

2002-05 I.S.F. PLAYING RULE CHANGES AND COMMENTS

- Rule 1, Sec 2:** **APPEAL PLAY.** (Add to end of “Appeal Play” definition the types of appeals, including;
- a) missing a base,
 - b) Leaving a base on a caught fly ball before the ball is first touched,
 - c) Batting out-of-order,
 - d) Attempting to advance to second base after making a turn at first base.
 - e) Illegal substitution, and
 - f) Illegal re-entry.

COMMENTS: *Types of appeals were added to the definition, in order to help clarify what is and what is not an appeal. If not listed in a-f, then it should not be considered an appeal play.*

- Rule 1, Sec. 4:** **BASE PATH.** A base path is a direct line between a base and the runner’s position at the time a defensive player is attempting to tag a runner.

COMMENTS: *In the 2000-01 Rule Book the base path was described as an imaginary line 0.91m (3 ft) to either side of a direct line between the bases. If a runner is rounding a base, this is more than 0.91m of a direct line between bases, and this could change again, if the runner changes direction, and returns to a base. Therefore, the new definition states the base path is determined by the runner and his direct line towards the base he is running to..*

- Rule 1, Sec 13a:** **CHARGED CONFERENCE.**
- a) (Offensive Conference) The offensive team requests a suspension of play to allow the manager, or other team representative, to confer with any member of their team.
 - b) (Defensive Conference) The defensive team requests a suspension of play for any reason, and a representative (not in the field) of the defensive team enters the playing field, and communicates with any defensive player.

COMMENTS: *The two types of conferences (“defensive” and “offensive”) previously had effects included in the definition and “effects” or “penalties” should be found only under the rules. See Rule 5, Sec 8a and b in these comments for that wording.*

- Rule 1, Sec. 26:** **FIELDER.** A fielder is any player of the defensive team who occupies a position on defense in the playing field.

COMMENTS:

The previous wording stated a fielder was any player of a team on the field and this was confusing, as offensive players could be on the field as runners. This change clarifies this by stating a “fielder” is a member of the defensive team..

Rule 1, Sec. 39:

ILLEGALLY BATTED BALL. An illegally batted ball occurs: (added new sub-section “d” to read)

- d) When, the batter steps with his entire foot out of the batter’s box, and returns to contact the ball while both feet are inside the batter’s box.**

COMMENTS:

This prevents a batter from (FP) stepping back out of the batter’s box to gain a running start and then swinging and contacting the ball, or (SP) stepping back out of the box and then back in, prior to hitting the ball. If no contact is made with the ball on the swing, there would be no penalty, only a strike on the batter.

Rule 1, Sec. 48:

LEAPING. Leaping is the act of a pitcher which causes him to be airborne on his initial push from the pitcher’s plate. The momentum built by the forward movement of the pitcher causes the entire body, including both the pivot and stepping (non-pivot) foot to be in the air at the same time and moving towards home plate as the delivery is completed. Leaping is an illegal act.

COMMENTS:

The definition was needed so umpires will know and understand what is meant by the wording of Rule 6, Sec 3i. Dragging the pivot foot from the pitcher’s plate is legal, however having both feet in the air at the same time is considered “leaping” and an illegal act.

Rule 1, Sec. 51:

LINE DRIVE. A line drive is a ball in flight that is batted sharply and directly into the playing field.

COMMENTS:

The previous wording described a line drive as a fly ball, and a fly ball is defined as “any ball batted into the air,” which normally means an arc. Therefore, the wording for a line drive was changed to read a ball “in flight.” batted sharply and directly into the playing field.

Rule 1, Sec. 53:

OBSTRUCTION. Obstruction is the act of

- a) A defensive player or team member which hinders or prevents a batter from striking or hitting a pitched ball, or**
b) A fielder while (1) not in possession of the ball, or (2) not in the act of fielding the ball, impedes the progress of a runner or batter-runner who is legally running bases.

COMMENTS:

A third part of sub-section (b) has been deleted from the previous wording which read “(3) not about to receive a thrown ball.” This now eliminates a defensive player from blocking a base (or home plate)

without the ball. If the fielder has the ball, the base can be blocked, however if the fielder does not have the ball, they cannot block the base or obstruction should be ruled and the base awarded the runner. This was also changed under Rule 8, Sec 7b(3).

Rule 1, Sec 59: **OVERTHROW.** An overthrow is a play in which a ball is thrown from one fielder to another. It can be a ball that:
a) remains in play,
b) remains in play, but becomes blocked, or
c) a ball that goes beyond the boundary lines. **NOTE: (b) and (c) results in a dead ball.**

COMMENTS: *As a result of the new definition for a “wild throw” this change was added to this definition. Previously this definition read that an “overthrow” was either a blocked ball, or a ball that was thrown beyond the grounds of the playing field, however an overthrow can actually remain in play.*

Rule 1, Sec. 60: **PASSED BALL. (FP ONLY)** A passed ball is a pitch that should have been held or controlled by the catcher with ordinary effort.

