



**IOWA CONFERENCE
WOMEN'S SOFTBALL
NEWSLETTER #1**



I hope everyone has had a great start to the season and has had a chance work out all of the kinks. We have had a couple of interesting plays that are worth discussing as a staff and I wanted to include them in this first newsletter.

Play #1 - The coach does not tell you of the re-entry of the starter and the other team appeals that #7 the starter was not re-entered but she is at bat. Result: This is an unreported substitute and treated differently than batting out of order or an illegal re-entry. If discovered while on Offense the player is always out, but declared officially in the game (or re-entered in this case), and all action while the player is at bat is legal until they have completed their turn at bat and before the first pitch is delivered to the next batter. The only time action is nullified is the time between the batter completing their turn at bat and the before the next pitch is thrown to the next batter. If discovered by the team at bat, and the player that was not reported makes a play on defense, the offense could appeal and take the result of the last play or have the batter return to bat with the previous count. Pages 82-85 Rule 8-4c.

Play # 2 – Batter is awarded ball four and rounds first base and attempts to go to second. At the time the batter-runner touches first base the ball is in he pitching circle with the pitcher and the runner on third is standing on the base. The runner from third then breaks steps off third and while the pitcher does not make any movement with the ball. Result: Dead ball and runner at third is declared out on the look-back rule and the batter-runner is returned to first base. Had the pitcher faked a throw or attempted to play on either runner, the look-back rule is not in effect an either runner would be free to “continue” to advance to the next base. Page 164 Rule 12-18 a-f.

Play # 3 – Runner at second and ball hit to the short stop and the runner from second goes to third. The runner seeing the short stop is going to play the ball runs around the back of the short stop and while doing so the short stop backs up slightly while playing the ball and makes contact with the runner going to third. The contact is brief and inadvertent and does not effect the short stop is not inhibited by the action. Ruling – No call (safe signal may be used to show that the play has not penalty and action is legal). Both players were doing what they were supposed to do(within their legal rights) and the fielder was not effected by the incidental or inadvertent contact on the play. Page 99 Rule 9-13c Exception.

Play # 4 – Runner at first and third base with two out and the defense attempts to turn a double play. The runner from first does not get down or out of the way of the throw coming from second to first. Ruling – Interference is called and the ball is dead. The runner at second who interfered is out and if in the umpires opinion the defense could have made the OUT at first base the runner closest to HOME is called out. In this case the runner from third had not yet touched home so they would be closest to home and the second out declared would be the runner at third with the batter-runner being left at first base. If the runner had touched home the runner closest to home would be the batter-runner. The

runner never HAS to slide, but must not interfere with another play being made after having been put out or after scoring. Pg. 100 Rule 9-13 e.

Play # 5 The batter to start the half inning and the on-deck batter are warming-up during the pitchers 5 warm-up pitches. The next batter wants to time pitches on the side of plate she wants to swing from which is away from her teams bench. This is legal as long as she is outside the batters box and the other batter is positioned in her team's on-deck circle. The general rule of thumb is that the batter shall be no closer than a 10' area that surrounds the plate as a safe distance. This is the distance that the plate umpire should be positioned (foul line extended on the side opposite the team about to bat) and generally the distance from the back of the catchers box if you drew a circle surrounding home plate in foul territory. Pg. 56 Rule 6-4d.

Play # 6 The coach has had one defensive conference earlier in the half inning and in the same half inning calls time and tells the umpire that she would like another conference. Ruling – the coach shall not be granted a second conference, however if they insist on taking another conference they will be ejected. If the coach tells the umpire they are making a pitching change prior to crossing the foul line to confer with their team they would be granted another conference if the pitcher had not pitched in that half inning. The coach shall have one conference for each new pitcher, but no more than one available at any one time in the half inning. The umpire should notify the head coach when any conference has been charged and make a note of it on the teams line-up card. Pgs. 59-60 Rule 6-11a -1.

Play # 7 The count on the batter is 2 balls and 2 strikes and after the next pitch the catcher thinks they have struck out the batter and fires the ball down to third base with no runners on base. The umpire had actually called a ball (3). Ruling: A ball is issued to the batter – in this case ball four and the batter will be issued a base on balls. The catcher must return the ball to the pitcher after a foul tip and each pitch not contacted with the following exceptions:

1. Runner(s) on base
2. Batter becomes a runner
3. Following a strikeout
4. Following a putout made by the catcher
5. Check swing appealed on a third strike
6. Batter is not entitled to first base, but runs anyway
7. Errant throw intended for the pitcher

If it is not one of these the penalty is the ball is dead and a ball is awarded to the batter. First Offense a warning is also given to the offending player and subsequent offenses the offender shall be ejected from the game. Pg. 116 Rule 10-16.

Play # 8 The catcher is waiting for the ball to arrive at home plate to tag a runner and has the plate blocked off and inhibits the runner from reaching the plate. The catcher is not about to receive the ball or in the act of fielding the ball (rule of thumb is that the ball is as close or closer to the catcher as the runner is to the catcher). The ball gets by the catcher and the runner does eventually touch the plate and is safe. Ruling: Obstruction is still signaled and called (delay dead ball) and the obstructing player and the coach will still be notified anytime there is obstruction on the play. Any subsequent violation by the same

player will result in an automatic one-base award. In the same play if the catcher obstructs and tags the runner out, a dead ball is called and the runner is awarded home with any other runners running the bases awarded the bases they would have reached, in the umpires judgment, had there not been obstruction. Pg. 107 Rule 9-18c.

Please review your pre-game checklist of your manual. Pgs. 42-43.

- Walk field clockwise with a ball to check to see if there are any problems where a ball could lodge or go under a fence.
- Make sure all bats appear on the Approved Bat list and do not appear on the Banned Bat list.
- Check all helmets for the stamped NOSCAE logo, including the catcher's helmets.
- Visitors dugout first and then home dugout.
- Line-ups from coaches Home team first then Visitors – Names, Numbers, Positions all correct? All players listed? Flex (if used) in the 10th position playing defense for the DP. Give back for one final check and then when the coach returns it to you it becomes official. Same procedure for Visiting team.
- Have home coach go over ground rules if the Plate umpire is unfamiliar with the field. Don't forget flags that may be flying over fair territory or tarps that are on the field of play.
- Tie-breaker used? Not in IIAC Conference games. Run rule is 8.
- Location of the scorekeeper.
- Good luck and Play Ball!
- Gather game ball from visiting team and at least two other balls from the home team besides the game ball the home pitcher will take to the circle. Be sure to check her ball also before the game begins.
- Check to make sure scorekeeper is ready and sportsmanship announcement is read after national anthem.

If you have items for discussion please list them in your game reports or give me an e-mail or phone call and we I will be glad to list them for everyone's benefit.