

SFNABA SELECTED RULES

SFNABA plays by MLB's Official Rules of Baseball. Some rules have been modified for play in SFNABA. The following is the official rule book that is to be used for any and all SFNABA sanctioned game.

(Any changes to the MLB rules have been noted in bold for your convenience. Some MLB rules have been deleted because they do not apply, or conflict with SFNABA rules)

3.03 Defensive Lineups

There is no restriction on defensive substitutions, with the exception of the pitcher. See Rule 3.05.

Lineups, Substitutions, and Adding to the Order

(a) A team must have a minimum of 8 players to begin the game. If a team has only 8 players, the 9th slot in the batting order will be declared an automatic out. Umpires should allow up to 15 minutes after the scheduled start time for a team to get enough players present to play.

NOTE: There is no run awarded to the opposing team for a delayed start.

(b) A team may add one or more slots to the bottom of the batting order at any time during the game. Once a slot has been added to the order, that slot may not be deleted. If a team is, for whatever reason, unable to field enough players to fill an added slot, it becomes an automatic out for the remainder of the game.

(c) Teams should announce to the Umpire in Chief, and the opposing team that they are "adding to the bottom" of the order, and provide the uniform number of the player being added.

(d) The added player may not have been in the batting order as a starter or substitute.

(e) Any starter may re-enter the batting order one time, and must re-enter in the same spot in the batting order.

(f) Only starters may re-enter a game.

(g) In the case that a starter is removed from the lineup, a substitute batter must have one plate appearance before the starter can re-enter.

EXAMPLE: Starter A is replaced for a pinch runner by B. Starter A may not re-enter the lineup until B, or anyone subsequently substituted for B, makes one or more plate appearances. It is not required that player B make a plate appearance.

Therefore, Runner B may be replaced by pinch hitter C. After C makes one plate appearance, Starter A may re-enter the game.

PENALTY: See Rule 3.08 – Note: There is no penalty for failing to announce a substitution.

Injuries and Ejections

(h) If a team is unable to continue to bat with the amount of hitters currently in the batting order due to the injury, a previously used player not currently in the batting order may take the injured player's place in order to prevent a forfeit.

NOTE: The team must insert a player who has not yet played into that slot before they may use a player who has already been removed from the game.

NOTE: The injured player may not return to the game if the team inserts a previously used player into the game.

(i) If a player is ejected from the game, and the team does not have an eligible substitute to replace them with, the slot becomes an automatic out. Teams may not replace an ejected player with a player who has already been removed from the game and is not otherwise eligible to enter.

NOTE: The game does not become a forfeit if an ejection results in the scenario above.

3.04 Pinch Runners and Non-Runners

(a) A player whose name is on his team's batting order may not become a substitute runner for another member of his team.

(b) Each team may designate up to two non-runners. Any non-runner must be identified on the lineup card prior to the start of the game.

(c) In the case of an injury suffered during the game, a manager may switch non-runners at the time of the injury, and only if the other manager agrees to the change. The Umpire in Chief must be notified of this change at the time of the injury.

(d) A team may only have two designated non-runners at any given time.

(e) A non-runner may be replaced by a replacement runner at any time, as long as he has not advanced past the base reached by his at-bat.

(f) The designated runner shall be the player who recorded the last out before the non-runner reached base. This runner will remain the designated runner for the duration of the inning.

EXAMPLE: Batter A flies out. Non-Runner B hits a double. Batter C makes an out.

Replacement runner A may run for B as long as B has not advanced past 2nd base. ONLY Player A may run for B. (If A is also a designated non-runner, then the player who recorded the previous out shall be the designated runner.)

(g) If the non-runner advances past the base reached during his at bat, he may no longer be replaced by a designated runner until he scores or is retired.

(h) If the non-runner is the first player up in the first inning of a game, the courtesy runner will be the last player in the batting order.

NOTE: There is no speed-up rule allowing runners for the pitcher or catcher. Any improper use of a courtesy runner including the use of the improper or wrong replacement shall result in the non-runner being scored as an out.

4.10

Time Limit

(h) No inning shall begin after 3 hours from the scheduled time for first pitch, unless:

(i) There is no scheduled game following the tied game, and both managers, and all umpires agree to extend the length of the game.

(ii) Managers must meet briefly with the Umpire in Chief, and establish the parameters by which the game shall continue. If all parties do not agree on the parameters, the game is over and is declared a tie.

Run Rule (Mercy Rule)

(i) If a team is leading by 10 or more runs after 7 completed innings, or after 6 and a half innings if the home team is ahead, the game is complete.

(j) There is no run rule to be used in the Conference Finals Series or the League Championship Series.

7.065

FORCE-PLAY SLIDE RULE

The intent of this rule is to ensure the safety of the defensive player. This is a safety as well as an interference rule. Whether the defense could have completed the double play has no bearing on the applicability of this rule. This rule pertains to a force-play situation at any base, regardless of the number of outs.

A. On any force play the runner must slide on the ground and in a direct line between the two bases.

i. EXCEPTION --- A runner need not slide directly into a base as long as the runner slides or runs in a direction away from the fielder to avoid making deliberate contact or altering the play of the fielder.

ii. "On the ground" means either a head-first slide or a slide with one leg and buttock on the ground.

iii. "Directly into a base" means the runner's entire body (feet, legs, trunk and arms) must stay in a straight line between the bases.

EXAMPLE: --- If a runner peels away from the baseline towards right field, and does not alter the play in any way nor contact any fielder, interference shall not be called.

B. Contact with a fielder is legal and interference shall not be called if the runner:

i. Makes a legal slide directly to, but not past, the base. or

ii. Is on the ground at the time of contact and the fielder moves directly down the line between the two bases to attempt a play.

iii. Makes a legal slide and makes contact with a defensive player who is on or over, but not beyond, the base.

EXAMPLE --- When the base runner slides beyond the base, but does not (1) make contact with, or (2) alter the play of the defensive player, interference shall not be called.

APPROVED RULING: If contact occurs on top of the base as a result of a "pop up" slide, this contact is legal.

C. Actions by a runner are illegal and interference shall be called if:

i. The runner slides or runs out of the base line in the direction of the fielder;

ii. The runner uses a rolling, cross-body or pop-up slide and either makes contact with or alters the play of a fielder;

iii. The runner's raised leg makes contact higher than the fielder's knee when in a standing position;

iv. The runner goes beyond the base and either makes contact with or alters the play of the fielder ("Beyond the base" means any part of the offensive player's body makes contact with or alters the play of the fielder beyond the base.)

v. The runner slashes or kicks the fielder with either leg;

vi. The runner illegally slides toward or contacts the fielder even if the fielder makes no attempt to throw to complete a play.

PENALTY for 1-6:

1. With less than two outs, the batter-runner, as well as the interfering runner, shall be declared out and no other runner(s) shall advance.

2. With two outs, the interfering runner shall be declared out and no other runner(s) shall advance.

3. If the runner's slide or collision is flagrant, the runner may be ejected from the contest based on the umpire's judgment.

APPROVED RULING: If the bases are loaded with no outs, a double-play attempt is made, and interference is called, all other runners must return to their original bases.

COLLISION RULE

D. The rules committee is concerned about unnecessary and violent collisions with the catcher at home plate, and with infielders at all bases. The intent of this rule is to encourage base runners and defensive layers to avoid such collisions whenever possible.

a. When there is a collision between a runner and a fielder who clearly is in possession of the ball, the umpire shall judge:

- i. Whether the collision by the runner was avoidable (could the runner have reached the base without colliding) or unavoidable (the runner's path to the base was blocked.)
- ii. Whether the runner actually was attempting to reach the base (plate) or attempting to dislodge the ball from the fielder; or
- iii. Whether the runner was using flagrant contact to maliciously dislodge the ball.

PENALTY: If the runner attempted to dislodge the ball, the runner shall be declared out even if the fielder loses possession of the ball. The ball is dead and all other base runners shall return to the last base touched at the time of the interference.

APPROVED RULING 1 – If the fielder blocks the path of the base runner to the base (plate), the runner may make incidental contact, slide into, or otherwise collide with a fielder as long as the runner is making a legitimate attempt to avoid the fielder and reach the base or plate.

APPROVED RULING 2 – If the flagrant or malicious contact by the runner was before the runner's touching the plate, the runner shall be declared out and also ejected from the contest. The ball shall be declared dead immediately. All other base runners shall return to the bases they last occupied at the time of the pitch.

NOTE: "Malicious contact" – Generally, players must slide or otherwise attempt to avoid making contact with a defensive player legally in possession of the ball. If a runner does not make a legitimate attempt to slide or otherwise avoid the player, it can be considered malicious contact.

EXAMPLE: A runner does not raise his arms or lower his shoulder, but simply continues to run towards home plate without sliding or trying to avoid the fielder, and who makes contact with the fielder shall be adjudged to have used malicious contact.

b. If the defensive player blocks the base (plate) or base line clearly without possession of the ball, obstruction shall be called. The umpire shall point and call, "That's obstruction." The umpire shall let the play continue until all play has ceased, call time, and award any bases that are justified. The obstructed runner is awarded at least one base beyond the base last touched legally before the obstruction.

APPROVED RULING 1 – If the base runner collides flagrantly, the runner shall be declared safe on the obstruction, but will be ejected from the contest. The ball is dead.

SFNABA 2012 EDITION

OFFICIAL BASEBALL RULES

DIVISIONS OF THE CODE

2.00 Definition of Terms.

3.00 Game Preliminaries.

4.00 Starting and Ending the Game.

5.00 Putting the Ball in Play, Dead Ball and Live Ball (in Play).

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Rule 2.00

2.00—Definitions of Terms.

(All definitions in Rule 2.00 are listed alphabetically.)

ADJUDGED is a judgment decision by the umpire.

An APPEAL is the act of a fielder in claiming violation of the rules by the offensive team.

A BALK is an illegal act by the pitcher with a runner or runners on base, entitling all runners to advance one base.

A BALL is a pitch which does not enter the strike zone in flight and is not struck at by the batter. Rule 2.00 (Ball) Comment: If the pitch touches the ground and bounces through the strike zone it is a "ball." If such a pitch touches the batter, he shall be awarded first base. If the batter swings at such a pitch after two strikes, the ball cannot be caught, for the purposes of Rule 6.05 (c) and 6.09 (b). If the batter hits such a pitch, the ensuing action shall be the same as if he hit the ball in flight.

A BASE is one of four points which must be touched by a runner in order to score a run; more usually applied to the canvas bags and the rubber plate which mark the base points.

A BASE COACH is a team member in uniform who is stationed in the coach's box at first or third base to direct the batter and the runners.

A BASE ON BALLS is an award of first base granted to a batter who, during his time at bat, receives four pitches outside the strike zone.

SFNABA NOTE: Teams must throw pitches. No automatic intentional walk.

A BATTER is an offensive player who takes his position in the batter's box.

BATTER-RUNNER is a term that identifies the offensive player who has just finished his time at bat until he is put out or until the play on which he became a runner ends.

The BATTER'S BOX is the area within which the batter shall stand during his time at bat.

The BATTERY is the pitcher and catcher.

BENCH OR DUGOUT is the seating facilities reserved for players, substitutes and other team members in uniform when they are not actively engaged on the playing field.

A BUNT is a batted ball not swung at, but intentionally met with the bat and tapped slowly within the infield.

A CALLED GAME is one in which, for any reason, the umpire-in-chief terminates play.

A CATCH is the act of a fielder in getting secure possession in his hand or glove of a ball in flight and firmly holding it; providing he does not use his cap, protector, pocket or any other part

of his uniform in getting possession. It is not a catch, however, if simultaneously or immediately following his contact with the ball, he collides with a player, or with a wall, or if he falls down, and as a result of such collision or falling, drops the ball.

It is not a catch if a fielder touches a fly ball which then hits a member of the offensive team or an umpire and then is caught by another defensive player. In establishing the validity of the catch, the fielder shall hold the ball long enough to prove that he has complete control of the ball and that his release of the ball is voluntary and intentional. If the fielder has made the catch and drops the ball while in the act of making a throw following the catch, the ball shall be adjudged to have been caught.

Rule 2.00 (Catch) Comment: A catch is legal if the ball is finally held by any fielder, even though juggled, or held by another fielder before it touches the ground. Runners may leave their bases the instant the first fielder touches the ball. A fielder may reach over a fence, railing, rope or other line of demarcation to make a catch. He may jump on top of a railing, or canvas that may be in foul ground. No interference should be allowed when a fielder reaches over a fence, railing, rope or into a stand to catch a ball. He does so at his own risk. If a fielder, attempting a catch at the edge of the dugout, is "held up" and kept from an apparent fall by a player or players of either team and the catch is made, it shall be allowed.

The CATCHER is the fielder who takes his position back of the home base.

The CATCHER'S BOX is that area within which the catcher shall stand until the pitcher delivers the ball.

THE CLUB is a person or group of persons responsible for assembling the team personnel, providing the playing field and required facilities, and representing the team in relations with the league.

A COACH is a team member in uniform appointed by the manager to perform such duties as the manager may designate, such as but not limited to acting as base coach.

A DEAD BALL is a ball out of play because of a legally created temporary suspension of play.

The DEFENSE (or DEFENSIVE) is the team, or any player of the team, in the field.

A DOUBLE-HEADER is two regularly scheduled or rescheduled games, played in immediate succession.

A DOUBLE PLAY is a play by the defense in which two offensive players are put out as a result of continuous action, providing there is no error between putouts.

(a) A force double play is one in which both putouts are force plays.

(b) A reverse force double play is one in which the first out is a force play and the second out is made on a runner for whom the force is removed by reason of the first out. Examples of reverse force plays: runner on first, one out; batter grounds to first baseman, who steps on first base (one out) and throws to second baseman or shortstop for the second out (a tag play).

Another example: bases loaded, none out; batter grounds to third baseman, who steps on third base (one out); then throws to catcher for the second out (tag play).

DUGOUT (See definition of BENCH)

A FAIR BALL is a batted ball that settles on fair ground between home and first base, or between home and third base, or that is on or over fair territory when bounding to the outfield past first or third base, or that touches first, second or third base, or that first falls on fair territory on or beyond first base or third base, or that, while on or over fair territory touches the person of an umpire or player, or that, while over fair territory, passes out of the playing field in flight.

A fair fly shall be judged according to the relative position of the ball and the foul line, including the foul pole, and not as to whether the fielder is on fair or foul territory at the time he touches the ball.

Rule 2.00 (Fair Ball) Comment: If a fly ball lands in the infield between home and first base, or home and third base, and then bounces to foul territory without touching a player or umpire and before passing first or third base, it is a foul ball; or if the ball settles on foul territory or is touched by a player on foul territory, it is a foul ball. If a fly ball lands on or beyond first or third base and then bounces to foul territory, it is a fair hit. Clubs, increasingly, are erecting tall foul poles at the fence line with a wire netting extending along the side of the pole on fair territory above the fence to enable the umpires more accurately to judge fair and foul balls.

FAIR TERRITORY is that part of the playing field within, and including the first base and third base lines, from home base to the bottom of the playing field fence and perpendicularly upwards. All foul lines are in fair territory.

A FIELDER is any defensive player.

FIELDER'S CHOICE is the act of a fielder who handles a fair grounder and, instead of throwing to first base to put out the batter-runner, throws to another base in an attempt to put out a preceding runner. The term is also used by scorers (a) to account for the advance of the batter-runner who takes one or more extra bases when the fielder who handles his safe hit attempts to put out a preceding runner; (b) to account for the advance of a runner (other than by stolen base or error) while a fielder is attempting to put out another runner; and (c) to account for the advance of a runner made solely because of the defensive team's indifference (undefended steal).

A FLY BALL is a batted ball that goes high in the air in flight.

A FORCE PLAY is a play in which a runner legally loses his right to occupy a base by reason of the batter becoming a runner.

Rule 2.00 (Force Play) Comment: Confusion regarding this play is removed by remembering that frequently the "force" situation is removed during the play. Example: Man on first, one out, ball hit sharply to first baseman who touches the bag and batter-runner is out. The force is removed at that moment and runner advancing to second must be tagged. If there had been a runner on third or second, and either of these runners scored before the tag-out at second, the run counts. Had the first baseman thrown to second and the ball then had been returned to first, the play at second was a force out, making two outs, and the return throw to first ahead of the runner would have made three outs. In that case, no run would score.

Example: Not a force out. One out. Runner on first and third. Batter flies out. Two out. Runner on third tags up and scores. Runner on first tries to retouch before throw from fielder reaches first baseman, but does not get back in time and is out. Three outs. If, in umpire's judgment, the runner from third touched home before the ball was held at first base, the run counts.

A FORFEITED GAME is a game declared ended by the umpire-in-chief in favor of the offended team by the score of 9 to 0, for violation of the rules.

A FOUL BALL is a batted ball that settles on foul territory between home and first base, or between home and third base, or that bounds past first or third base on or over foul territory, or that first falls on foul territory beyond first or third base, or that, while on or over foul territory, touches the person of an umpire or player, or any object foreign to the natural ground.

A foul fly shall be judged according to the relative position of the ball and the foul line, including the foul pole, and not as to whether the infielder is on foul or fair territory at the time he touches the ball.

Rule 2.00 (Foul Ball) Comment: A batted ball not touched by a fielder, which hits the pitcher's rubber and rebounds into foul territory, between home and first, or between home and third base is a foul ball.