COMMENTS: *The previous wording stated the pitch had to be a legally delivered ball and it does not have to be. A passed ball could also occur on an illegal pitch. Runners can advance one or more bases on a passed ball.*

Rule 1, Sec. 70: **SLAP HIT.** A slap hit is a batted ball that has been struck with a controlled short, chopping motion rather than with a full swing. The two most common types of slap hits are (a) where the batter takes his stance as if to bunt, but then either drives the ball into the ground with a quick, short swing or punches the ball over the infield, or (b) where the batter takes running steps (within the batter’s box) toward the pitcher before making contact with the pitch with a quick, short swing or punching the ball over the infield. **NOTE: A slap hit is not considered a bunt.**

COMMENTS: *This new definition is a common batting style which is described in the rule book so umpires and scorers know the difference between a bunt and a slap hit, and how to deal with it.*

Rule 1, Sec. 71: **SQUEEZE PLAY.** A squeeze play is a play in which the offensive team, with a runner on third base, attempts to score that runner by means of the batter contacting the ball.

COMMENTS: *This is another new definition. “Squeeze Play” is a term used in the rules (Rule 6, Sec 5) and it needed to be defined.*

Rule 1, Sec. 83:

WILD PITCH. (FP ONLY) A wild pitch is a pitch so high, so low, or so wide of the plate that the catcher cannot or does not stop and control it with ordinary effort.

COMMENTS:

Similar to Section 61 (Passed Ball), a wild pitch can be a legal or illegal pitch which cannot be stopped or controlled by the catcher. Previously it stated it had to be a legally delivered pitch.

Rule 1, Sec. 84:

WILD THROW: A wild throw is a play in which a ball is thrown from one fielder to another, and cannot be caught or controlled, is not blocked, and remains in play.

COMMENTS:

This new definition was added to describe that a ball can be overthrown, and still remain in play. Previously, the definition of "overthrow" stated it was only a ball thrown out of play or blocked, and this was also changed to include a ball could remain in play.

Rule 2, Sec 1:

Entire sub-section was re-written with the underlined words the only addition to the previous rule book. The new wording reads:

Sec. 1. THE PLAYING FIELD.

- a) That area in which the ball may be legally played and fielded.
NOTE: A ball is considered "outside the playing field" when it touches the ground, a person on the ground, or any object outside the playing area."
- b) Shall have a clear and unobstructed area from home plate to the outfield fence, between the foul lines within a minimum radius of:
 - 1) 67.06m (220 ft) for female fast pitch;
 - 2) 76.20m (250 ft) for male fast pitch;
 - 3) 91.44m (300 ft) for male slow pitch; or
 - 4) 80.77m (265 ft) for female slow pitch.
- c) Shall have an unobstructed area of not less than 7.62m (25 ft), and not more than 9.14m (30 ft) in width, outside the foul lines and between home plate and the backstop.
- d) Should have a warning track. If a warning track is used, it shall be:
 - 1) An area within the playing field and adjacent to any permanent fence along the outfield and side boundaries.
 - 2) A minimum of 3.65m (12 ft) to a maximum of 4.75m (15 ft) from the outfield and/or side fences.
 - 3) Made of a material (e.g. dirt, gravel) that is level with, but different from, the playing surface. The material must distinguish itself from the outfield surface and signals players when they are approaching the fence.

NOTE: There is no requirement for facilities to cut a warning track in the permanent outfield surface (grass or otherwise) when temporary fencing is used (i.e. when a fast pitch game is played on a field designed primarily for slow pitch).

COMMENTS:

This new format makes for ease in reading the section. The “NOTE” shown under Sec. 1a, was rewritten from 9-1-h. It should be located in this section, rather than under Rule 9.

Rule 2, Sec 1:

Changing fence distances to read:

The playing field shall have a clear and unobstructed area within the minimum radius of 67.06m (220 ft) for female fast pitch and 76.20m (250 ft) for male fast pitch; 80.77m (265 ft) for female slow pitch and 91.44m (300 ft) for male slow pitch from home plate between the foul lines.....

COMMENTS:

This increased fence distance should open up the game for fast pitch women, allowing for more doubles and triples in place of long singles. For the two male increases, this puts the rule book distance similar to the Technical Code distances for world championship play.

