



April 3, 2023

NFHS Softball Weekly Rule Interpretations

Situation 1: With R1 on first base with no outs, B2 hits a long ground ball to the outfield. R1 misses second base on their way to third base. F8 throws the ball to F4 who jumps for the high throw and happens to land on second base when they catch the throw. The base umpire rules R1 out. **RULING:** Incorrect ruling. An appeal play is a play or rule violation in which the umpire does not make a ruling until requested by a coach or player. For an umpire to rule on a live ball appeal, they must know that the player is actually making an appeal of a runner missing a base. There is not a requirement that the player make a verbal request, but the players' actions must give the umpire an indication that the player is making an appeal and not just accidentally touching the missed base with the ball. (2-1-1, 2-1-2a, 2-1-3a)

Situation 2: With R1 on second base and no outs, B2 hits a fly ball in the gap between F8 and F9. R1 believing the ball will not be caught starts to advance to third base. F9 makes a diving catch and as R1 begins to return to second base F9 throws to F6 standing on second base. The base umpire rules R1 out for leaving the base early on a caught fly ball. **RULING:** Correct ruling. It is clear that the defense was executing a live ball appeal of R1 leaving second base prior to the fly ball being touched by the defense. (2-1-1, 2-1-2b, 2-1-3a, 8-6-6)

Situation 3: With two outs and R1 on first base, B4 hits a deep fly ball that lands untouched. R1 advances to home and B4 ends up at third base. However, both runners missed second base on their way to third base. F6 calls for the ball and steps on second base to appeal the runner missing second base. The base umpire asks which runner they are appealing and F6 states the runner from first base. Umpire rules R1 out, inning is over and no runs score. **RULING:** Correct ruling. Since there was the potential of two violations (R1 and B4), the umpire needs to clarify which runner the defense is appealing. (2-1-1, 2-1-2a, 2-1-3a, 8-6-6, 9-1-1 EXCEPTION c)

Situation 4: With one out and R1 on first base, B3 hits a deep fly ball that lands untouched. R1 advances to home and B3 ends up at third base. However, R1 missed second base on their way to third base. F6 calls for the ball and steps on second base to appeal the runner missing second base. As F4 throws the ball toward F6 at second base, B3 takes off toward home in an attempt to advance. The umpire declares the ball dead, R1 out for missing second base and returns B3 to third base. **RULING:** Incorrect ruling. Since the defense is executing a live ball appeal, the ball should remain live and runners are entitled to advance with liability to be put out. The proper ruling is the ball remains live, R1's run is nullified as they are out for missing second base on the appeal and B3 may advance with liability to be put out. (2-1-1, 2-1-2a, 2-1-3a, 8-6-6)

Situation 5: Team A begins to take the field and the umpires notice that several players have eye black in the shape of a heart on their faces. Several other players have eye black that has been applied in streaks down their cheeks. The umpire rules this illegal and requires all of Team A's players to remove any eye black that is more than a single line below the eyes. **RULING:** Incorrect ruling. NFHS Softball has no rule specifically covering the application of eye black.