

SOFTBALL
UMPIRES QUIZ

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The ball slips out of the pitcher's hand on the backswing. Is the ball live or dead and may runners advance with liability to be put out? See question 13.

Each of the following includes a situation and possible answers. Decide which one answer is correct for NFHS fast pitch rules. (Answers on last page.)

1 While the umpires are walking the field prior to the game, they notice all of the following in a player's hair. Which one is illegal?

- Beads.
- Bobby pins.
- Bandanas.

2 All of the following are considered legal, provided they fit securely and are made of non-abrasive, soft material, except which?

- A yarmulke.
- A hijab.
- A helmet made of polyethylene foam to prevent concussions.

3 B1 lays down a bunt in front of home plate. F2 fields the ball and throws it to first base to try to retire B1. The ball hits B1 five feet in front of first base while both feet are in the air and both feet touched the chalk of the runner's lane when they last contacted the ground.

- B1 is legally inside the runner's lane and the ball remains live.
- The ball is immediately dead and B1 is ruled out for interference.
- It is a delayed-dead ball and the defense has the option of taking the result of the play or ruling B1 out for interference.

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4 In the third inning, the umpire notices a crack in the bat A1 is using and removes it from the game. In the fourth inning, A2 comes to bat and after the first pitch, the umpire notices the bat is the same bat that was removed the inning before.

- a. The umpire should remove the bat without penalty.
- b. A2 is declared out and both A2 and team A's head coach are restricted to the dugout for the remainder of the game.
- c. A2 is declared out and ejected.
- d. A team warning is issued to team A and the next offender is restricted to the dugout.

5 Which one of the following is considered illegal attire for a coach in live-ball area?

- a. Khaki pants.
- b. Black leggings.
- c. A school uniform.
- d. Blue jeans.

6 The pitcher is standing behind the pitcher's plate and has no part of either foot in contact with the pitcher's plate. The pitcher looks over to the head coach who gives a verbal signal. The pitcher then looks down at a wristband that holds a placard with numbers. The pitcher then takes a legal position on the pitcher's plate with the

hands separated and simulates taking a signal from the catcher before beginning the pitch.

- a. Legal. The pitcher may take a signal off the pitcher's plate as long as the pitcher then simulates taking a signal from the catcher once taking a legal position on the pitcher's plate with the hands separated.
- b. Illegal pitch. The pitcher may never take a signal while not in legal contact with the pitcher's plate. A ball shall be awarded to the batter.

7 How many warmup pitches maximum is a pitcher allowed between innings?

- a. Three pitches.
- b. Five pitches.
- c. Unlimited but must be completed within 60 seconds.
- d. Unlimited but must be completed within 90 seconds.

8 With one out, R1 on first and an 0-1 count on the batter, B3 hits a ground ball to the right side. F4 fields the ball, tags R1 and then throws the ball to F3 at first base ahead of B3's arrival. At the moment B3 contacted the ball, her entire left foot was touching the ground outside the batter's box.

- a. The ball is dead immediately upon contact, B3 is ruled out and R1 must

return to first base.

- b. No infraction has occurred. R1 is ruled out on the force out at second base and B3 is ruled out on the force out at first base.
- c. Delayed dead ball. The defensive team coach shall choose the result of the play or the standard effect for illegal contact, which is a strike on the batter and all baserunners must return to the base legally occupied at the time of pitch.

9 With R1 on first and R2 on second, B3 hits a ball to the fence in left field. Both R1 and R2 come around to score. R2 misses third base when coming around to score and after R1 crosses the plate, R2 returns to third to touch it and then comes home again and crosses home plate.

- a. Legal play, the defense may not appeal the missed touching of third base by R2.
- b. Once R1 scored, R2 lost the opportunity to return to touch a missed base and the defense may legally appeal the missed touching of third base by R2.

10 B1 swings and nicks the pitch with her bat. The ball hits off of F2's shoulder, pops up in the air and then is caught by F2 with her glove while the ball is directly above home plate.

- a. B1 is out on a caught fly ball.

b. Foul ball.

- c. Foul tip.
- d. The umpire should wait to determine if the ball is in fair or foul territory before making any ruling.

11 With R3 on third base and one out, F1's pitch gets by F2 and rolls away from the plate. R3 runs home and tries to score as F2 recovers the ball and throws to F1. F2's throw hits B3, who is standing on top of the plate, and R3 slides in safely.

- a. Legal play, R3's run scores.
- b. Immediate dead ball, B3 is guilty of interference and ruled out. R3 is returned to third base.
- c. Immediate dead ball, B3 is guilty of interference and R3 is ruled out.
- d. Delayed dead ball, B3 is guilty of interference and the defensive team has the option of taking the result of the play or R3 is ruled out.

12 B1 hits a ground ball to F5 and beats the throw to first base but doesn't touch the base. F3 catches the ball while in contact with first base but makes no appeal.