Rule 2, Sec. 2:

Change female fast pitch pitching distance to read:

Adult Division Female.....13.11m (43 ft)

COMMENTS:

This increase from 12.19m (40 ft) will bring more offense back to the game, making it more attractive for teams, players, spectators and television. In the United States, statistics from NCAA colleges have shown a run increase of .40 per team per game (3.20 runs to 3.60 runs) and a batting average increase of .025 per team per season (.234 at 40 feet to .259 at 43 feet) from 1988 when the 43 feet distance went into effect until today. It should also speed up the game as batters will be swinging at more pitches from this distance. This change is for women’s fast pitch only. The under 19 Jr. Women’s will remain at 12.19m (40 ft).

Rule 2, Sec 4-H-1(c):

Change 1) to Exception. Same wording, which reads:

EXCEPTION: On any live ball play made from first base foul territory, the batter-runner and the defensive player may use either base.

COMMENTS:

In the 2000-01 Rule Book the wording showed this as “1)” of sub-section c, which reads: “A defensive player must use only the fair portion of the base at all times”. It should have been an “exception” to the sub-section

Rule 3, Sec. 1-L:

Add prior to last sentence, the word “NOTE”, to read:

NOTE: A “flare” or “cone” grip attached to the bat will be considered an altered bat.

COMMENTS:

A bat with a “flare” or “cone” does not have a safety knob, therefore it is ruled to be an altered bat in accordance with Rule 1, Sec. 33 and Rule 3, Sec 1L. The addition of the “NOTE” clarifies this wording.

Rule 3, Sec. 3G:

Add the yellow optic cover, red-stitch ball to sub-section to read:

g. The white cover, white stitch or yellow optic cover, red-stitch 12-inch ball with a COR of .47 or under shall be used in the following ISF Championship play: Men’s and Women’s Fast Pitch, Boy’s Fast Pitch and Slow Pitch, and Girl’s Fast Pitch. It shall have an ISF logo marking.

COMMENTS:

The .47 COR was approved at the 1999 ISF Congress and has been added to wording. The yellow optic cover, red-stitch ball is popular because of the batter’s visibility to see the ball, and it is now an alternate type ball which can be used in championship play in the divisions listed.

Rule 3, Sec. 5:

Change last sentence of Sec 5 “SHOES” to read:

.....No hard plastic, nylon or polyurethane spikes similar to a metal sole and heel plate are allowed in any division at any level of play. Shoes with detachable cleats that screw onto the shoe are not allowed; however, shoes with detachable cleats that screw into the shoe are allowed.

COMMENTS:

This change clarifies that cleats (metal or plastic) that screw into the shoe, thereby not leaving an exposed post when the cleat is not on the shoe are legal. Cleats that screw onto a post fastened to the shoe are illegal, as it would be dangerous if the cleat came off and a sharp post remained..

Rule 3, Sec 5:

YOUTH DIVISION, MODIFIED FAST PITCH, AND COED SLOW PITCH ONLY: No metal cleats are allowed in any division at any level of play.

COMMENTS:

The words “or shoes with detachable cleats” were deleted from this sub-section. This allows for youth age players who play in both senior and junior divisions of play, to be permitted to interchange metal and plastic cleats on shoes, as long as the cleats screw into the shoe.

Rule 3, Sec 6 a:

a. Masks. (FP Only)

All catchers must wear masks, throat protector and helmet. NOTE: Catchers (or other members of the defensive team) are required to wear a mask, throat protector and helmet while receiving warm-up pitches at home plate or in the warm-up area. If the person catching the pitch will not wear the mask he must be replaced by a person who will do so. An extended wire protection attached to the mask can be worn in lieu of the throat protector.

COMMENTS:

The underlined words have been added to this sub-section. It is now a requirement that individuals warming up a pitcher(s) in the warm-up or practice areas, must wear a mask and throat protector.

Rule 3, Sec 6 c:

c. Face Masks.

Any defensive or offensive player can wear an approved plastic face mask/guard. Face mask/guards that are cracked or deformed, or has padding that has deteriorated or is missing, are prohibited from use. NOTE: Fast Pitch catchers cannot wear the plastic face mask/guard in place of the regular mask with throat protector.

COMMENTS:

By allowing a plastic face mask/guard to be worn on offense and/or defense, it provides protection against fractured facial bones while at bat, while running, or when fielding a batted ball. This is not a mandatory item. It allows the face mask to be worn should a player choose to wear one.

