. **Ruling:** Home team wins the game 4-0. (Umpires - make this call from your car phone as you clear the complex gate).

4.11 -- The score of a regulation game is the total number of runs scored by each team at the moment the game ends.

- (a) The game ends when the visiting team completes its half of the sixth inning [JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL/SOFTBALL: seventh inning] if the home team is ahead.
- (b) The game ends when the sixth inning [JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL/SOFTBALL: seventh inning] is completed, if the visiting team is ahead.

- (c) If the home team scores the winning run in its half of the sixth inning [**JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL/SOFTBALL: seventh inning**] (or in its half of an extra inning after a tie), the game ends immediately when the winning run is scored.

NOTE: Once a game becomes regulation and it is called with the home team taking the lead in an incomplete inning, the game ends with the home team the winner.

EXCEPTION: If the last batter in a game hits a home run out of the playing field, the batter-runners on base are permitted to score, in accordance with the base running rules, and the game ends when the batter-runner touches home plate.

APPROVED RULING: The batter hits a home run out of the playing field to win the game in the last half of the sixth [**JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL/SOFTBALL: seventh**] or an extra inning, but is called out for passing a preceding runner. The game ends immediately when the winning run is scored.

- (d) A called game ends at the moment the umpire terminates play.

EXCEPTION: If the game is called during an uncompleted inning, the game ends at the end of the last previous completed innings in each of the following situations:

- (1) The visiting team scores one or more runs to tie the score in the uncompleted inning, and the home team does not score in the uncompleted inning.
- (2) The visiting team scores one or more runs to take the lead in the uncompleted inning, and the home team does not tie the score or retake the lead in the uncompleted inning.

- (e) A regulation game that is tied after four [**JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL/SOFTBALL- five**] or more completed innings and halted by the umpire, shall be resumed from the exact point that play was halted. The game shall continue in accordance with **Rule 4.10 (a)** and **4.10 (b)**.

NOTE: When a TIE game is halted, the pitcher of record may continue pitching in the same game on any subsequent date provided said pitcher has observed the required days of rest for his/her particular age group. For scorekeeping purposes, it shall be considered the same game, and all batting, fielding and pitching records will count. (**LITTLE LEAGUE/JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE SOFTBALL**)

NOTE: When the TIE game is halted, the pitcher of record may continue pitching in the same game on any subsequent date provided said pitcher has observed the required days of rest and has pitching eligibility in the calendar week in which the game is resumed. For scorekeeping purposes, it shall be considered the same game, and all batting, fielding and pitching records will count.

EXAMPLE:

Rule 4.11

	1	2	3	4	5	6
VISITORS	0	0	0	4	1	
HOME	0	0	0	5		

Game called in top of 5th inning on account of rain. Score reverts to last completed inning (4th) and the home team is the winner 5 to 4.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *If the game is tied at the end of a completed inning, and the home team does not take the lead in an incomplete inning; the game is suspended, since you cannot revert to a tie game.*
- ⇒ *If the home team is ahead at the end of a completed inning, and the visiting team takes the lead and the home team does not tie or go ahead in an incomplete inning, the game reverts to the previous inning, home team wins.*
- ⇒ *Thus, the home team is the only team that can benefit by reverting to a previous inning.*
- ⇒ *As mentioned in **Rule 3.10**, the umpire should be careful not to start an inning unless he/she feels that he/she has a reasonable expectation to complete the entire inning.*

4.12 -- TIE games halted due to weather, curfew or light failure shall be resumed from the exact point at which they were halted in the original game. It can be completed preceding the next scheduled game between the same teams. A player may not pitch in more than one game in a day. (Exception: In the Big League Division, a player may be used as a pitcher in up to two (2) games in a day. See Regulation VI.)**[MINOR/MAJOR SOFTBALL: eighteen (18)] [JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE SOFTBALL: thirty (30) innings per week limitation provided in Regulation VI (b).]** The lineup and batting order of both teams shall be the same as the lineup and batting order at the moment the game was halted, subject to the rules governing substitution. Any player may be replaced by a player who was not in the game prior to halting the original game. No player once removed before the game was halted may be returned to the lineup unless covered by Rule 3.03. NOTE: When a Tie game is halted, the pitcher of record may continue pitching in the same game on any subsequent date provided said pitcher has observed the required days of rest for his/her particular age group. For scorekeeping purposes, it shall be considered the same game, and all batting, fielding and pitching records will count.

EXAMPLE:

Rule 4.12

	1	2	3	4	5	6
VISITORS	0	0	0	0	4	5
HOME	0	0	0	0	4	

Game called in the top of the 6th inning, visiting team batting with two out, no base runners - this is a tie game. Resume the game in the top of the 6th, visiting team at bat, two out.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Play 4-4: 5-5 tie after seven complete innings, game halted because of darkness. Little Bobby missed the full seven innings because of family obligations. Game is resumed two weeks later and little Bobby is present for the resumption. Can he/she play? **Ruling:** *An eligible player is any player in uniform whose name appears on the team roster. Yes, he/she may play.*

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *The pitcher of record may continue subject to the pitch count limitations provided in Regulation VI and provided for his/her particular age group.*

4.13 -- Double Headers

Little League (Majors) Division: A team may play one (1) doubleheader in a calendar week. No team shall play three games in a day. (Exception under condition of Rule 4.12.)

Minor League and Tee Ball: No team shall be scheduled to play two games in one day. (See Rule 4.12.)

[JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL/SOFTBALL: More than one double header can be scheduled in a calendar week.]

4.14 -- The umpire-in-chief shall order the playing field lights turned on whenever in such umpire's opinion darkness makes further play in daylight hazardous.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Ruling: Try to turn lights on at the top of an inning. However, if darkness makes further play hazardous “turn the lights on!” Don’t wait until the home team finishes its turn at bat.

4.15 -- A game may be forfeited by the umpire-in-chief of the game in progress to the opposing team when a team -

- (1) being upon the field, refuses to start play within 10 minutes after the appointed hour for beginning the game, unless such delay, in the umpire's judgment is unavoidable;

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Example: Star pitcher is late; manager wants to wait 20 minutes for him/her. Not an acceptable reason.

- (2) refuses to continue play unless game was terminated by the umpire;

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Example: Manager upset by umpires’ calls or because he/she didn’t wear his/her lucky shirt and refuses to continue.

- (3) fails to resume play, after game was halted by the umpire, within one minute after the umpire has called "Play";

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Example: Rain delay, umpire says “play” but manager disagrees.

(4) fails to obey within a reasonable time the umpire's order to remove a player from the game;

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Ruling: One minute is a reasonable time.

(5) after warning by the umpire, willfully and persistently violates any rules of the game;

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Example: Encouraging base-runners to leave base early, violating substitution rule by using a courtesy runner, etc.

(6) employs tactics designed to delay or shorten the game.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Example: Having his/her players confer on the pitcher's mound in the third inning as the sun sets in the west, and many more too numerous to list. **Rule of Thumb:** Do everything humanly possible to prevent a forfeit. Do not take the game away from the children, if possible.

[CHALLENGER: Forfeits are not to be declared. Every effort must be made to play all games to ensure compliance with the philosophy of the **Little League Challenger Division**. **TEE BALL:** Forfeits are not to be declared.]

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Please remember that the umpire-in-chief records a forfeit. However, all forfeits are subject to review by the Board of Directors.*

4.16 -- If a game cannot be played because of the inability of either team to place nine players on the field before the game begins, this shall not be grounds for automatic forfeiture, but shall be referred to the Board of Directors for a decision. Note: A game may not be started with less than nine (9) players on each team.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Note (1): Words “not be grounds for automatic forfeiture” have managers advise the Board of Directors why they did not have nine players. **Note (2):** Do not start with less than nine players.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Do not allow teams to borrow players from another team in order to play a game.*

4.17 -- If during a game either team is unable to place nine (9) players on the field due to injury or ejection, the opposing manager shall select a player to re-enter the lineup. A player ejected from the game is not eligible for re-entry. If no players are available for re-entry, or if a team refuses to place nine (9) players on the field, this shall not be grounds for automatic forfeiture but shall be referred to the Board of Directors for a decision. Note: A game may not be continued with less than nine (9) players on each team.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Note: Opposing manager (coach in manager's absence) picks the player to re-enter. However, any player ejected may not re-enter.

4.18 -- Forfeited games shall be so recorded in the scorebook and the book signed by the umpire-in-chief. A written report stating the reason for the forfeiture shall be sent to the league president within 24 hours, but failure of the umpire to file this report shall not affect the forfeiture.

4.19 -- PROTESTING GAME -

(a) Protest shall be considered only when based on the violation or interpretation of a playing rule or the use of an ineligible player. No protest shall be considered on a decision involving an umpire's judgment. Equipment which does not meet specifications must be removed from the game and shall not be the basis for a protest.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *If the batter hits a home run with an illegal bat, the home run counts, however, the bat is removed from the game.*
 ⇒ *Using equipment that has already been removed from the game can result in ejection of the player and/or manager.*
 ⇒ *An umpire's judgment or umpire mechanics or positioning cannot be protested.*

(b) The managers of contesting teams only shall have the right to protest a game (or in their absence, coaches). However, the manager or acting manager may not leave the dugout until receiving permission from an umpire.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *This is why it only makes sense to talk to the managers during the pre-game conference at home plate, since they are the official representative of the team. See Rule 4.01.*

(c) Protests shall be made as follows:

- (1) The protesting manager shall immediately, and before any succeeding play begins, notify the umpire that the game is being played under protest.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Should this not be done, there will be no protest, regardless whether later it is discovered that a mistake may have been made.*

- (2) Following such notice the umpire shall consult with the other umpire(s). If the umpire is convinced that the decision is in conflict with the rules, the umpire shall reverse that decision. If, however, after consultation, the umpire is convinced that the decision is not in conflict with the rules, said umpire shall announce that the game is being played under protest. Failure of the umpire to make such announcement shall not affect the validity of the protest.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Please remember that protests only involve a violation of the **Playing Rules**, not judgment calls.*

- (d) Protests made due to use of ineligible pitcher or ineligible player may be considered only if made to the umpire before the umpire(s) leave the field at the end of the game.

INSTRUCTORS COMMENTS:

⇒ *The umpire(s) leaving the field means the act of physically walking off the game field. If there was a fence enclosing the field this would mean walking through the fence into a dead ball area. If there is not a fence, then when the umpire(s) have entered a dead ball area is to be considered as "leave the field".*

Whenever it is found that an ineligible player is being used, said player shall be removed from the game, and the game shall be continued under protest or not as the protesting manager decides.

- (e) Any protest for any reason whatsoever must be submitted by the manager first to the umpire on the field of play and then in writing to the local league president within 24 hours. The umpire-in-chief shall also submit a report immediately.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *There can be NO FEE attached to the submission of protest. Leagues, at times, try to put a fee into place in an effort to discourage protests. THIS CANNOT BE DONE.*

[MINOR Baseball & Softball: A local league may adopt a rule that protests must be resolved before the next play.]

[TBALL: There shall be no protests in Tee Ball.]

[CHALLENGER: Protests are not to be considered and are not consistent with the philosophy of the **Little League Challenger Division.**]

- (f) A committee composed of the president, player agent, league's umpire-in-chief and one or more other officers or directors who are not managers or umpires shall hear and resolve any such protest as above, including playing rules. If the protest is allowed, resume game from exact point when the infraction occurred.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *This is why presidents and player agents should not manage or umpire.*
 ⇒ *The league's umpire-in-chief may serve on the Protest Committee if he/she is not umpiring the protested game.*
 ⇒ *If protest is found to be invalid, nothing else needs to be done, since the game result will stand. However, if the protest is found to be valid, there are three possible outcomes:*

- (1) Replay from the point of the protest, since the decision had a significant effect on the game's outcome;
- (2) Forfeit the game, if the use of an ineligible player (usually a pitcher) had a significant effect on the outcome of the game; or
- (3) Allow the game result to remain, since the protested decision had little or no effect on the outcome of the game.

(g) Minor League: A Local League may adopt a rule that protests must be resolved before the next pitch or play.

(h) There are not protests in Tee Ball.

NOTE 1: This does not pertain to charges of infractions of playing rules or regulations such as field decorum or actions of league personnel or spectators which must be considered and resolved by the Board of Directors.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *The most obvious example would be the violation of the Mandatory Play Rule, Regulation IV (i).*
- ⇒ *The youngsters should not be penalized because of the actions of the adults.*

NOTE 2: All **Little League** officials are urged to take precautions to prevent protests. When a protest situation is imminent, the potential offender should be notified immediately. **Example:** should a manager, official scorer, league official or umpire discover that a pitcher is ineligible at the beginning of a game, or will become ineligible during the game or at the start of the next inning of play; the fact should be brought to the attention of the manager of the team involved. Such action should not be delayed until the infraction has occurred.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Comment: All league officers, umpires, scorekeepers, etc. should do everything possible to prevent protests.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *An umpire should indicate in his/her report to the Board if he/she has reason to believe that a manager knew a player was ineligible and said nothing until the situation was protestable.*

5.00 -- PUTTING THE BALL IN PLAY - LIVE BALL

5.01 -- At the time set for beginning the game the umpire-in-chief shall order the home team to take its defensive positions and the first batter of the visiting team to take a position in the batter's box. As soon as all players are in position the umpire-in-chief shall call "Play".

[TBALL: When all defensive players are in position and ready the umpire will place the ball on the tee and say "Play Ball".]

5.02 -- After the umpire calls "Play" the ball is alive and in play and remains alive and in play until, for legal cause, or at the umpire's call of "Time" suspending play, the ball becomes dead. While the ball is dead, no player may be put out, no bases may be run and no runs may be scored, except that runners may advance one or more bases as the result of acts which occurred while the ball was alive (such as, but not limited to a balk, an overthrow, interference, or a home run or other fair ball hit out of the playing field).

"The Right Call" Casebook -- Play 5-1: Runner on first, home plate umpire believing all play had ceased, turned his/her back on the pitcher to dust off home plate when: (a) runner steals second with no play being made; (b) pitcher catches runner standing off first talking with first base coach. Base umpire calls runner out. **Ruling:** In both (a) and (b), put runner back on first. Although neither umpire technically called "time", it was implied when the home plate umpire turned his/her back to the ball to dust off home plate. Anytime you clean the plate, call "time". Then signal and call "play" to make the ball live again. See Rule 5.11.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ The "No Pitch" signal (raising one hand up while facing the pitcher) is the same as calling "Time". If an Umpire raises one hand up while facing the pitcher he/she has called "Time Out". The ball must be made "alive" again after this "Time Out." See Rule 5.11.

5.03 -- The pitcher shall deliver the pitch to the batter who may elect to strike the ball, or may not offer at it, as such batter chooses.

[CHALLENGER: (a) The ball shall be placed on the batting tee and the batter shall strike it; **(b)** The adult pitcher shall deliver the pitch to the batter who may elect to strike the ball, or who may not offer at it, as such batter chooses.]

5.04 -- The offensive team's objective is to have its batter become a runner, and its runners advance.

5.05 -- The defensive team's objective is to prevent offensive players from becoming runners, and to prevent their advance around the bases.

5.06 -- When a batter becomes a runner and touches all bases legally, one run shall be scored for the offensive team.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ Even though the rule states, "Touches all bases legally," if he/she doesn't and no appeal is made, the run scored is considered legal.

5.07 -- When three offensive players are legally put out, that team takes the field and the opposing team becomes the offensive team (side retired). (Minor League: If the Local League adopts a rule in which the offense bats through the order, the side is retired when three offensive players are legally put out, or when all players on the roster have batted one time in the half-inning. Tee Ball: The side is retired when three offensive players are legally put out, or when all players on the roster have batted one time in the half-inning.)

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ If a team changes sides before three are put out, the official scorer may alert the umpire in order to correct the situation. Also, the part concerning Minor League and Tee Ball is a good way to get your Minor and Tee Ball games moving along so you're not there for four (4) hours.

5.08 -- If a thrown ball accidentally touches a base coach, or a pitched or thrown ball touches an umpire, the ball is alive and in play. However, if the coach interferes with a thrown ball, the runner is out.

[CHALLENGER: If a thrown ball accidentally touches a base coach, or a pitched or thrown ball touches a volunteer in fair territory, the ball is alive and in play. However, if a volunteer interferes with a thrown ball, the runner is out.]

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Ruling: Once again, the umpire’s judgment comes into play. Did the coach interfere or was he/she in the wrong place at the wrong time? If you judge interference, kill the play immediately and call the runner out.

5.09 -- The ball becomes dead and runners advance one base, or return to their bases without liability to be put out, when -

- (a) a pitched ball touches a batter, or the batter's clothing, while in a legal batting position; runners, if forced, advance (see **Rule 6.08**);

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Hands are not part of the bat. Never have been and never will be a part of the bat.*

- (b) the plate umpire interferes with the catcher's act of throwing (when the throw is in an attempt to retire a runner), runners return. If the catcher's throw gets the runner out, the out stands. No umpire interference;

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Remember that this assumes the catcher first catches the pitched ball cleanly. If the catcher fumbles, bobbles, drops, etc. the rule no longer applies and any interaction with the umpire would be incidental.*

⇒ *If the throw gets the runner out, the umpire would announce that “the interference is disregarded,” not “no interference.”*

(c) **(MINOR/MAJOR BASEBALL/SOFTBALL)** an illegal pitch is committed (See Baseball Penalty 8.05 and Softball Penalty 8.01);

- (c) **(JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL)** a balk is committed, runners advance (see Rule 8.05-Penalty);

(d) a ball is illegally batted, either fair or foul; runners return;

(e) a foul ball not caught, runners return. The umpire shall not put the ball in play until all runners have retouched their bases;

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Ruling: Make sure each and every runner returns.

