

## NYSSO RULE CLARIFICATIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS

*Updated Jan. 2024*

### SITUATION 1

May a player wear religious headwear?

*AR1*

*Yes. Provided the use of safety equipment (e.g., batter's helmet) is not compromised, a player may wear religious headwear.*

### SITUATION 2

May a HS game be played with foul poles but without outfield fencing?

*AR 2*

*A HS softball contest shall not be canceled due to a field containing foul poles but no outfield fencing.*

### SITUATION 3

There seems to be a lot of talk about the Easton "Ghost" bat. Which bats are legal for HS play?

*AR 3*

*The bats that meet the requirements of the rulebook are legal. The requirements include, but are not limited to, the 2000 or 2004 ASA Certification Mark.*

### SITUATION 4

Are bats with the 2013 ASA Certification Mark legal?

*AR 4*

*Not in HS play.*

### SITUATION 5

A player has a medical/NYSPHSAA waiver to wear a daith piercing/earring. Does it need to be taped?

*AR 5*

*No.*

### SITUATION 6

I heard metal cleats are permitted in HS baseball, so they must be legal in HS softball, right?

*AR 6*

*Yes. Metal cleats are permitted in all levels of play. (updated 2/24).*

### SITUATION 7

With R3 on 3<sup>rd</sup> base and 2 outs, B4 lays down a squeeze bunt. R3 crosses home plate. Then, B4 is called out for 3-foot lane interference. Does R3's run count since she crossed home plate before the 3-foot lane interference?

*AR 7*

*No. No run shall score when the 3<sup>rd</sup> out of the inning is on the BR prior to reaching 1<sup>st</sup> base, regardless of how that out occurred.*

### **SITUATION 8A**

With R3 on 3<sup>rd</sup> base and R2 on 2<sup>nd</sup> base, F1 throws a passed ball. R3 advances aggressively toward home plate, but puts the brakes on when she realizes she would be out at the plate. R3 retreats back to 3<sup>rd</sup> base and is standing on 3<sup>rd</sup> base. R2 is also standing on 3<sup>rd</sup> base. F5 tags both R3 and R2 while they are standing on the base simultaneously. Who is out?

*AR 8A*

*R2 is out. R3 is entitled to her base until she (1) advances to and reaches the next base or (2) is forced from the base as a result of the batter becoming a batter-runner (force play).*

### **SITUATION 8B**

What if on the same play, F5 tagged R2 standing on 3<sup>rd</sup> base right before R3 returned to 3<sup>rd</sup> base?

*AR 8B*

*R2 would not be out at this point. 3<sup>rd</sup> base was not occupied by 2 runners at the same time and R2 was permitted to advance to 3<sup>rd</sup> base. She simply is not entitled to it if R3 returns and stands on 3<sup>rd</sup> base.*

### **SITUATION 9A**

The game is being played with a temporary fence. B1's batted ball hits 6 inches below the top plain of the fence and "falls" over the fence. The fence was loose and "had some give." The ball passed over the fence on the fly. Is this a homerun?

*AR 9A*

*No. The batted ball must cross the natural plain of the top of the fence. In this case, pressure from the ball caused the fence to fold/roll. When the ball does this or "climbs" the fence, a 2 base award shall be granted.*

### **SITUATION 9B**

But what about the rule that says something like "if the ball hits the top of the fence and then goes over, it's a home run?"

*AR 9B*

*That is still true. However, the "top of the fence" means the actual top that faces upward toward the sky. "Top of the fence" does not mean the top couple of inches of the fence facing the field.*

### **SITUATION 10A**

With R2 on 2<sup>nd</sup> base, B3 hits a long fly ball. The ball is caught and R2 tags up. Who is responsible for what?

*AR 10A*

*Because R2 is a sole runner and is on 2<sup>nd</sup> base, the base umpire is responsible for her tag up. The play on R2 going into 3<sup>rd</sup> base is the plate umpire's responsibility. This mechanic is endorsed by NYSSO. Do not use another association's mechanic if it deviates from this mechanic.*

### **SITUATION 10B**

Are there any possible deviations that NYSSO *would* accept on this play?

*AR 10B*

*Yes. The SOLE exception is if the plate umpire is pinned at home plate because he/she must remain there to determine fair/foul and catch/no catch down the right field line. In that case, the plate umpire must loudly communicate this deviation to his/her partner by saying “take her” or “she’s yours” etc. This mechanic is a deviation and may only be used in the situation described above. Umpires cannot default to a deviation because they prefer to use outdated mechanics.*

### **SITUATION 10C**

What if R2 advances to 3<sup>rd</sup> base, the ball gets passed F5 and R2 attempts to advance home?