Rule 4, Sec 5:

Change the Designated Hitter rule to Designated Player (FP Only) with these rules to be followed:

DESIGNATED PLAYER (FP ONLY)

- a. A Designated Player, referred to as a "DP", may be used as a batter for any defensive player, provided it is made known prior to the start of the game and his name is entered on the line-up sheet as one of the nine persons in the batting order.
- b. The starting DP may be substituted and may re-enter one time, as long as he returns to the position in the batting order that he occupied when he left the game.
- c. The name of the defensive player only (known as the "DEFO"), for whom the DP is batting, will be placed in the tenth position on the line-up sheet.
- d. The starting player listed as the DP (or his substitute) must remain in the same position in the batting order whenever he is in the game.
- e. The DP and his substitute or the substitute's replacement may never play offense at the same time.
- f. The DP may be substituted for at any time, either by a batter, a runner, or by the DEFO for whom he is batting.

NOTE: The DEFO, or his substitute, replacing the DP is not a substitution. If the DP is replaced on offense by the DEFO, or his substitute, the DP is considered to have left the game.

1. If replaced by the DEFO, this reduces the number of players from ten to nine. If the DP does not re-enter, the game may continue and legally end with nine players.
2. If the DP re-enters, he may play offense and defense (continue with nine players), or he may bat in his original place in the batting order, and the DEFO returns to the number 10 position and plays defense only again.

EFFECT 5 a-f: The provisions of Rule 4, Sec. 8 and penalties for these violations apply. Placing the DP in a position in the batting order other than his starting position is considered an illegal re-entry.

- g. The DP may play defense at any position. Should the DP play defense for a player other than the DEFO, that player will continue to bat, but not play defense, and is not considered to have left the game.
- h. The DP may play defense for the DEFO, and the DEFO is considered to have left the game, reducing the number of players to nine.
- i. The DEFO may be substituted for at any time, either by a legal substitute or the DP for whom he is playing defense. The DEFO may re-enter the game one time, either in the number 10 position, or in the DP's position in the batting order.
 1. If returning to the number 10 position, he will again play defense only, but may play in any defensive position.
 2. If returning in the DP's position in the batting order, he will play offense and defense, and the game will continue with nine players.

EFFECT 5g-i: The provisions of Rule 4, Sec. 8 and penalties for violations apply. Placing the DEFO in a position in the batting order other than that of the DP is considered an illegal re-entry.

COMMENTS:

In previous rule books the "DH" was not allowed to play defense. By changing to the "DP" ruling it offers a greater range of options offensively and defensively, and makes for better utilization of players. Managers and umpires alike should understand that a DP can never play defense only, a DEFO can never play offense only, and the DP and DEFO can never be one of the nine batters at the same time. If these three situations are understood, it helps in understanding and administering the rule.

Rule 4, Sec 9:

Change “balls and strikes” to “any judgment decision,” to read:

9. DISPUTED CALLS.

Any team member disputing any judgment decision by an umpire, will constitute a team warning. Any repeat offense shall result in the ejection of that team member.

COMMENTS:

The Playing Rules Commission felt that the warning should be extended to any judgment decision and not just limited to the calling of balls and strikes. Requesting help for a possible pulled foot or missed tag is acceptable, but questioning “out” or “safe” calls will constitute a warning.

Rule 5, Sec 5-a-1:

In fast pitch and modified pitch, add “15 runs after 4 innings” to the Mercy Rule, to read:

- a. A run ahead rule “mercy rule” must be used in all ISF Championships.
 1. (FP and Modified Pitch Only) 20 runs after three innings, 15 runs after four innings, or 10 runs after five innings.

COMMENTS:

The 2000-01 rule means if a team reaches 15-19 runs in fourth inning the game would still continue until 5th inning. With this addition, a team ahead by 15 runs after four complete inning, can be called. This wording is the same as currently written in the Technical Code.

Rule 5, Sec 6:

Change the word “tenth” with “eighth” to read:

TIEBREAKER. Starting with the top of the eighth inning, and each half inning thereafter, the offensive team shall begin it’s turn at bat, with the player who is scheduled to bat ninth (9th in FP).....

COMMENTS:

There is no reason to play two extra innings (8th and 9th) before using the “Tiebreaker” rule. By introducing the tiebreaker in the 8th inning, games can be completed within a reasonable time, thereby increasing the probability of keeping the games (and tournaments) on schedule. Many countries have already changed to the 8th inning, under their local amended rules.

Rule 5, Sec. 7-b-2:

Add “including an appeal play” to sub-section to read:

- b. A run shall not be scored if the third out of the inning is a result of:
 2. A runner being forced out, including an appeal play, due to the batter becoming a batter-runner.

COMMENTS:

This addition clarifies that runners forced out (and properly appealed), will be ruled out and no runs shall score.

Rule 5, Sec. 8:

Sec. 8. CHARGED CONFERENCES.

- a. **Offensive Conferences.** There shall only be one charged offensive conference in an inning.

NOTE: 1. This includes the batter, runner, on-deck batter and the coaches among themselves.