FOUL TERRITORY is that part of the playing field outside the first and third base lines extended to the fence and perpendicularly upwards.

A FOUL TIP is a batted ball that goes sharp and direct from the bat to the catcher's hands and is legally caught. It is not a foul tip unless caught and any foul tip that is caught is a strike, and the ball is in play. It is not a catch if it is a rebound, unless the ball has first touched the catcher's glove or hand.

A GROUND BALL is a batted ball that rolls or bounces close to the ground.

The HOME TEAM is the team on whose grounds the game is played, or if the game is played on neutral grounds, the home team shall be designated by mutual agreement.

ILLEGAL (or ILLEGALLY) is contrary to these rules.

An ILLEGAL PITCH is (1) a pitch delivered to the batter when the pitcher does not have his pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate; (2) a quick return pitch. An illegal pitch when runners are on base is a balk.

An INFIELDER is a fielder who occupies a position in the infield.

An INFIELD FLY is a fair fly ball (not including a line drive nor an attempted bunt) which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort, when first and second, or first, second and third bases are occupied, before two are out. The pitcher, catcher and any outfielder who stations himself in the infield on the play shall be considered infielders for the purpose of this rule.

When it seems apparent that a batted ball will be an Infield Fly, the umpire shall immediately declare "Infield Fly" for the benefit of the runners. If the ball is near the baselines, the umpire shall declare "Infield Fly, if Fair."

The ball is alive and runners may advance at the risk of the ball being caught, or retouch and advance after the ball is touched, the same as on any fly ball. If the hit becomes a foul ball, it is treated the same as any foul.

If a declared Infield Fly is allowed to fall untouched to the ground, and bounces foul before passing first or third base, it is a foul ball. If a declared Infield Fly falls untouched to the ground outside the baseline, and bounces fair before passing first or third base, it is an Infield Fly.

Rule 2.00 (Infield Fly) Comment: On the infield fly rule the umpire is to rule whether the ball could ordinarily have been handled by an infielder—not by some arbitrary limitation such as the grass, or the base lines. The umpire must rule also that a ball is an infield fly, even if handled by an outfielder, if, in the umpire's judgment, the ball could have been as easily handled by an infielder. The infield fly is in no sense to be considered an appeal play. The umpire's judgment must govern, and the decision should be made immediately.

When an infield fly rule is called, runners may advance at their own risk. If on an infield fly rule, the infielder intentionally drops a fair ball, the ball remains in play despite the provisions of Rule 6.05(l). The infield fly rule takes precedence.

IN FLIGHT describes a batted, thrown, or pitched ball which has not yet touched the ground or some object other than a fielder.

IN JEOPARDY is a term indicating that the ball is in play and an offensive player may be put out.

An INNING is that portion of a game within which the teams alternate on offense and defense and in which there are three putouts for each team. Each team's time at bat is a half-inning.

INTERFERENCE

(a) Offensive interference is an act by the team at bat which interferes with, obstructs, impedes, hinders or confuses any fielder attempting to make a play. If the umpire declares the batter, batter-runner, or a runner out for interference, all other runners shall return to the last base that was in the judgment of the umpire, legally touched at the time of the interference, unless otherwise provided by these rules.

Rule 2.00 (Interference (a)) Comment: In the event the batter-runner has not reached first base, all runners shall return to the base last occupied at the time of the pitch.

(b) Defensive interference is an act by a fielder that hinders or prevents a batter from hitting a pitch.

(c) Umpire's interference occurs (1) when a plate umpire hinders, impedes or prevents a catcher's throw attempting to prevent a stolen base or retire a runner on a pick-off play, or (2) when a fair ball touches an umpire on fair territory before passing a fielder.

Rule 2.00 (Interference (c)) Comment: Umpire interference may also occur when an umpire interferes with a catcher returning the ball to the pitcher.

(d) Spectator interference occurs when a spectator reaches out of the stands, or goes on the playing field, and (1) touches a live ball or (2) touches a player and hinders an attempt to make a play on a live ball. On any interference the ball is dead.

THE LEAGUE is a group of clubs whose teams play each other in a pre-arranged schedule under these rules for the league championship.

THE LEAGUE PRESIDENT is the league official charged with enforcing these Rules, fining or suspending any player, manager, coach or umpire for violation of these Rules, resolving any disputes involving these Rules or determining any protested games.

Rule 2.00 (League President) Comment: With respect to the Major Leagues, the functions of the League President pursuant to these Rules shall be carried out by the designees of the Commissioner of Baseball. The Commissioner may designate different officials to carry out different functions of a League President pursuant to these Rules.

LEGAL (or LEGALLY) is in accordance with these rules.

A LIVE BALL is a ball which is in play.

A LINE DRIVE is a batted ball that goes sharp and direct from the bat to a fielder without touching the ground.

THE MANAGER is a person appointed by the club to be responsible for the team's actions on the field, and to represent the team in communications with the umpire and the opposing team. A player may be appointed manager.

(a) The club shall designate the manager to the league president or the umpire-in-chief not less than thirty minutes before the scheduled starting time of the game.

(b) The manager may advise the umpire-in-chief that he has delegated specific duties prescribed by the rules to a player or coach, and any action of such designated representative shall be official. The manager shall always be responsible for his team's conduct, observance of the official rules, and deference to the umpires.

(c) If a manager leaves the field, he shall designate a player or coach as his substitute, and such substitute manager shall have the duties, rights and responsibilities of the manager. If the manager fails or refuses to designate his substitute before leaving, the umpire-in-chief shall designate a team member as substitute manager.

OBSTRUCTION is the act of a fielder who, while not in possession of the ball and not in the act of fielding the ball, impedes the progress of any runner.

Rule 2.00 (Obstruction) Comment: If a fielder is about to receive a thrown ball and if the ball is in flight directly toward and near enough to the fielder so he must occupy his position to receive the ball he may be considered “in the act of fielding a ball.” It is entirely up to the judgment of the umpire as to whether a fielder is in the act of fielding a ball. After a fielder has made an attempt to field a ball and missed, he can no longer be in the “act of fielding” the ball. For example: an infielder dives at a ground ball and the ball passes him and he continues to lie on the ground and delays the progress of the runner, he very likely has obstructed the runner.

OFFENSE is the team, or any player of the team, at bat.

OFFICIAL SCORER. See Rule 10.00.

ORDINARY EFFORT is the effort that a fielder of average skill at a position in that league or classification of leagues should exhibit on a play, with due consideration given to the condition of the field and weather conditions.

Rule 2.00 (Ordinary Effort) Comment: This standard, called for several times in the Official Scoring Rules (e.g., Rules 10.05(a)(3), 10.05(a)(4), 10.05(a)(6), 10.05(b)(3) (Base Hits); 10.08(b) (Sacrifices); 10.12(a)(1) Comment, 10.12(d)(2) (Errors); and 10.13(a), 10.13(b) (Wild Pitches and Passed Balls)) and in the Official Baseball Rules (e.g., Rule 2.00 (Infield Fly)), is an objective standard in regard to any particular fielder. In other words, even if a fielder makes his best effort, if that effort falls short of what an average fielder at that position in that league would have made in a situation, the official scorer should charge that fielder with an error.

An OUT is one of the three required retirements of an offensive team during its time at bat.

An OUTFIELDER is a fielder who occupies a position in the outfield, which is the area of the playing field most distant from home base.

OVERSLIDE (or OVERSLIDING) is the act of an offensive player when his slide to a base, other than when advancing from home to first base, is with such momentum that he loses contact with the base.

A PENALTY is the application of these rules following an illegal act.

The PERSON of a player or an umpire is any part of his body, his clothing or his equipment.

A PITCH is a ball delivered to the batter by the pitcher.

Rule 2.00 (Pitch) Comment: All other deliveries of the ball by one player to another are thrown balls.

A PITCHER is the fielder designated to deliver the pitch to the batter.

The pitcher’s PIVOT FOOT is that foot which is in contact with the pitcher’s plate as he delivers the pitch.

“PLAY” is the umpire’s order to start the game or to resume action following any dead ball.

A QUICK RETURN pitch is one made with obvious intent to catch a batter off balance. It is an illegal pitch.

REGULATION GAME. See Rules 4.10 and 4.11.

A RETOUCH is the act of a runner in returning to a base as legally required.

A RUN (or SCORE) is the score made by an offensive player who advances from batter to runner and touches first, second, third and home bases in that order.

A RUN-DOWN is the act of the defense in an attempt to put out a runner between bases.

A RUNNER is an offensive player who is advancing toward, or touching, or returning to any base.

“SAFE” is a declaration by the umpire that a runner is entitled to the base for which he was trying.

SET POSITION is one of the two legal pitching positions.

SQUEEZE PLAY is a term to designate a play when a team, with a runner on third base, attempts to score that runner by means of a bunt.

A **STRIKE** is a legal pitch when so called by the umpire, which—

- (a) Is struck at by the batter and is missed;
- (b) Is not struck at, if any part of the ball passes through any part of the strike zone;
- (c) Is fouled by the batter when he has less than two strikes;
- (d) Is bunted foul;
- (e) Touches the batter as he strikes at it;
- (f) Touches the batter in flight in the strike zone; or
- (g) Becomes a foul tip.

The **STRIKE ZONE** is that area over home plate the upper limit of which is a horizontal line at the midpoint between the top of the shoulders and the top of the uniform pants, and the lower level is a line at the hollow beneath the kneecap. The Strike Zone shall be determined from the batter's stance as the batter is prepared to swing at a pitched ball.

(For diagram of **STRIKE ZONE** see page 23.)

A **SUSPENDED GAME** is a called game which is to be completed at a later date.

A **TAG** is the action of a fielder in touching a base with his body while holding the ball securely and firmly in his hand or glove; or touching a runner with the ball, or with his hand or glove holding the ball, while holding the ball securely and firmly in his hand or glove. It is not a tag, however, if simultaneously or immediately following his touching a base or touching a runner, the fielder drops the ball. In establishing the validity of the tag, the fielder shall hold the ball long enough to prove that he has complete control of the ball.

If the fielder has made a tag and drops the ball while in the act of making a throw following the tag, the tag shall be adjudged to have been made.

A **THROW** is the act of propelling the ball with the hand and arm to a given objective and is to be distinguished, always, from the pitch.

A **TIE GAME** is a regulation game which is called when each team has the same number of runs. "TIME" is the announcement by an umpire of a legal interruption of play, during which the ball is dead.

TOUCH. To touch a player or umpire is to touch any part of his body, his clothing or his equipment.

A **TRIPLE PLAY** is a play by the defense in which three offensive players are put out as a result of continuous action, providing there is no error between putouts.

A **WILD PITCH** is one so high, so low, or so wide of the plate that it cannot be handled with ordinary effort by the catcher.

WIND-UP POSITION is one of the two legal pitching positions.

Any reference in these Official Baseball Rules to "he," "him" or "his" shall be deemed to be a reference to "she," "her" or "hers," as the case may be, when the person is a female.

Rule 3.01

3.00—Game Preliminaries.

3.01 Before the game begins the umpire shall—

- (a) Require strict observance of all rules governing implements of play and equipment of players;
- (b) Be sure that all playing lines (heavy lines on Diagrams No. 1 and No. 2) are marked with lime, chalk or other white material easily distinguishable from the ground or grass;
- (c) **Receive 3 regulation baseballs from each team, the make to be certified by the league president. The umpire shall be the sole judge of the fitness of the balls to be used in the game; The umpire shall get reserve baseballs from both teams equally during the game, if necessary.**

(e) Have in his possession at least two alternate balls and shall require replenishment of such supply of alternate balls as needed throughout the game. Such alternate balls shall be put in play when—

- (1) A ball has been batted out of the playing field or into the spectator area;
- (2) A ball has become discolored or unfit for further use;
- (3) The pitcher requests such alternate ball.

Rule 3.01(e) Comment: The umpire shall not give an alternate ball to the pitcher until play has ended and the previously used ball is dead. After a thrown or batted ball goes out of the playing field, play shall not be resumed with an alternate ball until the runners have reached the bases to which they are entitled. After a home run is hit out of the playing grounds, the umpire shall not deliver a new ball to the pitcher or the catcher until the batter hitting the home run has crossed the plate.

(f) All players must have matching jerseys and hats of the same primary color-scheme to compete in league-play.

3.02 No player shall intentionally discolor or damage the ball by rubbing it with soil, rosin, paraffin, licorice, sand-paper, emery-paper or other foreign substance.

PENALTY: The umpire shall demand the ball and remove the offender from the game. In addition, **the offender shall be subject to suspension.** For rules in regard to a pitcher defacing the ball, see Rules 8.02(a)(2) through (6).

3.03 Defensive Lineups

There is no restriction on defensive substitutions, with the exception of the pitcher. See Rule 3.05.

Lineups, Substitutions, and Adding to the Order

(a) A team must have a minimum of 8 players to begin the game. If a team has only 8 players, the 9th slot in the batting order will be declared an automatic out. Umpires should allow up to 15 minutes after the scheduled start time for a team to get enough players present to play.

NOTE: There is no run awarded to the opposing team for a delayed start.

(b) A team may add one or more slots to the bottom of the batting order at any time during the game. Once a slot has been added to the order, that slot may not be deleted. If a team is, for whatever reason, unable to field enough players to fill an added slot, it becomes an automatic out for the remainder of the game.

(c) Teams should announce to the Umpire in Chief, and the opposing team that they are “adding to the bottom” of the order, and provide the uniform number of the player being added.

(d) The added player may not have been in the batting order as a starter or substitute.

(e) Any starter may re-enter the batting order one time, and must re-enter in the same spot in the batting order.

(f) Only starters may re-enter a game.

(g) In the case that a starter is removed from the lineup, a substitute batter must have one plate appearance before the starter can re-enter.

EXAMPLE: Starter A is replaced for a pinch runner by B. Starter A may not re-enter the lineup until B, or anyone subsequently substituted for B, makes one or more plate appearances. It is not required that player B make a plate appearance.

Therefore, Runner B may be replaced by pinch hitter C. After C makes one plate appearance, Starter A may re-enter the game.

PENALTY: See Rule 3.08 – Note: There is no penalty for failing to announce a substitution.

Injuries and Ejections

(h) If a team is unable to continue to bat with the amount of hitters currently in the batting order due to the injury, a previously used player not currently in the batting order may take the injured player’s place in order to prevent a forfeit.

NOTE: The team must insert a player who has not yet played into that slot before they may use a player who has already been removed from the game.

NOTE: The injured player may not return to the game if the team inserts a previously used player into the game.

(i) If a player is ejected from the game, and the team does not have an eligible substitute to replace them with, the slot becomes an automatic out. Teams may not replace an ejected player with a player who has already been removed from the game and is not otherwise eligible to enter.

NOTE: The game does not become a forfeit if an ejection results in the scenario above.

3.04 Pinch Runners and Non-Runners

(a) A player whose name is on his team’s batting order may not become a substitute runner for another member of his team.

(b) Each team may designate up to two non-runners. Any non-runner must be identified on the lineup card prior to the start of the game.

(c) In the case of an injury suffered during the game, a manager may switch non-runners at the time of the injury, and only if the other manager agrees to the change. The Umpire in Chief must be notified of this change at the time of the injury.

(d) A team may only have two designated non-runners at any given time.

(e) A non-runner may be replaced by a replacement runner at any time, as long as he has not advanced past the base reached by his at-bat.

(f) The designated runner shall be the player who recorded the last out before the non-runner reached base. This runner will remain the designated runner for the duration of the inning.

EXAMPLE: Batter A flies out. Non-Runner B hits a double. Batter C makes an out.

Replacement runner A may run for B as long as B has not advanced past 2nd base. ONLY Player A may run for B. (If A is also a designated non-runner, then the player who recorded the previous out shall be the designated runner.)

(g) If the non-runner advances past the base reached during his at bat, he may no longer be replaced by a designated runner until he scores or is retired.

(h) If the non-runner is the first player up in the first inning of a game, the courtesy runner will be the last player in the batting order.

NOTE: There is no speed-up rule allowing runners for the pitcher or catcher. Any improper use of a courtesy runner including the use of the improper or wrong replacement shall result in the non-runner being scored as an out.

3.05

(a) The pitcher named in the batting order handed the umpire-in-chief, as provided in Rules 4.01 (a) and 4.01 (b), shall pitch to the first batter or any substitute batter until such batter is put out or reaches first base, unless the pitcher sustains injury or illness which, in the judgment of the umpire-in-chief, incapacitates him from pitching.

(b) If the pitcher is replaced, the substitute pitcher shall pitch to the batter then at bat, or any substitute batter, until such batter is put out or reaches first base, or until the offensive team is put out, unless the substitute pitcher sustains injury or illness which, in the umpire-in-chief's judgment, incapacitates him for further play as a pitcher.

(c) If an improper substitution is made for the pitcher, the umpire shall direct the proper pitcher to return to the game until the provisions of this rule are fulfilled. If the improper pitcher is permitted to pitch, any play that results is legal. The improper pitcher becomes the proper pitcher as soon as he makes his first pitch to the batter, or as soon as any runner is put out.

Rule 3.05(c) Comment: If a manager attempts to remove a pitcher in violation of Rule 3.05 (c) the umpire shall notify the manager of the offending club that it cannot be done. If, by chance, the umpire-in-chief has, through oversight, announced the incoming improper pitcher, he should still correct the situation before the improper pitcher pitches. Once the improper pitcher delivers a pitch he becomes the proper pitcher.

