



April 1, 2024

NFHS Softball Weekly Rule Interpretations

Situation 1: In the third inning, the coach of Team A informs the umpire that #23 is entering the game to run for number #31 the fourth batter in the lineup; the plate umpire accepts this change and informs Team B. As Team A is coming to bat in the fourth inning Team A's coach informs the umpire that they incorrectly reported the substitution and #23 should have been entered for #12 the fifth batter in the lineup. The umpire informs the coach that the substitution as reported and recorded must remain and that #23 is in the game for #31. **RULING:** Correct ruling. Since the coach reported and the umpire recorded the substitution as it was reported the substitution cannot be changed. There was the potential of an illegal substitution or batting out of order situation in the third inning, but since it was not discovered while the illegal player was in the game (illegal substitution) or prior to a pitch to the next batter (batting out of order), there is no retroactive penalty. At this point, the team will continue with the lineup changes as reported to the plate umpire. (3-3-2, 3-3-3; 3-4-1)

Situation 2: With no outs, B1 comes to bat and hits a double. B3, instead of B2 comes to bat and strikes out. B2 now comes to bat hitting a base hit scoring R1 from second base and arriving safely on first base. Following the play the opposing team approaches the umpire pointing out that Team A batted out of order. The umpire rules that B4 is out, B2 is removed from the base and B1 is returned to second base. B5 is the next proper batter with 2 outs and B1 on second base. **RULING:** Correct ruling. Since a pitch was thrown to B2 following B3's at bat it legalized B3's at bat and B4 becomes the proper batter. Since B2's improper at bat was appealed prior to a pitch to the next batter, their time at bat is negated which would remove B2 from first base and return B1 to second base. The batter who should have batted, B4 in this case, is declared out and the next proper batter is B5. (7-1-2 Penalties)

Situation 3: Team A's batting order is B1, B2, B3, B4. B2 incorrectly bats and reaches first base safely. B1 now bats and draws a walk. B3 then comes to bat and is safe at first base advancing B2 to third and B1 to second base, resulting in bases loaded with no outs. At this point Team B appeals batting out of order. The umpire rules that B2 should have been the proper batter and they negate B3's at bat removing them from first base, returning B2 to second base and B1 to first base. B3 comes to bat again with no outs and B2 on second and B1 on first base. **RULING:** Correct ruling. Once a pitch was thrown to B3 is legalized B1's at bat and B2 is now the proper batter. Since the appeal came before a pitch to the next batter, B3's at bat is negated and they are removed from base and runners not declared out must return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch. Since several batters have batted out of order prior to discovery and the proper batter, B2, is a runner they will remain on base but are not out and miss their time at bat with no penalty. B3 will now become the proper batter. (7-1-2 Penalties)