- (f) a fair ball touches a runner or an umpire on fair territory before it touches an infielder including the pitcher, or touches an umpire before it passed an infielder other than the pitcher. Runner hit by fair batted ball is out;

NOTE: If a fair ball goes through, or by an infielder and touches a runner immediately back of said infielder, or touches a runner after being deflected by an infielder, the ball is in play and the umpire shall not declare the runner out. In making such decision, the umpire must be convinced that the ball passed through, or by, the infielder and that no other infielder had the chance to make a play on the ball; runners advance if forced;

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Comment: In Little League, the umpire should not get hit by a fair ball before it passes an infielder. The umpire does not belong in front of the infielders. However, in Junior/Senior and/or Big League Baseball, if the ball touches an umpire after it has bounded past, or over, the pitcher, it is a dead ball.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *The concept of the runner being in jeopardy after the ball goes past an infielder and strikes the runner in a situation where another infielder still has a chance to make a play on the ball applies **ONLY** when the ball **PASSES** the first infielder without being touched or deflected by him/her. This concept **DOES NOT APPLY** if the ball is **touched or deflected** by the first infielder, **even though another infielder has a chance to make a play on the ball**. In other words, after a ball has been touched (deflected) by any infielder (including the pitcher), if the ball then strikes a runner (unintentionally on the part of the runner), the ball is alive and in play even if another infielder may be in position to field the ball.*

- (g) a pitched ball lodges in the catcher's or umpire's mask or paraphernalia; runners advance.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *If a pitched ball lodges in the umpire's or catcher's mask or paraphernalia, and remains out of play, on the third strike (JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL/SOFTBALL or fourth ball, then the batter is entitled to first base and all runners advance one base. If the count on the batter is less than three balls, runners advance one base.*

(h) (JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL) any legal pitch touches a runner trying to score; runners advance.

5.10 -- The ball becomes dead when an umpire calls "Time." The umpire-in-chief shall call "Time"

(a) when in said umpire's judgment, weather, darkness or similar conditions makes immediate further play impossible;

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Remember that it's better to call a game too early, rather than too late. Calling a game too late can result in safety concerns as well as situation that may cause an umpire to revert to the previous inning.*

⇒ *If, as the umpire, you feel that you cannot complete a full inning, it's best not to start it.*

(b) when light failure makes it difficult or impossible for the umpires to follow play;

NOTE: A league may adopt its own regulations governing games interrupted by light failure.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *"Light failure" in this case means artificial light, not darkness. Normally, when lights go out or fail unexpectedly, the game would be suspended.*

⇒ *It is recommended that games interrupted by light failure be suspended, regardless of the inning in which it occurs.*

(c) when an accident incapacitates a player or an umpire;

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *If the umpire does call "Time" while a play is in progress, when he/she resumes play he/she must make the determination what would have occurred had he/she not suspended play? This may involve calling a runner out or advancing runners.*

(1) If an accident to a runner is such as to prevent said runner from proceeding to an entitled base, as on a home run hit out of the playing field or an award of one or more bases, a substitute runner shall be permitted to complete the play.

(d) when a manager requests "Time" for a substitution, or for a conference with one of the players;

(NOTE: Only one offensive time-out, for the purpose of a visit or conference, will be permitted each inning.)

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *If the offensive manager requests time out to talk to the batter or runner, the defensive manager may confer with the pitcher and/or catcher without being charged with a visit.*

⇒ *This, however, is not automatic. "Time" shall be granted if, in the umpire's judgment, it is necessary.*

(e) when the umpire wishes to examine the ball, consult with either manager, or for any similar cause;

(f) when a fielder, after catching a fly ball, falls into a stand, or falls across ropes into a crowd when spectators are on the field, or other dead-ball area. As pertains to runners, the provisions of 7.04(b) **(JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL 7.04(b))** shall prevail.

NOTE: If a fielder, after making a catch steps into a dead-ball area, but does not fall, the ball is in play and runners may advance at their own peril.

"The Right Call" Casebook – Play 5-2: A fielder, after making a catch, steps into the stands (dead ball area) but does not fall. **Ruling:** The ball is in play and runners may advance at their own peril.

(g) when an umpire orders a player or any other person removed from the playing field;

(h) except in the cases stated in paragraphs (b) and (c) (1) of this rule, no umpire shall call "Time" while a play is in progress.

(i) **(SOFTBALL)** the ball remains live until the umpire calls "Time."

[TBALL: When players have advanced as far as possible without being put out or having been retired the umpire shall call "time" and place the ball on the tee.]

5.11 -- After the ball is dead, play shall be resumed when the pitcher takes position on the pitcher's plate with a new ball, or the same ball in said pitcher's possession and the plate umpire calls "Play." The plate umpire shall call "Play" as soon as the pitcher takes position on the plate with possession of the ball.

"The Right Call" Casebook -- Comment: All umpires need to do this. If you are not making the ball "alive" you need to get started.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *The catcher must be in the catcher's box and all other players must be in fair territory.*
- ⇒ *Normally, there would be a batter in the box as well, although, in some situations, such as an end-of-the-inning appeal, it would not be necessary.*

6.00 -- THE BATTER

6.01 --

- (a) Each player of the offensive team shall bat in the order that their name appears in the team's batting order.
- (b) The first batter in each inning after the first inning shall be the player whose name follows that of the last player who legally completed a time at bat in the preceding inning.

NOTE: In the event that while a batter is in the batter's box, the third out of an inning is made on a base runner, the batter then at bat shall be the first batter of the next inning and the count of balls and strikes shall start over.

6.02 --

- (a) The batter shall take a position in the batter's box promptly when it is said batter's time at bat.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Comment: Use this rule to help you get and keep the game moving. A friendly “let’s go”, “hustle”, “next batter”, will go a long way in keeping the game moving.

- (b) The batter shall not leave that position in the batter’s box after the pitcher comes to Set Position, or starts a windup.

PENALTY: If the pitcher pitches, the umpire shall call "Ball" or "Strike" as the case may be.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Comment: Keep in mind, however, that with no batter present, the pitcher should be given the benefit of the doubt in this case. After all, the batter backed out without permission. It is, however, not an automatic strike. The batter leaves the batter’s box at the risk of having a pitch delivered and a strike called, unless he/she requests the umpire to call “Time.” The batter is not at liberty to step in and out of the batter’s box at will.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Umpires will not call “Time” at the request of the batter or any member of his/her team once the pitcher has started his/her windup or has come to a set position even though the batter claims “dust in his/her eyes,” “steamed glasses,” “didn’t get the sign” or for any other reason.*
- ⇒ *Umpires may grant a hitter’s request for “Time” once he/she is in the batter’s box, but the umpire should eliminate hitters walking out of the batter’s box without reason. If umpires strictly enforce this, batters will understand that they are in the batter’s box and they must remain there until the ball is pitched.*
- ⇒ *If the pitcher delays once the batter is in the box and the umpire feels that the delay is not justified he/she may allow the batter to step out of the box momentarily.*
- ⇒ *If after the pitcher starts his/her windup or comes to a “set position” with a runner on, and he/she does not go through with his/her pitch because the batter has stepped out of the box, it shall not be called a balk or illegal pitch. Both the pitcher and batter have violated a rule and the umpire shall call time and both the batter and pitcher start over from “scratch.”*

- (c) If the batter refuses to take a position in the batter's box during a time at bat, the umpire shall call a "Strike" on the batter without the need for a pitch to be delivered. The ball is dead, and no runners may advance. After the penalty, the batter may take a proper position and the regular ball and strike count shall continue, but if the batter does not take a proper position before three strikes are called, that batter shall be declared out.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *The umpire shall give the batter a reasonable opportunity to take his/her proper position in the batter's box after the umpire has called a strike and before the umpire calls a successive strike.*
- ⇒ *The ball is dead and any base runners will be required to stay on their respective base.*
- ⇒ *In Juniors, Seniors and Big League, if the situation exists where the batter would ordinarily be allowed to run to first base on strike three, he/she will be declared out.*

6.03 -- The batter's legal position shall be both feet within the batter's box.

APPROVED RULING: The lines defining the box are within the batter's box.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Comment: Make sure the batter's feet are completely inside before the pitch.

6.04 -- A batter has legally completed a time at bat when he/she is put out or becomes a runner.

6.05 -- A batter is out when -

(a) a fair or foul fly ball (other than a foul tip) is legally caught by a fielder;

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *A fielder may reach into, but not step into, a dugout to make a catch, and if he/she holds the ball, the catch shall be allowed. A fielder, in order to make a catch on a foul ball nearing a dugout or other out-of-play area (such as the stands), must have one or both feet on or over the playing surface (including the dugout) and neither foot on the ground inside the dugout or in any other out-of-play area. Ball is in play, unless the fielder, after making a legal catch, falls into a dugout or other out-of-play area, in which case the ball is dead. Status of runners shall be as described in rule 7.04(c) Instructors Comments.*

(b) **(MINOR/MAJOR BASEBALL/SOFTBALL)** a third strike is caught or not caught by the catcher;

[TBALL: The local league will determine whether or not strikeouts will be permitted in Tee Ball.]

(JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE: (1) a third strike is legally caught by the catcher; (2) a third strike is not caught by the catcher when first base is occupied before two are out);

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *“Legally caught,” means in the catcher's glove before the ball touches the ground. It is not legal if the ball lodges in his/her clothing or paraphernalia or if it touches the umpire and is caught by the catcher on the rebound.*
 ⇒ *If a foul-tip first strikes the catcher's glove and then goes on through and is caught by both hands against his/her body or protector, before the ball touches the ground, it is a strike, and if third strike, batter is out. If smothered against his/her body or protector, it is a catch provided the ball struck the catchers' glove or hand first.*

(c) bunting foul on a third strike;

(d) an Infield Fly is declared;

(e) that batter attempts to hit a third strike and is touched by the ball;

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Amazingly, hands are still not part of the bat.*

(f) a fair ball touches said batter before touching a fielder;

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Comment: When this happens it is almost always as a batter leaves the batter's box. Make sure the batter is out of the batters box when you call this, otherwise, call “foul ball”.

(g) after hitting or bunting a fair ball, the bat hits the ball a second time in fair territory. The ball is dead and no runner may advance. If the batter-runner drops the bat and the ball rolls against the bat in fair territory and, in the umpire's judgment there was no intention to interfere with the course of the ball, the ball is alive and in play;

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *The phrase “while holding the bat” has been removed from this rule. A bat hits the ball a second time in fair territory; the batter will be called out with the ball being dead immediately and runner(s) returning or staying at their time of pitch base(s).*

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Comment: Rule of thumb here is bat hits ball a second time versus ball hits bat a second time and of course, umpire's judgment on intent to interfere.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *If a bat is thrown into fair territory and interferes with a defensive player attempting to make a play, interference shall be called, whether intentional or not.*

- ⇒ *In cases where the batting helmet is accidentally hit with a batted or thrown ball, the ball remains in play the same as if it has not hit the helmet.*
- ⇒ *If a batted ball strikes a batting helmet or any other object foreign to the natural ground while on foul territory, it is a foul ball and the ball is dead.*
- ⇒ *If, in the umpire's judgment, there is intent on the part of a base runner to interfere with a batted or thrown ball by dropping the helmet or throwing it at the ball, then the runner would be out, the ball dead and runners would return to last base legally touched.*

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *The phrase "while holding the bat" has been removed from this rule, since it has never mattered whether or not the batter is holding the bat or not. If the bat hits the ball a second time in fair territory, the batter is out, regardless whether it's intentional or unintentional.*

(h) after hitting or bunting a foul ball, that runner intentionally deflects the course of the ball in any manner while running to first base. The ball is dead and no runners may advance;

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Notice that intent only applies to a batted ball in foul territory. If the batter unintentionally deflects a foul ball, he/she is not out, but the ball is dead (foul ball).*

(i) after hitting a fair ball, the batter-runner or first base is tagged before said batter-runner touches first base; or Junior/.Senior/Big League, after a third strike as defined in Rule 6.09(b), the batter-runner or first base is tagged before said batter-runner touches first base;

(j) in running the last half of the distance from home base to first base, while the ball is being fielded to first base, the batter- runner runs outside (to the right of) the three-foot line, or inside (to the left of) the foul line, and in the umpire's judgment in so doing interferes with the fielder taking the throw at first base; except that the batter-runner may run outside (to the right of) the three-foot line, or inside (to the left of) the foul line to avoid a fielder attempting to field a batted ball;

"The Right Call" Casebook -- Play 6-1: Batter-runner hits a ground ball to the shortstop who throws to first. The throw pulls the first baseman up the line where he/she and the batter-runner collide. **Ruling:** *No call. What you have is a collision. Batter-runner was not out of baseline.*

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *The lines marking the three-foot lane are a part of that lane and a batter-runner is required to have both feet within the three-foot lane or on the lines marking the lane. The batter-runner is permitted to exit the three-foot lane by means of a step, stride, reach or slide in the immediate vicinity of first base for the sole purpose of touching first base.*

"The Right Call" Casebook -- Comment: It's always interference if the catcher's or pitcher's throw hits the batter-runner when he/she is not in the "lane". The lines that mark the "lane" are part of the "lane" and the interpretation to be made is that a runner is required to have both feet within the three foot "lane" or on the lines marking the "lane." If the throw is accurate to the first baseman and in the umpire's judgment the runner interfered with the first baseman, it is interference.

- ⇒ *There are two key elements to this rule that frequently are misunderstood: (1) the ball must be thrown in order for the runner to interfere with the "fielder taking the throw" and (2) the throw must be a reasonably catchable throw. A catcher who does not throw, or who throws well over the fielder's head should not be rewarded by having interference called.*
- ⇒ *A "catchable throw" would essentially be a throw that the baseman could catch it if the runner were not there.*
- ⇒ *This, most often, will be the plate umpire's call, since the base umpire will be moving into position to make the call at first. However, understand that either umpire may make the call.*

(k) an infielder intentionally drops a fair fly ball or line drive, with first, first and second, first and third, or first, second and third bases occupied before two are out. The ball is dead and runner or runners shall return to their original base or bases;

APPROVED RULING: In this situation, the batter is not out if the infielder permits the ball to drop untouched to the ground, except when the Infield Fly rule applies.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Rule of Thumb: If the fly ball touches a hand and/or glove and falls to the ground, rule intentionally dropped “dead ball, batter out and runner or runners shall return”. **Exception:** Infield Fly rule takes precedence over the intentionally dropped ball and it remains alive and in play.

- (l) a preceding runner shall, in the umpire’s judgment, intentionally interferes with a fielder who is attempting to catch a thrown ball or to throw a ball in an attempt to complete a play.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *The reason for this rule is to penalize the offensive team for deliberate, unwarranted, unsportsmanlike action by the runner in leaving the baseline for the obvious purpose of crashing the pivot man on a double play, rather than trying to reach the base. Obviously this is an umpire’s judgment play.*

(m) **(JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL)** With two out, a runner on third base, and two strikes on the batter, the runner attempts to steal home base on a legal pitch and the ball touches the runner in the batter’s strike zone. The umpire shall call “Strike Three,” the batter is out and the run shall not count; before two are out, the umpire shall call “Strike Three,” the ball is dead, and the run counts.

6.06 -- A batter is out for illegal action when -

- (a) hitting the ball with one or both feet on the ground entirely outside the batter’s box;

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Comment: Fair or foul, if he/she meets (a) above, call the batter will be out.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *This call is NEVER the responsibility of the base umpire. The plate umpire, only, is responsible.*

- (b) stepping from one batter’s box to the other while the pitcher is in position ready to pitch;

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *This is intended to prevent the batter from jumping from one side to the other, thereby confusing the defense, not when the batter happens to step across home plate when first arriving for his/her at bat.*

- (c) interfering with the catcher’s fielding or throwing by stepping out of the batter’s box or making any other movement that hinders the catcher’s play at home plate.

EXCEPTION: Batter is not out if any runner attempting to advance is put out, or if runner trying to score is called out for batter’s interference.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Comment: Notice that there is no mention of intentional. Again, umpire’s judgment.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *If the batter interferes with the catcher, the plate umpire shall call “interference.” The batter is out and the ball dead. No player may advance on such interference (offensive interference) and all runners must return to the last base that was, in the judgment of the umpire, legally touched at the time of the interference.*

⇒ *If, however, the catcher makes a play and the runner attempting to advance is put out, it is to be assumed there was no actual interference and that runner is out---not the batter. Any other runners on the base at the time may advance, as the ruling is that there is no actual interference if a runner is retired. In that case play proceeds just as if no violation had been called.*

⇒ *If a batter strikes at a ball and misses and swings so hard he/she carries the bat all the way around and, in the umpire’s judgment, unintentionally hits the catcher or the ball in back of him/her on the back swing before the catcher has securely held the ball, it shall be called a strike only (not interference). The ball will be dead, however, and no runner shall advance on the play.*

⇒ *While this rule will most often come into play in the Junior, Senior and Big League programs, it can occur in all divisions on passed balls or wild pitches. The batter must avoid interference. Period.*

6.07 -- BATTING OUT OF TURN

- (a) A batter shall be called out, on appeal, when failing to bat in the proper turn, and another batter completes a time at bat in place of the proper batter. (1) The proper batter may take a position in the batter's box at any time before the improper batter becomes a runner or is put out, and any balls and strikes shall be counted in the proper batter's time at bat.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Play 6-3: After the wrong batter works the count to 0-2, the offensive manager realizes the mistake and gets the proper batter up at bat. **Ruling:** As umpire, you should inform the proper batter he/she has a 0-2 count and then call “Play”. No other penalty is given.

- (b) When an improper batter becomes a runner or is put out, and the defensive team appeals to the umpire before the first pitch to the next batter of either team, or before any play or attempted play, the umpire shall (1) declare the proper batter out; and (2) nullify any advance or score made because of a ball batted by the improper batter or because of the improper batter's advance to first base on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batter or otherwise.

NOTE: If a runner advances, while the improper batter is at bat, on a stolen base, balk, wild pitch or passed ball, such advance is legal.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Play 6-4: Bases loaded, one out, or two outs, wrong batter steps into the box and strokes a triple, defense appeals, how many runs scored? **Ruling:** With one out, umpire calls out correct batter and returns all runners to the base they occupied at time of hit, no runs scored; with two outs, the umpire calls out correct batter for the third out and no runs scored.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ Appeal must be made before the next pitch, play or attempted play. *Baseball and Softball* treat this element differently. In *Baseball*, a fake throw is **NOT** considered an attempted play. However, in *Softball*, if the pitcher is in the eight-foot circle, a fake throw **IS** considered an attempted play for consideration of the circle rule. See **Rule 7.10** also.