2. It is not a charged conference when a pitcher is putting on a warm-up jacket while on base, or if the offense confers while the defensive team is in conference, provided the offense is ready to play when the defense is ready.

3. Umpires should not permit any such conferences in excess of one per inning.

EFFECT – Sec. 8a: A second charged conference shall result in the ejection of the manager or coach insisting on another charged conference.

- b. **Defensive Conferences.** There shall be only three charged defensive conference(s) in a seven inning game. For every inning beyond seven, there shall be one charged conference per inning

NOTE: 1. A conference includes players in the field leaving their position and going to the dugout for instructions, regardless of whether ‘Time’ has been requested or not.

2. Should a manager/coach from the dugout report a change to the umpire, this is not considered a charged defensive conference unless the manager then crosses the foul line to talk with any defensive player after making the change.

EXCEPTION: If this change is a pitching change and the pitcher leaves the pitching position prior to the manager crossing the foul line, the manager may legally enter fair territory to talk with any defensive player, while the new pitcher is taking his warm-up pitches, without a conference being charged.

3. The conference is over when the manager/coach crosses the foul line returning to the dugout.
4. Conferences are consecutive and do not start over when a new player enters into the game.
5. If all three conferences are not used in the first seven innings, they are lost and a team must follow the one per extra inning rule.
6. It is not a charged conference for the defense if they confer during a charged offensive conference, provided they are ready to play when the offense is ready.

EFFECT – Sec 8b: The fourth, and on each additional, charged conference in a seven inning game, or for any charged conference in excess of one per inning in an extra inning game, shall result in the pitcher, who is the listed pitcher at the time of the excess

conference, being declared an Illegal Pitcher, who may not pitch again for the remainder of the game.

NOTE: A declared Illegal Pitcher can play another position on defense but cannot pitch again.

c. Conferences will not be charged if they take place at any time when the umpire has suspended play.

COMMENTS:

The defensive conference change from one per inning to three per game will speed up the game. It allows a team to take more than one conference an inning if needed, but after the third conference at the pitcher's plate, on the fourth conference, the pitcher must be removed from the pitching position. He can play another defensive position, but cannot pitch again in the game. After four conferences, any pitcher(s) would have to be removed if another conference took place.

Rule 6, Sec 1-e:

Change the word "one" with "two" seconds, to read:

Sec. 1. PRELIMINARIES.

Before commencing the delivery (pitch), the pitcher:

e. Must, after taking the signal, bring his whole body to a full and complete stop with the ball held in both hands in front of the body. This position must be held for not less than two seconds and not more than 10 seconds before releasing the ball.

COMMENTS:

Increasing the time to two seconds will set a clearer parameter for the umpires to judge the stop. Enforcing these two seconds prior to starting the pitching movements should be a priority in calling the illegal pitch.

Rule 6, Sec 5c:

Change the PENALTY from "the runner will be awarded home" to "all runners shall advance one base on the illegal pitch," to read:

Sec. 5 DEFENSIVE POSITIONING:

c. With a runner on third base trying to score by means of a squeeze play or steal, no defensive player may:

- 1. Step on, or in front of, home plate without the ball, or**
- 2. Touch the batter or bat.**

PENALTY: The ball is dead. The batter shall be awarded first base on the obstruction and all runners shall advance one base on the illegal pitch.

COMMENTS:

In this particular case, both catcher's obstruction and the illegal pitch are ruled. Listing the penalty for the obstruction, and not clarifying the penalty for the illegal pitch in this situation is confusing. The re-written section should help in clarifying the penalty.

Rule 7, Sec. 2 b-c 2: **Sec. 2. BATTING ORDER.**

- b. Any advance or score made as a result of the improper batter becoming a batter-runner shall be nullified. Any out that is made prior to discovering this infraction, remains out.
- c. The next batter is the player whose name follows that of the player called out for failing to bat. If the next player was the incorrect batter who was called out, go to the next person in the line-up.
- d. No change.

COMMENTS:

The rule presently followed, benefits the team committing the error. If a batter bats out-of-order and an out or double play occurs, it is nullified and the same batter could come to the plate and get a hit and win the game. The game should penalize those in violation, rather than reward them. If the incorrect batter makes an out, and other outs occur while the incorrect batter bats, the outs will remain under this new rule change.

Rule 7, Sec. 6-e:

6. THE BATTER IS OUT

- e. When he leaves the batter's box to gain a running start, and then returns to the batter's box and makes contact with the ball.

EXCEPTION – 6 d-e: If no contact is made with the pitched ball, there is no penalty. If the batter swings and misses, the ball remains live (FP and Modified Pitch) or is ruled dead (SP Only).

