

## Plays and Clarifications

November 2025

### 2025 UIC Clinic

We just completed the 2025 UIC Clinic and USA Softball Council Meeting at the end of October in Oklahoma City. This was the first time we had combined the UIC Clinic with the Council. It was a great success with great participation by our umpire family at both events. Another first involved having the Clinic at the Oklahoma City Convention Center, a world class facility that offered attendees and speakers alike many comforts not afforded in our past venues. We had over attendees, who experienced a great speaker in Patty Gasso, and Coach Gasso hit many topics and thoughts on umpiring that resonated with not only the audience, but also our breakout sessions. This year we had eight different breakout sessions which everyone attended, and it covered a wide range of umpiring topics, some new and some old topics with a new twist. Thanks to all that attended and we look forward to seeing you at the next clinic. We conducted a survey and will continue talks with stakeholders to determine if we will continue biennially or switch to every four years for the clinic. That decision will be made soon and conveyed to the membership. Once again, thank you, our umpiring family for your support.

**Play 1:** R1 on 2B and a base hit to right field. R1 rounds third and gets the stop sign from their coach as the throw to the infield is cut off and then thrown to 3B to get the runner. F5 drops the ball, which would have been a sure out, but it trickles away not far past the coach's box. As F5 goes to retrieve the ball, they and the runner, who is returning to 3B, make contact; obstruction is signaled and verbalized. R1 gets back to 3B and soon realizes the base coach has been yelling multiple times for them to go home. After about the 4th or fifth time, they head home and are easily put out for the third out of the inning. The coach disputed the call because obstruction had been called and asked if the crew would get together. The crew met together and ruled the runner was out, stating the runner safely reached the base they would have reached had they not been obstructed. The coach then protested the ruling. Did the crew get it right?

**Ruling:** The umpire crew incorrectly ruled that R1 is out. Even though R1 obtains 3B safely, if they leave the base and try to advance to the next base, unless the defense plays on a different runner, the runner cannot be put out between the two bases where they were obstructed. This play does not meet one of the exceptions listed in **Rule 8, Section 5, B.**

Based on the judgment of the umpire(s), they should place the runner at either 3B or Home.

**Play 2 - FP:** Batter squares to bunt. The pitch is inside, and it hits the bat as they are trying to get out of the way. The ball drops down in the general area between the plate and the batter's box. It has some spin and rolls slightly back, but settles (stopped motionless, not moving) just inside the batter's box front corner in fair territory. The batter who was knocked back gathers themselves and starts to run to 1B as the catcher reaches for the ball. The front foot of the batter goes over the ball, but the back foot drags and kicks the ball. The umpire calls and signals "Dead Ball" and calls the batter out. The offensive coach claims the batter and ball were still in the box and asks the umpire to go for help. The umpire asks the coach what they should go for help on. The coach states, "The ball was still in the batter's box." The umpire agrees but adds that it was motionless and in fair territory when it was kicked by the batter-runner, which prevented the catcher from playing the fair ball. The umpire states, "That's why I called interference, and the batter-runner is out." Did they get the call right?

**Ruling:** In March 2025, we discussed a similar situation, but even though the play is slightly different, the ruling is the same as it was explained in March. In this situation, with the ball setting motionless in the batter's box, when the BR takes off towards 1B and contacts the ball, Rule 1, Foul Ball (F) should have been ruled. The ball is "Dead," but the call should have been ruled a "Foul Ball" because it was still in the batter's box when contact occurred.

**Play 3 - SP:** Two outs. Manager/Base coach asks the PU if they have any home runs left, and the PU indicates they do have one left. The next batter hits a HR. Then, three more batters reach base safely with another run scoring when the defensive coach/manager comes out and tells the PU that the last HR hit by the team was over the limit and should have been an out. What is the ruling? Is this an appeal play? Is it a situation that can be protested?

**Ruling:** Is this an appeal play? **Rule 8, Section 7, F-I** specifically lists plays that can be appealed, and this is not one of them. Is this a situation that can be protested? **Rule 9, Section 1A**, gives the criteria for when a play can be protested. **1.** Before the next pitch, legal or illegal, **2.** Before the next play, **3.** Before all infielders have left fair territory, **4.** On the last play of the game, before the umpires leave live ball territory. **Rule 9, Section 2**, indicates that protests will not be considered based solely on a decision involving the accuracy of judgment on the part of an umpire. Consequently, the home run and subsequent run counts, and all plays that have occurred since then, are legal. Continue the game with two outs and runners on their bases.

**Senior SP Game Clarification:** For example, a Senior SP, Time Limit Game, 5 Runs Maximum Allowed per Inning, Run-ahead rules of 20 after four innings, 15 after five innings. (Rule 5, Section 9A, 3b)

Bottom of 4th - Visiting Team is up 20-0. Plenty of time left on the clock. If the home team does not score any runs, the game is over, 20-0, in favor of the visitors. If the home team scores any runs (1, 2, 3, 4, or 5), the game continues with a score of, let's say, 20-3. If the umpire determines there is still enough time, they can continue the next inning with each team earning up to five runs that inning, or if they believe the time limit could expire, they can notify the teams that the fifth inning will have unlimited runs allowed.

Let's say the umpire continues the game with each team able to earn five runs in the fifth inning. If the visiting team is up by more than 15 runs after the fifth inning, the game is over. A team that wins by the run-ahead rule in regulation time is declared the winner. If, however, time runs out during the fifth inning, no matter the score, then the game shall continue one additional inning with each team having unlimited runs allowed. **Rule 5, Section 9, C** states, "The seventh inning, the last inning of a time limit game, or any extra innings will have unlimited runs allowed." This rule applies when a time expires, or when the umpire determines there is only time left for one more inning.