- (c) When the improper batter becomes a runner or is put out, and a pitch is made to the next batter of either team before an appeal is made, the improper batter thereby becomes the proper batter, and the results of such time at bat become legal.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Play 6-4: Batting order Abbey, Beverly, Calvin, and Danny. Beverly mistakenly bats for Abbey. After a pitch is delivered to Calvin the defensive manager notifies you that Beverly batted out of order. **Ruling:** No Call. Because Calvin has taken a pitch, Beverly's at bat is legal and Calvin continues his at bat.

- (d) (1) When the proper batter is called out for failing to bat in turn, the next batter shall be the batter whose name follows that of the proper batter thus called out; (2) When an improper batter becomes a proper batter because no appeal is made before the next pitch, the next batter shall be the batter whose name follows that of such legalized improper batter. The instant an improper batter's actions are legalized, the batting order picks up with the name following that of the legalized improper batter.

[TBALL only: The scorekeeper shall inform the manager that a player has batted out of order. There shall be no penalty and that player shall not have another turn at bat, but shall resume the normal position next time up.]

[CHALLENGER: A player batting out of turn shall not be cause for an out to be declared but shall be corrected in the following inning.]

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ Scorekeepers and umpires should never call attention to either team that a player is batting out of turn. It is an appeal play that must be discovered by the opposing team. This rule is designed to require managers and coaches from both teams to pay attention to who should bat and who is batting. The game cannot be protested if the scorekeeper says something. The scorekeeper should, however, be counseled as to his/her responsibilities.
- ⇒ There are two basic things about the rule to keep in mind: When a player bats out of turn, the proper batter is the player called out. If an improper batter bats and reaches base or is out and no appeal is made before a pitch to the next batter, or before any play or attempted play, that improper batter is considered to have batted in proper turn and establishes the order that is to follow.

- ⇒ *In games where announcers are used, have the announcer only announce the player who is physically stepping into the batter's box, not the player who is due up to bat. By announcing who is due up, he/she would be "giving away" to the opposing team that a player is batting out of turn.*
- ⇒ *A player who is called out, on appeal, for failing to bat is **NOT** considered as satisfying the **Mandatory Play Rule, Regulation IV (i)**, and an at bat for the purpose of **Rule 3.03**. Further, a player "skipped over" as a result of a player batting out of turn with no appeal has not satisfied either rule.*

APPROVED RULINGS

To illustrate various situations arising from batting out of turn, assume a first-inning batting order as follows:

(BASEBALL): Abel - Baker - Charles - Daniel - Edward - Frank - George - Henry - Irwin.

(SOFTBALL): Ann - Becky - Cher - Diane - Erin - Fran - Ginny - Heather - Irene

PLAY (1). Baker (*Becky*) bats. With the count 2 balls and 1 strike, **(a)** the offensive team discovers the error or **(b)** the defensive team appeals.

RULING: In either case, Abel (*Ann*) replaces Baker (*Becky*), with the count 2 balls and 1 strike.

PLAY (2). Baker (*Becky*) bats and doubles. The defensive team appeals **(a)** immediately or **(b)** after a pitch to Charles (*Cher*).

RULING: **(a)** Abel (*Ann*) is called out and Baker (*Becky*) is the proper batter; **(b)** Baker (*Becky*) stays on second and Charles (*Cher*) is the proper batter.

PLAY (3). Abel (*Ann*) walks. Baker (*Becky*) walks. Charles (*Cher*) forces Baker (*Becky*). Edward (*Erin*) bats in Daniel's (*Diane's*) turn. While Edward (*Erin*) is at bat, Abel (*Ann*) scores and Charles (*Cher*) goes to second on a wild pitch. Edward (*Erin*) grounds out, sending Charles (*Cher*) to third. The defensive team appeals **(a)** immediately or **(b)** after a pitch to Daniel (*Diane*).

RULING: **(a)** Abel's (*Ann's*) run counts and Charles (*Cher*) is entitled to second base since these advances were not made because of the improper batter batting a ball or advancing to first base Charles (*Cher*) must return to second base because the advance to third resulted from the improper batter batting a ball. Daniel (*Diane*) is called out and Edward (*Erin*) is the proper batter; **(b)** Abel's (*Ann's*) run counts and Charles (*Cher*) stays on third. The proper batter is Frank (*Fran*).

PLAY (4). With the bases full and two out, Henry (*Heather*) bats in Frank's (*Fran's*) turn, and triples, scoring three runs. The defensive team appeals **(a)** immediately or **(b)** after a pitch to George (*Ginny*).

RULING: **(a)** Frank (*Fran*) is called out and no runs score. George (*Ginny*) is the proper batter to lead off the second inning; **(b)** Henry (*Heather*) stays on third and three runs score. Irwin (*Irene*) is the proper batter.

PLAY (5). After **Play (4) (b)** above, George (*Ginny*) continues to bat. **(a)** Henry (*Heather*) is picked off third base for the third out, or **(b)** George (*Ginny*) flies out, and no appeal is made. Who is the proper leadoff batter in the second inning?

RULING: **(a)** Irwin (*Irene*) became the proper batter as soon as the first pitch to George (*Ginny*) legalized Henry's (*Heather's*) triple; **(b)** Henry (*Heather*). When no appeal was made, the first pitch to the leadoff batter of the opposing team legalized George's (*Ginny's*) time at bat.

PLAY (6). Daniel (*Diane*) walks and Abel (*Ann*) comes to bat. Daniel (*Diane*) was an improper batter and if an appeal is made before the first pitch to Abel (*Ann*), Abel (*Ann*) is out, Daniel (*Diane*) is removed from base, and Baker (*Becky*) is proper batter. There is no appeal and a pitch is made to Abel (*Ann*). Daniel's (*Diane's*) walk is now legalized, and Edward (*Erin*) thereby becomes the proper batter. Edward (*Erin*) can replace Abel (*Ann*) at any time before Abel (*Ann*) is put out, or becomes a runner. Edward (*Erin*) does not do so. Abel (*Ann*) flies out, and Baker (*Becky*) comes to bat. Abel (*Ann*) was an improper batter, and if an appeal is made before the first pitch to Baker (*Becky*), Edward (*Erin*) is out, and the proper batter is Frank (*Fran*). There is no appeal, and a pitch is made to Baker (*Becky*). Abel's (*Ann's*) out is now legalized, and the proper batter is Baker (*Becky*). Baker (*Becky*) walks. Charles (*Cher*) is the proper batter. Charles (*Cher*) flies out. Now Daniel (*Diane*) is the proper batter, but Daniel (*Diane*) is on second base. Who is the proper batter?

RULING: The proper batter is Edward (*Erin*). When the proper batter is on base, that batter is passed over, and the following batter becomes the proper batter.

(NOTE: The umpire and scorekeeper shall not direct the attention of any person to the presence in the batter's box of an improper batter. This rule is designed to require constant vigilance by the players and managers of both teams. There are two fundamentals to keep in mind. 1. When a player bats out of turn, the proper batter is the player called out. 2. If an improper batter bats and reaches base or is out and no appeal is made before a pitch to the next batter, or before any play or attempted play, that improper batter is considered to have batted in his/her proper turn and establishes the batting order that is to follow.)

Tee Ball: The scorekeeper shall inform the manager that a player has batted out of order. There shall be no penalty and that player shall not have another turn at bat, but shall resume the normal position next time up.

6.08 -- The batter becomes a runner and is entitled to first base without liability to be put out (provided said runner advances to and touches first base) when -

(a) four "balls" have been called by the umpire;

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ Remember, the batter-runner is permitted to overrun first base on a base on balls. This provision, however, does not apply to other runners advancing to second or third bases.

(b) the batter is touched by a pitched ball which the batter is not attempting to hit unless (1) The ball is in the strike zone when it touches the batter, or (2) the batter makes no attempt to avoid being touched by the ball;

NOTE: If the ball is in the strike zone when it touches the batter, it shall be called a strike, whether or not the batter tries to avoid the ball. If the ball is outside the strike zone when it touches the batter, it shall be called a ball if that batter makes no attempt to avoid being touched.

APPROVED RULING: When the batter is touched by a pitched ball which does not entitle that batter to first base, the ball is dead and no runner may advance.

"The Right Call" Casebook -- Comment: Do not get talked into buying the old "The hands are part of the bat" myth. No one has manufactured a bat with hands, yet!

(c) the catcher or any fielder interferes with the batter. If a play follows the interference, the manager of the offense may advise the plate umpire of a decision to decline the interference penalty and accept the play. Such election shall be made immediately at the end of the play. However, if the batter reaches first base on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batsman, or otherwise, and all runners advance at least one base, the play proceeds without reference to the interference;

"The Right Call" Casebook -- Comment: When giving a manager a choice of plays, word it in such a way that he/she knows what the correct answer is for his/her team.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ The umpire is responsible for enforcing the penalty for interference if all runners, including the batter-runner, fail to advance one base. The manager or umpire can and should initiate the option discussion. When the options are discussed they should be given so the manager understands the best answer for his/her team.

⇒ If catcher's interference is called with a play in progress the umpire will allow the play to continue because the manager may elect to take the play. If the batter-runner missed first base, or a runner misses his/her next base, he/she shall be considered as having reached the base, as stated in **Note of Rule 7.04(c)**.

⇒ Examples of plays the manager might elect to take: (1) Runner on third, one out, batter hits fly ball to the outfield on which the runner scores but catcher's interference was called. The offensive manager may elect to take the run and have batter called out or have the runner remain at third and batter awarded first base. (2) Runner on second base. Catcher interferes with batter as he/she bunts ball fairly sending runner to third base as the defense gets the out at 1st. The manager may rather have a runner on third base with an out on the play than have runners on second and first.

⇒ In situations where the manager wants the "interference" penalty to apply, the following interpretation shall be made of **6.08(c)**:

- ⇒ *If the catcher (or any fielder) interferes with the batter, the batter is awarded first base. If, on such interference a runner is trying to score by a steal or squeeze from third base, the ball is dead and the runner on third scores and batter is awarded first base. If the catcher interferes with the batter with no runners trying to score from third on a squeeze or steal, then the ball is dead, batter is awarded first base and runners who are forced to advance, do advance. Runners not attempting to steal or not forced to advance remain on the base they occupied at the time of the interference.*
- ⇒ *If the catcher interferes with the batter before the pitcher delivers the ball, it shall not be considered interference on the batter under **Rule 6.08(c)**. In such cases, the umpire shall call "Time" and the pitcher and batter start over from "scratch."*

(d) a fair ball touches an umpire or a runner on fair territory before touching a fielder.

NOTE: If a fair ball touches an umpire after having passed a fielder other than the pitcher, or having touched a fielder, including the pitcher, the ball is in play.

"The Right Call" Casebook -- Comment: Correct call is dead ball, award bases.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Only runners forced to advance are awarded a base in this situation.*

6.09 -- The batter becomes a runner when -

(a) a fair ball is hit;

[CHALLENGER: A ball hit off the tee may be declared foul if it fails to travel beyond the 15 foot arc in fair territory.]

(b) **(JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL/SOFTBALL)** the third strike called by the umpire is not caught, providing (1) first base is unoccupied or (2) first base is occupied with two out; **NOTE:** A batter forfeits his/her opportunity to advance to first base when he/she enters the dugout or other dead ball area.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Sometimes, the batter will take a few steps toward the dugout or his/her defensive position after the third strike without realizing that he/she can advance to first base. This would be perfectly legal. He's not "out of the baseline" or has not "abandoned his/her base" or any other explanation that the opposing manager will give you.*

(c) A fair ball, after having passed a fielder other than the pitcher, or after having been touched by a fielder, including the pitcher, shall touch an umpire or runner in fair territory;

(d) a fair fly ball passes over a fence or into the stands at a distance from home base of 165 feet **[JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL: 250 feet]** or more. Such hit entitles the batter to a home run when all bases have been legally touched. A fair fly ball that passes out of the playing field at a point less than 165 feet **[JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL: 250 feet]** from home base shall entitle the batter to advance to second base only;

(e) a fair ball, after touching the ground, bounds into the stands, or passes through, over or under a fence, or through or under a scoreboard, or through or under shrubbery, or vines on the fence, in which case the batter and runners shall be entitled to advance two bases;

(f) any fair ball which, either before or after touching the ground, passes through or under a fence, or through or under a scoreboard, or through any opening in the fence or scoreboard, or through or under any shrubbery or vines on the fence or which sticks in a fence or scoreboard in which case the batter and the runners shall be entitled to two bases;

(g) any bounding ball is deflected by the fielder into the stands, or over or under a fence on fair or foul territory, in which case the batter and all runners shall be entitled to two bases;

(h) any fair fly ball is deflected by the fielder into the stands, or over the fence into foul territory, in which case the batter shall be entitled to advance to second base; but if deflected into the stands or over the fence in fair territory, the batter shall be entitled to a home run. However, should such a fair fly be deflected at a point less than 165 feet **[JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL: 250 feet]** from home plate, the batter shall be entitled to two bases only.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *If a fair fly ball is deflected by the defensive player over the fence in fair territory, it shall be ruled a home run, since, by definition, the ball has left the playing field "in flight."*

7.00 -- THE RUNNER

7.01 -- A runner acquires the right to an unoccupied base when that runner touches it before being put out. The runner is then entitled to it until put out or forced to vacate it for another runner legally entitled to that base. If a runner legally acquires title to a base, and the pitcher assumes his/her pitching position, the runner may not return to a previously occupied base.

7.02 -- In advancing, a runner shall touch first, second, third and home base in that order. If forced to return, the runner shall retouch all bases in reverse order, unless the ball is dead under the provisions of **Rule 5.09**. In such cases, the runner may go directly to the original base.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *A runner who misses a base is considered as having touched a base if the opposing team makes no appeal.*

7.03 -- Two runners may not occupy a base, but if, while the ball is alive, two runners are touching the base, the following runner shall be out when tagged. The preceding runner is entitled to the base.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Comment: Enforce 7.03 provided there is no force involved.

7.04 -- Each runner, other than the batter, may without liability to be put out, advance one base when -

- (a) the batter's advance without liability to be put out forces the runner to vacate a base, or when the batter hits a fair ball that touches another runner or the umpire before such ball has been touched by, or has passed a fielder, if the runner is forced to advance, **or in Junior/Senior/Big League Baseball, there is a balk;**

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *A runner forced to advance without liability to be put out may advance past the base to which he/she is entitled only at his/her peril. If such a runner, forced to advance, is put out for the third out before a preceding runner, also forced to advance, touches home plate, the run shall score. **Play.** Two outs, bases loaded, batter walks but runner from second is overzealous and runs past third base toward home and is tagged out on a throw by the catcher. Even though two are out, the run would score on the theory that the run was forced home by the base on balls and that all the runners needed to do was proceed and touch the next base.*

- (b) a fielder, after catching a fly ball, falls into a stand, or falls across ropes into a crowd when spectators are on the field, or falls into other dead-ball areas;

NOTE: When a runner is entitled to a base without liability to be put out, while the ball is in play, or under any rule in which the ball is in play after the runner reaches an entitled base, and the runner fails to touch the base to which that runner is entitled before attempting to advance to the next base, the runner shall forfeit the exemption from liability to be put out and may be put out by tagging the base or by tagging the runner before that runner returns to the missed base.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *If a fielder, after having made a legal catch, should fall into a stand or among spectators or into the dugout or any other out-of-play area while in possession of the ball after making a legal catch, or fall while in the dugout after making a legal catch, the ball is dead and each runner shall advance one base, without liability to be put out, from his last legally touched base at the time the fielder fell into, or in, such out-of-play area,*

⇒ *Note that this is for a **BATTED** fly ball only. A batted bouncing ball is covered by 7.05 (f) and a thrown ball by 7.05 (g).*

- (c) **(JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL)** While the runner is attempting to steal a base, the batter is interfered with by the catcher or any other fielder.

NOTE: When a runner is entitled to a base without liability to be put out, while the ball is in play, or under any rule in which the ball is in play after the runner reaches an entitled base, and the runner fails to touch the base to which that runner is entitled before attempting to advance to the next base, the runner shall forfeit the exemption from liability to be put out and may be put out by tagging the base or by tagging the runner before that runner returns to the missed base.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Comment: A runner forced to advance without liability to be put out, may advance past the base to which he/she is entitled at his/her own risk.

7.05 -- Each runner including the batter-runner may, without liability to be putout, advance -

(a) to home base scoring a run, if a fair ball goes out of the playing field in flight and the runner touches all bases legally; or if a fair ball which, in the umpire’s judgment would have gone out of the playing field in flight (165 feet from home plate), is deflected by the act of a fielder in throwing a glove, cap, or any article of apparel;

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Comment: If this call is made, also warn the player that is throwing the glove, cap, or an article of apparel. That defensive player is making a travesty of the game.

(b) three bases, if a fielder deliberately touches a fair ball with a cap, mask or any part of that fielder’s uniform detached from its proper place on the person of said fielder. The ball is in play and the batter may advance to home base at the batter’s peril;

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Play 7-1: With his/her team way ahead, an infielder decides to showboat for his girlfriend in the stands. He glides under a soft pop-fly and catches it in his hat. Meanwhile, the batter races for second. **Ruling:** Batter is entitled to third base and ball remains in play.

(c) three bases, if a fielder deliberately throws a glove and touches a fair ball. The ball is in play and the batter may advance to home base at that batter’s own peril;

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *The glove must touch the ball, merely throwing the glove in it self is not against the rule. The act must be deliberate, not accidental. This penalty shall not be invoked against a fielder whose glove is carried off his/her hand by the force of a batted or thrown ball, or when his/her glove flies off his/her hand as he/she makes an obvious effort to make a legitimate catch. The ball remains alive and in play and the runner may advance to home if he/she wishes. Do not call “Time” when this act occurs.*

(d) two bases, if a fielder deliberately touches a thrown ball with a cap, mask or any part of the uniform detached from its proper place on the person of said fielder. The ball is in play;

(e) two bases, if a fielder deliberately throws a glove and touches a thrown ball. The ball is in play;

(f) two bases, if a fair ball bounces or is deflected into the stands outside the first or third base foul line; or if it goes through or under a field fence, or through or under a scoreboard, or through or under shrubbery or vines on the fence; or if it sticks in such fence, scoreboard, shrubbery or vines;

(g) two bases when with no spectators on the playing field, a thrown ball goes into the stands, or into a bench (whether or not the ball rebounds into the field), or over or under or through a field fence, or on a slanting part of the screen above the backstop, or remains in the meshes of wire screen protecting spectators. The ball is dead. When such wild throw is the first play by an infielder, the umpire, in awarding such bases, shall be governed by the position of the runners at the time the ball was pitched; in all other cases the umpire shall be governed by the position of the runners at the time the wild throw was made;

APPROVED RULING: If all runners, including the batter-runner have advanced at least one base when an infielder makes a wild throw on the first play after the pitch, the award shall be governed by the position of the runners when the wild throw was made;

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Comment: Position of the runners when the wild throw is released dictates where they are placed. **Play 7-2:** Runner on first, batter grounds to the shortstop who bobbles the ball long enough for a runner on first to get to second and batter-runner to get to first at which time he/she throws the ball into a dead ball area. What are the awards? **Ruling:** All (both) runners have advanced at least one base when wild throw was released, award home to runner and third to batter-runner.

