

MARCH PLAYS AND CLARIFICATIONS

Comments from the National Umpire Staff

The 2014 National Umpire Schools are going strong. We have completed nine National Umpire Schools with over 600 students in attendance. With the adapted agenda, new Power Points AND Teaching Points along with enthusiastic students and instructors, the schools have been a raving success. We still have three more schools scheduled plus a Slow Pitch Camp and a Fast Pitch Camp. All three schools are filling up fast and appear on their way to being well attended.

If you have not attended a Advanced Fast Pitch Camp and / or a Advanced Slow Pitch Camp, I would highly recommend that you consider it a priority. Both Camps include several days of intense advanced training and evaluation from members of the Deputy Director Staff and National Umpire Staff. The ratio of 10 students to each instructor is invaluable to both student and instructor. Each Camp will video games so that the umpire can not only see themselves umpiring but also better understand what the instructor is observing and commenting on.

This year's Advanced Slow Pitch Camp will be held in Clackamas, Oregon on June 5th – 8th. If you are interested contact the Camp Coordinator Rex Hoyt at hrhoyt@comcast.net, Cell (503) 314-9897 / H – (503) 649-5248. If you are interested in the Fast Pitch Camp, it is being held in Bloomington, Indiana June 17th – 22nd. Contact Camp Coordinator Ed Bellows at pmsieb@comcast.net. Both of these camps will help take your game to the next level.

Whether you choose a National Umpire School and / or an Advanced Camp, we feel it will be well worth your while. However, we ask that you give us your comments on how we can enhance our National Umpire Training Program. We value your input and ideas on how to make our Umpire Program the best in the country.

E Rule Book:

Our E Rule Book is up and running for the Android and will soon be launched for the I Phone. Sales are strong and we have even sold the E Rule Book to folks overseas. I urge you to invest the modest \$15.00 fee and have the ASA Umpire Manual / Rule Book at your finger tips. Reach out to your umpires and let them know that this tool is available and is easy to download, easy to use and a great asset when the book is not available. Thank you to those who have purchased it already and congratulations to those who will purchase it in the future.

Clarification:

11 Inch Ball:

We have received several questions about the Slow Pitch 52 / 300 balls used in all Men's Slow Pitch. The question is do we have the 52/300 design for the 11 inch ball used in our Women's Slow Pitch and by Women in the Coed game? All the prior testing was conducted with the 12 inch Men's ball. Testing with the 11" ball should be completed in the next few weeks. Upon completion, the recorded data will be sent to the test lab at Washington State University for their review. After their review they will let us know which direction we need to go with the 11" ball.

The Equipment Testing and Certification Committee historically base their decision based on scientific evidence. An announcement will be made soon thereafter.

Batter using an Illegal Bat, Altered or Non Approved Bat:

There have been some questions about the new rule, or clarification, of what happens to a batter after they have completed their turn at bat with an Illegal, Altered or Non Approved Bat. Be advised that the rule has not changed, this is just a clarification on what happens to the batter who uses an Illegal, Altered or Non Approved Bat after their turn at bat has been completed. If the umpires then notice the violation or it is brought to the attention of the umpires before a batter steps into the box with the same bat and receives a legal or illegal pitch with the same bat we can only get one out. The 2014 Rule book for **Rule 7, Section 6B-E, EFFECT: NOTE Should be B-E:** If a previous batter has used the same Illegal, Altered or Non Approved bat and a pitch has been made, the current batter is only out.

Lighting:

Please note if you happen to be discussing the lighting requirements for the field of play, there is a misprint in the 2014 ASA Rule Book. The guidelines for the lighting of a playing field are listed on the ASA website. If you have a question and / or are asked a question, please go to ASAsoftball.com and click on the About Us tab and scroll to the Lighting Guidelines tab and it has all the information you need.

Umpire Exam

There have been a few questions on the rule reference for Umpire Exam question number 32. We show the rule reference to be Rule 7 Section 4D which only covers part of the play. We should have also listed Rule 7 Section 6E, F, and G NOTE: and also Rule 7 Section 6M [3]. Using all three references gets you to the correct answer (C).

Plays and Rulings:

PLAY: In the bottom of the 7th inning with two outs and R1 on 2B, B4 hits a ball into the outfield that gets past F9 who is playing short and the ball rolls all the way to the outfield fence. B4 is obstructed rounding 1B by F3. R1 scores easily as B4 rounds 3B and on a close play at plate is tagged out. The Plate Umpire having recognized the Obstruction at 1B calls "time" and awards B4 home, tying the game up 3-3. The visiting team coach asks for time to protest the call saying "that B4 had advanced beyond two bases where the obstruction occurred and was tagged out, therefore by rule, the runner is out."

Ruling: The protest is denied. In obstruction, if a runner is put out prior to reaching the base they would have reached had there been no obstruction; the runner and all other runners are always awarded the base(s) they would have reached had there been no obstruction. **Rule 8, Section 5B[2] EFFECT.**

With reference to **Rule 8, Section 5B[3] EFFECT** there still seems to be a misunderstanding by coaches, players and some umpires that if the obstructed runner is put out after passing the base they would have reached had there been no obstruction **or advanced beyond the two bases where the obstruction occurred,** the obstructed runner will be called out and the ball remains live. What this is referring to is if the runner has passed the base they would have reached had there been no obstruction they are liable to be called out. It does not say passed two bases it states "the" two bases. When they have advanced past the two bases where the obstruction occurred, then **Rule 5, Section 5B[1]** is no longer in play because they cannot be called out between the bases where obstruction occurs except for the 5 reasons in the rule, and one of those bases were the base they would have reached had there been no obstruction.

PLAY: With R1 on 2B, B2 hits a ground ball to F6 who tries to field the ball and bobbles it. R1, trying to advance to 3B, attempts to get around F6 who is picking up the deflected batted ball. In doing so, R1 bumps F6 advancing to 3B. The umpire calls "dead ball" and calls R1 out for interference because the ball has not passed F6 and F6 still had an opportunity to make an out on B2.

Ruling: Incorrect ruling. If protested correctly, the umpire should reverse his ruling and "obstruction" should be called since this interference was not intentional. When a runner intentionally interferes with any defensive player having the opportunity to make an out with the deflected batted ball, the ball is dead and the runner is out. All other runners must return to the last base touched at the time of the interference. **Rule 8, Section 7J[4]**