3.06

The manager shall immediately notify the umpire-in-chief of any substitution and shall state to the umpire-in-chief the substitute's place in the batting order.

Rule 3.06 Comment: Players for whom substitutions have been made may remain with their team on the bench or may "warm-up" pitchers. If a manager substitutes another player for himself, he may continue to direct his team from the bench or the coach's box. Umpires should not permit players for whom substitutes have been made, and who are permitted to remain on the bench, to address any remarks to any opposing player or manager, or to the umpires.

3.07

The umpire-in-chief, after having been notified, shall immediately announce, or cause to be announced, each substitution.

3.08

(a) If no announcement of a substitution is made, the substitute shall be considered as having entered the game when—

- (1) If a pitcher, he takes his place on the pitcher's plate;
- (2) If a batter, he takes his place in the batter's box;
- (4) If a runner, he takes the place of the runner he has replaced.

(b) Any play made by, or on, any of the above mentioned unannounced substitutes shall be legal.

SFNABA NOTE: There is NO PENALTY for a legal substitution that is not announced.

3.09 Players in uniform shall not address or mingle with spectators, nor sit in the stands before, during, or after a game. No manager, coach or player shall address any spectator before or during a game. Players of opposing teams shall not fraternize at any time while in uniform.

3.10

(a) **The league, or by designation the Umpire in Chief** shall be the sole judge as to whether a game shall not be started because of unsuitable weather conditions or the unfit condition of the playing field, except for the second game of a doubleheader. **EXCEPTION:** Any league may permanently authorize its president to suspend the application of this rule as to that league during the closing weeks of its championship season in order to assure that the championship is decided each year on its merits. When the postponement of, and possible failure to play, a game in the final series of a championship season between any two teams might affect the final standing of any club in the league, the president, on appeal from any league club, may assume the authority granted the home team by this rule.

(b) The umpire-in-chief of the first game shall be the sole judge as to whether the second game of a doubleheader shall not be started because of unsuitable weather conditions or the unfit condition of the playing field.

3.11 Between games of a doubleheader, or whenever a game is suspended because of the unfitness of the playing field, the umpire-in-chief shall have control of ground-keepers and assistants for the purpose of making the playing field fit for play.

3.12

When an umpire suspends play, he shall call "Time." At the umpire-in-chief's call of "Play," the suspension is lifted and play resumes. Between the call of "Time" and the call of "Play" the ball is dead.

3.13

The managers and umpire should consult the SFNABA handbook as to any local ground rules. Additionally, the managers of both teams shall present to the umpire-in-chief and the opposing manager any ground rules he thinks necessary covering the overflow of spectators upon the playing field, batted or thrown balls into such overflow, or any other contingencies. If these rules are acceptable to the opposing manager they shall be legal. If these rules are unacceptable to the opposing manager, the umpire-in-chief shall make and enforce any special ground rules he thinks are made necessary by ground conditions, which shall not conflict with the official playing rules.

3.14 Members of the offensive team shall carry all gloves and other equipment off the field and to the dugout while their team is at bat. No equipment shall be left lying on the field, either in fair or foul territory.

3.15

No person shall be allowed on the playing field during a game except players and coaches in uniform, managers, who all have a signed SFNABA waiver on file, umpires, officers of the law in uniform. In case of unintentional interference with play by any person herein authorized to be on the playing field (except members of the team at bat who are participating in the game, or a base coach, any of whom interfere with a fielder attempting to field a batted or thrown ball; or an umpire) the ball is alive and in play. If the interference is intentional, the ball shall be dead at the moment of the interference and the umpire shall impose such penalties as in his opinion will nullify the act of interference.

Rule 3.15 Comment: For interference with a fielder attempting to field a batted or thrown ball by members of the team at bat or base coaches, who are excepted in Rule 3.15, see Rule 7.11. See also Rules 5.09(b), 5.09(f) and 6.08(d), which cover interference by an umpire, and Rule 7.08(b), which covers interference by a runner.

The question of intentional or unintentional interference shall be decided on the basis of the person's action. For example: a bat boy, ball attendant, policeman, etc., who tries to avoid being touched by a thrown or batted ball but still is touched by the ball would be involved in unintentional interference. If, however, he kicks the ball or picks it up or pushes it, that is considered intentional interference, regardless of what his thought may have been.

PLAY: Batter hits ball to shortstop, who fields ball but throws wild past first baseman. The coach at first base, to avoid being hit by the ball, falls to the ground and the first baseman on his way to retrieve the wild thrown ball, runs into the coach. The batter-runner finally ends up on third base. Whether the umpire should call interference on the part of the coach is up to the judgment of the umpire and if the umpire felt that the coach did all he could to avoid interfering with the play, no interference need be called. If, in the judgment of the umpire, the coach was attempting to make it appear that he was trying not to interfere, the umpire should rule interference.

3.16 When there is spectator interference with any thrown or batted ball, the ball shall be dead at the moment of interference and the umpire shall impose such penalties as in his opinion will nullify the act of interference.

APPROVED RULING: If spectator interference clearly prevents a fielder from catching a fly ball, the umpire shall declare the batter out.

Rule 3.16 Comment: There is a difference between a ball which has been thrown or batted into the stands, touching a spectator thereby being out of play even though it rebounds onto the field and a spectator going onto the field or reaching over, under or through a barrier and touching a ball in play or touching or otherwise interfering with a player. In the latter case it is clearly intentional and shall be dealt with as intentional interference as in Rule 3.15. Batter and runners shall be placed where in the umpire's judgment they would have been had the interference not occurred.

No interference shall be allowed when a fielder reaches over a fence, railing, rope or into a stand to catch a ball. He does so at his own risk. However, should a spectator reach out on the playing

field side of such fence, railing or rope, and plainly prevent the fielder from catching the ball, then the batsman should be called out for the spectator's interference.

Example: Runner on third base, one out and a batter hits a fly ball deep to the outfield (fair or foul). Spectator clearly interferes with the outfielder attempting to catch the fly ball. Umpire calls the batter out for spectator interference. Ball is dead at the time of the call. Umpire decides that because of the distance the ball was hit, the runner on third base would have scored after the catch if the fielder had caught the ball which was interfered with, therefore, the runner is permitted to score. This might not be the case if such fly ball was interfered with a short distance from home plate.

3.17 Players and substitutes of both teams shall confine themselves to their team's benches unless actually participating in the play or preparing to enter the game, or coaching at first or third base. No one except players, substitutes, managers, coaches, trainers and bat boys shall occupy a bench during a game.

PENALTY: For violation the umpire may, after warning, remove the offender from the field.

Rule 3.17 Comment: Players on the disabled list are permitted to participate in pre-game activity and sit on the bench during a game but may not take part in any activity during the game such as warming up a pitcher, bench-jockeying, etc. Disabled players are not allowed to enter the playing surface at any time or for any purpose during the game.

3.18 The home team shall provide police protection sufficient to preserve order. If a person, or persons, enter the playing field during a game and interfere in any way with the play, the visiting team may refuse to play until the field is cleared.

PENALTY: If the field is not cleared in a reasonable length of time, which shall in no case be less than 15 minutes after the visiting team's refusal to play, the umpire in chief may forfeit the game to the visiting team.

4.00—Starting and Ending a Game.

4.01

Unless league has given previous notice that the game has been postponed or will be delayed in starting, the umpire, or umpires, shall enter the playing field ten minutes before the hour set for the game to begin and proceed directly to home base where they shall be met by the managers of the opposing teams. In sequence—

(i) Batting practice is not allowed on the playing field before any SFNABA game.

(ii) Each team is granted the opportunity to take single round of infield/outfield practice before the game.

(iii) Pending availability, the home team is designated from :30 to :20 before the game for infield, the visiting team from :20 to :10.

(a) First, the home manager, or his designee, shall give his batting order to the umpire-in-chief, in duplicate.

(b) Next, the visiting manager, or his designee, shall give his batting order to the umpire-in-chief, in duplicate.

(c) As a courtesy, each lineup card presented to the umpire-in-chief should list the fielding positions to be played by each player in the batting order.

See Rule 6.10(b). As a courtesy, potential substitute players should also be listed, but the failure to list a potential substitute player shall not make such potential substitute player ineligible to enter the game.

(d) The umpire-in-chief shall make certain that the original and copies of the respective batting orders are identical, and then tender a copy of each batting order to the opposing manager. The copy retained by the umpire shall be the official batting order. The tender of the batting order by the umpire shall establish the batting orders. Thereafter, no substitutions shall be made by either manager, except as provided in the rules.

(e) As soon as the home team's batting order is handed to the umpire-in-chief the umpires are in charge of the playing field and from that moment the umpire-in-chief shall have sole authority to determine when a game shall be called, suspended or resumed on account of weather or the condition of the playing field. The umpire in chief shall not call the game until at least 30 minutes after he has suspended play.

The umpire-in-chief may continue the suspension so long as he believes there is any chance to resume play.

Rule 4.01 Comment: Obvious errors in the batting order, which are noticed by the umpire-in-chief before he calls "Play" for the start of the game, should be called to the attention of the manager or captain of the team in error, so the correction can be made before the game starts. For example, if a manager has inadvertently listed only eight men in the batting order, or has listed two players with the same last name but without an identifying initial and the errors are noticed by the umpire before he calls "play," he shall cause such error or errors to be corrected before he calls "play" to start the game. Teams should not be "trapped" later by some mistake that obviously was inadvertent and which can be corrected before the game starts.

The umpire-in-chief shall at all times try to complete a game. His authority to resume play following one or more suspensions of as much as 30 minutes each shall be absolute and he shall terminate a game only when there appears to be no possibility of completing it.

(f) Any manager may request that the other team provide photo identification for every player on the roster. Opposing managers must comply under penalty of forfeit. Procedurally, the opposing manager should collect the identifications and they can be checked against the real time online rosters provided by SFNABA. This should be done far enough in advance so as not to delay the scheduled start of the game.

PENALTY: If the opposing manager refuses to participate in the ID check, the opposing team is subject to forfeit.

PENALTY: If one or more players do not have proper photo identification, they should provide a credit card, or some other form of verification of their identification. If they cannot provide anything in support of their ID, the opposing manager has the option not to let the player play in that game.

(g) Any player not registered with NABA, or having signed (and presented) a paper-waiver for NABA insurance is ineligible to compete.

4.02

The players of the home team shall take their defensive positions, the first batter of the visiting team shall take his position in the batter's box, the umpire shall call "Play" and the game shall start.

4.03

When the ball is put in play at the start of, or during a game, all fielders other than the catcher shall be on fair territory.

(a) The catcher shall station himself directly back of the plate. He may leave his position at any time to catch a pitch or make a play except that when the batter is being given an intentional base on balls, the catcher must stand with both feet within the lines of the catcher's box until the ball leaves the pitcher's hand.

PENALTY: Balk.

(b) The pitcher, while in the act of delivering the ball to the batter, shall take his legal position;

(c) Except the pitcher and the catcher, any fielder may station himself anywhere in fair territory.

4.04

The batting order shall be followed throughout the game unless a player is substituted for another. In that case the substitute shall take the place of the replaced player in the batting order.

4.05

(a) The team at bat shall station two base coaches on the field during its time at bat, one near first base and one near third base.

(b) Base coaches shall be limited to two in number and shall (1) be in team uniform, and (2) remain within the coach's box at all times.

PENALTY: The offending base coach shall be removed from the game, and shall leave the playing field.

Rule 4.05 Comment: It has been common practice for many years for some coaches to put one foot outside the coach's box or stand astride or otherwise be slightly outside the coaching box lines.

Until a batted ball passes a coach, a coach is not permitted to position himself closer to home plate than the coach's box nor closer to fair territory than the coach's box. Otherwise, a coach shall not be considered out of the box unless the opposing manager complains, in which case the

umpire shall strictly enforce the rule and require all coaches (on both teams) to remain in the coach's box at all times.

It is also common practice for a coach who has a play at his base to leave the coach's box to signal the player to slide, advance or return to a base. This may be allowed if the coach does not interfere with the play in any manner.

4.06

(a) No manager, player, substitute, coach, trainer or batboy shall at any time, whether from the bench, the coach's box or on the playing field, or elsewhere—

(1) Incite, or try to incite, by word or sign a demonstration by spectators;

(2) Use language which will in any manner refer to or reflect upon opposing players, an umpire, or any spectator;

(3) Call "Time," or employ any other word or phrase or commit any act while the ball is alive and in play for the obvious purpose of trying to make the pitcher commit a balk.

(4) Make intentional contact with the umpire in any manner.

(b) No fielder shall take a position in the batter's line of vision, and with deliberate unsportsmanlike intent, act in a manner to distract the batter.

PENALTY: The offender shall be removed from the game and shall leave the playing field, and, if a balk is made, it shall be nullified.

4.07

When a manager, player, coach or trainer is ejected from a game, he shall leave the field immediately and take no further part in that game. **He shall leave the premises, including any stands, dugout, and parking lots. The umpires are instructed to not resume play until in their discretion the ejected player is sufficiently removed from the area.**

- If the player refuses to leave the premises, the Umpire in Chief should warn the ejected player's team that the player must leave.

- If following the warning, the player refuses to leave, or returns later, the Umpire in Chief has the discretion to declare the game a forfeit.

Rule 4.07 Comment: If a manager, coach or player is under suspension he may not be in the dugout or press box during the course of a game.

4.08

When the occupants of a player's bench show violent disapproval of an umpire's decision, the umpire shall first give warning that such disapproval shall cease. If such action continues—

PENALTY: The umpire shall order the offenders from the bench to the club house. If he is unable to detect the offender, or offenders, he may clear the bench of all substitute players. The manager of the offending team shall have the privilege of recalling to the playing field only those players needed for substitution in the game.

4.09 HOW A TEAM SCORES.

(a) One run shall be scored each time a runner legally advances to and touches first, second, third and home base before three men are put out to end the inning.

EXCEPTION: A run is not scored if the runner advances to home base during a play in which the third out is made (1) by the batter-runner before he touches first base; (2) by any runner being forced out; or (3) by a preceding runner who is declared out because he failed to touch one of the bases.

(b) When the winning run is scored in the last half-inning of a regulation game, or in the last half of an extra inning, as the result of a base on balls, hit batter or any other play with the bases full

which forces the runner on third to advance, the umpire shall not declare the game ended until the runner forced to advance from third has touched home base and the batter-runner has touched first base.

Rule 4.09(b) Comment: An exception will be if fans rush onto the field and physically prevent the runner from touching home plate or the batter from touching first base. In such cases, the umpires shall award the runner the base because of the obstruction by the fans.

PENALTY: If the runner on third refuses to advance to and touch home base in a reasonable time, the umpire shall disallow the run, call out the offending player and order the game resumed. If, with two out, the batter-runner refuses to advance to and touch first base, the umpire shall disallow the run, call out the offending player, and order the game resumed. If, before two are out, the batter-runner refuses to advance to and touch first base, the run shall count, but the offending player shall be called out.

Rule 4.09 Comment: APPROVED RULING: No run shall score during a play in which the third out is made by the batter-runner before he touches first base. Example: One out, Jones on second, Smith on first. The batter, Brown, hits safely. Jones scores. Smith is out on the throw to the plate. Two outs.

But Brown missed first base. The ball is thrown to first, an appeal is made, and Brown is out. Three outs. Since Jones crossed the plate during a play in which the third out was made by the batter-runner before he touched first base, Jones' run does not count.

APPROVED RULING: Following runners are not affected by an act of a preceding runner unless two are out.

Example: One out, Jones on second, Smith on first, and batter, Brown, hits home run inside the park. Jones fails to touch third on his way to the plate. Smith and Brown score. The defense holds the ball on third, appeals to umpire, and Jones is out. Smith's and Brown's runs count.

APPROVED RULING: Two out, Jones on second, Smith on first and batter, Brown, hits home run inside the park. All three runs cross the plate. But Jones missed third base, and on appeal is declared out. Three outs. Smith's and Brown's runs are voided. No score on the play.

APPROVED RULING: One out, Jones on third, Smith on second. Batter Brown flies out to center. Two out. Jones scores after catch and Smith scores on bad throw to plate. But Jones, on appeal, is adjudged to have left third before the catch and is out. Three outs. No runs.

APPROVED RULING: Two out, bases full, batter hits home run over fence. Batter, on appeal, is declared out for missing first base. Three outs. No run counts. Here is a general statement that covers:

When a runner misses a base and a fielder holds the ball on a missed base, or on the base originally occupied by the runner if a fly ball is caught, and appeals for the umpire's decision, the runner is out when the umpire sustains the appeal; all runners may score if possible, except that with two out the runner is out at the moment he misses the bag, if an appeal is sustained as applied to the following runners.

APPROVED RULING: One out, Jones on third, Smith on first, and Brown flies out to right field.

Two outs. Jones tags up and scores after the catch. Smith attempted to return to first but the right fielder's throw beat him to the base. Three outs. But Jones scored before the throw to catch Smith reached first base, hence Jones' run counts. It was not a force play.

4.10(a) A regulation game consists of nine innings, unless extended because of a tie score, or shortened (1) because the home team needs none of its half of the ninth inning or only a fraction of it, or (2) because the umpire-in-chief calls the game.

EXCEPTION: National Association leagues may adopt a rule providing that one or both games of a doubleheader shall be seven innings in length. In such games, any of these rules applying to the ninth inning shall apply to the seventh inning.