Play 7-3: On a ball hit to right field, the runner on first rounds second and the batter rounds first. The right fielder throws behind the runner at first and the ball goes out of play. **Ruling:** Runner at second gets home and the batter-runner goes to third. (Time of the throw is the key!)

- (h) one base, if a ball, pitched to the batter, or thrown by the pitcher from the position on the pitcher's plate to a base to catch a runner goes into a stand or a bench, or over or through a field fence or backstop. The ball is dead;
- (i) one base, if the batter becomes a runner on ball four when the pitch passes the catcher and lodges in the umpire's mask or paraphernalia.
- (i) **(JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL/SOFTBALL)** one base, if the batter becomes a runner on ball four or strike three when the pitch passes the catcher and lodges in the umpire's mask or paraphernalia.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Comment: Both (h) and (i) pertain to a “dead ball” situation.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *The fact a runner is awarded a base or bases without liability to be put out does not relieve him/her of the responsibility to touch the base he/she is awarded and all intervening bases. For example: batter hits a ground ball that an infielder throws into the stands but the batter-runner missed first base. If he/she fails to touch 1st on his/her way to 2nd he/she may be called out on appeal for missing first base after the ball is put in play even though he/she was “awarded” second base.*
- ⇒ *If a runner is forced to return to a base after a catch, he/she must retouch his/her original base even though, because of some ground rule or other rule, he/she is awarded additional bases. He/she may retouch while the ball is dead and the award is then made from his/her original base.*

NOTE (1): If the batter becomes a runner on a wild pitch which entitles the runners to advance one base, the batter-runner shall be entitled to first base only but can advance beyond first base at their own risk if the ball stays in play.

NOTE (2): In Tee Ball, the runner or runners will be permitted to advance at their own risk on an overthrow that remains in play, but not more than one base.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Rule of thumb: Always remember on base awards “One from the pitcher's plate and two from the field.”

- (j) one base, if a fielder deliberately touches a pitched ball with his/her cap, mask or any part of his/her uniform detached from its proper place on his/her person. The ball is in play, and the award is made from the position of the runner at the time the ball was touched.

7.06 -- When the obstruction occurs the umpire shall call or signal “Obstruction.”

- (a) If a play is being made on the obstructed runner, or if the batter-runner is obstructed before touching first base, the ball is dead and all runners shall advance without liability to be put out, to the bases they would have reached, in the umpire's judgment, if there had been no obstruction. The obstructed runner shall be awarded at least one base beyond the base last legally touched by such runner, before the obstruction. Any preceding runners forced to advance by the award of bases as the penalty for obstruction shall advance without liability to be put out.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *When a play is being made on an obstructed runner, the umpire shall “Time”, identify the defensive player who did the obstruction and award base(s) accordingly. The ball is immediately dead when this signal is given; however, should a thrown ball be in flight before the obstruction is called by the umpire, the runners are to be awarded such bases on wild throws as they would have been awarded had the obstruction not occurred.*
- ⇒ *On a play where a runner was trapped between second and third and obstructed by the third baseman going into third base while the throw is in flight from the shortstop, if such throw goes into the dugout the obstructed runner is to be awarded home base. Any other runners on base in this situation would also be awarded two bases from the base they last legally touched before obstruction was called.*

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Play 7-4: Batter hits a slow roller down the first base line. Pitcher, thinking he/she has a play, hustles to the line to try and field the batted ball. The ball gets past the pitcher before he/she can get to it, but he/she inadvertently runs into the runner. **Ruling:** As soon as you judge obstruction, kill the play. Throw your hands above your head and call “time”. Then announce “obstruction”. Award bases accordingly.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ Remember that it makes no difference which direction the runner is running when he/she is obstructed. He/she is awarded at least one base beyond the one last legally touched before the obstruction.

(b) If no play is being made on the obstructed runner, the play shall proceed until no further action is possible. The umpire shall then call "Time" and impose such penalties, if any, as in that umpire's judgment will nullify the act of obstruction. **NOTE (1):** When the ball is not dead on obstruction and an obstructed runner advances beyond the base which, in the umpire's judgment, the runner would have been awarded because of being obstructed, the runner does so at his/her own risk and may be tagged out. This is a judgment call. **NOTE (2):** If the defensive player blocks the base (plate) or base line clearly without possession of the ball, obstruction shall be called. The runner is safe and a delayed dead ball shall be called.

"The Right Call" Casebook -- Play 7-5: Runner on first takes off with the crack of the bat. Seeing no trouble making third, he/she rounds second when he/she collides with the shortstop who is wandering around aimlessly. Runner continues to third and the ball beats him/her there. What is the call? **Ruling:** When the runner ran into the wandering shortstop signal and verbalize "obstruction", but allow the play to continue. On the play at third, raise both hands above your head and call "time". Explain obstruction on the shortstop, runner is "awarded" third base.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ See other situations and explanations covered under Rule 2.00-Obstruction.

7.07 (JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL) If, with a runner on third base and trying to score by means of a squeeze play or steal, the catcher or any other fielder steps on, or in front of home base without possession of the ball, or touches the batter or the bat, the pitcher shall be charged with a balk, the batter shall be awarded first on the interference and the ball is dead.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ This rule does not apply to Little League Majors and below.
 ⇒ Realistically, we know that it's impossible to enforce both a balk and catcher's interference on the same play. One had to occur before the other. When the phrase is used, "the pitcher shall be charged with a balk", that enforcement is simply a scorekeeping matter and results in the run being earned, instead of unearned.

7.08 -- Any runner is out when -

(a) (1) running more than three feet away from his/her baseline to avoid being tagged, unless such action is to avoid interference with a fielder fielding a batted ball. A runner's baseline is established when the tag attempt occurs and is a straight line from the runner to the base which he/she is attempting to reach;
 or

"The Right Call" Casebook -- Comment: When a play is being made on a runner, he/she establishes his/her base line as a straight line between his/her position and the base towards which he/she is moving.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ Be aware that the base runner makes his/her own baseline as he/she progresses (or regresses) around the bases. Depending on the circumstances, his/her baseline frequently may change as the play develops.

(2) after touching first base the runner leaves the baseline, obviously abandoning all effort to touch the next base; or

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ Any runner after reaching first base who leaves the baseline heading for his/her dugout or his/her position believing that there is no further play, may be declared out if the umpire judges the act of the runner to be considered abandoning his/her efforts to run the bases. Even though an out is called, the ball remains in play in regard to any other runner.
 PLAY: Runner believing he/she is called out on a tag at first or third base starts for the dugout and professes a reasonable distance still indicating by his/her actions that he/she is out, shall be declared out for abandoning the bases.

"The Right Call" Casebook -- Comment: When to call him/her out? Whenever he/she obviously "gives up" and heads towards his/her dugout or, at the end of an inning, towards his/her defensive position. But wait until the runner is on foul ground or well onto the outfield grass before you declare an out.

- (3) the runner does not slide or attempt to get around a fielder who has the ball and is waiting to make the tag; or

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Comment: There is “no” must slide rule. The rule is slide or attempt to get around. The key in this situation is “fielder has the ball and is waiting to make the tag.”

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Hurdling or going over the defensive player that has the ball and is waiting to make a tag is a legal maneuver. Rule 7.08(a) (3) does not prevent or make hurdling illegal.*
- ⇒ *Rule 7.08(a-3) is easily the most misunderstood rule in the book. It is easily broken down as follows:*
 - (1) *The fielder must have the ball in his/her possession; AND*
 - (2) *The fielder must be WAITING to make the tag;**If BOTH of those two criteria are satisfied, then the runner must EITHER:*
 - (1) *Slide; OR*
 - (2) *ATTEMPT to get around the fielder.*
- ⇒ *Notice that the rule says, “attempt to get around”, not “avoid”. Contact may occur with no penalty assessed.*
- ⇒ *There is no “Must Slide” rule and no league may create one. No league may modify Rule 7.08(a-3).*

- (4) **(MINOR/MAJOR BASEBALL/SOFTBALL)** the runner slides head first while advancing.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *This rule does not apply when a runner is returning to a base, only when advancing to a base. Any runner who does a headfirst slide is out at the moment the umpire sees the runner go into the headfirst slide. The ball remains alive and in play and runners may advance at their own risk and plays may be attempted on any other runners. If the runner who is called out for sliding headfirst has been forced to advance by the batter-runner this will be a force out and no runs will score if this is the third out of the inning. In all other instances the headfirst slide will be a timing play when there are two outs.*

(5) **(SOFTBALL)** the runner fails to keep contact with the base to which that runner is entitled until the ball has been batted or reaches the batter **[JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE SOFTBALL: until the ball has been released by the pitcher.]** When a runner is off a base after a pitch or as a result of a batter completing a turn at bat, and while the pitcher has the ball within the eight (8) foot radius circle, the runner must immediately attempt to advance to the next base or return to the base the runner is entitled. **Note:** If the pitcher has possession of the ball within the pitcher’s circle, and is not making a play (a fake throw is considered a play for the interpretation of this rule only), runners not in contact with their bases must immediately attempt to advance or return to base.

PENALTY: The ball is dead, “No Pitch” is declared, and the runner is out. Eight (8) foot radius circle must be properly marked.

APPROVED RULING: (Junior/Senior/Big League Baseball/Softball): When a batter becomes a runner on a third strike that is not caught, and starts for the bench or his/her position, that batter may advance to first base at any time before entering the bench. To put the batter out, the defense must tag the batter or first base before the batter touches first base.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *If the runner(s) is off a base when the pitcher has the ball within the eight-foot circle, the runner(s) may continue around the bases. Having the ball within the circle does NOT stop the runner(s).*
- ⇒ *If the pitcher has the ball within the eight-foot circle and the runner stops while off a base, the runner must IMMEDIATELY either advance OR return. The runner has a choice. When this choice is made, if the runner stops again before reaching the base, she shall be called out.*
- ⇒ *If the runner is on the base when the ball is returned to the pitcher within the eight-foot circle, the runner may not leave the base or will be called out.*
- ⇒ *The responsibility for the runners to advance or return is removed if the pitcher attempts a play on a runner. In Softball, a fake throw by the pitcher, from the eight-foot circle, IS considered an attempted play for the interpretation of the circle rule.*

- (b) intentionally interferes with a thrown ball; or hinders a fielder attempting to make a play on a batted ball; (**NOTE:** A runner who is adjudged to have hindered a fielder who is attempting to make a play on a batted ball is out whether it was intentional or not);

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *A runner who is adjudged to have hindered a fielder who is attempting to make a play on a batted ball is out whether it was intentional or not.*
- ⇒ *If, however, the runner has contact with a legally occupied base when he/she hinders the fielder, he/she shall not be called out unless, in the umpire's judgment, such hindrance, whether it occurs on fair or foul territory is intentional. If the umpire declares the hindrance intentional, the following penalty shall apply: With less than two out, the umpire shall declare both the runner and batter out. With two out, the umpire shall declare the batter out.*
- ⇒ *If, in a run-down between third base and home plate, the succeeding runner has advanced and is standing on third base when the runner in a run-down is called out for offensive interference, the umpire shall send the runner standing on third base back to second base. This same principle applies if there is a run-down between second and third base and succeeding runner has reached second (the reasoning is that no runner shall advance on an interference play and a runner is considered to occupy a base until he/she legally has reached the next succeeding base).*

"The Right Call" Casebook -- Comment: A runner need not get off his/her base on a ball that is popped in the air and coming down around his/her base. He/she may stay in contact with the base and show the umpire he/she is trying to avoid the fielder and if there is contact, the ball is alive and in play.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Once again, the base runner has the right of way to the baseline on a thrown ball and can only be called out if he/she INTENTIONALLY interferes with a thrown ball. On a batted ball, however, any interference, whether intentional or otherwise, must be enforced. This could be visual or verbal as well.*

- (c) that runner is tagged, when the ball is alive while off a base;

EXCEPTION: A batter-runner cannot be tagged out after overrunning or over sliding first base if said runner returns immediately to the base.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *This includes an award of first base on a base on balls when the runner touches 1st and then steps off.*

APPROVED RULING: (1) if the impact of a runner breaks a bag loose from its position, no play can be made on that runner at that base if the runner had reached the base safely.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *This provision applies if the runner reaches the base safely and does not attempt to advance further.*

APPROVED RULING: (2) If a base is dislodged from its position during a play, any following runner on the same play shall be considered as touching or occupying the base if, in the umpire's judgment, that runner touches or occupies the point marked by the dislodged base.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *The "point marked by the dislodged base" is where the base belongs, not where the base finally rests.*

- (d) failing to retouch the base after a fair or foul fly is legally caught before that runner or the base is tagged by a fielder. The runner shall not be called out for failure to retouch the base after the first following pitch, or any play or attempted play. This is an appeal play.

NOTE: Base runners can legally retouch their base once a fair ball in flight is touched and advance at their own risk and can also advance if a foul ball is caught.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Runners need not "tag up" on a foul tip. They may steal on a foul tip. If a so-called tip is not caught, it becomes an ordinary foul. Runners then return to their bases.*

- (e) failing to reach the next base before a fielder tags said runner or the base after that runner has been forced to advance by reason of the batter becoming a runner. However, if a following runner is put out on a force play, the force is removed and the runner must be tagged to be put out. The force is removed as soon as the runner touches the base to which that runner is forced to advance, and if over sliding or overrunning the base, the runner must be tagged to be put out. However, if the forced runner, after touching the next base, retreats for any reason towards the base last occupied, the force play is reinstated and the runner can again be put out if the defense tags the base to which the runner is forced;

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Runner on first and three balls on batter: Runner steals on the next pitch, which is fourth ball, but after having touched second he/she over slides or overruns that base. Catchers throw catches him/her before he/she can return. **Ruling:** Runner is out. (Force out is removed).*
- ⇒ *Over sliding and overrunning situations arise at bases other than first base. For instance, before two are out, and runners on first and second, or first, second and third, the ball is hit to an infielder who tries for the double play. The runner on first beats the throw to second base but over slides the base. The relay is made to first base and the batter-runner is out. The first baseman, seeing the runner at second base off the bag, makes the return throw to second and the runner is tagged off the base. Meanwhile runners have crossed the plate. The question is: Is this a force play? Do the runs that crossed the plate during this play and before the third out was made when the runner was tagged at second, count? Answer: The runs score. It is not a force play. It is a tag play.*

- (f) touched by a fair ball in fair territory before the ball has touched or passed an infielder. The ball is dead and no runner may score, no runners advance, except runners forced to advance;

EXCEPTION: If a runner is touching a base when touched by an Infield Fly, that runner is not out, although the batter is out.

NOTE 1: If a runner is touched by an Infield Fly when not touching a base, both the runner and batter are out.

NOTE 2: If two runners are touched by the same fair ball, only the first one is out because the ball is instantly dead.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Rule of Thumb: Call the runner out if the ball has not passed or touched an infielder.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *If the base runner is hit by a fair-batted ball while standing on the base, the runner is out, unless the ball has already passed an infielder OR it's a declared Infield Fly. The base is not a sanctuary.*

- (g) attempting to score on a play in which the batter interferes with the play at home base before two are out. With two out, the interference puts the batter out and no score counts;

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *The theory behind this rule is that you penalize what will hurt the offending team (offense) more; less than two out, runner is called out, but with two out, the batter is out and the runner won't score. This way the batter called out won't "leadoff" the following inning.*

- (h) passes a preceding runner before such runner is out;

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Comment: One runner may assist another runner in the base line providing the assisting runner is not out or has not passed the runner being assisted! **Play 7-9:** Runner on first. Batter hits the ball in between the outfielders. Runner on first falls down on his/her way to second. Batter-runner picks up the runner and sets him/her down on second and returns to first. **Ruling:** Legal play as long as batter-runner does not pass runner.

- (i) after acquiring legal possession of a base, the runner runs the bases in reverse order for the purpose of confusing the defense or making a travesty of the game. The umpire shall immediately call "Time" and declare the runner out;

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *This rule limitation does not prevent a runner from returning to a base, such as in a rundown, or a play in which the batter was retired on a fly ball.*

⇒ *The batter is not forced to run to first base on a batted ball. He/she may return as far as home plate if he/she desires. At that point, however, the umpire will call him/her out.*

- (j) failing to return at once to first base after overrunning or over-sliding that base. If attempting to run to second the runner is out when tagged. If after overrunning or over-sliding first base, the runner starts toward the dugout, or toward a position, and fails to return to first base at once, that runner is out on appeal, when said runner or the base is tagged.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Comment: A runner may turn in any direction after reaching first base even on a base on balls. Establish the runner’s intent to determine if he/she may be put out before returning to first. If an out call is appropriate, the runner must be tagged.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *“Attempting to run to second” can mean as little as a step in that direction. The intent of the runner, even momentarily, determines whether or not the runner is in jeopardy of being tagged out.*
- ⇒ *If, after overrunning first base, the runner turns to the right, well into foul territory, and notices that the ball was overthrown. Even though the runner is clearly in foul territory, if he/she makes any move as if to run to second, he/she is in jeopardy of being tagged out.*

- (k) in running or sliding for home plate, the runner fails to touch home base and makes no attempt to return to the base, when a fielder holds the ball in hand, while touching home base, and appeals to the umpire for a decision. (**NOTE:** This rule applies only where the runner is on the way to the bench and a fielder would be required to chase the runner to tag him/her. It does not apply to the ordinary play where the runner misses the plate and then immediately makes an effort to touch the plate before being tagged. In that case, the runner must be tagged.)

