



Baseball Rules Interpretations - 2015

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SITUATION 1: The lead-off batter comes to the plate wearing a batting helmet that has tape around and through one of the ear holes. When asked about the helmet, the batter says the helmet is in good shape with no cracks and the tape is present to hold the ear pad in place. **RULING:** The helmet is not legal. The batter must obtain a legal helmet, one that is free of cracks and damage and has no tape. (1-5-1, 4-1-3b)

SITUATION 2: In the second inning, a batter comes to the plate wearing a batting helmet that has a mirror-like glare surface to it. The plate umpire instructs the batter to obtain a legal helmet and asks the coach to remove this helmet from play. In the fifth inning, another batter for the same team comes to bat wearing a batting helmet with a mirror-like surface. The opposing coach inquires if the head coach of the offensive team should be restricted to the bench since this is the second instance of a batter wearing an illegal helmet. **RULING:** The coach of the offensive team is not restricted for this issue. The batter is instructed to replace his batting helmet with a legal one and to remove this helmet from play. (1-5-1, 4-1-3b Penalty)

SITUATION 3: An open media area was designated and properly lined before the game. The home coach has placed a video recording camera on a tripod in the media area. The opposing coach objects to the camera's placement, stating that the camera must be in the dugout. **RULING:** This is legal. Video monitoring or replay equipment must be placed in the dugout or another dead-ball area. (3-3-1, 1-2-8)

SITUATION 4: The home coach has expanded both dugouts legally and has placed a video camera in the expanded area. The opposing coach tells the plate umpire that he thought the equipment must be within the confines of the structure of the dugout. **RULING:** This is legal. Video monitoring or replay equipment must be placed in the dugout or another dead-ball area. (3-3-1, 1-2-8)

SITUATION 5: The home coach has placed a wireless camera in the stands behind the dugout which transmits its recording to a monitor in the dugout. **RULING:** This is legal. Video monitoring or replay equipment must be placed in the dugout, stands or another dead-ball area. (3-3-1, 1-2-8)

SITUATION 6: To obtain information on the opposing pitcher, the team is using a radar gun in (a) its own dugout or (b) in the stands, where it is being handled by a parent of the team. **RULING:** Legal in both (a) and (b). (3-3-1)

SITUATION 7: An assistant coach in the uniform of his team, is sitting in the stands recording the game and using a radar gun on his pitcher. **RULING:** While it is legal for a camera or radar gun to be placed in the stands, it may not be used by a coach, player, attendant or other bench personnel. The assistant coach must be in the dugout or a dead-ball area inside the confines of the field. (3-3-1i)

SITUATION 8: As the pitcher looks into the catcher for a sign, the batter is moving his bat back and forth across the plate. The batter accidentally contacts the catcher with his bat during this movement. **RULING:** This is backswing interference. The ball is immediately dead and all players are provided time to regain their positions. (2-21-5, 5-1-1n, 7-3-7 Penalty)

SITUATION 9: With a crucial play at the plate not going his way, the coach of the defensive team checks his replay equipment and sees that the call of safe was not correct. He calls time and approaches the plate umpire with his tablet to show him the call needs to be reversed. **RULING:** The plate umpire may not use videotape or replay equipment for the purpose of rendering a decision. The plate umpire should professionally inform the coach that he cannot look at the video play and request that he return to the dugout. (10-1-5)

SITUATION 10: After bringing in a substitute pitcher, the defensive head coach is still at the mound after the eighth warm-up pitch. Shall a defensive conference be declared by the plate umpire? **RULING:** To maintain a solid pace of play for the game, the coach should be on his way back to the dugout at the conclusion of the pitcher's warm-up throws. If the coach lingers, the plate umpire should ask the coach if he wants a defensive conference to now be charged and, if not, the game needs to resume. (3-4, 2015 Points of Emphasis)