(b) If the score is tied after nine completed innings play shall continue until (1) the visiting team has scored more total runs than the home team at the end of a completed inning, or (2) the home team scores the winning run in an uncompleted inning.

(c) If a game is called, it is a regulation game:

(1) If five innings have been completed;

(2) If the home team has scored more runs in four or four and a fraction half-innings than the visiting team has scored in five completed half-innings;

(3) If the home team scores one or more runs in its half of the fifth inning to tie the score.

(d) If a regular season regulation game is called with the score tied in the home half of the inning, or with the score tied at the end of an inning, it shall be declared a tie game. See Rule 4.12.

if a regulation game is called while an inning is in progress and before the inning is completed, and the visiting team has scored one or more runs to take the lead, and the home team has not retaken the lead; or

(e) If a regulation game is called in the visitor's half of an inning, or in the home half of the inning in which the home team has not scored one or more runs to tie or take the lead, the game will revert to the last completed inning. If the last completed inning was a regulation game, the score at the time of the last completed inning will be the final score.

(f) If a playoff game is called with the score tied it shall be declared a suspended game.

(g) If a game is called before it has become a regulation game, the umpire-in-chief shall declare it "No Game." The game will be rescheduled if necessary, and played in its entirety from scratch.

Time Limit

(h) No inning shall begin after 3 hours from the scheduled time for first pitch, unless:

(i) There is no scheduled game following the tied game, and both managers, and all umpires agree to extend the length of the game.

(ii) Managers must meet briefly with the Umpire in Chief, and establish the parameters by which the game shall continue. If all parties do not agree on the parameters, the game is over and is declared a tie.

Run Rule (Mercy Rule)

(i) If a team is leading by 10 or more runs after 7 completed innings, or after 6 and a half innings if the home team is ahead, the game is complete.

(j) There is no run rule to be used in the Conference Finals Series or the League Championship Series.

4.11 The score of a regulation game is the total number of runs scored by each team at the moment the game ends.

(a) The game ends when the visiting team completes its half of the ninth inning if the home team is ahead.

(b) The game ends when the ninth inning is completed, if the visiting team is ahead.

(c) If the home team scores the winning run in its half of the ninth inning (or its half of an extra inning after a tie), the game ends immediately when the winning run is scored. **EXCEPTION:** If the last batter in a game hits a home run out of the playing field, the batter-runner and all runners on base are permitted to score, in accordance with the base-running rules, and the game ends when the batter-runner touches home plate.

APPROVED RULING: The batter hits a home run out of the playing field to win the game in the last half of the ninth or an extra inning, but is called out for passing a preceding runner. The game ends immediately when the winning run is scored, unless there are two out and the winning run has not yet reached home plate when the runner passes another, in which case the inning is over and only those runs that scored before the runner passes another shall count.

(d) A called game ends at the moment the umpire terminates play, unless it becomes a suspended game pursuant to Rule 4.12(a).

4.12 TIED/SUSPENDED GAMES

Regular season games will not be suspended. Only playoff games will deemed suspended. SEE Rule 4.10

(a) A game shall become a suspended game that must be completed at a future date if the game is terminated for any of the following reasons:

(1) A curfew imposed by law;

(2) A time limit permissible under league rules;

(3) Light failure or malfunction of a mechanical field device under control of the home club. (Mechanical field device shall include automatic tarpaulin or water removal equipment);

(4) Darkness, when a law prevents the lights from being turned on;

(5) Weather, if a regulation game is called while an inning is in progress and before the inning is completed, and the visiting team has scored one or more runs to take the lead, and the home team has not retaken the lead; or

(6) It is a regulation game that is called with the score tied.

National Association Leagues may also adopt the following rules for suspended games. (If adopted by a National Association League, Rule 4.10(e) would not apply to their games.):

(7) The game has not become a regulation game (4½ innings with the home team ahead, or 5 innings with the visiting club ahead or tied).

(b) A suspended game shall be resumed and completed at a time and location assigned by the SFNABA :

(c) A suspended game shall be resumed at the exact point of suspension of the original game. The completion of a suspended game is a continuation of the original game. The lineup and batting order of both teams shall be exactly the same as the lineup and batting order at the moment of suspension, subject to the rules governing substitution. Any player may be replaced by a player who had not been in the game prior to the suspension. No player removed before the suspension may be returned to the lineup.

(d) If a team does not have all of the players from the suspended game's batting order at the time of the next game, the opposing team shall be allowed to select ineligible players to fill those lineup slots so that the game continues with the same number of players in the batting order.

Rule 4.12(c) Comment: If immediately prior to the call of a suspended game, a substitute pitcher has been announced but has not retired the side or pitched until the batter becomes a base runner, such pitcher, when the suspended game is later resumed may, but is not required to start the resumed portion of the game. However, if he does not start he will be considered as having been substituted for and may not be used in that game.

4.13 RULES GOVERNING DOUBLEHEADERS.

(a) (1) Only two championship games shall be played on one date. Completion of a suspended game shall not violate this rule.

(b) After the start of the first game of a doubleheader, that game shall be completed before the second game of the doubleheader shall begin.

(c) The second game of a doubleheader shall start twenty minutes after the first game is completed, unless a longer interval (not to exceed thirty minutes) is declared by the umpire-in-chief and announced to the opposing managers at the end of the first game. **EXCEPTION:** If the league president has approved a request of the home club for a longer interval between games for some special event, the umpire-in-chief shall declare such longer interval and announce it to the opposing managers. The umpire-in-chief of the first game shall be the timekeeper controlling the interval between games.

(d) The umpire shall start the second game of a doubleheader, if at all possible, and play shall continue as long as ground conditions, local time restrictions, or weather permit.

(e) When a regularly scheduled doubleheader is delayed in starting for any cause, any game that is started is the first game of the doubleheader.

(f) When a rescheduled game is part of a doubleheader the rescheduled game shall be the second game, and the first game shall be the regularly scheduled game for that date.

4.14

The umpire-in-chief shall order the playing field lights turned on whenever in his opinion darkness makes further play in daylight hazardous.

4.15

A game may be forfeited to the opposing team when a team—

(a) Fails to appear upon the field, or being upon the field, refuses to start play within five minutes after the umpire-in-chief has called "Play" at the appointed hour for beginning the game, unless such delayed appearance is, in the umpire-in-chief's judgment, unavoidable;

(b) Employs tactics palpably designed to delay or shorten the game; **Umpires should first warn the offending team.**

(c) Refuses to continue play during a game unless the game has been suspended or terminated by the umpire-in-chief;

(d) Fails to resume play, after a suspension, within one minute after the umpire-in-chief has called "Play;"

(e) After warning by the umpire, willfully and persistently violates any rules of the game;

(f) Fails to obey within a reasonable time the umpire's order for removal of a player from the game;

(g) Fails to appear for the second game of a doubleheader within twenty minutes after the close of the first game unless the umpire-in-chief of the first game shall have extended the time of the intermission.

4.16

A game shall be forfeited to the visiting team if, after it has been suspended, the order of the umpire to groundskeepers respecting preparation of the field for resumption of play are not complied with.

4.17

FORFEITS FOR LACK OF PLAYERS See RULE 3.03

4.18

If the umpire-in-chief declares a game forfeited he shall transmit a written report to the league president within 24 hours thereafter, but failure of such transmittal shall not affect the forfeiture.

4.19 PROTESTING GAMES. Each league shall adopt rules governing procedure for protesting a game, when a manager claims that an umpire's decision is in violation of these rules. No protest shall ever be permitted on judgment decisions by the umpire. In all protested games, the decision of the League President shall be final. Even if it is held that the protested decision violated the rules, **no replay of the game will be ordered unless in the opinion of the League President the violation adversely affected the protesting team's chances of winning the game.**

Rule 4.19 Comment: Whenever a manager protests a game because of alleged misapplication of the rules the protest will not be recognized unless the umpires are notified at the time the play under protest occurs and before the next pitch, play or attempted play. A protest arising on a game-ending play, or due to a team's use of an ineligible player may be filed until 12 noon the following day with the league office.

Comment: If the League President finds that the game shall be replayed, the game will revert to the time in the game at the time of the protest. All rules for suspended games (Rule 4.12(c)) apply.

NOTE: There is no longer any fee charged to file an official protest.

5.00—Putting the Ball in Play. Live Ball.

5.01 At the time set for beginning the game the umpire-in-chief shall call “Play.”

5.02 After the umpire calls “Play” the ball is alive and in play and remains alive and in play until for legal cause, or at the umpire’s call of “Time” suspending play, the ball becomes dead. While the ball is dead no player may be put out, no bases may be run and no runs may be scored, except that runners may advance one or more bases as the result of acts which occurred while the ball was alive (such as, but not limited to a balk, an overthrow, interference, or a home run or other fair ball hit out of the playing field).

Rule 5.02 Comment: Should a ball come partially apart in a game, it is in play until the play is completed.

5.03 The pitcher shall deliver the pitch to the batter who may elect to strike the ball, or who may not offer at it, as he chooses.

5.04 The offensive team’s objective is to have its batter become a runner, and its runners advance.

5.05 The defensive team’s objective is to prevent offensive players from becoming runners, and to prevent their advance around the bases.

5.06 When a batter becomes a runner and touches all bases legally he shall score one run for his team.

Rule 5.06 Comment: A run legally scored cannot be nullified by subsequent action of the runner, such as but not limited to an effort to return to third base in the belief that he had left the base before a caught fly ball.

5.07 When three offensive players are legally put out, that team takes the field and the opposing team becomes the offensive team.

5.08 If a thrown ball accidentally touches a base coach, or a pitched or thrown ball touches an umpire, the ball is alive and in play. However, if the coach interferes with a thrown ball, the runner is out.

5.09 The ball becomes dead and runners advance one base, or return to their bases, without liability to be put out, when—

(a) A pitched ball touches a batter, or his clothing, while in his legal batting position; runners, if forced, advance;

(b) The plate umpire interferes with the catcher’s throw attempting to prevent a stolen base or retire a runner on a pick-off play; runners may not advance.

NOTE: The interference shall be disregarded if the catcher’s throw retires the runner.

Rule 5.09(b) Comment: Umpire interference may also occur when an umpire interferes with a catcher returning the ball to the pitcher.

(c) A balk is committed; runners advance; (See Penalty 8.05).

(d) A ball is illegally batted; runners return;

(e) A foul ball is not caught, in which case runners return to their bases. The umpire in chief shall not put the ball in play until all runners have retouched their bases;

(f) A fair ball touches a runner or an umpire on fair territory before it touches an infielder including the pitcher, or touches an umpire before it has passed an infielder other than the pitcher; runners advance, if forced.

If a fair ball goes through, or by, an infielder, no other infielder has a chance to make a play on the ball and the ball touches a runner immediately behind the infielder that the ball went through, or by, the ball is in play and the umpire shall not declare the runner out. If a fair ball touches a

runner after being deflected by an infielder, the ball is in play and the umpire shall not declare the runner out;

Rule 5.09(f) Comment: If a fair ball touches an umpire working in the infield after it has bounded past, or over, the pitcher, it is a dead ball. If a batted ball is deflected by a fielder in fair territory and hits a runner or an umpire while still in flight and then caught by an infielder it shall not be a catch, but the ball shall remain in play.

(g) A pitched ball lodges in the umpire's or catcher's mask or paraphernalia, and remains out of play, runners advance one base;

Rule 5.09(g) Comment: If a foul tip hits the umpire and is caught by a fielder on the rebound, the ball is "dead" and the batsman cannot be called out. The same shall apply where such foul tip lodges in the umpire's mask or other paraphernalia.

If a third strike (not a foul tip) passes the catcher and hits an umpire, the ball is in play. If such ball rebounds and is caught by a fielder before it touches the ground, the batsman is not out on such a catch, but the ball remains in play and the batsman may be retired at first base, or touched with the ball for the out.

If a pitched ball lodges in the umpire's or catcher's mask or paraphernalia, and remains out of play, on the third strike or fourth ball, then the batter is entitled to first base and all runners advance one base. If the count on the batter is less than three balls, runners advance one base.

(h) Any legal pitch touches a runner trying to score; runners advance.

5.10 The ball becomes dead when an umpire calls "Time." The umpire-in-chief shall call "Time"—

(a) When in his judgment weather, darkness or similar conditions make immediate further play impossible;

(b) When light failure makes it difficult or impossible for the umpires to follow the play;
NOTE: A league may adopt its own regulations governing games interrupted by light failure.

(c) When an accident incapacitates a player or an umpire;

(1) If an accident to a runner is such as to prevent him from proceeding to a base to which he is entitled, as on a home run hit out of the playing field, or an award of one or more bases, a substitute runner shall be permitted to complete the play.

(d) When a manager requests "Time" for a substitution, or for a conference with one of his players.

(e) When the umpire wishes to examine the ball, to consult with either manager, or for any similar cause.

(f) When a fielder, after catching a fly ball, falls into a bench or stand, or falls across ropes into a crowd when spectators are on the field. As pertains to runners, the provisions of 7.04(c) shall prevail.

If a fielder after making a catch steps into a bench, but does not fall, the ball is in play and runners may advance at their own peril.

(g) When an umpire orders a player or any other person removed from the playing field.

(h) Except in the cases stated in paragraphs (b) and (c)(1) of this rule, no umpire shall call "Time" while a play is in progress.

5.11 After the ball is dead, play shall be resumed when the pitcher takes his place on the pitcher's plate with a new ball or the same ball in his possession and the plate umpire calls "Play." The plate umpire shall call "Play" as soon as the pitcher takes his place on his plate with the ball in his possession.

6.00—The Batter.

6.01

(a) Each player of the offensive team shall bat in the order that his name appears in his team's batting order.

(b) The first batter in each inning after the first inning shall be the player whose name follows that of the last player who legally completed his time at bat in the preceding inning.

6.02

(a) The batter shall take his position in the batter's box promptly when it is his time at bat.

(b) The batter shall not leave his position in the batter's box after the pitcher comes to Set Position, or starts his windup.

PENALTY: If the pitcher pitches, the umpire shall call "Ball" or "Strike," as the case may be.

Rule 6.02(b) Comment: The batter leaves the batter's box at the risk of having a strike delivered and called, unless he requests the umpire to call "Time." The batter is not at liberty to step in and out of the batter's box at will.

Once a batter has taken his position in the batter's box, he shall not be permitted to step out of the batter's box in order to use the resin or the pine tar rag, unless there is a delay in the game action or, in the judgment of the umpires, weather conditions warrant an exception.

Umpires will not call "Time" at the request of the batter or any member of his team once the pitcher has started his windup or has come to a set position even though the batter claims "dust in his eyes," "steamed glasses," "didn't get the sign" or for any other cause.

Umpires may grant a hitter's request for "Time" once he is in the batter's box, but the umpire should eliminate hitters walking out of the batter's box without reason. If umpires are not lenient, batters will understand that they are in the batter's box and they must remain there until the ball is pitched. See Rule 6.02(d).

If pitcher delays once the batter is in his box and the umpire feels that the delay is not justified he may allow the batter to step out of the box momentarily.

If after the pitcher starts his windup or comes to a "set position" with a runner on, he does not go through with his pitch because the batter has stepped out of the box, it shall not be called a balk.

Both the pitcher and batter have violated a rule and the umpire shall call time and both the batter and pitcher start over from "scratch."

(c) If the batter refuses to take his position in the batter's box during his time at bat, the umpire shall call a strike on the batter. The ball is dead, and no runners may advance. After the penalty, the batter may take his proper position and the regular ball and strike count shall continue. If the batter does not take his proper position before three strikes have been called, the batter shall be declared out.

Rule 6.02(c) Comment: The umpire shall give the batter a reasonable opportunity to take his proper position in the batter's box after the umpire has called a strike pursuant to Rule 6.02(c) and before the umpire calls a successive strike pursuant to Rule 6.02(c).

(d) The following rule shall be in effect for all SFNABA games:

(1) The batter shall keep at least one foot in the batter's box throughout the batter's time at bat, unless one of the following exceptions applies, in which case the batter may leave the batter's box but not the dirt area surrounding home plate:

- (i) The batter swings at a pitch;
- (ii) The batter is forced out of the batter's box by a pitch;
- (iii) A member of either team requests and is granted "Time";
- (iv) A defensive player attempts a play on a runner at any base;
- (v) The batter feints a bunt;
- (vi) A wild pitch or passed ball occurs;
- (vii) The pitcher leaves the dirt area of the pitching mound after receiving the ball;
- or
- (viii) The catcher leaves the catcher's box to give defensive signals.

If the batter intentionally leaves the batter's box and delays play, and none of the exceptions listed in Rule 6.02(d)(1)(i) through (viii) applies, the umpire shall award a strike without the pitcher having to deliver the pitch.

The ball is dead, and no runners may advance. The umpire shall award additional strikes, without the pitcher having to deliver the pitch, if the batter remains outside the batter's box and further delays play.

Rule 6.02(d)(1) Comment: The umpire has the discretion to issue a warning to a batter in lieu of calling an automatic strike for the batter's first violation of Rule 6.02(d)(1) in a game, so long as the batter's violation is judged to be brief and inadvertent. The umpire shall give the batter a reasonable opportunity to take his proper position in the batter's box after the umpire has called a strike pursuant to Rule 6.02(d)(1) and before the umpire calls a successive strike pursuant to Rule 6.02(d)(1).

