



## **2018 and 2019 NCAA Softball Official Rules Interpretations, Clarifications and Situations**

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### **COLLISION AFTER OBSTRUCTION:**

If an obstructed runner crashes into a defensive player holding the ball, the crash takes precedence over the obstruction. The runner cannot simply run into the defensive player and not make an attempt to slide or go around the player. The runner must follow the guidelines in Rule 12.13 Collisions.

**Rule 12.13.2 To prevent a deliberate crash ruling**, the runner can slide, jump over the top of the defender holding the ball, go around the defender or return to the previous base touched.

Excerpt from **Rule 12.13 EFFECT**: The ball is dead...If an obstructed runner deliberately crashes into a fielder holding the ball, the obstruction call will be ignored, and the runner will be called out. If the act is determined to be flagrant, the offender will be ejected without warning. (Behavioral ejection; see Rule 13.2.1.)

In addition, since a crash ruling is considered a form of interference, other runners must return to the base they occupied at the time of the crash (interference).

**Rule 12.17.2.5** A runner may not remain on her feet and deliberately, with great force, crash into a defensive player who is holding the ball and waiting to apply a tag.

Ruling: If a runner is obstructed by a fielder **without the ball** (e.g. when the fielder is blocking the whole base/plate or base path) but the runner collides **flagrantly** with that fielder, the runner is ruled **safe** on the obstruction but she is **ejected**.

Excerpt from **Rule 9.5.3 EFFECT**: ...If the runner collides flagrantly, the ball is dead, and although the runner is declared safe on the obstruction call, she is ejected. (Behavioral ejection; see Rule 13.2.1.)

If you judge that this contact is **incidental or unavoidable**, the runner is ruled safe on the obstruction and she is not ejected.

If an obstructed runner subsequently interferes with a defensive player's reasonable opportunity to make a play, interference is ruled.

**Rule 9.5.7** An obstructed runner may not be called out between the two bases where she was obstructed unless one of the following occurs:

**Rule 9.5.7.3** The obstructed runner commits an act of **interference**.

**Rule 9.5.11** Should an act of interference occur after any obstruction, **enforcement of the interference effect takes precedence** provided both violations involve the same runner.

For example, a runner is obstructed by the first baseman on a batted ball, but the batted ball strikes the runner in front of the second baseman who has a reasonable opportunity to make a play, or a runner is obstructed during a rundown but she deliberately interferes with a thrown ball.



Do not confuse this rule with the incidental or unavoidable contact on obstruction as noted above. If a defensive player is blocking the whole base/plate or base path without the ball, but incidental contact occurs while she is attempting to catch a thrown ball, this would still be obstruction, not interference.

### **PUSHING RUNNER WHILE IN POSSESSION OF THE BALL:**

**Question:** Play at the plate. Runner coming from third on a suicide squeeze. As the catcher reaches down for the ball, she realizes she cannot make the tag in time. She picks up the ball in her bare hand, then shoves the runner with her glove to prevent her from touching the plate. The resulting collision forces both the catcher and the runner to the ground. It is now a scramble to get back to the plate.

**Ruling:** The rule support for this situation is Rule 9.5.3 Fielder Obstruction--even with the catcher having possession of the ball. I realize this rule says “push a runner off the base she possesses”, but the spirit and intent of this rule would also apply on the situation described.

**Rule 9.5.3.9** A fielder shall not use force to push a runner off the base she possesses in order to put her out. (See Rule 9.5.5.2 if excessive force is used.)

**EFFECT**—(9.5.3.7 to 9.5.3.10)—Delayed dead ball is signaled. The umpire shall issue a warning to the offending individual and notify her coach. Subsequent violation of the same rule by the same individual shall result in a one-base award to the obstructed base runner and each other base runner forced to advance. The awards shall be to the base beyond the base where obstruction occurred unless the base runner safely advances farther on her own, in which case no award is given.

If, in your judgment, you deem this contact to be flagrant, you could apply Rule 9.5.5.

### **Rule 9.5.5 Flagrant Player Obstruction**

**Rule 9.5.5.1** The fielder shall not at any time flagrantly (with excessive force) impede the batter, batter-runner or base runner.

**Rule 9.5.5.2** The fielder shall not attempt to put out a runner occupying a base by using excessive force to push her off the occupied base.

**EFFECT**—(9.5.5.1 and 9.5.5.2)—Delayed dead ball is signaled. The appropriate obstruction effect is applied, and in addition, the offender shall be ejected without warning. (Behavioral ejection; see Rule 13.2.1.)

### **WIPING SUBSTANCE OFF BALL:**

Most pitchers will wipe their pitching hand on their uniform pants after using a rosin bag or touching the dirt. She is not restricted to using her pants to wipe the residue off. She can touch another part of her uniform or her body.

**Rule 10.13.1** Under the supervision and within view of the umpire, a resin (a drying agent) may be used on the pitcher’s hand/fingers. Any substance (including resin, dirt or saliva) applied to the pitcher’s hands and fingers must be wiped off if it would transfer to the ball.



### **DP/FLEX:**

The DP and Flex are charged with a substitution when they are not doing what they are designed to in the lineup. When the DP is out of the batting order and the Flex is not playing defense, they will be charged with a substitution.

**Rule 8.2.4** The player(s) in the DP spot is charged with a substitution only when she is withdrawn from the batting order and the player(s) in the flex spot is charged with a substitution only when she is no longer listed as playing defense.

### **BAT LIST:**

#### **5.2 Inspection of Bats**

5.2.1 Upon arrival to the field, each coach shall:

a. provide a new, printed copy of the current NCAA Approved Softball Bat List for each day of competition (only page(s) that lists the bats available for play need to be printed);

**Bat list should not be laminated.** The dry erase marker writing can be easily smudged or erased as the document is handled.