- a. B1 is called safe at first.
- b. B1 is called out at first.
- c. The base umpire should make no call until the batter-runner returns to first base or the defense appeals the batter-runner missed first base.

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13 With R2 on second and no outs, F1 begins her delivery to the plate. After F1 separates her hands, the ball slips out of her throwing hand and ends up behind her. R2 makes a break for third base. F1 retrieves the ball and throws it to F5, who tags R2 before she reaches third base.

- a. The ball is dead, no pitch is called and R2 is placed back on second base.
- b. The ball is live, a ball is added to B2's count and R2 is out.
- c. The ball is live, R2 is out and the count to B2 is not affected.
- d. The ball is dead, a ball is added to B2's count and R2 is placed back on second base.

14 With R1 stealing on the pitch, B2 hits a line drive to right field. R1 doesn't see to where the ball is hit but she sees F6 simulating fielding a ground ball in the hole at short. R1 slows up and stops at second base. The base umpire judges R2 would have easily reached third had she not seen F6 simulating fielding the ball.

- a. Legal play by F6. R1 remains at second.
- b. F6 is guilty of a fake tag, obstruction should be called and R2 is awarded third base.

15 With the bases loaded and two outs, B6 swings at a pitch and makes contact with F2's glove. B6 still manages to make contact with the ball and hits the ball to the fence in right field. All three runners cross the plate and B6 ends up at second base. The defense properly appeals B6 missed first base.

- a. The offensive team coach has the option to take the result of the play or accept the penalty for catcher's obstruction, which would place B6 at first base and advance all runners one base.
- b. B6 is ruled out on appeal for missing first base for the third out of the inning and no runs score. Since B6 had already passed first base and all runners advanced one base, the catcher's obstruction is canceled.
- c. Catcher's obstruction is ruled and B6 is awarded second base since that is the base she obtained on the hit. All runs score and the appeal for missing first base is not granted.

16 With R2 on second and one out, B3 takes a called third strike. R2 is stealing on the pitch and F2's throw to third base hits B3 in the helmet and ricochets out of play. B3 had one foot in the batter's box and one foot over the plate as she was heading to her dugout after striking out when she was

struck by the ball.

- a. B3 is protected since she had one foot in the batter's box. R2 is awarded home once the ball rolls out of play.
- b. B3 is protected since she had one foot in the batter's box. R2 is awarded third base once the ball rolls out of play.
- c. B3 is guilty of interference, R2 is ruled out and the half-inning is over.

17 With R1 on first base and no outs, B2 hits a sharp one-hopper to F3. R1 returns to first base, after which F3 steps on first before B2 arrives. F3 then tags R1 while she is still in contact with first base.

- a. Both R1 and B2 are out.
- b. B2 is out on the force out and R1 remains at first.
- c. R1 is out for returning to the base and B2 remains at first.
- d. The defense may choose which runner is out.

18 In the top of the first inning, the visiting team coach notifies the plate umpire that the opposing pitcher has a small stud nose ring.

- a. The pitcher must remove the ring.
- b. If the umpire deems the ring to be dangerous, the pitcher must remove the ring.
- c. The rulebook does not have any provision against jewelry and the pitcher may continue to wear the ring.

19 With R1 on first and one out, B3 bunts the ball down the first-base line. F3 fields the ball and as she rises to tag B3, B3 raises her arms and deliberately and flagrantly runs over F3. F3 drops the ball.

- a. The ball is live and runners may advance with liability to be put out.
- b. B3 is out and the ball remains live.
- c. The ball is immediately dead, B3 is ruled out and ejected and R1 must return to the last base touched at the time of the collision.

20 B1 hits a fly ball near the out-of-play fence in right field. F7 races over to the fence and reaches into dead-ball territory to try to catch the ball. A spectator near the fence reaches up and touches the ball before it can enter F7's outstretched glove. The spectator and the ball are completely in dead-ball territory.

- a. Foul ball.
- b. Spectator interference, the batter is ruled out.

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ANSWERS

1

c
(3-2-5b)

2

c
(3-2-5c)

3

a
(8-2-6)

4

b
(3-6-21 & Penalty)

5

d
(3-5-3)

6

a
(6-1b, 2022 Points of Emphasis)

7

b
(6-4-10)

8

a
(7-4-8 & Penalty)

9

b
(8-3-9)

10

b
(2-25, 5-1-1d-2)

11

b
(7-4-4 Pen.)

12

a
(2-1-10)

13

b
(6-2-6 Eff.)

14

a
(2-21)

15

b
(8-1-1d Eff. 2, 9-1-1 Exc. a, d)

16

c
(8-6-16c Pen.)

17

b
(2-24-2, 8-2-2)

18

a
(3-2-12)

19

c
(8-6-14 Pen.)

20

a
(2-22-4, 2-25, 8-2-12)