(2) The batter may leave the batter's box and the dirt area surrounding home plate when "Time" is called for the purpose of

- (i) making a substitution; or
- (ii) a conference by either team.

Rule 6.02(d) Comment: Umpires shall encourage the on-deck batter to take a position in the batter's box quickly after the previous batter reaches base or is put out.

6.03

The batter's legal position shall be with both feet within the batter's box.

APPROVED RULING: The lines defining the box are within the batter's box.

6.04 A batter has legally completed his time at bat when he is put out or becomes a runner.

6.05 A batter is out when—

(a) His fair or foul fly ball (other than a foul tip) is legally caught by a fielder;

Rule 6.05(a) Comment: A fielder may reach into, but not step into, a dugout to make a catch, and if he holds the ball, the catch shall be allowed. A fielder, in order to make a catch on a foul ball nearing a dugout or other out-of-play area (such as the stands), must have one or both feet on or over the playing surface (including the lip of the dugout) and neither foot on the ground inside the dugout or in any other out-of-play area. Ball is in play, unless the fielder, after making a legal catch, falls into a dugout or other out-of-play area, in which case the ball is dead. Status of runners shall be as described in Rule 7.04(c) Comment.

(b) A third strike is legally caught by the catcher;

Rule 6.05(b) Comment: “Legally caught” means in the catcher’s glove before the ball touches the ground. It is not legal if the ball lodges in his clothing or paraphernalia; or if it touches the umpire and is caught by the catcher on the rebound.

If a foul tip first strikes the catcher’s glove and then goes on through and is caught by both hands against his body or protector, before the ball touches the ground, it is a strike, and if third strike, batter is out. If smothered against his body or protector, it is a catch provided the ball struck the catcher’s glove or hand first.

(c) A third strike is not caught by the catcher when first base is occupied before two are out;

(d) He bunts foul on third strike;

(e) An Infield Fly is declared;

(f) He attempts to hit a third strike and the ball touches him;

(g) His fair ball touches him before touching a fielder. If the batter is in a legal position in the batter’s box, see Rule 6.03, and, in the umpire’s judgment, there was no intention to interfere with the course of the ball, a batted ball that strikes the batter or his bat shall be ruled a foul ball;

(h) After hitting or bunting a fair ball, his bat hits the ball a second time in fair territory. The ball is dead and no runners may advance. If the batter-runner drops his bat and the ball rolls against the bat in fair territory and, in the umpire’s judgment, there was no intention to interfere with the course of the ball, the ball is alive and in play. If the batter is in a legal position in the batter’s box, see Rule 6.03, and, in the umpire’s judgment, there was no intention to interfere with the course of the ball, a batted ball that strikes the batter or his bat shall be ruled a foul ball;

Rule 6.05(h) Comment: If a bat breaks and part of it is in fair territory and is hit by a batted ball or part of it hits a runner or fielder, play shall continue and no interference called. If batted ball hits part of a broken bat in foul territory, it is a foul ball.

If a whole bat is thrown into fair territory and interferes with a defensive player attempting to make a play, interference shall be called, whether intentional or not.

In cases where the batting helmet is accidentally hit with a batted ball on or over fair territory or a thrown ball, the ball remains in play the same as if it has not hit the helmet.

If a batted ball strikes a batting helmet or any other object foreign to the natural ground while on foul territory, it is a foul ball and the ball is dead.

If, in the umpire’s judgment, there is intent on the part of a baserunner to interfere with a batted or thrown ball by dropping the helmet or throwing it at the ball, then the runner would be out, the ball dead and runners would return to last base legally touched.

(i) After hitting or bunting a ball that continues to move over foul territory, he intentionally deflects the course of the ball in any manner while running to first base. The ball is dead and no runners may advance;

(j) After a third strike or after he hits a fair ball, he or first base is tagged before he touches first base;

(k) In running the last half of the distance from home base to first base, while the ball is being fielded to first base, he runs outside (to the right of) the three-foot line, or inside (to the left of) the foul line, and in the umpire’s judgment in so doing interferes with the fielder taking the throw at first base, in which case the ball is dead; except that he may run outside (to the right of) the three-foot line or inside (to the left of) the foul line to avoid a fielder attempting to field a batted ball;

Rule 6.05(k) Comment: The lines marking the three-foot lane are a part of that lane and a batter runner is required to have both feet within the three-foot lane or on the lines marking the lane. The batter-runner is permitted to exit the three-foot lane by means of a step, stride, reach or slide in the immediate vicinity of first base for the sole purpose of touching first base.

(l) An infielder intentionally drops a fair fly ball or line drive, with first, first and second, first and third, or first, second and third base occupied before two are out.

The ball is dead and runner or runners shall return to their original base or bases;

APPROVED RULING: In this situation, the batter is not out if the infielder permits the ball to drop untouched to the ground, except when the Infield Fly rule applies.

(m) A preceding runner shall, in the umpire's judgment, intentionally interfere with a fielder who is attempting to catch a thrown ball or to throw a ball in an attempt to complete any play:

Rule 6.05(m) Comment: The objective of this rule is to penalize the offensive team for deliberate, unwarranted, unsportsmanlike action by the runner in leaving the baseline for the obvious purpose of crashing the pivot man on a double play, rather than trying to reach the base. Obviously this is an umpire's judgment play.

SEE COLLISION / FORCE PLAY SLIDE RULE 7.065

(n) With two out, a runner on third base, and two strikes on the batter, the runner attempts to steal home base on a legal pitch and the ball touches the runner in the batter's strike zone. The umpire shall call "Strike Three," the batter is out and the run shall not count; before two are out, the umpire shall call "Strike Three," the ball is dead, and the run counts.

(o) A member of his team (other than a runner) hinders a fielder's attempt to catch or field a batted ball. See Rule 7.11. For interference by a runner, see Rule 7.08(b).

6.06

A batter is out for illegal action when—

(a) He hits a ball with one or both feet on the ground entirely outside the batter's box.

Rule 6.06(a) Comment: If a batter hits a ball fair or foul while out of the batter's box, he shall be called out. Umpires should pay particular attention to the position of the batter's feet if he attempts to hit the ball while he is being intentionally passed. A batter cannot jump or step out of the batter's box and hit the ball.

(b) He steps from one batter's box to the other while the pitcher is in position ready to pitch;

(c) He interferes with the catcher's fielding or throwing by stepping out of the batter's box or making any other movement that hinders the catcher's play at home base.

EXCEPTION: Batter is not out if any runner attempting to advance is put out, or if runner trying to score is called out for batter's interference.

Rule 6.06(c) Comment: If the batter interferes with the catcher, the plate umpire shall call "interference." The batter is out and the ball dead. No player may advance on such interference (offensive interference) and all runners must return to the last base that was, in the judgment of the umpire, legally touched at the time of the interference.

If, however, the catcher makes a play and the runner attempting to advance is put out, it is to be assumed there was no actual interference and that runner is out--not the batter. Any other runners on the base at the time may advance as the ruling is that there is no actual interference if a runner is retired. In that case play proceeds just as if no violation had been called.

If a batter strikes at a ball and misses and swings so hard he carries the bat all the way around and, in the umpire's judgment, unintentionally hits the catcher or the ball in back of him on the backswing before the catcher has securely held the ball, it shall be called a strike only (not interference). The ball will be dead, however, and no runner shall advance on the play.

(d) He uses or attempts to use a bat that, in the umpire's judgment, has been altered or tampered with in such a way to improve the distance factor or cause an unusual reaction on the baseball. This includes, bats that are filled, flat-surfaced, nailed, hollowed, grooved or covered with a substance such as paraffin, wax, etc.

No advancement on the bases will be allowed and any out or outs made during a play shall stand. In addition to being called out, the player shall be ejected from the game and may be subject to additional penalties as determined by his League President.

Rule 6.06(d) Comment: A batter shall be deemed to have used or attempted to use an illegal bat if he brings such a bat into the batter's box.

6.07 BATTING OUT OF TURN.

(a) A batter shall be called out, on appeal, when he fails to bat in his proper turn, and another batter completes a time at bat in his place.

(1) The proper batter may take his place in the batter's box at any time before the improper batter becomes a runner or is put out, and any balls and strikes shall be counted in the proper batter's time at bat.

(b) When an improper batter becomes a runner or is put out, and the defensive team appeals to the umpire before the first pitch to the next batter of either team, or before any play or attempted play, the umpire shall

(1) declare the proper batter out;

and

(2) nullify any advance or score made because of a ball batted by the improper batter or because of the improper batter's advance to first base on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batter or otherwise.

NOTE: If a runner advances, while the improper batter is at bat, on a stolen base, balk, wild pitch or passed ball, such advance is legal.

(c) When an improper batter becomes a runner or is put out, and a pitch is made to the next batter of either team before an appeal is made, the improper batter thereby becomes the proper batter, and the results of his time at bat become legal.

(d) (1) When the proper batter is called out because he has failed to bat in turn, the next batter shall be the batter whose name follows that of the proper batter thus called out;

(2) When an improper batter becomes a proper batter because no appeal is made before the next pitch, the next batter shall be the batter whose name follows that of such legalized improper batter. The instant an improper batter's actions are legalized, the batting order picks up with the name following that of the legalized improper batter.

Rule 6.07 Comment: The umpire shall not direct the attention of any person to the presence in the batter's box of an improper batter. This rule is designed to require constant vigilance by the players and managers of both teams.

There are two fundamentals to keep in mind: When a player bats out of turn, the proper batter is the player called out. If an improper batter bats and reaches base or is out and no appeal is made before a pitch to the next batter, or before any play or attempted play, that improper batter is considered to have batted in proper turn and establishes the order that is to follow.

APPROVED RULING

To illustrate various situations arising from batting out of turn, assume a first-inning batting order as follows:

Abel-Baker-Charles-Daniel-Edward-Frank-George-Hooker-Irwin.

PLAY (1). Baker bats. With the count 2 balls and 1 strike, (a) the offensive team discovers the error or (b) the defensive team appeals. RULING: In either case, Abel replaces Baker, with the count on him 2 balls and 1 strike.

PLAY (2). Baker bats and doubles. The defensive team appeals (a) immediately or (b) after a pitch to Charles. RULING: (a) Abel is called out and Baker is the proper batter; (b) Baker stays on second and Charles is the proper batter.

PLAY (3). Abel walks. Baker walks. Charles forces Baker. Edward bats in Daniel's turn. While Edward is at bat, Abel scores and Charles goes to second on a wild pitch. Edward grounds out, sending Charles to third. The defensive team appeals (a) immediately or (b) after a pitch to Daniel. RULING:

(a) Abel's run counts and Charles is entitled to second base since these advances were not made because of the improper batter batting a ball or advancing to first base. Charles must return to second base because his advance to third resulted from the improper batter batting a ball. Daniel is called out, and Edward is the proper batter; (b) Abel's run counts and Charles stays on third. The proper batter is Frank.

PLAY (4). With the bases full and two out. Hooker bats in Frank's turn, and triples, scoring three runs. The defensive team appeals (a) immediately, or (b) after a pitch to George. RULING: (a) Frank is called out and no runs score. George is the proper batter to lead off the second inning; (b) Hooker stays on third and three runs score. Irwin is the proper batter.

PLAY (5). After Play (4)(b) above, George continues at bat. (a) Hooker is picked off third base for the third out, or (b) George flies out, and no appeal is made. Who is the proper leadoff batter in the second inning? RULING: (a) Irwin. He became the proper batter as soon as the first pitch to George legalized Hooker's triple; (b) Hooker. When no appeal was made, the first pitch to the leadoff batter of the opposing team legalized George's time at bat.

PLAY (6). Daniel walks and Abel comes to bat. Daniel was an improper batter, and if an appeal is made before the first pitch to Abel, Abel is out, Daniel is removed from base, and Baker is the proper batter. There is no appeal, and a pitch is made to Abel. Daniel's walk is now legalized, and Edward thereby becomes the proper batter. Edward can replace Abel at any time before Abel is put out or becomes a runner. He does not do so. Abel flies out, and Baker comes to bat. Abel was an improper batter, and if an appeal is made before the first pitch to Baker, Edward is out, and the proper batter is Frank. There is no appeal, and a pitch is made to Baker. Abel's out is now legalized, and the proper batter is Baker. Baker walks. Charles is the proper batter. Charles flies out. Now Daniel is the proper batter, but he is on second base. Who is the proper batter?

RULING: The proper batter is Edward.

When the proper batter is on base, he is passed over, and the following batter becomes the proper batter.

6.08

The batter becomes a runner and is entitled to first base without liability to be put out (provided he advances to and touches first base) when—

(a) Four “balls” have been called by the umpire;

Rule 6.08(a) Comment: A batter who is entitled to first base because of a base on balls must go to first base and touch the base before other base runners are forced to advance. This applies when bases are full and applies when a substitute runner is put into the game.

If, in advancing, the base runner thinks there is a play and he slides past the base before or after touching it he may be put out by the fielder tagging him. If he fails to touch the base to which he is entitled and attempts to advance beyond that base he may be put out by tagging him or the base he missed.

(b) He is touched by a pitched ball which he is not attempting to hit unless

(1) The ball is in the strike zone when it touches the batter, or

(2) The batter makes no attempt to avoid being touched by the ball;

If the ball is in the strike zone when it touches the batter, it shall be called a strike, whether or not the batter tries to avoid the ball. If the ball is outside the strike zone when it touches the batter, it shall be called a ball if he makes no attempt to avoid being touched.

APPROVED RULING: When the batter is touched by a pitched ball which does not entitle him out to first base, the ball is dead and no runner may advance.

(c) The catcher or any fielder interferes with him. If a play follows the interference, the manager of the offense may advise the plate umpire that he elects to decline the interference penalty and accept the play. Such election shall be made immediately at the end of the play. However, if the batter reaches first base on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batsman, or otherwise, and all other runners advance at least one base, the play proceeds without reference to the interference.

Rule 6.08(c) Comment: If catcher’s interference is called with a play in progress the umpire will allow the play to continue because the manager may elect to take the play. If the batter-runner missed first base, or a runner misses his next base, he shall be considered as having reached the base, as stated in Note of Rule 7.04 (d).

Examples of plays the manager might elect to take:

1. Runner on third, one out, batter hits fly ball to the outfield on which the runner scores but catcher’s interference was called. The offensive manager may elect to take the run and have batter called out or have runner remain at third and batter awarded first base.

2. Runner on second base. Catcher interferes with batter as he bunts ball fairly sending runner to third base. The manager may rather have runner on third base with an out on the play than have runners on second and first.

If a runner is trying to score by a steal or squeeze from third base, note the additional penalty set forth in Rule 7.07.

If the catcher interferes with the batter before the pitcher delivers the ball, it shall not be considered interference on the batter under Rule 6.08(c). In such cases, the umpire shall call “Time” and the pitcher and batter start over from “scratch.”

(d) A fair ball touches an umpire or a runner on fair territory before touching a fielder.

If a fair ball touches an umpire after having passed a fielder other than the pitcher, or having touched a fielder, including the pitcher, the ball is in play.

6.09

The batter becomes a runner when—

(a) He hits a fair ball;

(b) The third strike called by the umpire is not caught, providing (1) first base is unoccupied, or

(2) first base is occupied with two out;

Rule 6.09(b) Comment: A batter who does not realize his situation on a third strike not caught, and who is not in the process of running to first base, shall be declared out once he leaves the dirt circle surrounding home plate.

(c) A fair ball, after having passed a fielder other than the pitcher, or after having been touched by a fielder, including the pitcher, shall touch an umpire or runner on fair territory;

(d) A fair ball passes over a fence or into the stands at a distance from home base of 250 feet or more. Such hit entitles the batter to a home run when he shall have touched all bases legally. A fair fly ball that passes out of the playing field at a point less than 250 feet from home base shall entitle the batter to advance to second base only;

(e) A fair ball, after touching the ground, bounds into the stands, or passes through, over or under a fence, or through or under a scoreboard, or through or under shrubbery, or vines on the fence, in which case the batter and the runners shall be entitled to advance two bases;

(f) Any fair ball which, either before or after touching the ground, passes through or under a fence, or through or under a scoreboard, or through any opening in the fence or scoreboard, or through or under shrubbery, or vines on the fence, or which sticks in a fence or scoreboard, in which case the batter and the runners shall be entitled to two bases;

(g) Any bounding fair ball is deflected by the fielder into the stands, or over or under a fence on fair or foul territory, in which case the batter and all runners shall be entitled to advance two bases;

(h) Any fair fly ball is deflected by the fielder into the stands, or over the fence into foul territory, in which case the batter shall be entitled to advance to second base; but if deflected into the stands or over the fence in fair territory, the batter shall be entitled to a home run. However, should such a fair fly be deflected at a point less than 250 feet from home plate, the batter shall be entitled to two bases only.

7.00—The Runner.

7.01 A runner acquires the right to an unoccupied base when he touches it before he is out. He is then entitled to it until he is put out, or forced to vacate it for another runner legally entitled to that base.

Rule 7.01 Comment: If a runner legally acquires title to a base, and the pitcher assumes his pitching position, the runner may not return to a previously occupied base.

7.02

In advancing, a runner shall touch first, second, third and home base in order. If forced to return, he shall retouch all bases in reverse order, unless the ball is dead under any provision of Rule 5.09. In such cases, the runner may go directly to his original base.

7.03

(a) Two runners may not occupy a base, but if, while the ball is alive, two runners are touching a base, the following runner shall be out when tagged and the preceding runner is entitled to the base, unless Rule 7.03(b) applies.