COMMENTS: *This wording is connected with Rule 1, Sec 40d (Illegally Batted Ball definition) which was also added to the 2002-05 Rule Book.. It prevents a batter in fast pitch or slow pitch from stepping back out of the batter's box, to gain a running start, and then making contact with the pitch within the batter's box.. Re-letter sub-sections e-l to f-m.*

Rule 8, Sec 1-g-2:

Sec. 1. THE BATTER BECOMES A BATTER-RUNNER:

- g. When a fair batted fly ball:
 - 2) Goes directly off the fielder's glove or body and over the fence in fair territory, or makes contact with the top of the fence and goes over the fence in fair territory, or.....

COMMENTS:

To make the wording consistent with Rule 8, Sec. 7h(2), Rule 8, Sec 10e, and Rule 8, Sec 9j. No change. This is the existing interpretation.

Rule 8, Sec 1-g-2

Sec 1. THE BATTER BECOMES A BATTER-RUNNER:

EFFECT, Exception (2):

Effect – Sec 1g: The batter-runner is awarded a home run and must touch all bases in regular order.

EXCEPTION: If

- 1) The ball passes out of the grounds at a distance less than prescribed in Rule 2,

- 2) A fair batted fly ball goes off a fielder's glove or body and over the fence in foul territory,
- 3) A fair fly ball first contacts the fence, deflects off a fielder and then goes over the fence.

NOTE: In 1-2-3, the batter-runner shall be awarded two bases from the time of pitch.

COMMENTS:

This exception (underlined words) makes the wording consistent with that approved under previous rule change, as well as the exceptions 2 and 3 under EFFECT for Rule 7-h.

Rule 8, Sec 2-l:

Change the word “moves” to “steps,” to read:

Sec. 2. THE BATTER-RUNNER IS OUT:

- i. **When he steps back toward home plate to avoid or delay a tag by a fielder.**

COMMENTS:

This wording “steps” is what the previous ruling implied and the change of words helps clarify the situation.

Rule 8, Sec. 2-j:

Sec. 2. THE BATTER-RUNNER IS OUT:

- j. **If, when using the double base, and there is a force play on the batter-runner, (on a ball thrown by any fielder), who touches only the fair portion and collides with the fielder on the fair portion, who is about to catch the thrown ball.**

COMMENTS:

The batter-runner is supposed to use the foul portion and therefore should not come in contact with the defensive player. If the batter-runner uses the white and collides with a defensive player (preventing him from making a play), interference should be ruled. Change current EFFECT from ‘g-j’ to ‘g-k.’

Rule 8, Sec 4-g:

Delete the entire sub-section which read:

- g. **When a runner has advanced to, and touched, a base beyond a base left illegally, or a missed base, and the ball then becomes dead, he may not, even after the ball becomes alive, return to the missed base or base left illegally.**

COMMENTS:

Runners should be allowed to return to a missed base or one left illegally whether the ball is live, or after the ball is ruled dead. When the runner returns to the missed base or one left illegally, then the overthrow award can be made. Dead ball appeals cannot be made until a runner has completed his return.

Rule 8, Sec. 7-b:

Delete the words “about to receive a thrown ball from the “obstruction” wording, to now read:

7. RUNNERS ARE ENTITLED TO ADVANCE WITHOUT LIABILITY TO BE PUT OUT::

- b. When a fielder obstructs the runner from making a base, or impedes the progress of a runner or batter-runner who is legally running the bases, if the fielder is:**
- 1) Not in possession of the ball, or**
 - 2) Not in the act of fielding a batted ball, or**
 - 3) Making a fake tag without the ball.**

COMMENTS:

This was recommended by the Player’s Commission as an emergency ruling. It prevents a fielder from blocking the base when he is not in possession of the ball. If the fielder has the ball, he can block the base, but without the ball and a runner is advancing to the base or home plate, obstruction should be ruled and the base awarded.

Rule 8, Sec. 8-d:

8. A RUNNER MUST RETURN TO HIS BASE:

- f. When the on-deck batter, or any other non-playing team member, creates interference.**

COMMENTS:

This new sub-section “d” was added as it compliments the EFFECT for Rule 8, Sec. 2j, requiring runners to return to the base held at the time of the pitch for such a situation.

Rule 8, Sec 9-e:

9. THE RUNNER IS OUT:

- e. When anyone other than another runner physically assists the runner while the ball is in play.**

EFFECT – 9r: The ball remains in play.

COMMENTS:

To simplify and clarify a ruling which previously was a dead ball depending on what the “assist” was. With the new wording, the ball remains live. If, on a caught fly ball, then other outs can be made by the defense after the catch. If when assisting a runner, it is treated similar to other running violations, such as (a) passing a runner, (b) gaining a running start, or (3) running out of the three foot lane to avoid a tag. In these three situations the ball remains live, just as this situation will remain a live ball.