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Comment: If the runner misses home plate and immediately returns, he/she must be tagged to be out.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *In the event the runner is attempting to return to touch home plate, keep in mind, even though a baseline doesn't formally exist past home plate, the umpire should recognize a “three-feet either way, directly back to home plate” restriction.*

7.09 -- It is interference by a batter or a runner when -

- (a) the batter hinders the catcher in an attempt to field the ball;
- (b) the batter intentionally deflects the course of a foul ball in any manner;
- (c) before two are out and a runner on third base, the batter hinders a fielder in making a play at home base; the runner is out;

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *With two out, the batter would be called out, the run will not score and the batter will not leadoff the next inning.*

- (d) any member or members of the offensive team stand or gather around any base to which a runner is advancing, to confuse, hinder or add to the difficulty of the fielders. Such runner shall be declared out for the interference of teammate or teammates;
- (e) any batter or runner who has just been put out hinders or impedes any following play being made on a runner. Such runner shall be declared out for interference by a teammate;

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *When a runner is moving toward second base on a double play ball, there is no requirement for the runner to slide. The fielder must expect the runner to be there. As long as the runner is moving toward the base, there would generally be no interference.*
- ⇒ *If sliding into second base, the runner must be able to reach the base with hand or feet. If the sliding runner is not able to reach the base with his/her hand or feet, and in the umpires judgment the slide caused the second baseman not to complete the double play, call interference and get the out at 1st base also.*

- ⇒ *If the batter or a runner continues to advance after he/she has been put out, he/she shall not by that act alone be considered as confusing, hindering or impeding the fielders.*
- ⇒ *If contact between the runner and fielder occurs after the ball is released, there would be no interference.*

- (f) if, in the judgment of the umpire, a base runner willfully and deliberately interferes with a batted ball or a fielder in the act of fielding a batted ball with the obvious intent to break up a double play, the ball is dead. The umpire shall call the runner out for interference and also call out the batter-runner because of the action of the runner. In no event may bases be run or runs scored because of such action by a runner;

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Play 7-10: Runners on first and third, no outs. Ball grounded towards second. The runner on third going home. The runner on first stops momentarily in front of the second baseman causing him/her to miss the ball. **Ruling:** This is intentional interference. The runner from first AND the batter-runner are called out. The runner from third is returned to third.

- (g) if, in the judgment of the umpire, a batter-runner willfully and deliberately interferes with a batted ball or a fielder in the act of fielding a batted ball, with the obvious intent to break up a double play, the ball is dead. The umpire shall call the batter-runner out for interference and shall also call out the runner who advanced closest to the home plate regardless of where the double play might have been possible. In no event shall bases be run because of such interference;

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Play 7-11: Runners on first and third, no outs. Batter bunts the ball down the first base line with the runners advancing. The pitcher is about to field the ball for a play at second and the batter-runner intentionally runs into him/her. **Ruling:** The batter-runner and runner on third are called out. The runner from first is returned to first.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Notice the difference between 7.09(f) and 7.09(g). While both situations involve willful and deliberate actions, one is committed by a base runner; the other is committed by the batter-runner. This changes the penalty.*

- (h) in the judgment of the umpire, the base coach at third base, or first base, by touching or holding the runner, physically assists that runner in returning to or leaving third base or first base;

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Play 7-12: Runner on third, one out, fly ball hit to deep left. Runner on third stays on the bag waiting for the third base coach to signal when the catch is made. The coach slaps the runner on the back when the ball is caught; he/she runs home and scores. **Ruling:** WRONG! Runner declared out because the third base coach touching him/her was illegal assistance. **Play 7-13:** The runner trips over the base rounding third. The coach helps him/her up and pushes the runner back to third or sends him/her home. **Ruling:** Runner is out because of the coach’s assistance. **Play 7-14:** The batter hits a home run with the bases full. Each runner who passes the third base coach is congratulated with a “high five” by the base coach. **Ruling:** No call. This is not assistance. **Comment:** When a play is being made on the assisted runner, the umpire shall call “Time” and enforce the penalty: The runner is out and all runners return to the bases occupied at the time of the interference. If no play is being made on the assisted runner, the umpire shall signal that the runner is out and allow plays on other runners if possible (delayed dead ball).

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Giving a “high five” or patting the player on the back after a home run IS NOT PHYSICAL ASSISTANCE. Do not call the player out for receiving a “high five” or a congratulatory pat on the back in situations such as this.*
- ⇒ *Physically assisting implies that the coach did something by touching the runner which improved that runner’s chance of accomplishing his/her goal as a runner. In other words, touching alone does not constitute **physically assisting**, the umpire must be convinced that the runner is trying to get back to a base or is trying to advance with a sense of urgency.*
- ⇒ *When a play is being made on the **assisted** runner, the umpire should call “Time” and enforce the penalty: The runner is out and all runners return to the bases occupied at the time of the interference (assistance). If no play is being made on the assisted runner, the umpire shall signal that the runner is out and allow plays on other runners if possible (delayed dead ball).*

- (i) with a runner on third base, the base coach leaves the box and acts in any manner to draw a throw by a fielder;

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Play 7-15: Runner on third, one out, fly ball to right field. Third base coach dashes down the line toward home and draws a throw that gets by the catcher, allowing the runner on third to score. **Ruling:** Call the runner out for interference by third base coach.

- (j) the runner fails to avoid a fielder who is attempting to field a batted ball, or intentionally interferes with a thrown ball, provided that if two or more fielders attempt to field a batted ball and the runner comes in contact with one or more of them, the umpire shall determine which fielder is entitled to the benefit of this rule, and shall not declare the runner out for coming in contact with a fielder other than the one the umpire determines to be entitled to field such ball;

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *This further demonstrates that the right of way to the baseline belongs to the fielder on a batted ball and to the base runner on a thrown ball.*

- (k) a fair ball touches the batter or runner in fair territory before touching a fielder. If a fair ball goes through or by an infielder and touches a runner immediately back of said infielder or touches the runner after having been deflected by a fielder, the umpire shall not declare the runner out for being touched by a batted ball. In making such decision, the umpire must be convinced that the ball passed through or by the infielder and that no other infielder had a chance to make a play on the ball. If in the judgment of the umpire, the runner deliberately and intentionally kicks such a batted ball on which the infielder had missed a play, then the runner shall be called out for interference.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *If a batted ball goes past an infielder and hits a runner, the umpire must determine if another infielder had a chance to make a play. Example: Runner on second base. The batter smacks a ground ball between third base and shortstop. The ball gets by the third baseman diving to his/her left and hits the runner advancing to third. In your judgment the shortstop had a good chance of fielding the ball and retiring the batter-runner but the ball hit the runner. Rule the runner out for interference and award the batter runner 1st base.*

PENALTY FOR INTERFERENCE: The runner is out and the ball is dead.

7.10 -- Any runner shall be called out on appeal -

- (a) after a fly ball is caught the runner fails to retouch the base before said runner or the base is tagged; (**NOTE:** “Retouch” in this rule means to tag up and start from a contact with the base after the ball is caught. A runner is not permitted to take a flying start from a position in back of, and not touching, the base);

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *This is an example when an appeal does not have to be made verbally. When a runner is returning to a base on a caught fly ball, if the ball arrives before the runner does, the umpire will call the runner out.*

- (b) with the ball in play, while advancing or returning to a base, the runner fails to touch each base in order before said runner, or a missed base, is tagged;

APPROVED RULING: (1) No runner may return to touch a missed base after a following runner has scored. (2) When the ball is dead no runner may return to touch a missed base or one abandoned after said runner has advanced to and touched a base beyond the missed base.

Examples:

Play A – Batter hits ball out of the park, or hits a ground rule double, and misses first base (ball is dead). The runner may return to first base to correct the mistake before touching second. But if the runner touches second, he/she may not return to first and if the defensive team appeals, the runner is declared out at first. (Appeal play.)

Play B – Batter hits a ground ball to shortstop, who throws wild into the stands (ball is dead). Batter-runner misses first base but is awarded second base on the overthrow. Even though the umpire has awarded the runner second base on the overthrow, the runner must touch first base before proceeding to second base. (Appeal play.)

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Play 7-16: Runners on second and third. Batter hits a triple. Runner from third misses home plate, runner from second tags home plate. Now runner from third returns and touches home plate. **Ruling:** Too late! Does not change a thing. Runner from third is still in jeopardy of being called out on an appeal.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *A common play that confuses many is when a throw is made to first base to retire a batter-runner that misses first. If the ball arrives after the batter-runner has missed first and advanced past first, signal the runner "Safe". This is now an appeal play, since the runner is considered as having touched a base when they move past a base until such time he/she is appealed.*

- (c) the runner overruns or over-slides first base and fails to return to the base immediately, and said runner or the base is tagged;
- (d) the runner fails to touch home base and makes no attempt to return to that base, and home base is tagged; NOTE: A runner forfeits his/her opportunity to return to home base when he/she enters the dugout or any other dead ball area.

Any appeal under this rule must be made before the next pitch, or any play or attempted play.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *In Softball, a fake throw by the pitcher, from within the eight-foot circle is considered an attempted play for the interpretation of the circle rule. See 7.08(4). Any other fielder in Softball making a fake throw is NOT to be considered as having made an attempted play. A fake throw is NOT an attempted play in Baseball.*

If the violation occurs during a play which ends a half-inning, the appeal must be made before the defensive team leaves the field. (The defensive team has left the field when no players remain in fair territory).

An appeal is not to be interpreted as a play or an attempted play.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *This is only to enable the defense to execute more than one appeal. If an appeal were considered a play or an attempted play, then no further appeals could be allowed.*

[SOFTBALL: In making an appeal, the pitcher shall not throw to a base while the foot is in contact with the pitcher's plate. After taking the pitching position, the pitcher shall step backwards off the pitcher's plate (with the pivot foot first) to begin the appeal. Penalty: Call an illegal pitch and award a ball to the batter.]

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *In Baseball, an appeal may be made directly from the pitcher's plate. If, however, the pitcher decides to disengage the pitcher's plate, he/she must do so with the pivot foot first; otherwise, it will be a balk or illegal pitch. With no runners on base, it makes no difference, since the pitcher cannot balk without runners on base.*

Successive appeals may not be made on a runner at the same base. If the defensive team on its first appeal errs, a request for a second appeal on the same runner at the same base shall not be allowed by the umpire. (Intended meaning of the word "err" is that the defensive team in making an appeal threw the ball out of play. For example, if the pitcher threw to first base to appeal and threw the ball into the stands, no second appeal would be allowed.)

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Anytime the defensive team, in making an appeal, causes the ball to become dead with runners advancing (balk, throw out of play, etc.), no second appeal will be allowed on any runner. Such act would now be considered an attempted play, and thus would nullify further appeals.*

NOTE: (1) Appeal plays may require an umpire to recognize an apparent "fourth out." If the third out is made during a play in which an appeal play is sustained on another runner, the appeal play decision takes precedence in determining the out. If there is more than one appeal during a play that ends a half-inning, the defense may elect to take the out that gives it the advantage. For the purposes of this rule, the defensive team has "left the field" when all players have left fair territory on their way to the bench or dugout.

NOTE: (2) If a pitcher commits an illegal pitch (a balk in Junior/Senior/Big League) when making an appeal, such act shall be a play. An appeal should be clearly intended to be an appeal, either by request by the player or an act that unmistakably indicates an appeal to the umpire. A player, inadvertently stepping on the base with a ball in hand, would not constitute an appeal. Ball must be live to make an appeal.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Play 7-17: Runners on first and third, two outs. The batter singles to left field. The runner on third scores and runner on first is thrown out trying to reach third, missing second on his/her way, for the third out. The defensive team is leaving the field when the defensive coach yells at the right fielder, the last player in fair territory, to pick up the ball, step on second, appeal the runner missing second. **Ruling:** The runner is out on a force at second. The fourth out takes precedence over the third out and the run scored is nullified.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- How to make a proper appeal: To make an appeal, first you (the umpire) must make sure the ball is live. If the ball is live, it does NOT have to go back to the pitcher. The ball may be taken straight to the base missed, or to the runner who missed the base or who left early. The base or the runner can be tagged. The defense then tells the umpire what they are doing. **Example:** “Mr. Umpire, the runner who was on second left before the catch.” The umpire then declares the runner either safe or out. If the umpire has a dead ball situation, in other words, “time” has been called or the ball has gone into a dead ball area, he/she must first make a live ball situation. How do the umpires make a ball live after it was dead? CPR! No. I refer you to Rule 5.11. Get a ball to the pitcher, get him/her to toe the pitcher’s plate (stand on it), and you, the umpire, yell “play” or “play ball”. Now the ball is alive. Now follow the procedure outlined above for a live ball appeal.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *If a pitcher balks when making an appeal, the balk is considered a play. An appeal should be clearly intended as an appeal, either by a verbal request by the player or an act that unmistakably indicates an appeal to the umpire. A player, inadvertently stepping on the base with a ball in his/her hand, would not constitute an appeal. Time is not out when an appeal is being made.*

7.11 -- The players, coaches or any member of an offensive team shall vacate any space (including both dugouts) needed by a fielder who is attempting to field a batted or thrown ball.

PENALTY: Interference shall be called and the batter or runner on whom the play is being made shall be declared out.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Obviously, since in Little League programs, the dugouts are out of play, the fielder may not go into a dugout to make a play. However, if someone inside the dugout interferes with the player when he/she reaches into the dugout, interference shall be called. Depending on the team at fault, this could result in an out call, awarding bases, or nullifying the outcome.*

7.12 -- Unless two are out, the status of a following runner is not affected by a preceding runner's failure to touch or retouch a base. If, upon appeal, the preceding runner is the third out, no runners following the preceding runner may score. If such a third out is the result of a force play, neither the preceding nor following runners shall score.

7.13 (MINOR/MAJOR BASEBALL) -- When a pitcher is in contact with the pitcher's plate and in possession of the ball and the catcher is in the catcher’s box ready to receive delivery of the ball, base runners shall not leave their bases until the ball has been delivered and has reached the batter. **NOTE:** In Tee Ball and Minor Leagues, the local league may adopt the option that a base runner is called out for leaving the base before the pitched ball has reached the batter.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *If, in the umpire's judgment, the manager is instructing his/her players to leave early intentionally, the manager may be warned and/or ejected from the game for deliberately violating the rules.*
- ⇒ *When a runner is legitimately off his/her base, the pitcher cannot stop the runner by taking the ball back to the pitcher's plate.*
- ⇒ *The catcher is “ready to receive delivery” of the pitch when he/she has his/her mask on and is facing the pitcher. It is not necessary for him/her to be in a squat position.*
- ⇒ *Until the pitcher and catcher have satisfied the above elements of this rule, the runners are free to advance without violation.*

The violation by one base runner shall affect all other base runners -

- (a) when a base runner leaves the base before the pitched ball has reached the batter and the batter does not hit the ball, the runner is permitted to continue. If a play is made on the runner and the runner is out, the out stands. If said runner reaches safely the base to which the runner is advancing, that runner must be returned to the base occupied before the pitch was made, and no out results;

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *It doesn't matter which runner leaves early. The violation affects each and every base runner.*
 ⇒ *Rule 7.13(a) will be enforced after all play has stopped. If the batter does not hit the ball, umpires will allow the play to continue until all play has been completed. Any outs on the play will stand. All other runner(s) will return to their original base or bases.*

[CHALLENGER: Base stealing is not permitted. Base runners shall not leave their bases until the ball is batted. Violation: All base runners are returned to their original bases and “no pitch” declared.]

- (b) when a base runner leaves the base before the pitched ball has reached the batter and the batter hits the ball, the base runner or runners are permitted to continue. If a play is made and the runner or runners are put out, the out or outs will stand. If not put out, the runner or runners must return to the original base or bases or to the unoccupied base nearest the one that was left;

In no event shall the batter advance beyond first base on a single or error, second base on a double or third base on a triple. The umpire-in-chief shall determine the base value of the hit ball.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Play 7-18: Bases loaded and any one of the runners leaves his/her base early, batter hits a clean triple, but is thrown out at the plate trying to score after the over throw at third. **Ruling:** “Time” is called, the out stands. Return all runners to first, second and third.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Note that the umpire determines the base value of the hit ball, not the scorekeeper. This is not protestable, but rather the judgment of the umpire.*
 ⇒ *The batter may not advance beyond first base on a single or an error, including two-base errors, obstruction or any other award he/she may receive.*
 ⇒ *If at the end of the entire play, an open base exists, the runners must return to the original base or to the one nearest to the one that was left early.*

- (c) when any base runner leaves the base before the pitched ball has reached the batter and the batter bunts or hits the ball within the infield, no run shall be allowed to score. If three runners were on the bases and the batter reaches first base safely, each runner shall advance to the base beyond the one they occupied at the start of the play except the runner on third base, which runner shall be removed from the base without a run being scored.

NOTE: See exceptions following this rule.

EXCEPTION: If at the conclusion of the play there is an open base, paragraphs (a) and (b) will apply.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Play 7-19: Bases loaded and any one of the runners leaves his/her base early. Ball hit to shortstop that goes through his/her legs onto the outfield grass. **Ruling:** All runners advance safely. One run will score because the ball was not valued as an infield hit. Remember, the ball must stay in the infield to use 7.13(c).

