



September 2023 Plays and Clarifications

From the Director:

We have had another successful year of National Championships. The umpire program was able to send well over 500 umpires to our National Championships this year in spite of many of our Championships being cancelled. Our umpires are one of the most important parts of our program and continue to shine every year and your efforts in 2023 were a big factor in the success of our National Championships.

We have two National Championship remaining our 50 – O and 60 – O Fast Pitch, in Houston Texas. If you were one of the umpires that called a National Championship, we say THANK YOU. We also ask you to be a little more patient as we are having issues with the Umpire Portal and getting evals ready to send out. Once we have conquered the issues, we will get them sent out as soon as possible.

Now is the time we go to work for next year. Our USA Softball Council Meeting, a business meeting, will be held at the end of October and the beginning of November. We will be reviewing any new rule proposals, Procedural Code proposals and all other items that help run this great organization we all know as USA Softball. As the National Governing Body, now is the time we lead our sport into the future and I am sure our Council will do just that.

Once this is over and complete, we will review and get the new Rulebook put together for 2024. We will include any new rules and as usual post them on the website. This year we plan on also adding some items that were cleaned up in the rulebook and shaded in gray. We hope to have this done by December so it can go to the rule book designer and have it available by January 1st at the latest.

Finally, thank you for being a USA Softball Umpire.

2024 National Umpire Schools:

We are completing the 2024 National Umpire Schools for 2024. The first up will be Region 6 in Illinois. After that we will have Region 4, Region 3 Florida, Region 10 Las Vegas, with Region 1 and Region 9 to follow. More information will follow once we have all the information we need along with the instructors for these schools.

Fast Pitch Camp:

As a reminder the Fast Pitch camp will be held Oct 4 – 8th hosted by USA Softball of DFW (Plano, Texas). We have spaces for 60 students and right now we have 42 signed up. If you are still interested, reach out to Jackie Shults at jackie@usasoftballdfw.org.

Play Clarifications:

Play: Fast Pitch, B3 is at bat with two outs. In a) the batter is hit by a pitch that they tried to get out of the way of and b) made no act to try and avoid being hit by a pitched ball. Ruling?

Ruling: In (a) the umpire should call dead ball and award the Batter-Runner first and in (b) the umpire should call dead ball a keep the batter in the box since they made no effort to avoid being hit. **Rule 8, Section 1F**

Play: In a JO Fast Pitch game a pitcher commits an illegal pitch. The umpire immediately called an "Illegal Pitch" and called dead ball. Is this correct mechanic?

Ruling: No. Once the pitcher commits an Illegal Pitch the umpire should give the delayed dead ball signal and let the pitch continue until thrown or the pitcher stops their motion by calling time or stepping off the pitcher's plate. The penalty for an illegal pitch depends on the result of the pitch and whether the balk was hit and put into play. We should not call time until the pitch is thrown or the pitcher steps off the pitcher's plate. Let the pitch continue and enforce the penalty.

Rule 6A, Section 11B

Play: B2 hits a ground ball to F6 who throws to F3 pulling F3 off 1B in a) to the right of the base but in fair territory, and in b) into foul territory. In both cases F3 went to the contrasting color of the bag for the out at 1B. The umpire called an out both in (a) and (b). Ruling?

Ruling: In (a) if the runner touched the white portion of the base before F3 touched the white portion of the base even though they had touched the contrasting color, the runner should be called safe. (b) If the umpire judged the throw pulled F3 into foul ground, F3 is allowed to use either color of the base on the play at 1B. **Rule 8, Section 2N[3], Rule 8, Section 2N[5]**