

SUN LAKES SENIOR SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION RULES INTERPRETATIONS & CLARIFICATIONS

Last Updated: March 13, 2012

Item 10 has been added regarding Batter's Box Rules

Our organization's playing rules are governed by our own Sun Lakes Senior Softball Association Playing Rules and by those of Senior Softball-USA. When the two sources conflict, our playing rules supersede those of the SS-USA. Periodically, we encounter situations that don't often occur. The following situations have actually occurred during recent league play. These Rules Interpretations and Clarifications are provided to help umpires and scorers make the proper rulings.

This document will be updated as we encounter additional "knotty problems of softball." Umpires and scorers are encouraged to bring unusual situations to the attention of Mike Core, Dennis LePore or Larry Wolfe in order that we can include the proper interpretations in this document for purposes of accuracy and consistency.

1. Home Run Rule:

Our homerun rules use the one-up rule for over-the-fence homeruns. However, what happens if a long fly ball hits a fielder's glove before going over the fence? Here's the proper ruling per Section 8.3 (8) of the Senior Softball-USA Rulebook:

Any fair ball touched by a player on either side of the fence that clears or has cleared the fence in fair territory will be declared a "Four Base Award" and will not be included in the total over the fence homerun count.

2. Proper Runner at Second Base to Start an Extra Inning:

In extra innings, the runner that starts the inning at second base shall be the player who was the batter when the last out of the previous inning was made.

3. Batting Out of Turn:

Scorers should notify the umpire if a batter is about to bat out of order. The umpire should then order the correct batter to bat. No penalty applies.

Scorers should notify the umpire if a batter already at bat is batting out of order. In this instance, the correct batter will take the place of the incorrect batter and assume the ball and strike count, if any. No penalty applies.

Scorers should notify the umpire if a batter reaches base and was the incorrect batter. In this instance, the umpire will call that batter out and all base runners, if any, will return to their previous bases and the correct batter will then bat. The notification must occur before a pitch is thrown to the subsequent batter. The correct batter will then bat. If a pitch has already been made, then the result of the play shall stand and the next proper batter shall bat. If the proper batter is on base, the batter following him in the batting order shall bat.

4. Touching a Live Ball in Play with No Impact on the Play:

An umpire should **not** call interference if a non-participant or member of the offensive team grasps a live ball if no play is affected and no runner attempts to advance.

5. Definition of a Catch:

A **CATCH** is the act of a fielder in getting secure possession in his hand or glove of a ball in flight and firmly holding it; providing he does not use his cap, protector, pocket or any other part of his uniform in getting possession. It is not a catch, however, if simultaneously or immediately following his contact with the ball, he collides with a player, or with a wall, or if he falls down, and as a result of such collision or falling, drops the ball. It is not a catch if a fielder touches a fly ball which then hits a member of the offensive team or an umpire and then is caught by another defensive player. If the fielder has made the catch and drops the ball while in the act of making a throw following the catch, the ball shall be adjudged to have been caught. In establishing the validity of the catch, the fielder shall hold the ball long enough to prove that he has complete control of the ball and that his release of the ball is voluntary and intentional.

6. Running Out of the Baseline:

Rule 7.08 (a) (1) of the SS-USA Rulebook states:

Any runner is out when --

He runs more than three feet away from his baseline to avoid being

tagged unless his action is to avoid interference with a fielder fielding a batted ball. A runner's baseline is established when the tag attempt occurs and is a straight line from the runner to the base he is attempting to reach safely.

7. Scoring decision: Error vs. Fielder's Choice

In calculating statistics for our Modified On-Base Percentage we basically include reaching base via hit, walk or error in the numerator of the calculation. Fielder's choices are not counted in the numerator. What if an error is made on a fielder's choice? For example, a runner is on first base and the batter hits a ground ball to the shortstop who throws to the second baseman for what should have been a force out. However, either the shortstop makes a bad throw or the second baseman drops the ball allowing both the runner and the batter to be safe. This is a fielder's choice and an error and should be recorded as a fielder's choice when calculating on-base percentage statistics.

8. Intentional Non-catch of Fly Ball

According to Section 1.36 of the SS-USA Rulebook and general baseball rules: If a fielder intentionally drops, or lets drop, a fair fly ball, including a line drive, which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort with first, first and second, first and third, or first, second and third bases occupied with less than two outs, then the batter is out. The ball is dead and all runners return to their previously-occupied bases. Note: The fielder does NOT have to touch the ball. Also note: This is an umpire's judgment call and cannot be appealed.

9. Infield Fly Rule Clarification

The infield fly rule does **NOT** apply to line drives. Whether a batted ball is a line drive or a fly ball is a judgment call by the umpire. The umpire must call the infield fly while the ball is in the air.

10. Batter's Box Rules & Clarifications

The batter must have both feet **on or inside the lines** of the batter's box at the start of the pitch. (Note: The mats at the Field of Dreams shall be considered the batter's box. Since there are no lines per se, the batter's feet must be entirely within the box at the start of the pitch.)

A batter is out when an **entire foot** is touching the ground **completely outside** the lines of the batter's box when he hits a fair or foul ball. (Again, since we have no lines, if an entire foot is off of the mat and on the ground, the batter shall be called out. The ball is dead and all runners return to their previous bases. Note that if a foot is in the air outside the box when the ball is hit, this is NOT an out.)

A batter is out when **any part of a foot** is touching home plate when he hits a fair or foul ball.

Following are illustrations of the batter's box rules:

This batter is NOT out of the batter's box. His toes are on the line and considered within the box.



The batter below is out of the batter's box since his entire foot or feet are not within the box. His toes are outside the box. The same would be true if he was at the back of the box and his heels were outside of the box.



The batter below is out of the box while hitting the ball. He is out and the ball is dead.



The batter below is NOT out since his entire foot is not out of the box. The heel on his front foot is not completely outside the box.

