



March 10, 2025

NFHS Softball Weekly Rule Interpretations

Situation 1: Team A is at bat with R1 on first base and no outs, B2 hits a pop fly in foul territory, after hitting the ball, B2 begins running to first base. F5 catches the ball near home plate and then throws the ball to first base in an attempt to make a live ball appeal on R1 leaving early on a caught fly ball. F5's throw hits B2 preventing the play at first base. Team B's coach insists this is interference by a retired runner and the runner closest to home, R1 in this case should be called out. **RULING:** Interference is a judgement call. If, in the umpire's judgement, B2 hindered F5's play on R1, R1 (the runner closest to home) would be declared out. (2-31-1, 8-6-16; Case Plays 8.6.16 Situation B&C)

Situation 2: In the second inning Team A's pitcher only takes one warm up pitch and is ready to start the inning. Team B's coach insists that their first batter gets 60 seconds to prepare to bat. **RULING:** The time between innings is governed by rule 6-4-10 that allows the pitcher to have not more than one minute to throw not more than five pitches. Although NFHS Softball Rules has no dictated time allotment for the batter to prepare, a batter typically has the same time allowed (one minute) for the pitcher to throw their warm up pitches. In a situation where the pitcher is prepared to begin prior to the one-minute mark, the umpire has the ability to allow the batter a reasonable amount of time to prepare to bat. Once the umpire judges that this reasonable amount of time has passed and all defensive players are on the field prepared to start the inning including the pitcher and catcher being in their positions, they should call for the batter. At this point, the ten second allowance for the batter to take their position within the batter's box begins. (6-2-3, 6-4-10, 7-3-1)

Situation 3: B2 is walking up to the plate when it appears to the plate umpire that they have a non-approved bat. The plate umpire stops B2 and examines the bat verifying it is a non-approved bat. They require B2 to remove the bat from play and obtain a legal bat. They also issue a team warning for illegal equipment. **RULING:** Correct ruling. With the exception of appeal plays where an umpire does not make a ruling until requested to do so by a coach or player, an umpire should rule on infractions when they first observe the infraction. In this case the umpire observed the player with a piece of equipment that violates rule 1-5-1 and should require it to be removed from the game when detected, and issue a team warning with the next offender and the head coach being restricted to the dugout/bench for the remainder of the game. (1-5-1, 3-6-1)