(b) If a runner is forced to advance by reason of the batter becoming a runner and two runners are touching a base to which the following runner is forced, the following runner is entitled to the base and the preceding runner shall be out when tagged or when a fielder possesses the ball and touches the base to which such preceding runner is forced.

7.04 Each runner, other than the batter, may without liability to be put out, advance one base when—

(a) There is a balk;

(b) The batter's advance without liability to be put out forces the runner to vacate his base, or when the batter hits a fair ball that touches another runner or the umpire before such ball has been touched by, or has passed a fielder, if the runner is forced to advance;

Rule 7.04(b) Comment: A runner forced to advance without liability to be put out may advance past the base to which he is entitled only at his peril. If such a runner, forced to advance, is put out for the third out before a preceding runner, also forced to advance, touches home plate, the run shall score.

Play. Two out, bases full, batter walks but runner from second is overzealous and runs past third base toward home and is tagged out on a throw by the catcher. Even though two are out, the run would score on the theory that the run was forced home by the base on balls and that all the runners needed to do was proceed and touch the next base.

(c) A fielder, after catching a fly ball, falls into a bench or stand, or falls across ropes into a crowd when spectators are on the field;

Rule 7.04(c) Comment: If a fielder, after having made a legal catch, should fall into a stand or among spectators or into the dugout or any other out-of-play area while in possession of the ball after making a legal catch, or fall while in the dugout after making a legal catch, the ball is dead and each runner shall advance one base, without liability to be put out, from his last legally touched base at the time the fielder fell into, or in, such out-of-play area.

(d) While he is attempting to steal a base, the batter is interfered with by the catcher or any other fielder.

NOTE: When a runner is entitled to a base without liability to be put out, while the ball is in play, or under any rule in which the ball is in play after the runner reaches the base to which he is entitled, and the runner fails to touch the base to which he is entitled before attempting to advance to the next base, the runner shall forfeit his exemption from liability to be put out, and

he may be put out by tagging the base or by tagging the runner before he returns to the missed base;

(e) A fielder deliberately touches a pitched ball with his cap, mask or any part of his uniform detached from its proper place on his person. The ball is in play, and the award is made from the position of the runner at the time the ball was touched.

7.05 Each runner including the batter-runner may, without liability to be put out, advance—

(a) To home base, scoring a run, if a fair ball goes out of the playing field in flight and he touched all bases legally; or if a fair ball which, in the umpire's judgment, would have gone out of the playing field in flight, is deflected by the act of a fielder in throwing his glove, cap, or any article of his apparel;

(b) Three bases, if a fielder deliberately touches a fair ball with his cap, mask or any part of his uniform detached from its proper place on his person. The ball is in play and the batter may advance to home base at his peril;

(c) Three bases, if a fielder deliberately throws his glove at and touches a fair ball. The ball is in play and the batter may advance to home base at his peril.

(d) Two bases, if a fielder deliberately touches a thrown ball with his cap, mask or any part of his uniform detached from its proper place on his person. The ball is in play;

(e) Two bases, if a fielder deliberately throws his glove at and touches a thrown ball.

The ball is in play; Rule 7.05(b) through 7.05(e) Comment: In applying (b-c-d-e) the umpire must rule that the thrown glove or detached cap or mask has touched the ball. There is no penalty if the ball is not touched.

Under (c-e) this penalty shall not be invoked against a fielder whose glove is carried off his hand by the force of a batted or thrown ball, or when his glove flies off his hand as he makes an obvious effort to make a legitimate catch.

(f) Two bases, if a fair ball bounces or is deflected into the stands outside the first or third base foul lines; or if it goes through or under a field fence, or through or under a scoreboard, or through or under shrubbery or vines on the fence; or if it sticks in such fence, scoreboard, shrubbery or vines;

(g) Two bases when, with no spectators on the playing field, a thrown ball goes into the stands, or into a bench (whether or not the ball rebounds into the field), or over or under or through a field fence, or on a slanting part of the screen above the backstop, or remains in the meshes of a wire screen protecting spectators. The ball is dead. When such wild throw is the first play by an infielder, the umpire, in awarding such bases, shall be governed by the position of the runners at the time the ball was pitched; in all other cases the umpire shall be governed by the position of the runners at the time the wild throw was made;

APPROVED RULING: If all runners, including the batter-runner, have advanced at least one base when an infielder makes a wild throw on the first play after the pitch, the award shall be governed by the position of the runners when the wild throw was made.

Rule 7.05(g) Comment: In certain circumstances it is impossible to award a runner two bases.

Example: Runner on first. Batter hits fly to short right. Runner holds up between first and second and batter comes around first and pulls up behind him. Ball falls safely. Outfielder, in throwing to first, throws ball into stand.

APPROVED RULING: Since no runner, when the ball is dead, may advance beyond the base to which he is entitled, the runner originally on first base goes to third base and the batter is held at second base.

The term "when the wild throw was made" means when the throw actually left the player's hand

and not when the thrown ball hit the ground, passes a receiving fielder or goes out of play into the stands.

The position of the batter-runner at the time the wild throw left the thrower's hand is the key in deciding the award of bases. If the batter-runner has not reached first base, the award is two bases at the time the pitch was made for all runners. The decision as to whether the batter-runner has reached first base before the throw is a judgment call.

If an unusual play arises where a first throw by an infielder goes into stands or dugout but the batter did not become a runner (such as catcher throwing ball into stands in attempt to get runner from third trying to score on passed ball or wild pitch) award of two bases shall be from the position of the runners at the time of the throw. (For the purpose of Rule 7.05 (g) a catcher is considered an infielder.)

PLAY. Runner on first base, batter hits a ball to the shortstop, who throws to second base too late to get runner at second, and second baseman throws toward first base after batter has crossed first base.

Ruling—Runner at second scores. (On this play, only if batter-runner is past first base when throw is made is he awarded third base.)

(h) One base, if a ball, pitched to the batter, or thrown by the pitcher from his position on the pitcher's plate to a base to catch a runner, goes into a stand or a bench, or over or through a field fence or backstop. The ball is dead;

APPROVED RULING: When a wild pitch or passed ball goes through or by the catcher, or deflects off the catcher, and goes directly into the dugout, stands, above the break, or any area where the ball is dead, the awarding of bases shall be one base. One base shall also be awarded if the pitcher while in contact with the rubber, throws to a base, and the throw goes directly into the stands or into any area where the ball is dead.

If, however, the pitched or thrown ball goes through or by the catcher or through the fielder, and remains on the playing field, and is subsequently kicked or deflected into the dugout, stands or other area where the ball is dead, the awarding of bases shall be two bases from position of runners at the time of the pitch or throw.

(i) One base, if the batter becomes a runner on Ball Four or Strike Three, when the pitch passes the catcher and lodges in the umpire's mask or paraphernalia. If the batter becomes a runner on a wild pitch which entitles the runners to advance one base, the batter-runner shall be entitled to first base only.

Rule 7.05(i) Comment: The fact a runner is awarded a base or bases without liability to be put out does not relieve him of the responsibility to touch the base he is awarded and all intervening bases. For example: batter hits a ground ball which an infielder throws into the stands but the batter-runner missed first base. He may be called out on appeal for missing first base after the ball is put in play even though he was "awarded" second base.

If a runner is forced to return to a base after a catch, he must retouch his original base even though, because of some ground rule or other rule, he is awarded additional bases. He may retouch while the ball is dead and the award is then made from his original base.

7.06 When obstruction occurs, the umpire shall call or signal "Obstruction."

(a) If a play is being made on the obstructed runner, or if the batter-runner is obstructed before he touches first base, the ball is dead and all runners shall advance, without liability to be put out, to the bases they would have reached, in the umpire's judgment, if there had been no obstruction.

The obstructed runner shall be awarded at least one base beyond the base he had last legally touched before the obstruction.

EXAMPLE: A batter-runner is rounding first base when he runs into the first baseman who has his back turned to look at the ball in the outfield. The runner is impeded, and stops at second base. If, in the umpire's judgment, the runner would have reached third base on the play, the umpire will award third base. A runner does not have to make contact with a fielder for obstruction to be called.

Any preceding runners, forced to advance by the award of bases as the penalty for obstruction, shall advance without liability to be put out.

Rule 7.06(a) Comment: When a play is being made on an obstructed runner, the umpire shall signal obstruction in the same manner that he calls "Time," with both hands overhead. The ball is immediately dead when this signal is given; however, should a thrown ball be in flight before the obstruction is called by the umpire, the runners are to be awarded such bases on wild throws as they would have been awarded had not obstruction occurred. On a play where a runner was trapped between second and third and obstructed by the third baseman going into third base while the throw is in flight from the shortstop, if such throw goes into the dugout the obstructed runner is to be awarded home base.

Any other runners on base in this situation would also be awarded two bases from the base they last legally touched before obstruction was called.

(b) If no play is being made on the obstructed runner, the play shall proceed until no further action is possible. The umpire shall then call "Time" and impose such penalties, if any, as in his judgment will nullify the act of obstruction.

Rule 7.06(b) Comment: Under 7.06(b) when the ball is not dead on obstruction and an obstructed runner advances beyond the base which, in the umpire's judgment, he would have been awarded because of being obstructed, he does so at his own peril and may be tagged out. This is a judgment call.

NOTE: The catcher, without the ball in his possession, has no right to block the pathway of the runner attempting to score. The base line belongs to the runner and the catcher should be there only when he is fielding a ball or when he already has the ball in his hand.

7.065

FORCE-PLAY SLIDE RULE

The intent of this rule is to ensure the safety of the defensive player. This is a safety as well as an interference rule. Whether the defense could have completed the double play has no bearing on the applicability of this rule. This rule pertains to a force-play situation at any base, regardless of the number of outs.

A. On any force play the runner must slide on the ground and in a direct line between the two bases.

i. EXCEPTION --- A runner need not slide directly into a base as long as the runner slides or runs in a direction away from the fielder to avoid making deliberate contact or altering the play of the fielder.

ii. "On the ground" means either a head-first slide or a slide with one leg and buttock on the ground.

iii. “Directly into a base” means the runner’s entire body (feet, legs, trunk and arms) must stay in a straight line between the bases.

EXAMPLE: --- If a runner peels away from the baseline towards right field, and does not alter the play in any way nor contact any fielder, interference shall not be called.

B. Contact with a fielder is legal and interference shall not be called if the runner:

- i. Makes a legal slide directly to, but not past, the base. or
- ii. Is on the ground at the time of contact and the fielder moves directly down the line between the two bases to attempt a play.
- iii. Makes a legal slide and makes contact with a defensive player who is on or over, but not beyond, the base.

EXAMPLE --- When the base runner slides beyond the base, but does not (1) make contact with, or (2) alter the play of the defensive player, interference shall not be called.

APPROVED RULING: If contact occurs on top of the base as a result of a “pop up” slide, this contact is legal.

C. Actions by a runner are illegal and interference shall be called if:

- i. The runner slides or runs out of the base line in the direction of the fielder;
- ii. The runner uses a rolling, cross-body or pop-up slide and either makes contact with or alters the play of a fielder;
- iii. The runner’s raised leg makes contact higher than the fielder’s knee when in a standing position;
- iv. The runner goes beyond the base and either makes contact with or alters the play of the fielder (“Beyond the base” means any part of the offensive player’s body makes contact with or alters the play of the fielder beyond the base.)
- v. The runner slashes or kicks the fielder with either leg;
- vi. The runner illegally slides toward or contacts the fielder even if the fielder makes no attempt to throw to complete a play.

PENALTY for 1-6:

1. With less than two outs, the batter-runner, as well as the interfering runner, shall be declared out and no other runner(s) shall advance.
2. With two outs, the interfering runner shall be declared out and no other runner(s) shall advance.
3. If the runner’s slide or collision is flagrant, the runner may be ejected from the contest based on the umpire’s judgment.

APPROVED RULING: If the bases are loaded with no outs, a double-play attempt is made, and interference is called, all other runners must return to their original bases.

COLLISION RULE

D. The rules committee is concerned about unnecessary and violent collisions with the catcher at home plate, and with infielders at all bases. The intent of this rule is to encourage base runners and defensive layers to avoid such collisions whenever possible.

- a. When there is a collision between a runner and a fielder who clearly is in possession of the ball, the umpire shall judge:
 - i. Whether the collision by the runner was avoidable (could the runner have reached the base without colliding) or unavoidable (the runner’s path to the base was blocked.)

- ii. Whether the runner actually was attempting to reach the base (plate) or attempting to dislodge the ball from the fielder; or
- iii. Whether the runner was using flagrant contact to maliciously dislodge the ball.

PENALTY: If the runner attempted to dislodge the ball, the runner shall be declared out even if the fielder loses possession of the ball. The ball is dead and all other base runners shall return to the last base touched at the time of the interference.

APPROVED RULING 1 – If the fielder blocks the path of the base runner to the base (plate), the runner may make incidental contact, slide into, or otherwise collide with a fielder as long as the runner is making a legitimate attempt to avoid the fielder and reach the base or plate.

APPROVED RULING 2 – If the flagrant or malicious contact by the runner was before the runner's touching the plate, the runner shall be declared out and also ejected from the contest. The ball shall be declared dead immediately. All other base runners shall return to the bases they last occupied at the time of the pitch.

NOTE: "Malicious contact" – Generally, players must slide or otherwise attempt to avoid making contact with a defensive player legally in possession of the ball. If a runner does not make a legitimate attempt to slide or otherwise avoid the player, it can be considered malicious contact.

EXAMPLE: A runner does not raise his arms or lower his shoulder, but simply continues to run towards home plate without sliding or trying to avoid the fielder, and who makes contact with the fielder shall be adjudged to have used malicious contact.

b. If the defensive player blocks the base (plate) or base line clearly without possession of the ball, obstruction shall be called. The umpire shall point and call, "That's obstruction." The umpire shall let the play continue until all play has ceased, call time, and award any bases that are justified. The obstructed runner is awarded at least one base beyond the base last touched legally before the obstruction.

APPROVED RULING 1 – If the base runner collides flagrantly, the runner shall be declared safe on the obstruction, but will be ejected from the contest. The ball is dead.

7.07 If, with a runner on third base and trying to score by means of a squeeze play or a steal, the catcher or any other fielder steps on, or in front of home base without possession of the ball, or touches the batter or his bat, the pitcher shall be charged with a balk, the batter shall be awarded first base on the interference and the ball is dead.

7.08 Any runner is out when—

(a) (1) He runs more than three feet away from his baseline to avoid being tagged unless his action is to avoid interference with a fielder fielding a batted ball. A runner's baseline is established when the tag attempt occurs and is a straight line from the runner to the base he is attempting to reach safely; or

(2) after touching first base, he leaves the baseline, obviously abandoning his effort to touch the next base;

Rule 7.08(a) Comment: Any runner after reaching first base who leaves the baseline heading for his dugout or his position believing that there is no further play, may be declared out if the umpire judges the act of the runner to be considered abandoning his efforts to run the bases. Even though an out is called, the ball remains in play in regard to any other runner.

This rule also covers the following and similar plays: Less than two out, score tied last of ninth inning, runner on first, batter hits a ball out of park for winning run, the runner on first passes second and thinking the home run automatically wins the game, cuts across diamond toward his bench as batter-runner circles bases. In this case, the base runner would be called out “for abandoning his effort to touch the next base” and batter-runner permitted to continue around bases to make his home run valid. If there are two out, home run would not count (see Rule 7.12). This is not an appeal play.

PLAY. Runner believing he is called out on a tag at first or third base starts for the dugout and progresses a reasonable distance still indicating by his actions that he is out, shall be declared out for abandoning the bases.

(b) He intentionally interferes with a thrown ball; or hinders a fielder attempting to make a play on a batted ball;

Rule 7.08(b) Comment: A runner who is adjudged to have hindered a fielder who is attempting to make a play on a batted ball is out whether it was intentional or not.

If, however, the runner has contact with a legally occupied base when he hinders the fielder, he shall not be called out unless, in the umpire’s judgment, such hindrance, whether it occurs on fair or foul territory, is intentional. If the umpire declares the hindrance intentional, the following penalty shall apply: With less than two out, the umpire shall declare both the runner and batter out. With two out, the umpire shall declare the batter out.

If, in a run-down between third base and home plate, the succeeding runner has advanced and is standing on third base when the runner in a run-down is called out for offensive interference, the umpire shall send the runner standing on third base back to second base. This same principle applies if there is a run-down between second and third base and succeeding runner has reached second (the reasoning is that no runner shall advance on an interference play and a runner is considered to occupy a base until he legally has reached the next succeeding base).

(c) He is tagged, when the ball is alive, while off his base.

EXCEPTION: A batter-runner cannot be tagged out after overrunning or oversliding first base if he returns immediately to the base;

APPROVED RULING: (1) If the impact of a runner breaks a base loose from its position, no play can be made on that runner at that base if he had reached the base safely.

APPROVED RULING: (2) If a base is dislodged from its position during a play, any following runner on the same play shall be considered as touching or occupying the base if, in the umpire’s judgment, he touches or occupies the point marked by the dislodged bag.

(d) He fails to retouch his base after a fair or foul ball is legally caught before he, or his base, is tagged by a fielder. He shall not be called out for failure to retouch his base after the first following pitch, or any play or attempted play. This is an appeal play;

Rule 7.08(d) Comment: Runners need not “tag up” on a foul tip. They may steal on a foul tip. If a so-called tip is not caught, it becomes an ordinary foul. Runners then return to their bases.