*AR 10C*

*In this case, the plate umpire is responsible for getting back home and covering the play. This situation is clearly described in the NYSSO Manual. Unless the plate umpire drops dead on the field, the base umpire has absolutely no business covering home plate in the 2-umpire system.*

### **SITUATION 11**

Team A submitted an official lineup card using the DP/Flex. After the 9<sup>th</sup> batter bats, the Flex bats, rather than the leadoff batter. Is this batting out of order or something else?

*AR 11*

*Batting out of order involves players 1-9 in the batting order, not the Flex. When the Flex bats without a line-up change being reported to the plate umpire, this is an unreported substitution. But that is only step one. Remember, there is no player penalty in NYSSO softball for an unreported substitution. With that said, step two is determining whether the Flex batted illegally. If the leadoff batter was the DP, this can be ruled simply as an unreported substitution without penalty. However, if she batted for someone other than the DP, this move would be illegal because the Flex was not eligible to bat for someone other than the DP. The penalties imposed will depend on the timing of this infraction being brought to the plate umpire’s attention.*

### **SITUATION 12**

A batting helmet has a NOCSAE stamp, but no external warning label. Is this permitted?

*AR 12*

*Effective 2018, HS no longer requires the external warning label. The NOCSAE stamp, however, is still required.*

### **SITUATION 13**

Team A’s head coach reports a change to the plate umpire. Team A’s head coach then says, “I’ll let them know” referring to the opposing team. Is this a proper procedure?

*AR 13*

*No. Although there is technically no prohibition to the coach reporting the information, it is the responsibility of the plate umpire to notify the opposing team. The proper response from the plate umpire should be along the lines of “That’s okay, coach; I will let them know.”*

### **SITUATION 14**

B1 is a right-handed batter. B1 bats the ball, which lands just outside the batter's box in fair territory. B1 takes her first step toward 1<sup>st</sup> base and steps on top of or kicks the ball with her left foot. When B1 does this, her right foot is still within the batter's box, but her left foot is outside the batter's box.

*AR 14*

*B1 is out for interference. B1 did not meet the definition of being "within" the batter's box when she contacted the batted ball.*

### **SITUATION 15A**

R2 from 2<sup>nd</sup> base is advancing home on B3's hit to the outfield. F2 is legally blocking the plate as R2 attempts to do a slide by and sneak her hand in. F2 misses the tag and R2 misses the plate. Can F2 make a live ball appeal for R2 missing home plate?

*AR 15A*

*Yes, any player in possession of the ball may execute a live ball appeal. To do so, she must execute the appeal prior to the runner "fixing" her base running error. The player in possession of the ball may either tag the runner or tag the base where the "violation" occurred. In this case, F2 can simply make her live ball appeal known to the umpire and step on home plate prior to R2 touching home.*

### **SITUATION 15B**

Then why do catchers always chase after the runner who misses home plate?

*AR 15B*

*Probably because they weren't taught properly and because many don't know how to execute a live ball appeal.*

### **SITUATION 16A**

B1 hits and over-the-fence home run. As she rounds 3<sup>rd</sup> base and is heading home, she removes her helmet and tosses it in the air in celebration. Is B1 out for intentionally removing her helmet?

*AR 16A*

*No. There are multiple elements necessary to call a runner out for intentionally removing her helmet. One of those elements is that the ball is live. An over-the-fence home run becomes a dead ball.*

### **SITUATION 16B**

If a runner does intentionally remove her helmet during a live ball, why does the rule state that doing so does not remove the force?

*AR 16B*

*It is intended to prevent the offense from benefiting from violating the rule. For instance, with R1 on 1<sup>st</sup> base, B2 hits a tailor-made double play. Seeing this, B2 intentionally removes her helmet just prior to the execution of R1's out at 2<sup>nd</sup> base. Imagine that R1 were to be called safe because the defense attempted to execute a force out rather than a tag out, which ordinarily would be necessary when the BR is declared out? That would fundamentally change how the game is played and could not be tolerated.*

### **SITUATION 17**

The 3<sup>rd</sup> base coach requests time and asks to have the “last batted out” run for the runner on 1<sup>st</sup> base. She says, “We do that every game.”

