

Overthrows and Blocked/Lodged balls

We need to look at a couple of definitions as we review overthrows / lodged or blocked ball

These are a few items we need to know

1. We need to know a overthrow is treated the same a lodged or blocked ball.
2. What is the award?
3. What about equipment or players on the field?

Next, let us look at the definition of an blocked ball and an overthrow

BLOCKED BALL: A batted, pitched or thrown ball that is touched, stopped or handled by a person not engaged in the game, or which touches loose equipment or any object that is not part of the official equipment or official playing area.

OVERTHROW: A thrown ball from a fielder that goes:

- A. Beyond the boundary lines of the playing field (dead ball territory), or
- B. Becomes a blocked ball.

RULE 1 – DEFINITIONS
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Now we have the definition of a blocked ball and an overthrow. What is the award for both? The next page tells us how we handle an overthrow or batted ball.

- A. Thrown Ball.

1. When a thrown ball hits loose equipment belonging to the team at bat, the ball is dead immediately. If such action interferes with a play, interference should be ruled. The runner being played on at the time of the interference is called out, and each runner must return to the last base touched prior to the interference. If a play is not apparent, a blocked ball should be ruled, no one is called out, and all runners must return to the last base touched at the time of the dead ball.
2. When the loose equipment belongs to the team in the field, it becomes a blocked ball and the overthrow rule applies.

- B. Batted Ball.

1. A batted foul ball touching loose equipment is a foul ball.
2. A batted fair ball touching loose equipment belonging to:
 - a. The offense, it is a dead ball and runners return, unless they are forced to advance when the batter-runner is awarded first base on a base hit, or
 - b. The defense, it is a dead ball and all runners, including the batter-runner, are awarded two bases from their position at the time of the pitch

G. When the ball is live and is overthrown or is blocked:

Effect:

1. All runners shall be awarded **two** bases.
2. The award shall be governed by the position of the runners when the ball **left the fielder's hand**.

Note: Runners must return to touch a base missed or left too soon. When two runners are between the same two bases, the award is based on the position of the lead runner. Once a base runner advances to the next awarded base, the runner may no longer return to touch any base missed or left too soon.

Exception:

When a fielder loses possession of the ball, and the ball leaves live ball territory or becomes blocked.

Effect:

1. The ball is dead.
2. Each runner is awarded one base from the last base touched at the time the ball entered dead ball territory or became blocked.

When the ball becomes dead, runners must return to touch a base missed or left too soon if they have advanced, touched, and are a base beyond the base missed or left too soon.

Note: Runners must be given the opportunity to complete their base running responsibilities. A runner shall not be declared out if a fielder deliberately carries or throws the ball into dead ball territory to prevent that runner from returning to a base missed or left too soon. Once a runner leaves live ball territory they cannot return to touch any base missed or left too soon.

3. If the ball becomes blocked due to offensive equipment not involved in the game.

Effect:

- A. The ball is dead.
 - B. Runners are returned to the last base touched at the time of the blocked ball.
 - C. If the blocked ball prevented the defense from making an out, the runner being played on is out.
3. If a base is awarded in error, after a legal or illegal pitch the error cannot be corrected.

Notes:

We penalize the team at fault for equipment or people outside the dugout.

When the defense leaves equipment or people outside the dugout and they are **touched** by the ball, we will stop play and award 2 bases from the **TIME OF THROW**.

So, when the offense leaves equipment or people outside the dugout, we will stop play and award **NO** bases and all runners return. All outs stand as the result of the play.

A batted ball that hits offensive equipment or person(s) out of the dugout is always ruled a **FOUL BALL**. If it is defensive equipment, the batter is awarded 1st base and runner advance if forced.

WE NEVER "HELP" THE OFFENDING TEAM. We will either award bases or put runners back. The ball is always dead.

Blocked and lodged balls are treated the same as overthrows.

Question: Does the ball **HAVE** to hit someone outside the dugout for interference to be called?

NO. Ask yourself this...did the players outside the dugout cause the defense to stop going after the ball or change their handling of the ball?

If the answer is YES, then interference should be called and we treat it the same as the ball hit the person or equipment.

It matters what team left the equipment on the field or are standing outside the dugout. We **NEVER** reward the offending team. If the offense did something, the ball is still dead but they do not get to advance runners and the batter is NOT awarded 1st base. If the defense left the equipment or are standing outside the dugout, bases can be awarded.

How do we prevent this problem?

1. Ask (note the word ASK) the players to get in the dugout with all equipment.
2. If they do not want to listen, we will now enforce any penalties that will nullify a lodged or blocked ball.
3. Remember, the ball does NOT have to hit a player or equipment.
4. The penalty will encourage players and equipment to be in the dugout.