Rule 8, Sec. 9-k:

add the underlined words to sub-section, to read:

9. THE RUNNER IS OUT:

- k. When he is struck with a fair-batted ball over fair territory while off base and before it passes a fielder, excluding the pitcher, unless in the umpire’s judgment, no fielder had an opportunity to make an out.**

COMMENTS:

Compliments the new wording for Rule 8, Sec 1e and the current wording in Rule 8, Sec 10e. Sec. 10e indicates the runner is not out if hit by a fair-batted ball while in foul territory, provided no fielder had a chance to make an out.

Rule 8, Sec. 9-n:

Add the under-lined words, to read:

9. THE RUNNER IS OUT:

- n. When, after a runner, batter, or batter-runner has been declared out, or after a runner has scored, the runner, batter or batter-runner interferes with a defensive player's opportunity to make a play on another runner. A runner continuing to run and drawing a throw will be considered a form of interference. NOTE: The runner closest to home plate, at the time of the interference, will be called out.**

COMMENTS:

This new wording allows for the penalty to apply to the batter-runner as well as the batter or a runner. The batter-runner could commit interference after being put out, as easily as the other players listed.

Rule 9, Sec 1:

Delete the following sub-sections:

9. THE BALL IS DEAD AND NOT IN PLAY:

- g. When a runner is called out for leaving the base too soon on a pitched ball.**
- h. SECOND SENTENCE which reads: A ball is considered "outside the playing field" when it touches the ground, person on the ground, or object outside the playing area.**
- j. In case of interference with a fielder.**
- p. When the batter is hit by a pitched ball.**

Add the following sub-section:

- g. When a fair-batted ball strikes an umpire, or runner:**
- 1) Before touching a fielder, including the pitcher.**
 - 2) Before passing a fielder, other than the pitcher, without being touched.**

COMMENTS:

Reasons for deleting "f" is that it is a duplication of sub-sections "s" and "t"; for deleting the second sentence of sub-section "h", which should be located in Rule 2, Sec 1; for deleting "j" is that it is a duplication of sub-section "g"; and for deleting "p" is that it is a duplication of sub-section "d".

The addition of "h" is that it compliments the existing Effect (3) for Rule 8, Sec. 1e.

Rule 9, Sec 2: Add the underlined word, to read:

Sec. 2. THE BALL IS IN PLAY:

x. When a thrown ball accidentally strikes a coach.

COMMENTS: *To help clarify that a thrown ball remains live when accidentally striking a coach, but is dead and interference ruled when the coach intentionally interferes with a thrown ball.*

Rule 10, Sec 1-e-1: Add the underlined words to read:

- e. The plate umpire in fast pitch:
1. Must wear a black face mask, black or tan padding, and a black throat protector. (An extended wire protector may be worn in lieu of a throat protector on the mask.)

COMMENTS: *This change now allows a fast pitch plate umpire to wear tan padding under the black mask.. A throat protector must be attached to the mask.*

Rule 11, Sec. 2: The entire section has been rewritten as follows:

- 2. PROTESTS THAT WILL BE RECEIVED:**
Protests that shall be received and considered include matters of the following types:
- a. Misinterpretation of a playing rule.
 - b. Failure of an umpire to apply the correct rule to a given situation.
 - c. Failure to impose the correct penalty for a given violation.
NOTE: 1) Protests for the above must be made before the next pitch, or before all infielders have left fair territory, or, if on the last play of the game, before the umpires leave the playing field.
NOTE: 2) After one pitch has been thrown (legal or illegal), no change can be made on any umpire's ruling.
 - d. Eligibility of a team roster member.
NOTE: Protests for the above are to be submitted to the appropriate authority (not the umpires) and may be made at any time, subject to the provisions of Rule 11, Section 5.

COMMENTS: *Protests must be made prior to the next pitch for sub-sections "a-c" and can be made at any time to a league or tournament director for sub-section "d". The penalty for "a-c," if upheld by the protest committee, is to replay the game from the spot of protest, and the penalty for "d" is forfeiture of the game by the team using the ineligible player.*

Rule 12, Sec 2-b-4-b-9: Add a new sub-section “9” to read:

- b) A putout is credited to the catcher:
 - 9) When the batter is called out for changing from one batter’s box to another.

COMMENTS: *Clarifies who should be credited with the put out, when the catcher changes from one batter’s box to another (Rule 7, Sec. 6i).*

Rule 12, Sec 3-d: **Delete** Rule 12, Sec. 2-3-e and **add** to Sec 3-d the following:

Sec 3. A BASE HIT SHALL NOT BE SCORED IN THE FOLLOWING CASES:

- d. When a batter reaches first base safely as a result of a preceding runner being called out for interfering with a batted ball or a defensive player.