SITUATION 11: After a team's player has hit a go-ahead home run, the team gathers around home plate to congratulate him. **RULING:** Since the ball is dead with the home run, the players may gather outside the dugout to congratulate their teammate. However, they must provide the plate umpire the ability to observe all the players on base touch home to verify that they scored. Preventative umpiring by the plate umpire, urging players to stay away from the plate, may assist in this need. (2015 Points of Emphasis)

SITUATION 12: In the fifth inning, the batter hits a bases-clearing home run for the fifth hit in a row by his team. As his teammates gather to congratulate him, one of them taunts the catcher with a comment on all the hits that have occurred. **RULING:** While it is acceptable for a team to celebrate and congratulate each other on such an exciting event, good sportsmanship must be maintained. The plate umpire should immediately warn and/or eject depending upon the content of the comment. (3-3-1f-2, 2015 Points of Emphasis)

SITUATION 13: Following the completion of the game, one of the umpires is still within the confines of the field. The losing coach berates him for his performance and directs some inappropriate language toward him. **RULING:** Since both umpires have not left the confines of the field following the completion of the game, the umpire still has jurisdiction over the game. The umpire may warn or eject the coach, even though the game is over. (10-1-2, 2015 Points of Emphasis)

SITUATION 14: After the umpires have left the field following the conclusion of the game, the visiting coach and some of the parents follow the umpires to their cars to state their opinions on the umpires' performance. **RULING:** The umpires are to be left alone and allowed to leave the field without being subject to poor sportsmanship. While the umpires no longer have jurisdiction to eject a player or coach, a report should be made to the state association concerning the incident. (10-1-2, 2015 Points of Emphasis)

SITUATION 15: A batter with his foot on the ground completely outside the lines of the batter's box hits the pitch which goes directly to the catcher's hands and is caught by the catcher. **RULING:** The batter is out and the ball is dead. (7-3-2)

SITUATION 16: The batter legally contacts the pitch with his bat and his lead foot then lands on the ground outside of the batter's box. The batted ball contacts the ground in front of home plate and spins back, contacting the batter's leg that is outside the batter's box. **RULING:** This is a foul ball. With one foot still in the batter's box, the batter is considered to be in the batter's box at the time he was contacted by the batted ball. (2-16-1g)

SITUATION 17: With first base empty, the batter swings and misses the pitch for strike three. The catcher is unable to catch the pitch, which rolls some distance away from home plate. The batter moves from the batter's box to first base and the plate umpire goes up the first base foul line to observe the batter advancing in the running lane. The catcher's throw hits the umpire in the back and rebounds away, allowing the batter-runner to easily advance to first base. **RULING:** The ball remains live and in play. This is not umpire interference as he did not hinder the catcher's attempt to throw. Proper use of umpire mechanics would prevent this from happening. (2-21-2)

SITUATION 18: The batted fly ball lands past first base in fair territory and rebounds into foul ground. The base umpire, mistakenly declares "Foul Ball." The plate umpire, having a great view of the ball, immediately overrules the base umpire and declares the hit to be fair. **RULING:** Since the base umpire declared it to be a foul ball and it did touch the ground, it is a foul ball and immediately dead. The plate umpire cannot overrule the call. (2-16-1e, 5-1-1h)

SITUATION 19: Caught in a rundown between home and third, R2 is returning to third base when the catcher throws the ball to the third baseman who is covering the base. The third baseman does not catch the ball, which is caught by the shortstop who is backing up the play behind third base. Everyone else, including the third baseman, believes the third baseman has the ball when he tags R2 as he slides back into third base. The third baseman shows the umpire an empty glove and is confused as R2 safely slides into third base. The offensive head coach wants the umpire to declare a fake tag and award R2 home. **RULING:** This is not a fake tag. The third baseman simply did not catch the ball. (2-22-2)

SITUATION 20: The batter hits the ball to the shortstop who bobbles the ball and throws late to first base. The batter-runner beats the throw but does not touch first base. **RULING:** The runner beats the ball on the play and is considered to be safe. The defense must appeal the missed base or tag the batter-runner before he returns to first in order to have the out declared for the missed base. (8-2-1 Penalty)