



## May Plays and Clarifications

### **Comments from the National Umpire Staff**

#### **Going For Help:**

In recent years we have been asked a lot of questions about when an umpire should or should not go for help on a call. This includes a check swing or on a play in the field. The thought process used in going for help should be the same as going for help on an appeal, if we go for help on an appeal, we must be missing a piece of the puzzle. The same thought process should be used on a check swing as well as a play in the field.

On a check swing you can gain credibility by going for help only when needed. If you see that there was no swing, then stand by your call. If you are not sure, then ask for help. Going for help is another way of saying that I am missing a piece of the puzzle and my partner might have the missing piece. If you are not sure it was a swing, do not wait to be asked, go for help. This will help you gain credibility with both the catcher and coaches. If you see everything clearly and the batter did not swing, then convince the coach that you had all the pieces of the puzzle.

On plays in the field the same theory applies. Do I have all the pieces of the puzzle? If not, ask your partner for help. If you have all the pieces, no more information is needed. It comes down to being honest with yourself.

Common plays that umpires get asked to go for help on are swipe tags, a pulled foot, or control of the ball. If you have a play and you are missing one of the pieces, for example: the base, the ball, the defense, the offense, and the interaction of all four elements, then ask your partner and get the call right. If you have all the elements then do not go for help.

On force plays DO NOT go for help on judgment calls. Judgments differ from person to person so going for help on a judgment call will only confuse things. If you have all the pieces and a coach differs with your judgment, it is time to becoming an umpire. Stand by your call. Know you had all of the elements thereby your judgment was correct. DO NOT go for help simply to appease the coach. If you do they will begin to ask you to go for help on all judgment calls and you will lose all credibility as an umpire.

Being a great umpire involves more than safe and out or ball and strike. It also involves knowing when you need additional information to get the call right. It also involves remaining firm when you do have all the information, especially on force plays or plays at first base. Let them know that you saw all of the elements come together and based on your judgment the call stands.

## **2015 National Umpire Schools**

The last of the 2014 National Umpire Schools are coming to a close along with the Slow Pitch Advanced Camp and the Fast Pitch Advanced Camp. It's time to start the local association promotion campaign for the 2015 National Umpire Schools. If you are interested in hosting a National Umpire school in 2015 please notify your Regional Umpire-in-Chief as soon as possible. We need to start putting the schedule together so we can compare dates and make sure we do not place schools in locations that they have conflicting dates. Remember just because you host a National Umpire School does NOT replace the need to provide training, using all the tools available from ASA, to meet the needs of your umpires in every stage of their development on a Local and Regional level.

## **Elite Program**

Remember the ability to apply the same year you qualify has been reinstated this year for the Elite program. However there are time constraints we must follow. If your qualifying Championship is a Fast Pitch event then your application must be in the office within three weeks after your Championship ends. Example: if the 18U Gold is your last qualifying event, the application must be at the National Office in OKC by August 18<sup>th</sup>, the MMFP by August 25<sup>th</sup>, etc.. Applications from the MASP, which is the last qualifying event, must be in the National Office no Later than October 15<sup>th</sup> to be considered for Elite the same year.

## **Plays and Clarifications:**

**Play:** With one out and R1 (the DP) on 1B, B3 (the Flex) hits a single to F7 and moves R1 to 2B. The defensive coach properly appeals before the next pitch and it is determined that B3 is an Illegal Player/Illegal Batter.

**Ruling:** B3 is ruled an Illegal Batter. B3 is called out and is disqualified from the game. B3 must be replaced by a legal substitute. All other outs stand and runners who were not declared out must be return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch. **Rule 4, Section 6F2 EFFECT.**

**NOTE:** The **EFFECT** for an Illegal Player states that the Illegal Player is disqualified and replaced with a legal substitute. All other provisions of Rule 4, Section 6A-C[1-9] apply. Now you must refer to Rule 4, Section 6C[3] since no pitch has been thrown and apply the balance of the **EFFECT**.

**Play:** With two outs, R1 on 3B and R2 on 2B, B5 hits the ball to centerfield. After rounding 3B, R2 is obstructed and starts to return to 3B while F8 is throwing the ball home. The third base coach seeing the obstruction tells R2 to again return home. R2 does and is tagged by F2 before reaching the plate. The umpire declares R2 out because they had gone beyond the base that would have been reached had there been no obstruction.

**Ruling:** Incorrect procedure. R2 was obstructed between 3B and home and should have been protected between those bases unless one of **Rule 8, Section 5B EXCEPTIIONS** has occurred. Once R2 was tagged out the umpire should have called "Dead Ball" and awarded R2 the base R2 would have reached had there been no obstruction. In this case it appears that R2 should have been placed back at 3B. **Rule 8, Section 5B[1-4].**

**Play:** With no outs and R1 on 1B, B2 hits the ball up the middle. F6 dives for the ball and falls down close to 2B. F6 is unable to flip the ball out of the glove to F4 who is covering 2B so F6 takes the ball from the glove and reaches toward F4, without letting go of the ball, and puts her hand into the F4's glove. The Umpire ruled R1 out.

**Ruling:** Incorrect procedure. F6 never relinquished control of the ball. Just because F4 also had their hand on the ball does not show control by F4. The runner should have been ruled safe. **Rule 1, Definitions No Catch/Rule 8, Section 7C.**

**Play:** With no outs, R1 at 3B, R2 at 2B and R3 at 1B, B4 hits a sharp ground ball to F4 who turns and throws to F6 at 2B. F6 touches 2B and starts to throw to F3 as R3 runs into F6 and prevents the throw to 1B. In (a) R1 scored prior to the collision and in (b) R1 is between 3B and Home.

**Ruling:** In (a) R1 is out at 2B on the force out. R1 is guilty of interference by a retired runner and by rule the runner closest to home at the time of the interference is also declared out. Since R1 had scored prior to the interference, R2 is the runner closest to home and should be called out for the second out. In (b) since R1 had not scored prior to the interference, R1 is the runner closest to home and should be called out. **Rule 8, Section 7P.**

**Play:** With one out and R1 on 3B, R2 on 1B, B4 hits a line drive back to F1. The ball goes off F1's glove up into the air where F6 catches it for the second out and runs over to touch 1B to retire R2 who had not properly tagged up. R1 scores prior to F6 touching 1B.

**Ruling:** When F6 caught the ball retiring B4, the force out was removed making the play at 1B a "time play". Therefore, since R1 scored before the third out, the run would count. **Rule 5, Section 5B2.**