**October 2024 Plays and Clarifications**

**PLAY:** R1 standing on 1B, B2 hits a line drive that hits R1, and the ball drops to the field. F3 picks up the ball and touches first base to get the batter. At this point we do not know the position of the defensive player

The question is do we have two outs, one out, or is it dead once the R1 gets hit?

According to our USA Softball Rules the following is considered in the play.

**Rule 8 – Section 8 – The runner is not out**

**Rule 8-8 M** When hit by a batted ball while in contact with a base, unless the runner intentionally

interferes with the ball or a fielder making a play. However, you are provided some leeway with the comment that unless the runner intentionally interferes with the ball or fielder making the play.

Rules Supplement #44 states

**44 - RUNNER HIT BY A FAIR BATTED BALL**

**A.** While in Contact with the Base. A runner who is hit by a fair batted ball while in

contact with the base should not be called out unless the act is intentional. The ball

remains live, or becomes immediately dead, depending on the closest defensive

player. When the closest defensive player is in front of the base that the runner is

in contact with, the ball remains live. However, when the closest defensive player

is behind the base, the ball is dead. Should the ball be ruled dead and the batter

awarded a base hit, only runners forced to advance because the batter was placed

on first base shall advance one base.

**B.** While Not in Contact with the Base. A runner who is hit by a fair batted ball while

not in contact with a base should be called out or ruled safe, depending on the

interference rule. (Rule 8, Section 7J & K or Rule 8, Section 8D-F)

The correct ruling on the play above is B1 is out, due to F3 fielding the ball and touching 1B, which removes the force and R1 is now entitled to remain on that base. Had F3 touched the runner on the base and then touched 1B we would have had a double play, the ball remains alive in both instances.

**National Championships**

While observing recent Slow Pitch National Championships we would like to mention the **TOP 5** most common missed mechanics as observed at National Championships.

1. Improper heel/toe stance. Many either over or under rotated.
2. Improper slot. Umpires setting up with their head completely in the strike zone rather than their inside ear on the inside edge of the plate.
3. Base umpires working too deep in the field with a 5-man infield, was not using a line from play to player but established themselves behind the deepest player, resulting in an inability to get to a proper position in the infield~~.~~
4. U1 not taking BR or last runner into 3B.
5. Not moving parallel to the runners on steals, most wanted to take steps in toward the base path instead of running parallel to the base. The steps toward the base path reduces the angle for a call as well as causes the umpire not to reach the proper distance for a base tag play

These observations are typical of what we are seeing at many of our National Championships. We need to strive to be better prepared for our future Championships. Preparation in all phases of umpiring: rules, mechanics, physical conditioning and game management. The players and coaches certainly prepare, and we should as well.