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Logic behind 7.13(c) is as follows: If the ball makes it to the outfield, all runners would normally be expected to advance one base safely, so in a bases loaded situation, one run would score. In the same bases loaded situation, however, if the ball stayed within the infield, a runner leaving early may have prevented the defense from executing a force play at one of the bases, so no run will score.*
 ⇒ *If a runner is removed by enforcing this rule, instruct the scorekeeper to write 7.13(c) (the rule reference) with a large “X” through the box. No run is scored, no out is recorded and no runner is left on base.*

EXAMPLES:

1. Runner on first leaves too soon, batter reaches first safely, runner goes to second.

2. Runner on second leaves too soon, batter reaches first safely, runner returns to second.
3. Runner on third leaves too soon, batter reaches first safely, runner returns to third.
4. Runner on first leaves too soon, batter hits clean double, runner goes to third only.
5. Runner on second leaves too soon, batter hits clean double, runner goes to third only.
6. Runner on third leaves too soon, batter hits clean double, runner returns to third.
7. All runners on base will be allowed to score when the batter hits a clean triple or home run, regardless of whether any runner left too soon.
8. Runners on first and second, either leaves too soon, batter reaches first safely, runners go to second and third.
9. Runners on first and second, either leaves too soon, batter hits clean double, runner on first goes to third, runner on second scores.
10. Runners on first and third, either leaves too soon, batter reaches first safely, runner on first goes to second, runner on third remains there.
11. Runners on first and third, either leaves too soon, batter hits a clean double, runner on first goes to third, runner on third scores.
12. Runners on second and third, either leaves too soon, batter reaches first safely, neither runner can advance.
13. Runners on second and third, either leaves too soon, batter hits a clean double, runner on third scores, runner on second goes to third.
14. Runners on first, second and third, any runner leaves too soon, batter hits clean double, runners on second, third score, runner on first goes to third.
15. Bases full, any runner leaves too soon, batter reaches first safely on any ball bunted or hit within the infield, all runners advance one base except runner advancing from third. Runner advancing from third is removed, no run is scored and no out charged. If on the play, a putout at any base results in an open base, runner who occupied third base returns to third base.
16. Bases full, any runner leaves too soon, batter received a base on balls or is hit by a pitch, each runner will advance one base and a run will score.

NOTE (1): When an umpire detects a base runner leaving the base too soon, that umpire shall drop a signal flag immediately to indicate the violation.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *The note indicates "drop a signal flag" to indicate the violation. This shall be done immediately. Do not trust this to memory. It's tough to sell that a runner left early, if there was no visible verification.*

NOTE (2): For purpose of these examples, it is assumed that the batter-runner remains at the base last acquired safely.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *If the batter-runner or any other base runner is put out on a play in which a runner left early, it may result in open base(s), in which case, runners will return.*

7.13 (MINOR/MAJOR SOFTBALL) -- When the pitcher is in the eight (8) foot radius circle and in possession of the ball, the base runner(s) shall not leave their base(s) until the pitched ball has been batted or reaches the batter. See Rule 7.08(a) (5) for penalty.

PENALTY: The ball is dead. "No Pitch" is declared, and the runner is out.

Applies to all divisions of Softball - “The Right Call” Casebook --Note: If the pitcher has possession of the ball within the pitcher’s circle, and is not making a play (a fake throw by the pitcher is considered a play), runners not in contact with their bases must immediately attempt to advance or return to base. **Comment:** (1) Don’t guess her out! Make sure she left early or was off the base when the ball is in the circle. (2) The defense cannot freeze runners merely by getting the ball in the circle. Any runner(s) advancing or returning to base may do so without penalty. **Play 7-24:** With a runner on second, the batter takes a called third strike for the first out of the inning; meanwhile, the runner on second leads off after the catcher received the pitch. Catcher returns ball to the pitcher who has it within the eight (8) foot radius of the pitcher’s plate. The runner at this moment makes no attempt to move either way. **Ruling:** The runner must immediately return to second or immediately advance to the next base. Failure to immediately return to her base or proceed to the next base once the pitcher has the ball within the eight (8) foot radius of the pitcher’s plate will result in the base-runner being declared out.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Note: While only one runner can be declared out for a single violation of the rule, this important point should be followed: If several runners violate, declare out the most advanced runner.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ For added clarification, please see comments after (Softball) Rule 7.08(a-5).

7.13 (JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE SOFTBALL) -- When the pitcher is in the eight (8) foot radius circle and in possession of the ball, the base runner(s) shall not leave their base(s) until the pitched ball has been released by the pitcher. See Rule 7.08(a) (5) for penalty.

PENALTY: The ball is dead. “No Pitch” is declared, and the runner is out.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Note: While only one runner can be declared out for a single violation of the rule, this important point should be followed: If several runners violate, declare out the most advanced runner.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ For added clarification, please see comments after (Softball) Rule 7.08(a-5).

7.14 -- Once each inning, a team may utilize a player who is not in the batting order as a special pinch-runner for any offensive player. A player may only be removed for a pinch runner one time during a game. The player for whom the pinch-runner runs is not subject to removal from the lineup. If the pinch runner remains in the game as a substitute defensive or offensive player, that player may not be used again as a pinch-runner while in the batting order. However, if removed for another substitute that player or any player not in the lineup, is again eligible to be used as a pinch runner. **NOTE:** Does not apply if local league adopts the continuous batting order. See Rule 4.04.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Play 7-20: Bottom of the 7th inning, no outs and tie score, Billy strokes a single; however, he is also the team’s slowest runner. In an attempt to get speed in the game, the manager wants to use Jane as a “special pinch-runner.” Jane had been in the game in innings 3 through 6. Is this legal? **Ruling:** Yes. A player who is not in the lineup may be used as a special pinch runner. As long as Jane is not currently in the game (lineup); she is eligible to be pinch runner.

7.15 - Procedures for Use of a Double First Base: The double base may be used for first base only. The base must be rectangular, with two sides not less than 14 inches and not more than 15 inches, and the other two sides not less than 29 inches and not more than 30 inches. The longer sides shall face toward home plate and the right field corner. The outer edges shall not be more than two and one-fourth (2 ¼) inches thick, filled with soft material, and covered with canvas or rubber. Half the base is white (entirely over fair territory) and half is orange or green (entirely over foul territory). When using the double first base, the following rules must be observed:

- a. A batted ball that hits the white section of the double base shall be declared fair. A batted ball that hits the colored (orange or green) section, without first touching or bounding over the white section, shall be declared foul.
- b. Whenever a play is being made on the batter-runner, the defense must use the white section of the double first base. **NOTE 1:** A play is being made on the batter-runner when he/she is attempting to reach first base while the defense is attempting to retire him/her at that

- base. **Penalty:** Batter-runner is out. **NOTE 2:** If there is a play on the batter-runner, and the batter-runner touches only the white portion and the defense appeals prior to the batter-runner returning to first base it is treated the same as missing the base.
- c. Whenever a play is being made on the batter-runner, the batter-runner must use the colored (orange or green) section on his/her first attempt to tag first base. **NOTE:** On extra-base hits or other balls hit to the outfield when there is no chance for a play to be made at the double first base, the batter-runner may touch either the white or colored (orange or green) section of the base. Should, however, the batter-runner reach and go beyond first base, he/she may only return to the white section of the base. **Penalty:** If there is a play on the batter-runner, and the batter-runner touches only the white portion and the defense appeals prior to the batter-runner returning to first base, it is treated the same as missing the base. If properly appealed, the batter-runner is out.
 - d. When tagging up on a fly ball, the white section of the base must be used by the runner. One foot is permitted to extend behind the base into foul territory, as long as the front foot is touching the white section of the base. **Penalty:** If properly appealed runner is out.
 - e. When leaving base on a pitched ball in Little League Baseball/Softball (Majors and below), the runner must maintain contact with the white section of the base until the ball has reached the batter. **Penalty:** See Rule 7.13. **(JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE SOFTBALL)** A runner must maintain contact with the white section of the base until the ball has been released by the pitcher. Runners may extend a foot behind the base, but must maintain contact with the white section until the ball has reached the batter.
 - f. On an attempted pick-off play, the runner must return to the white section of the base only. This includes a throw from the pitcher, catcher, or any other player, in an attempt to retire the runner at the double first base.
 - g. **In Junior, Senior and Big League divisions**, when the batter becomes a runner on a third strike not caught by the catcher, the batter-runner and the defensive player may use either the colored (orange or green) or the white section.
 - h. Use of the double first base does not change any other rule concerning interference or obstruction at first base. (An errant throw into the three-foot running lane could still result in an obstruction call. Also, the batter-runner must still avoid interference with the fielder attempting to field a batted ball.)

8.00 -- THE PITCHER (BASEBALL)

8.01 (BASEBALL) -- Legal pitching delivery. There are two legal pitching positions, the Windup Position and the Set Position, and either position may be used at any time.

Pitchers shall take signs from the catcher while standing on the pitcher's plate.

Pitcher's may disengage the pitcher's plate after taking their signs but may not step quickly onto the pitcher's plate and pitch. This may be judged a quick pitch by the umpire. When the pitcher disengages the pitcher's plate, he/she must separate and drop his/her hands to the sides, before stepping back onto the pitcher's plate.

[CHALLENGER: Players may pitch. A player, referred to as the pitcher, shall be positioned in the pitching circle during play.]

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Comment: The pitcher may take signs from the manager or coach while on the rubber as long as he/she does not “unnecessarily delay” the game. This is also to prevent the pitcher from throwing a “Quick Pitch” by taking the sign while off the rubber and quickly walking through the pitching motion. If the manager/coach insists on calling pitches, the manager/coach should give the signs to the catcher who relays it to the pitcher while the pitcher is on the rubber.

- (a) **The Windup Position.** The pitcher shall stand facing the batter, the pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate, and the other foot free. From this position any natural movement associated with the delivery of the ball to the batter commits the pitcher to pitch without interruption or alteration. The pitcher shall not raise either foot from the ground, except that in the actual delivery of the ball to the batter, said pitcher may take one step backward and one step forward with the free foot.

From this position the pitcher may:

- (1) deliver the ball to the batter, or
- (2) step and throw to a base in an attempt to pick off a runner, or
- (3) disengage the pitcher's plate. In disengaging the pitcher's plate, the pitcher must step off with the pivot foot and not the free foot first. The pitcher may not go into a set or stretch position. If the pitcher does, it is an illegal pitch (**a balk in Junior/Senior/Big League Baseball**).

NOTE: When a pitcher holds the ball with both hands in front of the body, with the entire pivot foot on, or in front of and touching but not off the end of the pitcher's plate, and the other foot free, that pitcher will be considered in a Windup Position.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *It is legal to step and throw to a base from the windup position. However, once the pitcher begins his/her pitching motion, which can include a step back with the non-pivot foot, he/she is committed to the pitch and may not throw to a base.*

- (b) **The Set Position.** Set Position shall be indicated by the pitcher when that pitcher stands facing the batter with the pivot foot in contact with, and the other foot in front of the pitcher's plate, holding the ball in both hands in front of the body and coming to a complete stop. From such set position the pitcher may deliver the ball to the batter, throw to a base or step backward off the pitcher's plate with the pivot foot. Before assuming the Set Position, the pitcher may elect to make any natural preliminary motion such as that known as “the stretch.” But if the pitcher so elects, that pitcher shall come to the Set Position before delivering the ball to that batter.

NOTE: The pitcher need not come to a complete stop in Little League (Minor/Major). **Junior/Senior/Big League Baseball** the pitcher must come to a complete and discernible stop.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Comment: In Major Little League (and below), the pitcher may windup from the Set Position.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Comment: In Juniors, Seniors & Big League, the pitcher, following “the stretch”, must hold the ball in both hands in front of his/her body **AND** come to a complete stop, with both feet on the ground. Umpires should watch this closely and should immediately call a “balk” for any violation made with runners on base.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *In Majors and Minors, the pitcher need not come to a complete stop in a set position, since the base runners may not leave their bases until the ball reaches the batter.*
- ⇒ *While it is legal in the Majors and Minors for a pitcher to windup from a set position, it is a delivery that should not be taught. It will be a balk once the pitcher enters the Junior Division.*

(c) At any time during the pitcher's preliminary movements and until the natural pitching motion commits that pitcher to the pitch, said pitcher may throw to any base provided the pitcher steps directly toward such base before making the throw. The pitcher shall step "ahead of the throw." A snap throw followed by the step toward the base is an illegal pitch. (See Penalty for illegal pitch under Rule 8.05)

[JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE: Balk not illegal pitch]

(d) If the pitcher makes an illegal pitch with the bases unoccupied, it shall be called a ball unless the batter reaches first base on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batter or otherwise. A ball which slips out of the pitcher's hand and crosses the foul line shall be called a ball; otherwise it will be called "no pitch" without runners on base, and an illegal pitch with runners on base. (See Penalty for illegal pitch under Rule 8.05.)

[JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE: Balk not illegal pitch]

(e) If the pitcher removes the pivot foot from contact with the pitcher's plate by stepping backward with that foot, that pitcher thereby becomes an infielder and in the case of a wild throw from that position, it shall be considered the same as a wild throw by any other infielder.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *The pitcher, while off the pitcher's plate may throw to any base. If he/she makes a wild throw, such throw is the throw of an infielder and what follows is governed by the rules covering a ball thrown by a fielder. See Rule 7.05(g).*

(f) **Tee Ball:** The pitcher shall keep both feet on the pitcher's plate until the ball is hit.

8.02 (BASEBALL) -- The pitcher shall not -

(a) (1) bring the pitching hand in contact with the mouth or lips while in the 10 foot circle **[18-foot circle JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE]** surrounding the pitcher's plate; **EXCEPTION:** Provided it is agreed to by both managers, the umpire, prior to the start of a game played in cold weather, may permit the pitcher to blow on his/her hands while in the 10/18-foot circle.

PENALTY: For violation of this part of the rule the umpires shall immediately call a ball and warn the pitcher that repeated violation of any part of this rule can cause the pitcher to be removed from the game. However, if the pitch is made and a batter reaches first base on a hit, an error, a hit bats-man or otherwise, and no runner is put out before advancing at least one base, the play shall proceed without reference to the violation.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Realistically, the pitch, in this circumstance, should never be delivered. The call should be made immediately when the pitcher touches his/her hand to his/her mouth.*
- ⇒ *Generally, the plate umpire should make this call, unless the pitcher's back is turned away from the plate.*
- ⇒ *If the pitcher commits this violation when "Time" has been called, simply warn the pitcher not to do it again.*

(2) apply a foreign substance of any kind to the ball;

(3) expectorate on the ball, either hand or the glove;

(4) rub the ball on the glove, person or clothing;

(5) deface the ball in any manner;

(6) deliver what is called the "shine" ball, "spit" ball, "mud" ball or "emery" ball. The pitcher is allowed to rub off the ball between the bare hands.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *If a pitcher were wearing a batting glove under his/her fielder's glove, it would be very difficult to rub the ball "between the bare hands." Simply, don't allow the pitcher to wear a batting glove and you avoid the problem.*

PENALTY: For violations of any part of this **Rule 8.02 (a), (2 thru 6)** umpire shall: Call the pitch a ball and warn the pitcher.

If a play occurs on the violation, the manager of the offense may advise the plate umpire of acceptance of the play. (Such election must be made immediately at end of the play.)

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *As with the elements of Rule 8.02 (a-1), the pitch should never be delivered. Call the violation when it happens.*

NOTE: A pitcher may use a rosin bag for the purpose of applying rosin to the bare hand or hands. Neither the pitcher nor any other player shall dust the ball with the rosin bag; neither shall the pitcher nor any other player be permitted to apply rosin from the bag to their glove or dust any part of the uniform with the rosin bag.

(b) Intentionally delay the game by throwing the ball to players other than the catcher, when the batter is in position, except in an attempt to retire a runner; or commit an illegal pitch for the purpose of not pitching to the batter (i.e. intentional walk, etc),

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *".....or commit an illegal pitch for the purpose of not pitching to the batter (i.e. intentional walk, etc)", was added to prevent managers from instructing their pitchers to just drop the ball or start and stop their motion to get the umpire to call an illegal pitch four times thus not requiring the pitcher to throw four pitches to give a batter an intentional walk. Warn the manager that he/she should stop the pitcher from doing this and send the manager home if the pitcher continues to try to beat the rules.*

PENALTY: If, after warning by the umpire, such delaying action is repeated, the pitcher can be removed from the game.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *The pitcher can be charged with a balk or illegal pitch for unnecessary delaying the game, as an intermediate step before ejection.*

(c) Intentionally pitch at the batter. If, in the umpire's judgment, such a violation occurs, the umpire shall warn the pitcher and the manager of the defense that another such pitch will mean immediate expulsion of the pitcher. If such pitch is repeated during the game, the umpire shall eject the pitcher from the game.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *To pitch at a batter's head is unsportsmanlike and EXTREMELY dangerous. It should be---and is---condemned by everybody. Umpires should act without hesitation in enforcement of this rule.*

(CHALLENGER) 8.02 -

(a) Adult volunteers may pitch to those players whose coordination and abilities allow them to hit a pitched ball. The pitching distance may be shortened as required.

(b) The batting tee, positioned at home plate, may be used for players not receiving the pitched ball. The umpire shall place the ball on the tee.

(c) The pitched ball and batting tee may be used interchangeably throughout the game.

8.03 (BASEBALL) -- When a pitcher takes his/her position at the beginning of each inning, that pitcher shall be permitted to pitch not to exceed eight preparatory pitches to the catcher during which play shall be suspended. Such preparatory pitches shall not consume more than one minute of time. If a sudden emergency causes a pitcher to be summoned into the game without any opportunity to warm up, the umpire-in-chief shall allow the pitcher as many pitches as the umpire deems necessary.

"The Right Call" Casebook -- Comment: To keep the game moving, enforce this rule.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *The eight preparatory pitches shall be made to the catcher, a practice catcher, or any other player.*

⇒ *The umpire will control the number of warm up pitches that an incoming pitcher will receive.*

8.04 (BASEBALL) -- When the bases are unoccupied, the pitcher shall deliver the ball to the batter within 20 seconds after the pitcher receives the ball. Each time the pitcher delays the game by violating this rule, the umpire shall call "Ball."

NOTE: The intent of this rule is to avoid unnecessary delays. The umpire shall insist that the catcher return the ball promptly to the pitcher, and that the pitcher take his/her position on the pitcher's plate promptly.

