

Plays and Clarifications

February 2025

Many of you around the country have already started your 2025 season while others may be still a month or longer waiting for the weather to break so that you may start your season. With the umpire program at USA Softball, we are continuously in season with one activity or another. Currently, we are working to fill out the rosters for our National Championships as well as planning and preparing for the Biennial UIC Clinic in October.

UIC CLINIC

The Biennial UIC Clinic will be held October 23-25 in Oklahoma City. The clinic which will have instructional sessions on Oct. 24-25 will include general sessions, breakout sessions on various umpiring topics and a guest speaker. The cost of the clinic is \$225 which includes the instruction and lunch on both days. Registration for the clinic will begin in March with a blast that will include more details, a link to register and a link for the hotel.

Plays

Play: In Junior Olympic play Team A is using the DP/Flex with the DP in the 4th spot in the line-up and the Flex pitching. In the 4th inning the coach of team A puts the DP into pitch, and the Flex moved to F5. The player originally playing F5 (Smith) is still in the game batting only. In the 5th inning Smith gets a base hit. The coach of team A wants to insert the Flex to run for Smith. The umpire does not allow this to happen, but the coach is insistent that they can put the Flex into run for the DP. What is the correct ruling here?

Ruling: The DP in this game occupies the 4th spot in the line-up and will occupy that spot the entire game. The offense can make changes such as the one made in the fourth inning that will result in a player in the line-up that is only playing offense. However, they do not become the “new DP” as the DP started the game in the fourth batting position in the lineup and will only occupy the fourth batting position for the entire game. The coach’s statement that the Flex can run for the DP is true, but they were attempting to use the Flex as a runner for a position other than the DP’s and would result in an illegal substitution. ***Rule 4-3E and 4-3I***

Play: In a Fast Pitch game R1 is on 1B and B2 has a full count. R1 steals on the pitch as B2 takes ball four R1 slides safely into 2B gets back up as B2 leisurely goes to 1B, and F2 returns the ball to F1 in the circle. R1 seeing that F1 is not paying attention takes off to 3B while B2 has yet to touch 1B. The coach of the defensive team protests that R1 should be out on the Look Back Rule since R1 had stopped on 2B with the pitcher possessing the ball in the circle. What would be the ruling?

Result: The Look Back Rule does not apply until the batter/runner has reached 1B. R1 is not prevented from advancing from 2B to 3B on this play because B1 had yet to touch 1B which would put the Look Back Rule and its restrictions into effect. **Rule 8-7T {2}**

Play: In a Slow Pitch game Team A is playing using a 11 player line-up (10 defenders and a EP). In the 3rd inning on a fly ball to the outfield F7 and F8 collide which injures both players and they leave the game with no available substitutes. With no substitutes the umpire rules the game is a forfeit and Team A protests that they are only down one player from the required number to play they will take an out when their batting position comes up in the line-up. What is the correct ruling?

Result: The shorthanded rule does allow the team to continue the game with one player less than they started with in the batting order. Team A started with 11 players in their batting order and by the shorthanded rule they must have 10 players to continue the game. The injuries took two players out of the batting order, reducing the batting line-up to nine players. Again, the batting order may be reduced by only one player, and when both players left the line-up with no available substitutes the game became a forfeit.

Rule 4-1C {3B & Note} and 4-1D {2A [4]}