(e) He or the next base is tagged before he touches the next base, after he has been forced to advance by reason of the batter becoming a runner. However, if a following runner is put out on a force play, the force is removed and the runner must be tagged to be put out. The force is removed as soon as the runner touches the base to which he is forced to advance, and if he overslides or overruns the base, the runner must be tagged to be put out. However, if the forced runner, after touching the next base, retreats for any reason towards the base he had last occupied, the force play is reinstated, and he can again be put out if the defense tags the base to which he is forced;

Rule 7.08(e) Comment: PLAY. Runner on first and three balls on batter: Runner steals on the next pitch, which is fourth ball, but after having touched second he overslides or overruns that base. Catcher's throw catches him before he can return. Ruling is that runner is out. (Force out is removed.)

Oversliding and overrunning situations arise at bases other than first base. For instance, before two are out, and runners on first and second, or first, second and third, the ball is hit to an infielder who tries for the double play. The runner on first beats the throw to second base but overslides the base. The relay is made to first base and the batter-runner is out. The first baseman, seeing the runner at second base off the bag, makes the return throw to second and the runner is tagged off the base. Meanwhile runners have crossed the plate. The question is: Is this a force play? Was the force removed when the batter-runner was out at first base? Do the runs that crossed the plate during this play and before the third out was made when the runner was tagged at second, count? Answer: The runs score. It is not a force play. It is a tag play.

(f) He is touched by a fair ball in fair territory before the ball has touched or passed an infielder. The ball is dead and no runner may score, nor runners advance, except runners forced to advance. EXCEPTION: If a runner is touching his base when touched by an Infield Fly, he is not out, although the batter is out;

Rule 7.08(f) Comment: If two runners are touched by the same fair ball, only the first one is out because the ball is instantly dead.

If runner is touched by an Infield Fly when he is not touching his base, both runner and batter are out.

(g) He attempts to score on a play in which the batter interferes with the play at home base before two are out. With two out, the interference puts the batter out and no score counts;

(h) He passes a preceding runner before such runner is out;

(i) After he has acquired legal possession of a base, he runs the bases in reverse order for the purpose of confusing the defense or making a travesty of the game. The umpire shall immediately call "Time" and declare the runner out;

Rule 7.08(i) Comment: If a runner touches an unoccupied base and then thinks the ball was caught or is decoyed into returning to the base he last touched, he may be put out running back to that base, but if he reaches the previously occupied base safely he cannot be put out while in contact with that base.

(j) He fails to return at once to first base after overrunning or oversliding that base. If he attempts to run to second he is out when tagged. If, after overrunning or oversliding first base he starts toward the dugout, or toward his position, and fails to return to first base at once, he is out, on appeal, when he or the base is tagged;

Rule 7.08(j) Comment: Runner who touches first base in overrunning and is declared safe by the umpire has, within the intent of Rule 4.09(a) "reached first base" and any run which scores on such a play counts, even though the runner subsequently becomes the third out for failure to return "at once," as covered in Rule 7.08(j).

(k) In running or sliding for home base, he fails to touch home base and makes no attempt to return to the base, when a fielder holds the ball in his hand, while touching home base, and appeals to the umpire for the decision.

Rule 7.08(k) Comment: This rule applies only where runner is on his way to the bench and the catcher would be required to chase him. It does not apply to the ordinary play where the runner misses the plate and then immediately makes an effort to touch the plate before being tagged. In that case, runner must be tagged.

(l) A play on him is being made and a member of his team (other than a runner) hinders a fielder's attempt to field a thrown ball. See Rule 7.11. For interference by a runner, see Rule 7.08(b).

7.09 It is interference by a batter or a runner when—

(a) After a third strike he hinders the catcher in his attempt to field the ball;

(b) He intentionally deflects the course of a foul ball in any manner;

(c) Before two are out and a runner on third base, the batter hinders a fielder in making a play at home base; the runner is out;

(d) Any member or members of the offensive team stand or gather around any base to which a runner is advancing, to confuse, hinder or add to the difficulty of the fielders. Such runner shall be declared out for the interference of his teammate or teammates;

(e) Any batter or runner who has just been put out, or any runner who has just scored, hinders or impedes any following play being made on a runner. Such runner shall be declared out for the interference of his teammate;

Rule 7.09(e) Comment: If the batter or a runner continues to advance after he has been put out, he shall not by that act alone be considered as confusing, hindering or impeding the fielders.

(f) If, in the judgment of the umpire, a base runner willfully and deliberately interferes with a batted ball or a fielder in the act of fielding a batted ball with the obvious intent to break up a double play, the ball is dead. The umpire shall call the runner out for interference and also call out the batter-runner because of the action of his teammate. In no event may bases be run or runs scored because of such action by a runner.

(g) If, in the judgment of the umpire, a batter-runner willfully and deliberately interferes with a batted ball or a fielder in the act of fielding a batted ball, with the obvious intent to break up a double play, the ball is dead; the umpire shall call the batter-runner out for interference and shall also call out the runner who had advanced closest to the home plate regardless where the double play might have been possible. In no event shall bases be run because of such interference.

(h) In the judgment of the umpire, the base coach at third base, or first base, by touching or holding the runner, physically assists him in returning to or leaving third base or first base.

(i) With a runner on third base, the base coach leaves his box and acts in any manner to draw a throw by a fielder;

(j) He fails to avoid a fielder who is attempting to field a batted ball, or intentionally interferes with a thrown ball, provided that if two or more fielders attempt to field a batted ball, and the runner comes in contact with one or more of them, the umpire shall determine which fielder is entitled to the benefit of this rule, and shall not declare the runner out for coming in contact with a fielder other than the one the umpire determines to be entitled to field such a ball;

Rule 7.09(j) Comment: When a catcher and batter-runner going to first base have contact when the catcher is fielding the ball, there is generally no violation and nothing should be called.

“Obstruction” by a fielder attempting to field a ball should be called only in very flagrant and violent cases because the rules give him the right of way, but of course such “right of way” is not a license to, for example, intentionally trip a runner even though fielding the ball. If the catcher is fielding the ball and the first baseman or pitcher obstructs a runner going to first base “obstruction” shall be called and the base runner awarded first base.

(k) A fair ball touches him on fair territory before touching a fielder. If a fair ball goes through, or by, an infielder, and touches a runner immediately back of him, or touches the runner after having been deflected by a fielder, the umpire shall not declare the runner out for being touched by a batted ball. In making such decision the umpire must be convinced that the ball passed

through, or by, the fielder, and that no other infielder had the chance to make a play on the ball. If, in the judgment of the umpire, the runner deliberately and intentionally kicks such a batted ball on which the infielder has missed a play, then the runner shall be called out for interference. PENALTY FOR INTERFERENCE: The runner is out and the ball is dead.

7.10 Any runner shall be called out, on appeal, when—

(a) After a fly ball is caught, he fails to retouch his original base before he or his original base is tagged;

Rule 7.10(a) Comment: “Retouch,” in this rule, means to tag up and start from a contact with the base after the ball is caught. A runner is not permitted to take a flying start from a position in back of his base.

(b) With the ball in play, while advancing or returning to a base, he fails to touch each base in order before he, or a missed base, is tagged.

APPROVED RULING: (1) No runner may return to touch a missed base after a following runner has scored. (2) When the ball is dead, no runner may return to touch a missed base or one he has left after he has advanced to and touched a base beyond the missed base.

Rule 7.10(b) Comment: PLAY. (a) Batter hits ball out of park or ground rule double and misses first base (ball is dead)—he may return to first base to correct his mistake before he touches second but if he touches second he may not return to first and if defensive team appeals he is declared out at first.

PLAY. (b) Batter hits ball to shortstop who throws wild into stand (ball is dead)—batter-runner misses first base but is awarded second base on the overthrow. Even though the umpire has awarded the runner second base on the overthrow, the runner must touch first base before he proceeds to second base. These are appeal plays.

(c) He overruns or overslides first base and fails to return to the base immediately, and he or the base is tagged;

(d) He fails to touch home base and makes no attempt to return to that base, and home base is tagged.

Any appeal under this rule must be made before the next pitch, or any play or attempted play. If the violation occurs during a play which ends a half-inning, the appeal must be made before the defensive team leaves the field. An appeal is not to be interpreted as a play or an attempted play. Successive appeals may not be made on a runner at the same base. If the defensive team on its first appeal errs, a request for a second appeal on the same runner at the same base shall not be allowed by the umpire. (Intended meaning of the word “err” is that the defensive team in making an appeal threw the ball out of play. For example, if the pitcher threw to first base to appeal and threw the ball into the stands, no second appeal would be allowed.)

Appeal plays may require an umpire to recognize an apparent “fourth out.” If the third out is made during a play in which an appeal play is sustained on another runner, the appeal play decision takes precedence in determining the out. If there is more than one appeal during a play that ends a half-inning, the defense may elect to take the out that gives it the advantage. For the purpose of this rule, the defensive team has “left the field” when the pitcher and all infielders have left fair territory on their way to the bench or clubhouse.

Rule 7.10 Comment: If two runners arrive at home base about the same time and the first runner misses home plate but a second runner legally touches the plate, the runner is tagged out on his attempt to come back and touch the base or is called out, on appeal, then he shall be considered as having been put out before the second runner scored and being the third out. Second runner’s run shall not count, as provided in Rule 7.12.

If a pitcher balks when making an appeal, such act shall be a play. An appeal should be clearly intended as an appeal, either by a verbal request by the player or an act that unmistakably indicates an appeal to the umpire. A player, inadvertently stepping on the base with a ball in his hand, would not constitute an appeal. Time is not out when an appeal is being made.

7.11

The players, coaches or any member of a team at bat shall vacate any space (including both dugouts or bullpens) needed by a fielder who is attempting to field a batted or thrown ball. If a member of the team at bat (other than a runner) hinders a fielder's attempt to catch or field a batted ball, the ball is dead, the batter is declared out and all runners return to the bases occupied at the time of the pitch. If a member of the team at bat (other than a runner) hinders a fielder's attempt to field a thrown ball, the ball is dead, the runner on whom the play is being made shall be declared out and all runners return to the last legally occupied base at the time of the interference.

7.12

Unless two are out, the status of a following runner is not affected by a preceding runner's failure to touch or retouch a base. If, upon appeal, the preceding runner is the third out, no runners following him shall score. If such third out is the result of a force play, neither preceding nor following runners shall score.

8.00—The Pitcher.

8.01 Legal pitching delivery. There are two legal pitching positions, the Windup Position and the Set Position, and either position may be used at any time.

Pitchers shall take signs from the catcher while in contact with the pitcher's plate.

Rule 8.01 Comment: Pitchers may disengage the rubber after taking their signs but may not step quickly onto the rubber and pitch. This may be judged a quick pitch by the umpire. When the pitcher disengages the rubber, he must drop his hands to his sides.

Pitchers will not be allowed to disengage the rubber after taking each sign.

(a) The Windup Position. The pitcher shall stand facing the batter, his pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate and the other foot free. From this position any natural movement associated with his delivery of the ball to the batter commits him to the pitch without interruption or alteration. He shall not raise either foot from the ground, except that in his actual delivery of the ball to the batter, he may take one step backward, and one step forward with his free foot.

When a pitcher holds the ball with both hands in front of his body, with his pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate and his other foot free, he will be considered in the Windup Position.

Rule 8.01(a) Comment: In the Windup Position, a pitcher is permitted to have his "free" foot on the rubber, in front of the rubber, behind the rubber or off the side of the rubber.

From the Windup Position, the pitcher may:

- (1) deliver the ball to the batter, or
- (2) step and throw to a base in an attempt to pick-off a runner, or
- (3) disengage the rubber (if he does he must drop his hand to his sides).

In disengaging the rubber the pitcher must step off with his pivot foot and not his free foot first. He may not go into a set or stretch position—if he does it is a balk.

(b) The Set Position. Set Position shall be indicated by the pitcher when he stands facing the batter with his pivot foot in contact with, and his other foot in front of, the pitcher's plate, holding the ball in both hands in front of his body and coming to a complete stop. From such Set Position he may deliver the ball to the batter, throw to a base or step backward off the pitcher's plate with his pivot foot. Before assuming Set Position, the pitcher may elect to make any natural preliminary motion such as that known as "the stretch." But if he so elects, he shall come to Set Position before delivering the ball to the batter. After assuming Set Position, any natural motion associated with his delivery of the ball to the batter commits him to the pitch without alteration or interruption.

Preparatory to coming to a set position, the pitcher shall have one hand on his side; from this position he shall go to his set position as defined in Rule 8.01(b) without interruption and in one continuous motion.

The pitcher, following his stretch, must (a) hold the ball in both hands in front of his body and (b) come to a complete stop. This must be enforced. Umpires should watch this closely. Pitchers are constantly attempting to "beat the rule" in their efforts to hold runners on bases and in cases where the pitcher fails to make a complete "stop" called for in the rules, the umpire should immediately call a "Balk."

Rule 8.01(b) Comment: With no runners on base, the pitcher is not required to come to a complete stop when using the Set Position. If, however, in the umpire's judgment, a pitcher delivers the ball in a deliberate effort to catch the batter off guard, this delivery shall be deemed a quick pitch, for which the penalty is a ball. See Rule 8.05(e) Comment.

(c) At any time during the pitcher's preliminary movements and until his natural pitching motion commits him to the pitch, he may throw to any base provided he steps directly toward such base before making the throw.

Rule 8.01(c) Comment: The pitcher shall step "ahead of the throw." A snap throw followed by the step directly toward the base is a balk.

(d) If the pitcher makes an illegal pitch with the bases unoccupied, it shall be called a ball unless the batter reaches first base on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batter or otherwise.

Rule 8.01(d) Comment: A ball which slips out of a pitcher's hand and crosses the foul line shall be called a ball; otherwise it will be called no pitch. This would be a balk with men on base.

(e) If the pitcher removes his pivot foot from contact with the pitcher's plate by stepping backward with that foot, he thereby becomes an infielder and if he makes a wild throw from that position, it shall be considered the same as a wild throw by any other infielder.

Rule 8.01(e) Comment: The pitcher, while off the rubber, may throw to any base. If he makes a wild throw, such throw is the throw of an infielder and what follows is governed by the rules covering a ball thrown by a fielder.

(f) A pitcher must indicate visually to the umpire-in-chief, the batter and any runners the hand with which he intends to pitch, which may be done by wearing his glove on the other hand while touching the pitcher's plate. The pitcher is not permitted to pitch with the other hand until the batter is retired, the batter becomes a runner, the inning ends, the batter is substituted for by a pinch-hitter or the pitcher incurs an injury. In the event a pitcher switches pitching hands during an at-bat because he has suffered an injury, the pitcher may not, for the remainder of the game, pitch with the hand from which he has switched. The pitcher shall not be given the opportunity to throw any preparatory pitches after switching pitching hands.

Any change of pitching hands must be indicated clearly to the umpire-in-chief.

8.02 The pitcher shall not—

(a) (1) While in the 18-foot circle surrounding the pitcher's plate, touch the ball after touching his mouth or lips, or touch his mouth or lips while he is in contact with the pitcher's plate. The pitcher must clearly wipe the fingers of his pitching hand dry before touching the ball or the pitcher's plate.

EXCEPTION: Provided it is agreed to by both managers, the umpire prior to the start of a game played in cold weather, may permit the pitcher to blow on his hand.

PENALTY: For violation of this part of this rule the umpires shall immediately call a ball.

However, if the pitch is made and a batter reaches first base on a hit, an error, a hit batsman or otherwise, and no other runner is put out before advancing at least one base, the play shall proceed without reference to the violation. Repeat offenders shall be subject to a fine by the League President.

(2) expectorate on the ball, either hand or his glove;

(3) rub the ball on his glove, person or clothing;

(4) apply a foreign substance of any kind to the ball;

(5) deface the ball in any manner; or

(6) deliver a ball altered in a manner prescribed by Rule 8.02(a)(2) through (5) or what is called the "shine" ball, "spit" ball, "mud" ball or "emery" ball. The pitcher is allowed to rub the ball between his bare hands.

PENALTY: For violation of any part of Rules 8.02 (a)(2) through (6):

(a) The pitcher shall be ejected immediately from the game **and referred to the League for disciplinary action.**

(b) If a play follows the violation called by the umpire, the manager of the team at bat may advise the umpire-in-chief that he elects to accept the play. Such election shall be made immediately at the end of the play. However, if the batter reaches first base on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batsman, or otherwise, and no other runner is put out before advancing at least one base, the play shall proceed without reference to the violation.

(c) Even though the team at bat elects to take the play, the violation shall be recognized and the penalties in subsection (a) will still be in effect.

(d) If the manager of the team at bat does not elect to accept the play, the umpire-in-chief shall call an automatic ball and, if there are any runners on base, a balk.

(e) The umpire shall be sole judge on whether any portion of this rule has been violated.

Rules 8.02(a)(2) through 8.02(a)(6) Comment: If a pitcher violates either Rule 8.02(a)(2) or Rule 8.02(a)(3) and, in the judgment of the umpire, the pitcher did not intend, by his act, to alter the characteristics of a pitched ball, then the umpire may, in his discretion, warn the pitcher in lieu of applying the penalty set forth for violations of Rules 8.02(a)(2) through 8.02(a)(6). If the pitcher persists in violating either of those Rules, however, the umpire should then apply the penalty.

