



## May 2022 Plays and Clarifications

### 2023 UIC Clinic:

We are in the process of wrapping up the final details of the UIC Clinic. It will be at the Shearon Downtown and all the events will be held at the hotel. We are putting together the final details and should have an email blast out in a few days. Save the dates, February 2<sup>nd</sup> through the 5<sup>th</sup> 2023, with the 5<sup>th</sup> being the travel home day. We will have all the details of cost of registration, rooms etc. out at the same time so stay tuned.

### Rule Changes:

We have had a lot of discussion about some of the 2022 rule changes submitted and approved by the USA Softball Council. The new rules creating the most questions are the rule concerning the extra hitter in JO Fast Pitch, the pitching rule for JO Fast Pitch and the five second rule in Slow Pitch. Hopefully we can explain and answer a few of the questions here.

**Rule 4, Section 1C [1] [D&E]** is our new rule that allows the offense to bat 10 players. When using 9 players and having the extra hitter, that hitter may be anywhere in the batting order. It also allows any player in the line-up to play defense at any time. It is important to remember for the sake of our courtesy runner rule, any change for pitcher or catcher must be reported to the plate umpire.

Section E also allows the use of the DP/ FLEX and bat 10 with an EP. When using the DP/FLEX the DP/FLEX rules still apply. You still can have any 9 in the line-up play defense. However, if someone plays defense for the FLEX this is a substitution for the FLEX since they will not be on defense any longer. The FLEX will still be listed at the end of the batting order just like our previous rules.

**Rule 6A, Section 3K** is our new rule for Women's and JO Girls Fast Pitch that allows for both feet of the pitcher to be in the air during the pitching motion. Look at this as a disengagement of the pivot foot from the ground. New techniques of pitching being taught can cause the pivot foot to be airborne and this will no longer be considered illegal. All else in the rule remains the same such as the step back, feet on or off the pitcher's plate and staying within the 24-inch length of pitcher's plate.

**Rule 6C, Section 3J** is a change in the Slow Pitch rule reducing the time for the pitcher to release the ball from 10 seconds to 5 seconds. Nothing else has changed in the pitching rule for Slow Pitch. The batter still has 10 seconds to get in the box and once the ball is put back in play the pitcher now has the 5 seconds to release the pitch. Questions on when does the 5 seconds start have been asked. It starts the same time as the 10 seconds count started. Nothing changed except when the ball is put in play or remains in play after a pitch, the pitcher has 5 seconds to deliver the pitch. If the pitcher is in the act of delivering the ball, has stopped, and started the pitchers motion, the 5 seconds stops just as it was with the 10 seconds. In summary

treat this rule as we did the 10 seconds rule, once the player is in the box and the umpire says play the count starts. If on a pitched ball and the batter stays in the batter's box, the 5 seconds starts after the pitcher has received the ball from the catcher.

**Play:** B1 hits a single to left field, rounds 1B and is obstructed by F3. B1 stops and realizes they have been obstructed and calmly trots to 2B where they are tagged with the ball on the way to 2B. The umpire calls the runner out since the umpire feels that B1 reached the base they would have reached had there been no obstruction.

**Ruling:** Incorrect. An obstructed runner cannot be called out between the bases they were obstructed except for the five reasons listed in the USA Softball Rule Book. Once the player is tagged with the ball the umpire should call dead ball and place the runner on the base they would have reached had there been no obstruction, in this case back on 1B. Rule 8, Section 5BA.

**Play:** In Slow Pitch Softball with R1 on 1B and one out B3 three hits a single to right field. The ball comes back in the infield and all playing action had ceased and the umpires call time with R1 on 3B and R2 on 1B. The ball is returned to the pitcher who is ready to pitch but B4 is not in the box. B4 steps in the box and the umpire says play ball and then calls time and awards a ball on the batter since the pitcher took more than 5 seconds to pitch once receiving the ball.

**Ruling:** This is incorrect. Once the batter is in the box and the umpire signals play ball the pitcher now has 5 seconds to start their delivery. Rule 6 Section 3J

**Play: (Fast Pitch)** The team at bat is using an EP, batting 10 players and using the DP/FLEX. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning one of the 10 players in the batting order goes in for the FLEX to play defense. The plate umpire reminds the coach that this a substitution and they just went from 11 in the line-up, 10 in the line-up batting with the DP FLEX to 10 in the line-up with the FLEX now being out of the game.

**Ruling:** This is correct. When batting 10 and using the DP/FLEX if any of the 10 players play defense for the FLEX, the FLEX has left the game. Rule 4, Section 1C [1] [D&E] and Rule 4, Section 3E.

**Play: (Fast Pitch)** B2 at bat with one out. B2 swings at strike three and it is not caught by the catcher. B2, thinking they have struck out heads back toward the dugout as the coach tells them to run to 1B. F2 has the ball and holds the ball as B2 runs to 1B. F2 finally throws the 1B and beat B2 by a step and U1 calls B2 out at the play at 1B.

**Ruling:** This is a correct ruling. Since the third strike was not caught and the batter did not enter the dugout or dead ball territory the ball is still live by the dropped third strike rule and B2 is not out until they are either tagged with the ball or the ball thrown to 1B before B2 arrives. Rule 8, Section 2A, Rule 8, Section 2H, Rule 8, Section 2D3 and Rule 8, Section 7U.