



May 2, 2022

## NFHS Softball Weekly Rule Interpretations

For the following situations, the proper batting order is B1, B2, B3, B4, B5, B6, B7, B8 and B9.

**Situation 1:** In the first inning, B3 is due up to bat but B4 bats instead. With 2 balls and 2 strikes the defensive coach approaches the umpire claiming that the offense is batting out of order. **RULING:** The umpire should examine the lineup and determine if there is a violation. In this case, it is verified that B3 should be the proper batter and B3 comes to bat and assumes the 2 ball 2 strike count. (7-1-1)

**Situation 2:** In the second inning, B2 is due to bat but B4 bats instead and reaches first base safely. At this point, B5 comes to bat but the defense appeals prior to a pitch (legal or illegal). **RULING:** The umpire should examine the lineup and determine if there is a violation. In this case, it is verified that B2 failed to bat in their proper position, since B4 completed a turn at bat B2 is declared out for failure to bat in their proper turn, B4 is removed from base and B3 comes to bat with 1 out. (7-1-2 PENALTIES 2)

**Situation 3:** In the third inning, B4 is due up but B5 bats instead reaching first base safely. B6 comes to bat and has a 1 ball 2 strike count when the defense appeals batting out of order. **RULING:** The umpire should examine the lineup and determine if there is a violation. It was found that B5 did bat out of order but once a pitch was thrown to the next batter that infraction can no longer be appealed. Once a pitch was thrown to another batter, B5's at bat becomes legal and the batting order picks up with the name following that of the legalized improper batter, in this case B6. At the time of this appeal there were no infractions, and the offense is again batting in the proper order. B4's time at bat is skipped and they will not bat until their time in the batting order comes again. (7-1-2 PENALTIES 3 & 5)

**Situation 4:** In the fourth inning, with R1 (B1) on third base and R2 (B2) on second base with no outs, B3 is due up to bat but B8 incorrectly bats and hits a pop up that is caught by F3. B9 then comes to bat and reaches first base safely. At this point the defense appeals batting out of order. **RULING:** The umpire should examine the lineup and determine if there is a violation. It was found that B8 did bat out of order, but once a pitch was thrown to the next batter that infraction can no longer be appealed. Once a pitch was thrown to another batter, B8's at bat becomes legal and the batting order picks up with the name following that of the legalized improper batter, in this case B9. Since B9 has now completed their turn at bat B1 would be the next proper batter, however since several batters have batted out of order and B1 and B2 are still on base they miss their time at bat with no penalty and B3 would become the next proper batter. (7-1-2 PENALTIES 3, 5 & 6)

**Situation 5:** In the fifth inning, with R1 (B1) on third base and R2 (B2) on second base with no outs, B3 is due up to bat but B6 incorrectly bats and reaches first base safely. B4 then comes to bat and walks scoring R1 (B1). At this point the defense appeals batting out of order. **RULING:** The umpire should examine the lineup and determine if there is a violation. B6 did bat out of order, but once a pitch was

thrown to the next batter that infraction can no longer be appealed. Once a pitch was thrown to another batter, B6's at bat becomes legal and the batting order picks up with the name following that of the legalized improper batter, in this case B7. Although B3's failure to bat is no longer able to be appealed, at the time the defense appeals the offense is again batting out of order as B4 has just completed a turn at bat when the proper batter should have been B7. The proper ruling would be to rule B7 out for failing to bat in turn, B4's illegal bat is negated and R1 is returned to third base. B8 would then come to bat with bases loaded and one out (7-1-2 PENALTIES). **NOTE:** As the arbiter of the game an umpire is tasked with ensuring that both teams are correctly following the rules of the game. Batting out of order is an appeal play that an umpire can only rule on once asked to do so by a coach or player (2-1-1). Once that player or coach appeals batting out of order it falls on the umpire to ensure that the offensive team is batting in proper order and enforce any penalties that apply if they are not. For example in this situation if a coach were to approach the umpire and specifically appeal that "Blue B6 batted out of order". At this point, using their lineup card and either or both teams' scorebooks the umpire would recreate the recent events to determine who the proper batter should be. Although the time to appeal B6 batting out of order may have passed, during the time that the umpire and coach are examining the situation the coach would be allowed to make an additional appeal (2-1-8 states more than one appeal can be made) if an additional infraction is determined to have occurred. Although an umpire should never instruct the coach on how to make an additional appeal if the umpire determines that an infraction still exists the batting order needs to be corrected prior to resuming the game.