

Following are some play situations which should be reviewed by all high school softball umpires. These play

situations have either been observed by me or brought to my attention by other umpires, coaches, or athletic administrators.

1- In the second inning of the game, the coach of team A notifies the plate umpire that he is putting #17 in for his catcher as a courtesy runner. In the fifth inning the coach of team A notifies the plate umpire that he is putting #17 in as a courtesy runner for his pitcher. Two pitches are thrown to team A's next batter and the coach of team B questions the plate umpire about #17 being used as a courtesy runner for the pitcher. What should happen?

2- In the top of the third inning, team A has loaded the bases with no outs. The pitcher has now thrown two balls to the batter and the count is 2-0. The catcher requests and is granted time by the plate umpire to talk to her pitcher. Team B's head coach who is coaching third base calls all three base runners over to third base area to conference with them. Is this a legal conference? Should anything be done? If so, what?

3- R1 is on first with no outs. Batter hits a clean base hit to left center. The left fielder retrieves the ball and attempts to throw to third base to make a play on R1. The throw is offline and is muffed first by the short stop and then is booted out of play by the pitcher trying to gain control of the ball. When the throw was released by the left fielder, R1 had reached second base and B2 had reached first base. When the ball finally rolled into out of play area after the pitcher last touched the ball, R1 had reached home and B2 had slid safely into third base. What is the ruling?

4- With a no balls and 2 strikes count to a right-handed batter and no baserunners, the batter swings and misses for strike 3. The ball deflects off the catcher's shin guards about 3-4 feet in front of home plate. As the catcher charges forward to field the dropped third strike, the catcher and the batter runner collide. Is this interference? Is this obstruction? Is this just a train wreck?

5- The batting order for team B is B1, B2, B3, B4, B5, B6, B7, B8, and B9. In the 4th inning, B3 is scheduled to bat but B5 bats and reaches base safely. B6 strikes out and B5 advances to second

base. B3 now bats and after reaching a 2-2 count, the opponent's coach questions the batting out of order of team B. What is the ruling?

6- The batting order for team B is B1, B2, B3, B4, B5, B6, B7, B8, and B9. In the 4th inning, B3 is scheduled to bat but B4 bats and reaches base safely. B5 strikes out and B4 advances to second base. B3 now bats and walks. B6 now bats and after reaching a 2-2 count, the opponent's coach questions the batting out of order by team B. What is the ruling?

Umpires selected for the MPSSAA softball playoffs should be familiar with the rules and procedures for each

of these plays. If high school umpires want to communicate with me directly concerning any of these play situations, that's good. When playoff crews meet with Ken Kazmarek and myself prior to the state semi-final

and championship games, the umpires should be prepared to briefly discuss these plays and procedures.

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