8.05 (MINOR/MAJOR BASEBALL) – An illegal pitch is when –

INSTRUCTORS COMMENTS:

⇒ *With no runners on base you only call an illegal pitch if (e) and/or (g) are committed. Otherwise, call nothing with no runners on base at any level of play.*

8.05 (JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL) - If there is a runner, or runners, a balk occurs when -

(a) the pitcher, while touching the plate, makes any motion naturally associated with the pitch and fails to make such delivery;

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Comment: If a pitcher swings any part of the free foot past the back edge of the pitcher's plate, the pitcher is required to pitch to the batter except to throw to second base on a pick-off play. Umpires should bear in mind that the purpose of the balk rule is to prevent the pitcher from deliberately deceiving the base runner. If there is doubt in the umpire's mind, the "intent" of the pitcher should govern.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *If the pitcher starts his/her delivery, in any way, and stops, the pitcher has violated the rule. Call a balk or illegal pitch.*

(b) the pitcher, while touching the plate, feints a throw to first base and fails to complete the throw;

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *A pitcher, while touching the plate, may fake to second or third base PROVIDED the base is occupied and the pitcher steps prior to the fake.*

(c) the pitcher, while touching the plate, fails to step directly toward a base before throwing to that base;

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Requires the pitcher, while touching the pitcher's plate, to step directly toward a base before throwing to that base. If a pitcher turns or spins off his/her free foot without actually stepping or if he/she turns his/her body and throws before stepping, it is a balk.*
- ⇒ *A pitcher is to step directly toward a base before throwing to that base but does not require him/her to throw (except to first base only) because he/she steps. It is possible, with runners on first and third, for the pitcher to step toward third and not throw, merely to bluff the runner back to third; then seeing the runner on first start for second, turn and step toward and throw to first base. This is legal. However, if, with runners on first and third, the pitcher, while in contact with the rubber, steps toward third and then immediately and in practically the same motion "wheels" and throws to first base, it is obviously attempt to deceive the runner at first base, and in such a move it is practically impossible to step directly toward first base before the throw to first base, and such a move shall be called a balk. Of course, if the pitcher steps off the pitcher's plate and then makes such a move, it is not a balk.*
- ⇒ *This frequently happens in one of two ways: (1) a left-hander, facing first base, steps toward the plate while throwing to first; and (2) a right-hander, who is facing third base, turns and pivots on the front (left) foot while throwing to first. Both of these moves are balks and should be enforced.*
- ⇒ *Both the "jump turn" and the "stutter-step" are legal provided it's a quick and fluid motion. If there is any interruption, call a balk.*

(d) the pitcher, while touching the plate, throws, or feints a throw to an unoccupied base, except for the purpose of making a play;

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Throwing to an unoccupied base to make an appeal is acceptable and not a balk.*
- ⇒ *An example of a move that would be a balk: A runner on first breaks for second. The pitcher, sensing that the runner is stealing second, turns and throws to second base, while the runner is back at first. Since there was no play at second, call a balk.*

(e) the pitcher makes a quick pitch;

NOTE: Umpires will judge a quick pitch as one delivered before the batter is reasonably set in the batter's box.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *A quick pitch is an illegal pitch. In Little League (Minors/Majors and all divisions of softball) a quick pitch is only a ball to the batter with or without runners. In Junior/Senior/Big League Baseball with runners on base the penalty is a balk; with no runners on base, it is a ball. The quick pitch is dangerous and should not be permitted.*
- ⇒ *The only two illegal pitches that are balks with runners on base are in Junior/Senior/Big League Baseball, (1) a quick return pitch and (2) a pitch that is delivered when the pitcher is not in contact with the pitcher's plate.*
- ⇒ *Recognize that in the process of turning the foot and pushing off, the pitcher will not be in contact with the pitcher's plate upon delivery. What the rule is trying to prevent is when the pitcher CLEARLY picks up the foot and re-plants the foot CLEARLY in front of the pitcher's plate. This is taking unfair advantage of the hitter.*

(f) the pitcher delivers the ball to the batter while not facing the batter;

(g) the pitcher, makes any motion naturally associated with the pitch while not touching the pitcher's plate;

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *This is a move clearly designed to deceive the runners and must be called. The pitcher should not get onto the pitcher's plate until he's ready to look in for the sign and then pitch.*

(h) the pitcher unnecessarily delays the game;

(i) the pitcher, without having the ball, stands on or astride the pitcher's plate or while off the plate feints a pitch;

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *This is a move clearly designed to deceive the runners and must be called a balk in the Junior/Senior/Big League Baseball programs. The pitcher should not get onto the pitcher's plate until he/she has the ball and he/she is ready to look in for the sign and then pitch.*

(j) the pitcher, while touching the plate, accidentally or intentionally drops the ball;

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *A ball, which slips out of a pitcher's hand and crosses the foul line shall be, called a ball; otherwise it will be called no pitch. In Junior/Senior/Big League Baseball this would be a balk with men on base*

(k) the pitcher, while giving an intentional base on balls, pitches when the catcher is not in the catcher's box.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Because of the size of the catcher's box in Little League, it's virtually impossible to get out of the box.*
- ⇒ *The catcher must have his/her foot on the ground entirely outside the catcher's box before the pitch is delivered.*
- ⇒ *This action occurs **only on intentional base on balls**, not on "pitch outs" or other situations.*

NOTE: There is no balk in Little League, Minor League or Tee Ball.

(JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE) (l) the pitcher, after coming to a legal pitching position, removes one hand from the ball other than in an actual pitch, or in throwing to a base;

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *This is a nervous habit for many pitchers in the **Majors** and below. Coaches should make an effort to break pitchers of this habit.*
- ⇒ *In Juniors, Seniors and Big League, this is a balk whether it is from the Windup or the Set Position.*

(JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE) (m) the pitcher delivers the pitch from Set Position without coming to a stop.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *In Majors and below, it is not necessary to stop prior to delivery. Pitchers can also windup from Set Position.*
- ⇒ *In Juniors, Seniors and Big League, the pitcher may step and throw to a base at any time during the stretch. However, the pitcher must come to a stop before delivering the ball to the batter.*
- ⇒ *A "change of direction" is not considered a stop.*

(MINOR/MAJOR Baseball) PENALTY: The pitch shall be called a ball. If a play follows the illegal pitch, the manager of the offense may advise the plate umpire of a decision to decline the illegal pitch penalty and accept the play. Such election shall be made immediately at the end of the play. However, if the batter hits the ball and reaches first base safely, and if all base-runners advance at least one base on the action resulting from the batted ball, the play proceeds without reference to the illegal pitch. **NOTE:** A batter hit by a pitch shall be awarded first base without reference to the illegal pitch.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Don't award the batter first base if he/she would not have been awarded first base if the pitch had been legal. Rule 6.08(b) In such a case enforce the illegal pitch.*

APPROVED RULING: If the pitcher violates (a) through (k) in this rule and throws wild to a base, the runner or runners may advance at their own risk. (Delayed dead ball.)

(JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE) PENALTY: The ball is dead, and each runner shall advance one base without liability to be put out, unless the batter reaches first on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batter or otherwise, and all other runners advance at least one base in which case the play proceeds without reference to the balk. When a balk is called, and if the pitch is delivered, it will be considered neither a ball nor strike unless the pitch is ball four (4) awarding the batter first base and forcing all runners on base to advance. (NOTE: Umpires should bear in mind that the purpose of the balk rule is to prevent the pitcher from deliberately deceiving the base runner. If there is doubt in the umpire's mind, the "intent" of the pitcher should govern. However, certain specifics should be borne in mind:

- (1) Straddling the pitcher's plate without the ball is to be interpreted as intent to deceive and ruled a balk.
- (2) With a runner on first base, and the runner attempting to steal second, the pitcher may make a complete turn, without hesitating toward first, and throw to second. This is not to be interpreted as throwing to an unoccupied base.

"The Right Call" Casebook -- Comment: A major problem we have is umpire's calling "time" when a pitcher balks. If the pitcher is in the act of delivering the ball, just yell "balk" and stay down and call the pitch.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *If the pitch is delivered, it's neither a ball nor a strike UNLESS the pitch is ball four awarding the batter first base and any other runners advance because of the ball four award. If they don't all advance as a result of the ball four award, enforce the balk, nullify the walk and bring the batter back up to bat.*

(JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE) APPROVED RULING: If the pitcher violates (a) through (m) in this rule and throws wild to a base, the runner or runners may advance at their own risk. (Delayed dead ball.)

"The Right Call" Casebook -- Comment: If the pitcher "balks" in throwing to a base, yell "balk" and wait to see what happens on the play. (Rule 8.05 Approved Ruling (1)).

(JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE) APPROVED RULING: A runner who misses the first base to which that runner is advancing and who is called out on appeal shall have been considered as having advanced one base for the purpose of this rule.

8.06 (BASEBALL) – This rule, which applies to each pitcher who enters a game, governs the visits of the manager or coach to the pitcher at the mound:

- (a) A manager or coach may come out twice in one inning to visit with the pitcher, but the third time out, the player must be removed as a pitcher. Example: If a manager visits Pitcher A once in the first inning, then makes a pitching change in the same inning, Pitcher B would be allowed two visits in that inning before being removed on the third visit.

(b) A manager or coach may come out three times in one game to visit with the pitcher, but the fourth time out, the player must be removed as a pitcher. Example: If a manager visits Pitcher A twice in the first three innings, then makes a pitching change in the fourth inning, Pitcher B would be allowed three visits in that game before being removed on the fourth visit, subject to the limits in (a) above.

(c) The manager or coach is prohibited from making a third visit while the same batter is at bat.

(d) A manager or coach may confer with any other defensive player(s), including the catcher, during the visit

with the pitcher. A manager or coach who is granted a time out to talk to any defensive player will be charged with a visit to the pitcher.

APPROVED RULING 1: At the time a pitcher is removed, a visit shall not be charged to the new pitcher.

APPROVED RULING 2: A conference with the pitcher or any other fielder to evaluate the player's condition after an injury shall not be considered a visit for the purposes of this rule. The manager or coach should advise the umpire of such a conference, and the umpire should monitor the conference.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Comment: If the manager or coach after a warning, makes a third visit to the pitcher while the same batter is at bat, the manager or coach shall be removed from the game, not the pitcher.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *A manager is allowed to visit with any defensive player. If the manager or coach comes out and only talks to the shortstop or only to the 3^d baseman he/she is still charged with a visit to the pitcher. The manager or coach, in all Divisions, may go to the mound or foul line, whichever he/she prefers. .*
- ⇒ *At times, managers will call a catcher over to the dugout in an effort to avoid being charged a conference. This is not allowed and additional visits must be charged to the pitcher.*
- ⇒ *When a manager comes out and makes a pitching change that shall not be considered a visit to the pitcher being replaced. This applies to Junior/Senior/Big League Softball and Big League Baseball where a pitcher may move to another position and return as a pitcher later in the same game.*

8.00 -- THE PITCHER (SOFTBALL)

8.01 – THE PITCHER

- (a) A legal pitching delivery shall be a ball that is delivered to the batter in an underhand motion.
- (b) When the pitcher takes her/his position on the pitcher's plate, both feet must be on the ground within the 24-inch length of the pitcher's plate.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Whether the pitcher chooses to have only the pivot foot or both feet in contact with the pitcher's plate, the non-pivot foot may not extend beyond the limit of the pitcher's plate (toward first base or toward third base).*

- (c) The shoulders shall be in line with first and third bases.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *This position means that the shoulders should be parallel with a line extending from first base to third base.*

- (d) The pitcher shall take a position with his/her pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate. This contact must be on or partially on the top surface of the pitcher's plate. The non-pivot foot must be on or behind the pitcher's plate.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Note: Not just two (2) feet on the pitcher's plate, but one or two (2), the pitcher has the choice.

- (e) While on the pitching plate, the pitcher shall take the signal or appear to be taking a signal with the hands separated. The ball must remain in either the glove or pitching hand.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *The pitcher can take signs from the manager or coach as long as she is standing on the pitcher's plate. If not done, after warning, she can be removed from the game.*

- (f) The pitcher shall hold the ball in one or both hands in front of the body for not less than one second and not more than 10 seconds before starting the delivery.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Umpires should be aware that this rule is designed to prevent the pitcher from (1) quick-pitching the batter and (2) unnecessarily delaying the game. Develop a feel for whether or not this is being abused.*

- (g) A backward step may be taken before or simultaneous with the hands being brought together. The pivot foot must remain in contact with the pitching plate at all times prior to the forward step.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Comment: (1) Prior to bringing the hands together, or simultaneous with bringing the hands together, a pitcher may take one step back with the non-pivot foot before delivering the pitch to the batter. However, if the pitcher starts his/her delivery with only one hand on the ball, he/she may also take a step back with the non-pivot foot. (2) There are two (2) approved deliveries (a) windmill - the “windmill” pitch occurs when the pitcher makes a full and complete revolution with the pitching arm. (b) slingshot - the “slingshot” pitch occurs when the pitcher turns her body toward first or third base and bends her elbow during the back swing, then whips (slingshots around to the plate.)

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *The Note above allows the pitcher to take a step backwards, but only if the hands were apart before the step. If the hands are together while in the pitching position, the pitcher may not step back.*

⇒ *The hands must be brought together before, during or after the backward step.*

- (h) In the act of delivering the ball, the pitcher may take one step with the non-pivot foot simultaneous with the release of the ball. The step must be forward and toward the batter within the 24-inch length of the pitcher's plate. **NOTE:** It is not a step if the pitcher slides the pivot foot across the pitcher's plate toward the batter, or if the pivot foot turns or slides in order to push off the pitcher's plate, provided contact is maintained with the plate. Raising the foot off the pitching plate and returning it to the plate creates a rocking motion and is an illegal act.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *This "sliding foot" is typically the pivot foot. Do not allow her to slide this foot off the pitcher's plate.*

- (i) The pitcher shall not be considered in the pitching position unless the catcher is in position to receive the pitch.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *With the current size of the catcher's box, it's virtually impossible for the catcher to be outside these lines.*
 ⇒ *Returning the pitched ball to the pitcher keeps the ball game moving.*

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *In a study of **Softball Rules 7.08(a-4) and 7.08(a-5)**, the catcher's position has no bearing on stopping the runner.*
 ⇒ *However, when the pitcher moves to the pitcher's plate, the catcher should be in position.*
 ⇒ *The catcher is not considered in position to receive the pitch, unless she has her mask on and is facing the pitcher. It is not necessary for her to be in a squatting position.*

- (j) The pitcher may not take the pitching position on the pitcher's plate without having the ball in his/her possession.
- (k) The pitch starts when one hand is taken off the ball after the hands have been placed together or makes any motion that is part of his/her wind up after the required pause.
- (l) The pitcher must not make any motion to pitch without immediately delivering the ball to the batter.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *It is not illegal for the pitcher to strike or brush her hip in the delivery of the ball to the batter.*
 ⇒ *The so-called "hesitation" pitch is illegal. There should be no pause in the forward motion.*

- (m) The pitcher must not use a pitching motion in which, after having the ball in both hands in the pitching position, the pitcher removes one hand from the ball, and returns the ball to both hands in front of the body.
- (n) The pitcher must not make a stop or reversal of the forward motion after separating the hands.
- (o) The pitcher must not make two revolutions of the arm in the windmill pitch. A pitcher may drop the arm to the side and to the rear before starting the windmill motion. If the windmill motion is not used the ball must be delivered toward home plate on the first forward swing of the pitching arm past the hip.
- (p) The delivery must be an underhanded motion with the hand below the hip and the wrist not farther from the body than the elbow.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *With the speed of the deliveries, it can be difficult to determine. If not sidearm, it's probably legal.*

- (q) The release of the ball and follow through of the hand and wrist must be forward and past the straight line of the body.
- (r) Pushing off with the pivot foot from a place other the pitcher's plate is illegal. This includes a "crow hop" as defined under Rule 2.00.
- (s) The pivot foot must remain in contact with or push off and drag away from the pitching plate prior to the front foot touching the ground, as long as the pivot foot remains in contact with the ground. When the pivot foot leaves the ground it is considered a leap and is considered an illegal pitch. See definition under Rule 2.00.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Definitions for both the "Crow Hop" and "Leaping" are found in Rule 2.00. They are both illegal pitches.*
 ⇒ *This rule is intended to make it more difficult for the pitcher to get away with a "crow hop" delivery.*

- (t) The pitcher must not make another revolution after releasing the ball.
 (u) The pitcher shall not deliberately drop, roll or bounce the ball in order to prevent the batter from hitting it.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Please note that this differs from the ball slipping from the hand that is covered in Rule 8.07(a).*

- (v) The pitcher has 20 seconds to release the next pitch after receiving the ball or after the umpire indicates "play ball."

PENALTY: The penalty imposed for violation of all subsections of rule 8.01, with the exception of subsection (i), is an illegal pitch. Violation of (i) is ruled as No Pitch. The pitch shall be called a ball. If a play follows the illegal pitch the manager of the offense may advise the plate umpire of a decision to decline the illegal pitch penalty and accept the play. Such election shall be made immediately at the end of the play. However, if the batter hits the ball and reaches first base safely, and if all base runners advance at least one base on the action resulting from the batted ball, the play proceeds without reference to the illegal pitch. **NOTE:** A batter hit by a pitch shall be awarded first base without reference to the illegal pitch.

8.02 (SOFTBALL) -- The pitcher shall not -

- (a) (1) apply a foreign substance of any kind to the ball, pitching hand or fingers. Under the supervision of an umpire, powder rosin may be used to dry the hands; **NOTE:** A pitcher may use a rosin bag for the purpose of applying rosin to the bare hand or hands. Neither the pitcher nor any other player shall dust the ball with the rosin bag; neither shall the pitcher or any other player be permitted to apply rosin from the bag to their glove or dust any part of the uniform with the rosin bag.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Softball presently does not have the rule that will charge an automatic ball to the batter for bringing the pitching hand to the mouth or lips while in the circle. This is a Baseball rule. However, if the umpire is convinced that by doing so, the pitcher either defaces the ball (see 3 below) or gains an unfair advantage, it is an illegal pitch.*
 ⇒ *Unless you are absolutely certain that an advantage is gained, there is no infraction.*

- (2) wear a sweatband, bracelet or similar type items on the wrist or forearm of either arm;
 (3) deface the ball in any manner;

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Some umpires will incorrectly hold up one hand, indicating to the pitcher not to pitch. Do not do this unless your intention is to call "Time". Either the ball is in play or it's not. There is no "in-between". If the pitcher is quick pitching, penalize her with an illegal pitch.*

- (b) intentionally delay the game by throwing the ball to players other than the catcher, when the batter is in position;

PENALTY: If, after warning by the umpire, such delaying action is repeated, the pitcher can be removed from the game.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *This penalty does not preclude the umpire from enforcing the illegal pitch when it occurs. If it continues, then eject the pitcher.*

8.03 (SOFTBALL) --

- (a) At the beginning of each inning or when a pitcher relieves another, no more than one minute may be used to deliver not more than eight preparatory pitches to the catcher or other teammate acting in the capacity of catcher.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *The eight preparatory pitches shall be made to the catcher, a practice catcher, or any other player.*
- ⇒ *The umpire will control the number of warm up pitches that an incoming pitcher will receive.*
- ⇒ *If a sudden emergency causes a pitcher to be summoned into the game without any opportunity to warm up, the plate umpire shall allow the pitcher as many pitches as the UMPIRE deems necessary.*

(b) The catcher shall return the ball directly to the pitcher after each pitch.