Rule 8.02(a) Comment: If at any time the ball hits the rosin bag it is in play. In the case of rain or wet field, the umpire may instruct the pitcher to carry the rosin bag in his hip pocket. A pitcher may use the rosin bag for the purpose of applying rosin to his bare hand or hands. Neither the pitcher nor any other player shall dust the ball with the rosin bag; neither shall the pitcher nor any other player be permitted to apply rosin from the bag to his glove or dust any part of his uniform with the rosin bag.

(b) Have on his person, or in his possession, any foreign substance. For such infraction of this section (b) the penalty shall be immediate ejection from the game. In addition, the pitcher shall be suspended automatically. In National Association

Leagues, the automatic suspension shall be for 10 games.

(c) Intentionally delay the game by throwing the ball to players other than the catcher, when the batter is in position, except in an attempt to retire a runner.

PENALTY: If, after warning by the umpire, such delaying action is repeated, the pitcher shall be removed from the game.

(d) Intentionally Pitch at the Batter.

If, in the umpire's judgment, such a violation occurs, the umpire may elect either to:

1. Expel the pitcher, or the manager and the pitcher, from the game, or
2. may warn the pitcher and the manager of both teams that another such pitch will result in the immediate expulsion of that pitcher (or a replacement) and the manager.

If, in the umpire's judgment, circumstances warrant, both teams may be officially "warned" prior to the game or at any time during the game.

(League Presidents may take additional action under authority provided in Rule 9.05)

Rule 8.02(d) Comment: Team personnel may not come onto the playing surface to argue or dispute a warning issued under Rule 8.02(d). If a manager, coach or player leaves the dugout or his position to dispute a warning, he should be warned to stop. If he continues, he is subject to ejection.

To pitch at a batter's head is unsportsmanlike and highly dangerous. It should be—and is—condemned by everybody. Umpires should act without hesitation in enforcement of this rule.

8.03 When a pitcher takes his position at the beginning of each inning, or when he relieves another pitcher, he shall be permitted to pitch not to exceed eight preparatory pitches to his

catcher during which play shall be suspended. A league by its own action may limit the number of preparatory pitches to less than eight preparatory pitches. Such preparatory pitches shall not consume more than one minute of time. If a sudden emergency causes a pitcher to be summoned into the game without any opportunity to warm up, the umpire-in-chief shall allow him as many pitches as the umpire deems necessary.

8.04 When the bases are unoccupied, the pitcher shall deliver the ball to the batter within 12 seconds after he receives the ball. Each time the pitcher delays the game by violating this rule, the umpire shall call “Ball.”

The 12-second timing starts when the pitcher is in possession of the ball and the batter is in the box, alert to the pitcher. The timing stops when the pitcher releases the ball.

The intent of this rule is to avoid unnecessary delays. The umpire shall insist that the catcher return the ball promptly to the pitcher, and that the pitcher take his position on the rubber promptly. Obvious delay by the pitcher should instantly be penalized by the umpire.

8.05 If there is a runner, or runners, it is a balk when—

(a) The pitcher, while touching his plate, makes any motion naturally associated with his pitch and fails to make such delivery;

Rule 8.05(a) Comment: If a lefthanded or righthanded pitcher swings his free foot past the back edge of the pitcher’s rubber, he is required to pitch to the batter except to throw to second base on a pick-off play.

(b) The pitcher, while touching his plate, feints a throw to first base and fails to complete the throw;

(c) The pitcher, while touching his plate, fails to step directly toward a base before throwing to that base;

Rule 8.05(c) Comment: Requires the pitcher, while touching his plate, to step directly toward a base before throwing to that base. If a pitcher turns or spins off of his free foot without actually stepping or if he turns his body and throws before stepping, it is a balk.

A pitcher is to step directly toward a base before throwing to that base but does not require him to throw (except to first base only) because he steps. It is possible, with runners on first and third, for the pitcher to step toward third and not throw, merely to bluff the runner back to third; then seeing the runner on first start for second, turn and step toward and throw to first base. This is legal. However, if, with runners on first and third, the pitcher, while in contact with the rubber, steps toward third and then immediately and in practically the same motion “wheels” and throws to first base, it is obviously an attempt to deceive the runner at first base, and in such a move it is practically impossible to step directly toward first base before the throw to first base, and such a move shall be called a balk. Of course, if the pitcher steps off the rubber and then makes such a move, it is not a balk.

(d) The pitcher, while touching his plate, throws, or feints a throw to an unoccupied base, except for the purpose of making a play;

(e) The pitcher makes an illegal pitch;

Rule 8.05(e) Comment: A quick pitch is an illegal pitch. Umpires will judge a quick pitch as one delivered before the batter is reasonably set in the batter’s box. With runners on base the penalty is a balk; with no runners on base, it is a ball. The quick pitch is dangerous and should not be permitted.

(f) The pitcher delivers the ball to the batter while he is not facing the batter;

(g) The pitcher makes any motion naturally associated with his pitch while he is not touching the pitcher’s plate;

(h) The pitcher unnecessarily delays the game;

Rule 8.05(h) Comment: Rule 8.05(h) shall not apply when a warning is given pursuant to Rule 8.02(c) (which prohibits intentional delay of a game by throwing to fielders not in an attempt to put a runner out). If a pitcher is ejected pursuant to Rule 8.02(c) for continuing to delay the game, the penalty in Rule 8.05(h) shall also apply. Rule 8.04 (which sets a time limit for a pitcher to deliver the ball when the bases are unoccupied) applies only when there are no runners on base.

(i) The pitcher, without having the ball, stands on or astride the pitcher's plate or while off the plate, he feints a pitch;

(j) The pitcher, after coming to a legal pitching position, removes one hand from the ball other than in an actual pitch, or in throwing to a base;

(k) The pitcher, while touching his plate, accidentally or intentionally drops the ball;

(l) The pitcher, while giving an intentional base on balls, pitches when the catcher is not in the catcher's box;

(m) The pitcher delivers the pitch from Set Position without coming to a stop.

PENALTY: The ball is dead, and each runner shall advance one base without liability to be put out, unless the batter reaches first on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batter, or otherwise, and all other runners advance at least one base, in which case the play proceeds without reference to the balk.

APPROVED RULING: In cases where a pitcher balks and throws wild, either to a base or to home plate, a runner or runners may advance beyond the base to which he is entitled at his own risk.

APPROVED RULING: A runner who misses the first base to which he is advancing and who is called out on appeal shall be considered as having advanced one base for the purpose of this rule.

Rule 8.05 Comment: Umpires should bear in mind that the purpose of the balk rule is to prevent the pitcher from deliberately deceiving the base runner. If there is doubt in the umpire's mind, the "intent" of the pitcher should govern. However, certain specifics should be borne in mind:

(a) Straddling the pitcher's rubber without the ball is to be interpreted as intent to deceive and ruled a balk.

(b) With a runner on first base the pitcher may make a complete turn, without hesitating toward first, and throw to second. This is not to be interpreted as throwing to an unoccupied base.

8.06 A professional league shall adopt the following rule pertaining to the visit of the manager or coach to the pitcher:

(a) This rule limits the number of trips a manager or coach may make to any one pitcher in any one inning;

(b) A second trip to the same pitcher in the same inning will cause this pitcher's automatic removal from the game;

(c) The manager or coach is prohibited from making a second visit to the mound while the same batter is at bat, but

(d) if a pinch-hitter is substituted for this batter, the manager or coach may make a second visit to the mound, but must remove the pitcher from the game.

A manager or coach is considered to have concluded his visit to the mound when he leaves the 18-foot circle surrounding the pitcher's rubber.

Rule 8.06 Comment: If the manager or coach goes to the catcher or infielder and that player then goes to the mound or the pitcher comes to him at his position before there is an intervening play (a pitch or other play) that will be the same as the manager or coach going to the mound.

Any attempt to evade or circumvent this rule by the manager or coach going to the catcher or an infielder and then that player going to the mound to confer with the pitcher shall constitute a trip to the mound.

If the coach goes to the mound and removes a pitcher and then the manager goes to the mound to talk with the new pitcher, that will constitute one trip to that new pitcher that inning.

In a case where a manager has made his first trip to the mound and then returns the second time to the mound in the same inning with the same pitcher in the game and the same batter at bat, after being warned by the umpire that he cannot return to the mound, the manager shall be removed from the game and the pitcher required to pitch to the batter until he is retired or gets on base. After the batter is retired, or becomes a base runner, then this pitcher must be removed from the game. The manager should be notified that his pitcher will be removed from the game after he pitches to one hitter, so he can have a substitute pitcher warmed up.

The substitute pitcher will be allowed eight preparatory pitches or more if in the umpire's judgment circumstances justify.

9.00—The Umpire.

9.01

(a) The league president shall appoint one or more umpires to officiate at each league championship game. The umpires shall be responsible for the conduct of the game in accordance with these official rules and for maintaining discipline and order on the playing field during the game.

(b) Each umpire is the representative of the league and of professional baseball, and is authorized and required to enforce all of these rules. Each umpire has authority to order a player, coach, manager or club officer or employee to do or refrain from doing anything which affects the administering of these rules, and to enforce the prescribed penalties.

(c) Each umpire has authority to rule on any point not specifically covered in these rules.

(d) Each umpire has authority to disqualify any player, coach, manager or substitute for objecting to decisions or for unsportsmanlike conduct or language, and to eject such disqualified person from the playing field. If an umpire disqualifies a player while a play is in progress, the disqualification shall not take effect until no further action is possible in that play.

(e) Each umpire has authority at his discretion to eject from the playing field (1) any person whose duties permit his presence on the field, such as ground crew members, ushers, photographers, newsmen, broadcasting crew members, etc., and

(2) any spectator or other person not authorized to be on the playing field.

9.02

(a) Any umpire's decision which involves judgment, such as, but not limited to, whether a batted ball is fair or foul, whether a pitch is a strike or a ball, or whether a runner is safe or out, is final. No player, manager, coach or substitute shall object to any such judgment decisions.

Rule 9.02(a) Comment: Players leaving their position in the field or on base, or managers or coaches leaving the bench or coaches box, to argue on BALLS AND STRIKES will not be permitted.

They should be warned if they start for the plate to protest the call. If they continue, they will be ejected from the game.

(b) If there is reasonable doubt that any umpire's decision may be in conflict with the rules, the manager may appeal the decision and ask that a correct ruling be made. Such appeal shall be made only to the umpire who made the protested decision.

(c) If a decision is appealed, the umpire making the decision may ask another umpire for information before making a final decision. No umpire shall criticize, seek to reverse or interfere with another umpire's decision unless asked to do so by the umpire making it. If the umpires consult after a play and change a call that had been made, then they have the authority to take all steps that they may deem necessary, in their discretion, to eliminate the results and consequences of the earlier call that they are reversing, including placing runners where they think those runners would have been after the play, had the ultimate call been made as the initial call, disregarding interference or obstruction that may have occurred on the play; failures of runners to tag up based upon the initial call on the field; runners passing other runners or missing bases; etc., all in the discretion of the umpires. No player, manager or coach shall be permitted to argue the exercise of the umpires' discretion in resolving the play and any person so arguing shall be subject to ejection.

Rule 9.02(c) Comment: A manager is permitted to ask the umpires for an explanation of the play and how the umpires have exercised their discretion to eliminate the results and consequences of the earlier call that the umpires are reversing. Once the umpires explain the result of the play, however, no one is permitted to argue that the umpires should have exercised their discretion in a different manner.

The manager or the catcher may request the plate umpire to ask his partner for help on a half swing when the plate umpire calls the pitch a ball, but not when the pitch is called a strike. The manager may not complain that the umpire made an improper call, but only that he did not ask his partner for help.

Field umpires must be alerted to the request from the plate umpire and quickly respond.

Managers may not protest the call of a ball or strike on the pretense they are asking for information about a half swing.

Appeals on a half swing may be made only on the call of ball and when asked to appeal, the home plate umpire must refer to a base umpire for his judgment on the half swing. Should the base umpire call the pitch a strike, the strike call shall prevail.

Base-runners must be alert to the possibility that the base umpire on appeal from the plate umpire may reverse the call of a ball to the call of a strike, in which event the runner is in jeopardy of being out by the catcher's throw. Also, a catcher must be alert in a base stealing situation if a ball call is reversed to a strike by the base umpire upon appeal from the plate umpire. The ball is in play on appeal on a half swing.

On a half swing, if the manager comes out to argue with first or third base umpire and if after being warned he persists in arguing, he can be ejected as he is now arguing over a called ball or strike.

(d) No umpire may be replaced during a game unless he is injured or becomes ill.

9.03

(a) If there is only one umpire, he shall have complete jurisdiction in administering the rules. He may take any position on the playing field which will enable him to discharge his duties (usually behind the catcher, but sometimes behind the pitcher if there are runners). He shall be considered umpire-in-chief.

(b) If there are two or more umpires, one shall be designated umpire-in-chief and the others field umpires.

9.04

(a) The umpire-in-chief shall stand behind the catcher. (He usually is called the plate umpire.) His duties shall be to:

- (1) Take full charge of, and be responsible for, the proper conduct of the game;
- (2) Call and count balls and strike;
- (3) Call and declare fair balls and fouls except those commonly called by field umpires;
- (4) Make all decisions on the batter;
- (5) Make all decisions except those commonly reserved for the field umpires;
- (6) Decide when a game shall be forfeited;
- (7) If a time limit has been set, announce the fact and the time set before the game starts;
- (8) Inform the official scorer of the official batting order, and any changes in the lineups and batting order, on request;
- (9) Announce any special ground rules, at his discretion.

(b) A field umpire may take any position on the playing field he thinks best suited to make impending decisions on the bases. His duties shall be to:

- (1) Make all decisions on the bases except those specifically reserved to the umpire-in-chief;
- (2) Take concurrent jurisdiction with the umpire-in-chief in calling "Time," balks, illegal pitches, or defacement or discoloration of the ball by any player.
- (3) Aid the umpire-in-chief in every manner in enforcing the rules, and excepting the power to forfeit the game, shall have equal authority with the umpire-in-chief in administering and enforcing the rules and maintaining discipline.

(c) If different decisions should be made on one play by different umpires, the umpire-in-chief shall call all the umpires into consultation, with no manager or player present. After consultation, the umpire-in-chief (unless another umpire may have been designated by the league president) shall determine which decision shall prevail, based on which umpire was in best position and which decision was most likely correct. Play shall proceed as if only the final decision had been made.

9.05

(a) The umpire shall report to the league president within twelve hours after the end of a game all violations of rules and other incidents worthy of comment, including the disqualification of any trainer, manager, coach or player, and the reasons therefor.

(b) When any trainer, manager, coach or player is disqualified for a flagrant offense such as the use of obscene or indecent language, or an assault upon an umpire, trainer, manager, coach or player, the umpire shall forward full particulars to the league president within four hours after the end of the game.

(c) After receiving the umpire's report that a trainer, manager, coach or player has been disqualified, the league president shall impose such penalty as he deems justified, and shall notify the person penalized and the manager of the club of which the penalized person is a member. If the penalty includes a fine, the penalized person shall pay the amount of the fine to the league within five days after receiving notice of the fine. Failure to pay such fine within five days shall result in the offender being debarred from participation in any game and from sitting on the players' bench during any game, until the fine is paid.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS TO UMPIRES

Umpires, on the field, should not indulge in conversation with players. Keep out of the coaching box and do not talk to the coach on duty.

Keep your uniform in good condition. Be active and alert on the field.

Be courteous, always, to club officials; avoid visiting in club offices and thoughtless familiarity with officers or employees of contesting clubs.

When you enter a ball park your sole duty is to umpire a ball game as the representative of baseball. Do not allow criticism to keep you from studying out bad situations that may lead to protested games. Carry your rule book. It is better to consult the rules and hold up the game ten minutes to decide a knotty problem than to have a game thrown out on protest and replayed.

Keep the game moving. A ball game is often helped by energetic and earnest work of the umpires.

You are the only official representative of baseball on the ball field. It is often a trying position which requires the exercise of much patience and good judgment, but do not forget that the first essential in working out of a bad situation is to keep your own temper and self-control.

You no doubt are going to make mistakes, but never attempt to "even up" after having made one. Make all decisions as you see them and forget which is the home or visiting club.

Keep your eye everlastingly on the ball while it is in play. It is more vital to know just where a fly ball fell, or a thrown ball finished up, than whether or not a runner missed a base. Do not call the plays too quickly, or turn away too fast when a fielder is throwing to complete a double play. Watch out for dropped balls after you have called a man out.

Do not come running with your arm up or down, denoting "out" or "safe." Wait until the play is completed before making any arm motion.

Each umpire team should work out a simple set of signals, so the proper umpire can always right a manifestly wrong decision when convinced he has made an error. If sure you got the play correctly, do not be stampeded by players' appeals to "ask the other man." If not sure, ask one of your associates. Do not carry this to extremes, be alert and get your own plays. But remember! The first requisite is to get decisions correctly. If in doubt don't hesitate to consult your associate. Umpire dignity is important but never as important as "being right."

Most important rule for umpires is always "BE IN POSITION TO SEE EVERY PLAY." Even though your decision may be 100% right, players still question it if they feel you were not in a spot to see the play clearly and definitely. Finally, be courteous, impartial and firm, and so compel respect from all.

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