EXCEPTION: If, in the judgment of the scorer, the batter would have reached first base safely had the interference not occurred, a base hit shall be credited to the batter.

COMMENTS: *When interference occurs on another runner, the batter should not receive a base hit. One offensive player (the batter) should not be rewarded for a violation by another offensive player. With this change, the batter is now credited with a fielder’s choice, rather than a base hit.*

Rule 12, Sec 5-b: Add the underlined words to sub-section 5b, to read:

Sec. 5. A RUN BATTED IN IS A RUN SCORED BECAUSE OF ONE OF THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

- b. A sacrifice bunt or slap hit (FP Only) or a sacrifice fly (FP and SP).

COMMENTS: *This compliments the new wording under Rule 1, SLAP HIT, and provides guidance for scorers on how to list in the box score.*

ADD THE FOLLOWING CO-ED SLOW PITCH RULES TO THE RULES AS DESCRIBED:

<u>Rule 2, Sec 1:</u>	Base Distance:	19.82m (65 feet)
	Pitching Distance:	15.24m (50 feet)
	Fence Distance:	83.82m (275 feet) minimum
	Fence Distance:	91.44m (300 feet) maximum

<u>Rule 3, Sec. 3-h:</u>	Ball usage.	The white cover, red-stitch 12-inch ball with a COR of .47 or below. It must have a marking of MSP-47, in addition to the ISF logo.
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<u>Rule 3, Sec. 5:</u>	Shoes:	No metal spikes allowed for men or women.
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<u>Rule 4, Sec 3-a-5:</u>	Players:	<p>Co-ed Slow Pitch. Ten players (five male and five female) with the following positioning requirements: two male and two female in both the infield and the outfield, and one male and one female as a pitcher and a catcher.</p> <p>Co-ed with Extra Players (EP). Twelve players: six male and six female – same as co-ed plus two EP's who bat in the line-up.</p>
<u>Rule 4, Sec. 6:</u>	Extra Player(s)	If the EP is used in coed, all 12 must bat and any 10 (five male and five female) may play defense. Defensive positions may be changed as long as the coed positioning (Rule 4, Sec 3-a-5) is followed. The batting order must remain the same throughout the game.
<u>Rule 7, Sec 2:</u>	Batting:	The batting order for coed shall alternate the sexes. If a team does not have enough male or female players, an out must be taken when two players of the same sex bat back to back.
<u>Rule 8, Sec 1-c:</u>	Walks:	The ball is dead. Any walk to a male batter will result in a two base award. The next batter (a female) will bat. EXCEPTION: With two outs, the female batter has the option to walk. No out shall be called during this dead ball period. A male batter-runner advancing to second base without touching first base shall be called out if properly appealed.

COMMENTS: *The European Region already has championship play for Co-ed. In the summer of 2002, a World Cup championship for co-ed play will be held at Plant City, FL, USA and rules must be uniform for all countries.*

THE FOLLOWING WERE RECOMMENDED TO BE PLACED IN THE TECHNICAL AND PROCEDURAL CODE, TO BE USED IN WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS AND OLYMPIC GAMES COMPETITION ONLY.

INTENTIONAL WALK: (FP) The ball is dead and runners may not advance unless forced. If the pitcher desires to walk a batter intentionally he may do so by notifying the plate umpire who shall award the batter first base. If more than one batter is to be walked intentionally the second intentional walk may not be administered until the first batter reaches first base. **NOTE:** If the umpire mistakenly allows two walks

at one time and the first batter fails to touch first base, no appeal will be honored on the first batter.

COMMENTS:

It is felt this ruling will help speed up the fast pitch game. The only reason to pitch in the regular fast pitch rules during an intentional walk, is to see if the pitcher will throw a wild pitch or illegal pitch and runners could advance. With the intentional walk, this will not happen. This is the same rule currently followed in the slow pitch game.

WARM-UP PITCHES:

(FP) In the first inning (or when a pitcher relieves another), not more than one minute may be used to deliver not more than five (5) warm-up pitches to the catcher or another team member. In each subsequent inning(s), pitchers will be given three (3) pitches. A pitcher returning to pitch in the same half inning will not be entitled to warm-up pitches.

EXCEPTION: 1) This does not apply if the umpire delays the start, or resumption of play due to a substitution, conference, injury, etc. 2)An umpire can allow five (5) pitches rather than three (3) should the weather conditions warrant it.

COMMENTS:

This too is proposed to help speed up the game. Many pitchers now take only 2-3 pitches during their warm-up between innings, so it will not have a major effect. If more than three (3) pitches are thrown when not authorized by the umpire, a ball will be called for each additional pitch thrown.