

2004 Baseball Rules Changes and Points of Emphasis

Rule 1-13, Uniforms. (MAJOR)

Add: “f. When coaching the bases, the uniform game jersey must be worn. If a team jacket or windshirt is worn, it must be worn under the official uniform. At all other times, coaches are allowed to wear a team-issued jacket or windshirt (in the dugout, during dead ball situations, etc.).”

Rule 2 and 7-4-b, Strike zone.

Continue to have this be a point of emphasis.

Rule 2, Ejections. (MAJOR)

Add: “Umpires must file an ejection report with the offending team’s athletics director and a conference administrator, if applicable.”

Rule 2, Ejection.

A.R. – If a game is protested (before or after an ejection), regardless of the outcome of the protest, the ejection(s) shall be counted and suspensions served, if applicable.

Rule 2, Interference.

A.R. 3 – If a fielder has a chance to field a batted ball, but misplay it and while attempting to recover it, the ball is in the fielder’s immediate reach and the fielder is contacted by the base runner attempting to reach a base, interference shall be called.

A.R. 4 -- If a fielder has a chance to field a batted ball, but misplay it and must chase after the ball, the fielder must avoid the runner. If contact occurs, obstruction shall be called.

Rule 2, Obstruction. (MAJOR)

When a runner is obstructed, 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. If a runner(s) advances beyond what the umpire would have granted and is put out, the runner(s) is out.

Rule 3-9, Medical Personnel.

Added approved ruling: “A.R.: In a situation where a player is bleeding, a decision to substitute for the player must be made within 10 minutes from the time play is stopped. A substitute player must begin warming up immediately when the blood rule is in effect.”

Rule 3-10, Tobacco.

Continue to have this be a point of emphasis. Emphasize that umpires should be reported and punished by the proper authority if they are guilty of tobacco use.

Rule 5-13-a and b, Protested Game.

Changed wording in a to read: “**For regular season contests**, each conference or governing agency should adopt a procedure for protesting a game...”

Also, switched last two sentences of 5-13-a and 5-13-b for clarity.

Rule 6-1-c, Live Ball.

Delete “and no other infielder has a reasonable chance to make a play” from this section to clarify and be consistent with professional rules.

Rule 6-2-e, Immediate Dead Ball—Runners Return.

Delete “who have a reasonable chance to field the ball” from this section to clarify and be consistent with professional rules.

Rule 6-3-d (1), Delayed Dead Ball—Runners Return or Advance. (MAJOR)

Change penalty to read:

“PENALTY -- 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. If a runner(s) advances beyond what the umpire would have granted and is put out, the runner(s) is out.”

Rule 7-1-b (2), A Batter.

Changed to read: “If the batter refuses to take the position in the batter’s box during the time at bat, the umpire shall **call a strike**, ~~order the pitcher to pitch and shall call “strike” on each such pitch.~~ The pitch shall be a live ball. The batter is declared out after the third strike, ~~regardless of the location of the pitch.~~

Rule 7-11-h-A.R. 1:

If, while attempting to advance to first base, the batter-runner intentionally deflects the ball, the batter-runner is declared out, the ball is dead and all runners return.

Rule 7-11-h-A.R. 2:

If, while attempting to advance to first base, the batter-runner unintentionally deflects the ball, the ball is live and in play. Exception – If there are less than two outs and first base is occupied, the ball is dead and all runners return, unless the runner(s) are stealing on the pitch.

Rule 8-2-d-A.R., Batter Becomes Baserunner. (MAJOR)

Altered to read: “A.R.—If the batter intentionally gets touched by moving or rolling any part of the body ~~outside the batter’s box~~ into the pitch, ~~or positions the body in the batter’s box so that any part of the body is outside the vertical lines extending above the batter’s box,~~ the umpire shall call a strike or ball in accordance with Rules 7-4 and 7-5.”

Rule 8-2-d-A.R. (2), Batter Becomes Baserunner. (MAJOR)

Added A.R. to read: “If the batter freezes (makes no attempt to avoid the pitch) and is hit by a pitch that is clearly inside the vertical lines of the batters box, the ball is dead and the batter is awarded first base.”

Rule 8-3-e, Entitlement to Bases. (MAJOR)

Altered to read: “e. If obstruction by a fielder is committed against a ~~batter~~-runner ~~before reaching first base~~, a delayed dead ball situation exists.

PENALTY – The umpire shall point and call “That’s obstruction.” The obstructed runner is awarded at least one base beyond the base last touched legally before the obstruction.”

Rule 8-3-f, Entitlement to Bases. (MAJOR)

Change penalty to read:

“PENALTY -- 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. If a runner(s) advances beyond what the umpire would have granted and is put out, the runner(s) is out.”

Rule 8-5-k, When Runners Are Out.

Delete “who have a reasonable chance to field the ball” from this section to clarify and be consistent with professional rules.

Rule 8-6-b (9), When Runners Are Out on Appeals

Add additional rule reference directing readers to Rule 2 – Force Play.

Rule 9-1-a and 9-1-b, Pitching Positions.

Add, immediately after section regarding pitcher’s pivot foot on the rubber: “PENALTY – Warning on first offense. Illegal pitch shall be called on subsequent offenses.”

Rule 9-1-a, Wind-up.

Point of emphasis for determining the start of the pitching motion.

Rule 9-2-e, A.R. 2 (MAJOR)

A.R. 2—A substance may be used by an athletic trainer for the purpose of stopping bleeding, provided the substance dries sufficiently before resuming play.

Rule 9-3-m (2), Balk.

Add wording to read: “If a balk is immediately followed by a wild throw **by the pitcher** to a base that permits...”

Rule 9-4-a, A.R. 5, Removing Pitcher. (MAJOR)

“In a situation where a player is bleeding, a decision to substitute for the player must be made within 10 minutes from the time play is stopped. A substitute player must begin warming up immediately when the blood rule is in effect.”

Rule 9-4-a, A.R. 6, Removing Pitcher. (MAJOR)

“During a free trip, a defensive player may warm-up with another defensive player, provided it does not delay the game. The players warming up must be in the current lineup and remain in fair territory during the charged conference. For example, a bullpen catcher is not allowed to participate in this type of warm-up.”

Interpretations

Situation: Runner on first base, no outs. Batter-runner strikes out with a runner on first, but the catcher does not successfully catch the pitch. The batter-runner begins running to first base and unintentionally kicks the ball in the process. The runner on first goes to second base. **Ruling:** The runner on second must return to first base because the batter-runner was immediately out and the runner on first base was not running on the pitch.

Situation: Same as above, except the runner on first base is running with the pitch.

Ruling: If, in the umpire's discretion, the runner on first would have reached second base safely had the batter-runner not kicked the ball, the runner shall remain at second base.

Points of Emphasis

Tobacco

Strike Zone

Pitching Positions

Obstruction

Batter's Box Rule

Committee Administration

Dennis Womack, University of Virginia, was nominated as committee chair.