(c) **Junior/Senior/Big League Intentional Walk Rule:** Before a pitch is delivered to the batter, the catcher must inform the home plate umpire that the defensive team wishes to give the batter an intentional base-on-balls. The home plate umpire waves the batter to first base. The ball is dead.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Comment: Must be “announced” before first pitch to batter. If a pitch is made, then the intentional walk is completed by the delivery of four (4) pitches out of the strike zone, which the batter does not attempt to hit.

8.04 (SOFTBALL) -- "No Pitch" shall be declared and the ball is dead when -

- (a) the pitcher pitches during the suspension of play;
- (b) the runner is called out for leaving the base too soon;
- (c) if the catcher's feet (both) are not within the catcher's box while the pitcher has the ball and is ready to pitch. Once the ball is released, catcher may step outside the box.

8.05 (SOFTBALL) -- An Illegal Pitch is -

- (a) a pitch delivered to the batter when the pitcher does not have his/her pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate;

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *This rule will also include when either of the pitcher's feet is extended beyond the outside ends of the pitcher's plate.*
- ⇒ *This also includes the "crow hop" and "leap". The pivot foot may, however, drag away from the pitcher's plate.*

(b) when the pitcher delivers the pitch with a foreign substance applied to the ball; (Rosin can be applied to the hand).

(c) a "quick" return pitch;

(d) a pitch not made in accordance with the pitching rules.

PENALTY: The pitch shall be called a ball. If a play follows the illegal pitch the manager of the offense may advise the plate umpire of a decision to decline the illegal pitch penalty and accept the play. Such election shall be made immediately at the end of the play. However, if the batter hits the ball and reaches first base safely, and if all base runners advance at least one base on the action resulting from the batted ball, the play proceeds without reference to the illegal pitch. **NOTE:** A batter hit by pitch shall be awarded first base without reference to the illegal pitch.

NOTE: There is no balk in softball.

(e) a throw to a base while the pivot foot is in contact with the pitcher's plate.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Note that the only penalty is a "Ball" to the batter. The base runners are NOT awarded a base.*

8.06 (SOFTBALL) – This rule, which applies to each pitcher who enters a game, governs the visits of the manager or coach to the pitcher at the mound:

(a) a manager or coach may come out twice in one inning to visit with the pitcher, but the third time out, the player must be removed as a pitcher. Example: If a manager visits Pitcher A once in the first inning, then makes a pitching change in the same inning, Pitcher B would be allowed two visits in that inning before being removed on the third visit.

(b) a manager or coach may come out three times in one game to visit with the pitcher but the fourth time out, the player must be removed as a pitcher. Example: If a manager visits Pitcher A twice in the first three innings, then makes a pitching change in the fourth inning, Pitcher B would be allowed three visits in that game before being removed on the fourth visit, subject to the limits in (a) above.

(c) the manager or coach is prohibited from making a third visit while the same batter is at bat.

(d) a manager or coach may confer with any other defensive player(s) including the catcher during the visit with the pitcher. A manager or coach who is granted a time out to talk to any defensive player will be charged with a visit to the pitcher.

APPROVED RULING 1: At the time a pitcher is removed, a visit shall not be charged to the new pitcher.

APPROVED RULING 2: A conference with the pitcher or any other fielder to evaluate the player's condition after an injury shall not be considered a visit for the purposes of this rule. The manager or coach should advise the umpire of such a conference, and the umpire should monitor the conference.

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Comment: If the manager or coach, after a warning, makes a third visit to the pitcher while the same batter is at bat, the manager or coach shall be removed from the game, not the pitcher.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *If a manager requests time to talk to his pitcher, the defensive manager also will be allowed to talk to his batter or runner without being charged with an offensive time-out.*
- ⇒ *A manager is allowed to visit with any defensive player. The manager or coach, in all Divisions, may go to the mound or foul line, whichever he/she prefers.*
- ⇒ *At times, managers will call a catcher over to the dugout in an effort to avoid being charged a conference. This is not allowed and must be charged to the pitcher.*
- ⇒ *When a manager comes out and makes a pitching change that shall not be considered a visit to the pitcher being replaced. This applies to all divisions of softball where a pitcher may move to another position and return as a pitcher later in the same game.*

8.07 (SOFTBALL) -- Dropped Ball

(a) If the ball slips from the pitcher's hand, before, during or up to the delivery of a pitch, a ball is declared on the batter. The ball will remain in play and the runner(s) may advance at their own risk. See 2.00 – Dropped ball.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *In all divisions, in this situation, runners may advance as soon as the ball slips from the pitcher's hand. The ball is live and in play*
- ⇒ *Dropped Ball – Is a ball which slips from the pitcher's hand after the pitcher takes a position on the pitcher's plate, or goes directly from the pitcher's hand straight to the ground during the pitcher's motion. A dropped ball can occur while the pitcher is just standing on the pitcher's plate; during the back swing or up to the delivery of the pitch in the windmill motion. A drop is distinguished from a pitch in that a pitch must have lift and carry pass the release of the hip and a drop slips from the hand or goes straight and direct to the ground.*

9.00 -- THE UMPIRE

9.01 --

- (a) The league president shall appoint one or more umpires to officiate at each league game. The umpire shall be responsible for the conduct of the game in accordance with these official rules and for maintaining discipline and order on the playing field during the game.

NOTE (1): Plate umpire must wear mask, shin guards and chest protector. Male umpires must wear protective cup. **NOTE (2):** It is highly recommended all umpires attach a “dangling” type throat protector to their mask.

[SOFTBALL: NOTE: (1) Male umpires working the game behind the plate must wear mask, chest protector and protective cup.]

[SOFTBALL: NOTE: (2) Female umpires working the game behind the plate must wear mask and chest protector.]

[SOFTBALL: NOTE: (3) Use of protective shin guards is strongly recommended as a safety precaution for both men and women umpires working behind the plate.]

[TBALL: Managers and coaches may be used as umpires.]

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *While the throat protector is not mandatory for the plate umpire, it is highly recommended if the umpire is utilizing the inside chest protector. With the outside (or balloon-type) chest protector, the throat protector is less effective.*

- (b) Each umpire is the representative of the league and of **Little League Baseball**, and is authorized and required to enforce all of these rules. Each umpire has authority to order a player, coach, manager or league officer to do or refrain from doing anything that affects the administering of these rules and to enforce the prescribed penalties.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *The umpires are obligated to abide by these rules. Leagues cannot change the **Playing Rules** unless permission is given through listed options in one of the **Little League Rules Books**.*

- (c) Each umpire has authority to rule on any point not specifically covered in these rules.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Seldom will an umpire have to utilize this rule. Most situations can be covered by rules and interpretations listed throughout the book. Umpires should not use **Rule 9.01(c)** as a substitute for knowledge of the rules or to further their individual agendas utilizing the word “safety”.*

⇒ *Situations such as throwing the bat and other potentially unsafe actions should be covered as follows: Warn the player and warn the other members of this player’s team. After the warnings highly recommend to the manager of the offending team that it is time to substitute for the offender until they are properly schooled in the proper method of discarding the bat after the ball is hit. While there is no easy solution to this problem ultimately the responsibility rests with the team manager for teaching the players the proper way to discard a bat. .*

- (d) Each umpire has authority to disqualify any player, coach, manager or substitute for objecting to decisions or for unsportsmanlike conduct or language and to eject such disqualified persons from the playing field. If an umpire disqualifies a player while a play is in progress, the disqualification shall not take effect until no further action is possible in that play.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Keep in mind that the unsportsmanlike conduct or language could exist toward an umpire, the opposing team, and even a member of the same team. Do not allow bad behavior to continue, even if it’s not directed at you.*

- (e) All umpires have authority at their discretion to eject from the playing field (1) any person whose duties permit that person's presence on the field, such as ground crew members, photographers, newsmen, broadcasting crew members, etc. and (2) any spectator or other persons not authorized to be on the playing field.

- (f) Umpires may order both teams into their dugouts and suspend play until such time as League Officials deal with unruly spectators. Failure of League Officials to adequately handle an unruly spectator can result in the game remaining suspended until a later date.

9.02 --

- (a) Any umpire's decision which involves judgment, such as, but not limited to, whether a batted ball is fair or foul, whether a pitch is a strike or a ball, or whether a runner is safe or out, is final. No player, manager, coach or substitute shall object to any such judgment decisions.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Arguing on BALLS AND STRIKES should not and will not be condoned. Teams should be warned that if they start for the plate to protest the calls they could face an ejection.*

“The Right Call” Casebook -- Comment: (1) each umpire has an area of responsibility and each umpire should not get caught in the other umpire’s area. (Hand in the cookie jar, so to speak) There are times a home plate umpire will be required to make a call on the bases and vice versa. In other words, if you need help, ask before making a call. **Example:** Swipe tag at first, base umpire does not see a tag, he/she should not make a call, but ask for help...“Did he/she get him/her?” Plate umpire would signal “out” if tag were made and “safe” if tag were missed. Same applies to pulled foot at a base, etc. If a call is made, you live with the call, right or wrong. **Comment:** (2) a strike call on half swing may not be appealed. A good rule of thumb to use on a half swing; Right Handed Batter: If the barrel of the bat is pointed at or past the first base line, it has gone far enough...Call it a strike! Left Handed Batter: If the barrel of the bat is pointed at or past the third base line, it has gone far enough...Call it a strike!

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *There is probably no other rule more important to an umpire. Judgment calls are final. Work to get the call right and resist the frequent requests to check with another umpire.*
- ⇒ *It is customary and highly recommended that the plate umpire check on a half-swing called a “ball” if he/she has doubt.*
- ⇒ *If there is a question as to whether or not a batted ball is fair or foul, leave it in play. You can always return the runners if you discover the ball foul. If you call it “Foul”, however, you’ve killed the play. However, if the ball is a fly ball and you inadvertently call “Foul” and the ball is caught, it is still a fly ball out.*
- ⇒ *On pitched balls, in order to call a pitch a strike, you must see either the ball in the strike zone OR the batter swing at the pitch. If you see neither, it must be a ball.*
- ⇒ *In order to call an out, you must see something happen, i.e., runner tagged, ball caught, ball beat a runner to a base, etc. If not, he/she must be safe. Don’t guess out. Make sure.*
- ⇒ ***No umpire may overrule another umpire on any judgment call! PERIOD! EXCLAMATION POINT!***

- (b) If there is reasonable doubt that any umpire's decision may be in conflict with the rules, the manager may appeal the decision and ask that a correct ruling be made.

Such an appeal shall be made only to the umpire who made the protested decision.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *This, of course, does NOT apply to judgment calls, just rules decisions.*

- (c) If a decision is appealed, the umpire making the decision may ask another umpire for information before making a final decision. No umpire shall criticize, seek to reverse or interfere with another umpire’s decision unless asked to do so by the umpire making it.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *Keep in mind that the umpire who has made the rules decision is the only one who may initiate the discussion. Regardless of the experience or knowledge, no other umpire may force the discussion or overrule the decision. If a manager has a concern with a rules decision, he/she must take his/her case to the umpire who made the decision.*
- ⇒ *Checking with another umpire is not required. No umpire can overrule another umpire.*

- (d) No umpire may be replaced during a game unless injured or ill.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Recognize, however, that Little League umpires are volunteers. The umpire's needs may require him/her to be replaced. Nobody else, including the league president, however, can "force" an umpire's replacement after a game has started.*

9.03 --

- (a) If there is only one umpire, that umpire shall have complete jurisdiction in administering the rules. This umpire may take any position on the playing field which will enable said umpire to discharge all his/her duties (usually behind the catcher, but sometimes behind the pitcher if there are runners.)

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Since most decisions for an umpire will be balls and strikes, the most effective place to work is behind the plate.*

- (b) If there are two or more umpires, one shall be designated umpire-in-chief and the others, field umpires.

9.04 --

- (a) The umpire-in-chief shall stand behind the catcher. This umpire usually is called the plate umpire. The umpire-in-chief's duties shall be to:

- (1) take full charge of, and be responsible for, the proper conduct of the game;
- (2) call and count balls and strikes;

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Review the procedures for half-swings listed in the comments following Rule 9.02(a).*

- (3) call and declare fair balls and fouls except for those commonly called by field umpires;

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *The plate umpire is responsible for fair and foul calls on balls up to first or third base. Over the base and beyond is the responsibility of the base umpire. Of course, if there is no base umpire on the foul line, the responsibility is that of the plate umpire.*

- (4) make all decisions on the batter;

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *The plate umpire will make "all decisions on the batter" including whether or not the batter hits the ball while out of the box.*

- (5) make all decisions except those commonly reserved for the field umpires;
- (6) decide when a game will be forfeited;

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *All forfeits, however, must be reported to the league's board of directors for review.*

- (7) inform the official scorer of the official batting order; and any changes in the lineups and batting order, on request;

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *As indicated earlier in Rule 4.01, the plate umpire is responsible for the lineup and changes. Follow this procedure and your games will be much more peaceful.*

- (8) announce any special ground rules.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Special ground rules would be circumstances that are different from what is listed in the **Playing Rules**.*

- (b) A field umpire may take any position (see **Little League Umpire Manual**) on the playing field best suited to make impending decisions on the bases. A field umpire's duties shall be to:

- (1) make all decisions on the bases except those specifically reserved to the umpire-in-chief;

- (2) take concurrent jurisdiction with the umpire-in-chief in calling "Time," balks, illegal pitches, or defacement or discoloration of the ball by any player;
- (3) aid the umpire-in-chief in every manner in enforcing the rules, and excepting the power to forfeit a game, shall have equal authority with the umpire-in-chief in administering and enforcing the rules and maintaining discipline.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Frequently, leagues have an experienced umpire behind the plate and a "rookie" or less-experienced umpire working the bases, thinking that the plate umpire "controls" all of the action, expecting him/her to make all of the tough calls and other decisions such as Balks, Illegal Pitches, Infield Fly, and such. The field umpires not only have equal authority to make these calls, but, in many cases, have the primary responsibility for these decisions.*

- (c) If different decisions should be made on one play by different umpires, the umpire-in-chief shall call all the umpires into consultation, with no manager or player present. After consultation, the umpire-in-chief (unless another umpire may have been designated by the league president) shall determine which decision shall prevail, based on which umpire was in the best position and which decision was most likely correct. Play shall proceed as if only the final decision had been made.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *This is the only occasion where one umpire has authority to "overrule" another umpire. Umpires should, however, work to understand proper mechanics and communication that will keep this situation from arising.*

9.05 --

- (a) The umpire shall report to the league president within twenty-four hours after the end of a game all violations of rules and other incidents worthy of comment, including the disqualification of any manager, coach or player, and the reasons therefore.
- (b) When any manager, coach or player is disqualified for a flagrant offense such as the use of obscene or indecent language, or an assault upon an umpire, manager, coach or player, the umpire shall forward full particulars to the league president within twenty-four hours after the game.
- (c) After receiving the umpire's report that a manager, coach or player has been disqualified, the league president shall require such manager, coach or player to appear before at least three members of the Board of Directors to explain his/her conduct. In the case of a player, the manager shall appear with the player in the capacity of an advisor. The members of the Board present at the meeting shall impose such penalty as they feel is justified. **NOTE:** The Board may impose such penalties that they feel are warranted, but may not lessen the requirements of rule 4.07.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *If a manager, coach or player is ejected from a game the provisions of rule 4.07 must be followed. However, the Board may elect to increase the suspension, or terminate, etc. However, the Board may not make the penalty less than what rule 4.07 calls for.*

⇒ *The umpire is the representative of the league president on the field. If there is a situation, circumstance or behavior that needs attention or needs to be corrected, he/she must inform the president of the facts.*

⇒ *If you don't report incidents, expect them to occur again.....and again.....and again!*

9.06 -- Umpires shall not wear shoes with metal spikes or cleats.**IMPORTANT**

Carry your rulebook. It is better to consult the Rules and hold up the game long enough to decide a knotty problem than to have a game protested and possibly replayed.

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

⇒ *Inexperienced umpires should keep the rulebook with them. Others should keep it handy for consultation.*

- ⇒ *Do not allow managers to have you show them the rule. That's not your job. Your job is to call the game. If he/she wants to protest let him/her do it, even if it's a judgment call. He'll find out soon enough that judgment calls are not protestable.*
- ⇒ *You are going to make mistakes, but never attempt to "even up" after having made one. Make all decisions as you see them and forget which is the home or visiting club.*
- ⇒ *Keep your eye everlastingly on the ball while it is in play. It is more vital to know just where a fly ball fell, or a thrown ball finished up, than whether or not a runner missed a base. Do not call the plays too quickly, or turn away too fast when a fielder is throwing to complete a double play. Watch out for dropped balls after you have called a man out.*
- ⇒ *Do not come running with your arm up or down, denoting "out" or "safe." Wait until the play is completed before making any arm motion.*

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:

- ⇒ *If you are sure you got the play correct, do not be stampeded by players' appeals to "ask the other umpire." If you are not sure, ask one of your associates. Do not carry this to extremes, be alert and get your own plays. But remember! The first requisite is to get decisions correct. If in doubt don't hesitate to consult your associate. Umpire dignity is important but never as important as "getting the call right."*
- ⇒ *A most important rule for an umpire is always "BE IN POSITION TO SEE EVERY PLAY." Even though your decision may be 100 percent right, someone will still question it if they feel you were not in a spot to see the play clearly and definitely.*
- ⇒ *Finally, be courteous, impartial and firm and you will earn respect from all.*

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