

National Federation of State
High School Associations



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Printing Error: 2012 Softball Rules Book: page 68, Article 16c, sentence should read (delete struck through text):
c. After being declared out or after scoring, a runner ~~intentionally~~ interferes with a defensive player's opportunity to make a play on another runner....

SITUATION 1: The home team provides the umpire with three pink softballs, all labeled with the NFHS Authenticating Mark, for use during a special fundraiser game. **RULING:** Illegal softballs. The softballs have been illegally labeled by the manufacturer with the NFHS Authenticating Mark as softballs are required to be optic yellow. The home team shall provide legal optic yellow softballs to the umpire for the contest. The "promotion" softballs may be used for warm-ups, etc., but not for competition. (1-3-1; 1-3-8)

SITUATION 2: The right fielder has a pouch-like product attached to her glove designed to keep the throwing hand warm during cold-weather play. **RULING:** The equipment is legal provided it meets all the glove specifications listed in Rule 1-4, especially the two-color requirement. (1-4)

SITUATION 3: The umpire notices that B1's bat has a crack in the barrel (a) before she steps into the batter's box or (b) after she steps in the batter's box. **RULING:** In (a), B1 may obtain a legal bat without penalty. In (b), B1 would be declared out for using an illegal bat. No ejections occur unless the umpire deems the bat has been altered (structurally changed) by a device/treatment to enhance performance. In both (a) and (b), the illegal bat is removed from the game and the umpire issues a warning to the head coach. The next player not properly equipped will result in the player and the head coach being restricted to the dugout/bench for the duration of the game. (1-5-1c; 2-4-2; 3-6-1; 7-4-2)

SITUATION 4: With two outs and R1 on third base, B4 steps into the batter's box with a bat that is manufactured with holes in the taper of the bat and bears the 2004 ASA Certification Mark. **RULING:** B4 is declared out. **COMMENT:** It is the responsibility of the umpires to inspect equipment before the game. If the umpires find a bat not in compliance with Rule 1-5, the team should have the opportunity to make the bat legal or it shall be removed from play. (1-5-2c; 2-4-2; 7-4-2)

SITUATION 5: During the pregame inspection of equipment, the umpires notice several bats in the home team's dugout that are very warm to the touch. The umpires remove the bats from play. In the fifth inning, the home team asks the umpire to check the bats again to see if they have cooled off enough to use for the remainder of the game. **RULING:** Incorrect procedure. Once an altered bat has been removed from the game, it should remain out of play for the entire contest. (2-4-2a; 3-2-10 Penalty; 10-2-3a)

SITUATION 6: R1 is at third base and R2 is at first base with no outs. B3, an illegal offensive player, hits the ball to F6, an illegal defensive player, who turns a 6-4-3 double play. R1 crosses the plate. At the end of playing action, before the next pitch, both coaches come out and appeal the opponent's illegal player. **COMMENT:** Since this situation is unlikely to occur, there is no specific rule/penalty to address it; therefore, the umpire must make a decision as in 10-2-3g. The most likely rulings would appear to advantage one team over the other and it is impossible to invoke penalties that are completely "offsetting." There-fore, one possible "hybrid" ruling is presented for consideration. **ONE POSSIBLE RULING:** Since both teams violated the illegal substitute rule and the violations were discovered before the next pitch, the umpire shall restrict both the illegal offensive and defensive players to the bench/dugout for the remainder of the game with legal substitutes replacing them. It would seem "fair" to call B3 out and return both R1 and R2 to third base and first base, respectively. The game would continue with one out and the player following the illegal batter as the next batter. This penalty incorporates portions from the two individual penalties. (2-57-3; 3-4-2 Penalty; 3-4-3 Penalty; 10-2-3g)

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