

# SCC Umpires' Bulletin I - February 2018

## purpose - to remind, clarify and educate

As we navigate through each season, issues arise that can be used as learning experiences. Below are some situations from the past session.

Reference - **OFFICIAL SUN CITY CENTER SOFTBALL 2017-18 RULEBOOK**

\* - indicates comment on the rule.

1.If a catcher cannot accurately return a pitched ball to the mound, can an umpire speed the game up by throwing the ball back to the pitcher?

\* **No.**

### **6.10 • CATCHER**

**B. The catcher shall return the ball directly to the pitcher after each pitch.....**

\* The umpire is not a player.

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2. An umpire determines the strike zone based upon a pitcher's ability or lack thereof combined with the pitcher's effort and environmental concerns; eg. windy day.

\* **Sorry, no.**

### **6.14 • ILLEGAL PITCH**

**The umpire shall call an illegal pitch when the ball is at its highest point less than six feet or over twelve feet above the playing service.**

\*The umpire calls "illegal" (also acceptable are the descriptive adjectives of "flat" or "too high.") as the ball begins its descent.

Make your call quickly. If the batter swings after your "illegal" call, the results of the swing stand.

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3. Umpires should give helpful tips to players during the game, such as, "Swing at a good pitch this time", "the right field line is really open" or " the runner missed second base, you should have appealed" or (my favorite) "Strike...get your pitches up."

\* **Sigh.**

\* If it was called a strike, why should the pitcher adjust the height?

## **SECTION 10 - UMPIRES**

### **10.1 POWERS AND DUTIES**

\*This section outlines the responsibilities of both umpires.

\*The umpire is still a friend but not a manager or coach.

\*Tips, helpful or otherwise are inappropriate.

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4. It's helpful to have players call "flat" pitches from the dugout and remind you to "Watch the runner on first leaving early" or "Watch the batter stepping out of the box".

\*Nope, it's not helpful at all. If players from the dugout are calling pitches, they are confusing their own batter. If it happens once, courteously request the players refrain from helping you umpire. If it occurs again, warn the player.

\*If you don't know who the player was, ask. If nobody admits to it, warn the manager. If it occurs again, thank the manager for valued service during his/her exit. My old judo instructor said, "When a man makes a fist, he has lost the discussion." Be nice, be kind, don't yell at players, but if necessary use the rules as needed.

\*and.....don't "watch" for anything but be prepared to "see" everything.

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5. Runner on 1B, long fly ball to left center. Runner rounds 2B, 3B and starts for home. The outfielder makes a miracle catch. The runner makes a left turn and runs directly back to 1B. Is this shortcut permitted?

**Absolutely not!**

### **5.7 SCORING OF RUNS**

**A. One run shall be scored each time a runner touches the scoring plate after legally touching all bases in proper order.**

\*If one must touch all the bases in proper order to score a run, one must touch all bases in reverse order to return to the original base.

\*Softball doesn't have shortcuts or express lanes.

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### **1.1 APPEAL PLAYS**

6. An appeal is made that a runner missed second base. Everyone at the game saw the runner miss second base. People in Ruskin saw the runner miss second base. Satellite photos show the runner missing second base, everyone saw the miss except the umpires.

\*A valuable guideline for an umpire when an appeal is being discussed.

Be honest, if you didn't see the miss, say that. Check with your partner.

Don't say, "I saw the tag" if you didn't. If neither of you saw the miss, say that.

The discussion ends there.

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7. position position position

\*I once got a very nice (sort of) compliment from a very competitive player. I was umping @ home and went to 3rd to make a call as this player slide in.

I called him out. He said, "Well, you missed the call but you missed it from 5 feet so I can't complain."

Thanks, Bill S.

8. Runners at first & second. Short fly to left center. Runners hold their bases and the ball drops in. Left center fielder throws to 3rd for force out. Home umpire moves up the line towards 3rd. An off target throw pulls the 3rd baseman down the line towards home to catch the ball. The 3rd baseman stretches

full length to make the catch. The plate umpire calls “safe” because the fielder’s foot cannot be seen in contact with the base as the catch is made.

\*There’s a lot going on here. First, the home plate umpire MUST make a call. Second, the safe call is correct because the umpire did not see the fielder’s foot in contact with the bag at the time of the catch.

### **1.52 • PROTESTS**

**A - Only managers or acting managers may notify the umpire of their intent to protest. The only basis for protest is "misinterpretation of a playing rule."**

\*Misinterpretation of a playing rule. What’s that mean? Based on the information available to the home plate umpire, the safe call was made.

However, 2-3 defensive players had a great view of the play and the fielding manager decided to protest based upon **new information**. The fielding team claimed the 3rd baseman held the base at the time of the catch and the runner should be out.

Wait. Is this appealable?

### **10.4 • UMPIRE’S JUDGMENT**

**There shall be no appeal of any decision of any umpire on the grounds that he was not correct in his decision that a batted ball was fair or foul, a base runner was out or safe, a pitched ball was a ball or a strike, or any other play involving accuracy of judgment.**

However.

**. No decision of an umpire shall be reversed, except when he is convinced it is in violation of a rule. If the manager, captain, or either team does not seek reversal of a decision based solely on a point of rules, the umpire whose decision is in question, shall, if in doubt, confer with his associate before taking any action.**

So, the home plate umpire, as rules permit, conferred with the base umpire (who kept his eye on the ball) and decided the runner at 3B was out based upon the new information provided by the base umpire.

\*The situation was well handled and the correct call was made.

9. Live drive hit by the batter down 3rd. Third baseman reaches over the foul line and touches the ball backhand while standing in fair territory. Home plate umpire immediately calls, “Foul ball.” 2 members of the batting team charge the umpire and insist the 3rd baseman touched the ball. One demands that the umpire ask the 3rd baseman.

### **1.21 • FAIR BALL**

**A batted ball 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.**

and

### **10.4 • UMPIRE’S JUDGMENT**

**There shall be no appeal of any decision of any umpire on the grounds that he was not correct in his decision that a batted ball was fair or foul,**

\*1st - there is no new information to be considered, the call was "Foul ball"

\*2nd - the players were not ejected, but they could have been.

#### 10.4 • UMPIRE'S JUDGMENT

There shall be no appeal of any decision of any umpire on the grounds that he was not correct in his decision that a batted ball was fair or foul, a base runner was out or safe, a pitched ball was a ball or a strike, or any other play involving accuracy of judgment. **Any argument is grounds for a player or coach to be ejected from the game.**

Please feel free to contact us with any questions you may have or with any interesting situations you see on the field that you'd like to see included in the next bulletin.

Thank you,

Ed Maslyk, Ron Russell, Tom Mackar