*AR 17*

*This is not legal. If an eligible courtesy runner is available for a pitcher or catcher, the team may use her. If an eligible substitute is available, she may be used. If neither exists, then R1 must run or be declared out for not running.*

### **SITUATION 18A**

The 3<sup>rd</sup> base coach requests time and reports to the plate umpire “#12 is batting for #20 and then #20 is going to re-enter.” Is this permissible?

*AR 18A*

*Projected substitutions are not permitted. Projected substitutions involve multiple changes involving the same player. The umpire should state, “Coach, I’m entering #12 for #20; but, you’re required to report any future change with her.”*

### **SITUATION 18B**

Does that mean that the coach can’t report multiple batting changes? For example, if the team is ahead by 10 runs and the coach reports, “I’m entering #1 for #2, #3 for #4 and #5 for #6” is that permitted?

*AR 18B*

*Yes. Although there are multiple changes, they involved different players, as opposed to multiple changes with the same player.*

**SITUATION 19:** An offensive coach is yelling out location of pitches once he sees where the catcher is setting up. Is this “unsporting conduct?” Should any warnings be issued?

*AR 19*

*There is no prohibition on stealing signs, pitches or location; nor is there a prohibition against using that information; provided in both cases it is not done illegally. Illegally is limited to cases involving the use of electronic equipment, game personnel going where they don’t belong, etc.*

*The solution is for the defensive team to set up later or more subtly. There are other solutions, but I cannot recommend they be implemented. Because, as described, there was no illegal conduct, there is nothing for which to issue a warning. Warnings should only be used when an actual violation occurs and there must be a penalty for a subsequent violation.*

*For what it is worth, just this past weekend a runner on second was gesturing location to the batter and the third base coach would yell “sit” when he knew the pitcher would throw a change up. Both are perfectly legal.*

*An umpire would be in error to issue a directive to a coach to stop calling location.*

### **SITUATION 20**

B1 comes to bat. After the first pitch to her, the plate umpire sees she is wearing jewelry. The plate umpire immediately ejects B1 and her head coach. Is this correct?

*AR 20*

*No. Only exposed jewelry, which is judged by the umpire to be dangerous, must be removed and may not be worn during the game. Additionally, medical alert bracelets or necklaces are not considered jewelry. If worn, they must be taped to the body so the medical alert information remains visible.*

### **SITUATION 21A**

Does the protection that an obstructed runner garners change depending on whether she is obstructed advancing to a base or returning to a base?

*AR 21A*

*No. An obstructed runner is protected between the two bases where the obstruction occurred and to the base she would have reached, in the umpires' judgment, had she not been obstructed.*

### **SITUATION 21B**

F3 obstructs BR rounding 1<sup>st</sup> base on an outfield hit. F8 charges the ball, fields it cleanly and throws it directed to F6 covering 2<sup>nd</sup> base. BR never would have reached 2<sup>nd</sup> base safely. As soon as BR is obstructed, her 1<sup>st</sup> base coach yells "go to 2<sup>nd</sup> base." BR is thrown out at 2<sup>nd</sup> base. What is the proper ruling?

*AR 21B*

*An obstructed runner is protected between the two bases where the obstruction occurred and to the base she would have reached, in the umpires' judgment, had she not been obstructed. When BR is thrown out, the umpire will call time and award BR 1st base.*

### **SITUATION 21C**

F3 obstructs BR returning to 1<sup>st</sup> base on an outfield hit. F8 charges the ball, fields it cleanly and throws it directed to F6 covering 2<sup>nd</sup> base. BR never would have reached 2<sup>nd</sup> base safely. As soon as BR is obstructed returning to 1<sup>st</sup> base, her 1<sup>st</sup> base coach yells "go to 2<sup>nd</sup> base." BR is thrown out at 2<sup>nd</sup> base. Does the ruling differ from Situation / AR 21B?

*AR 21C*

*No. An obstructed runner is protected regardless of whether she is advancing to or returning to a base.*

### **SITUATION 21D**

When there is obstruction on BR rounding or returning to 1<sup>st</sup> base (e.g., on an outfield single), is there any reason the BR shouldn't attempt to advance to 2<sup>nd</sup> base?

*AR 21D*

*No. Provided BR doesn't commit an act of interference, miss a base, etc., this is, in essence, a "free play." If BR's advancement draws a poor throw or the ball is misplayed and she reaches 2<sup>nd</sup> base safely, good for her. If she's thrown out by 50 feet after never having a realistic chance of getting to 2<sup>nd</sup> base safely, the ball is dead, and she is returned to 1<sup>st</sup> base.*

