

## **SECTION 5 – Appeals and Protests**

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### **Appeals – SECTION 5.1.**

- a. The umpire does not make a ruling on an appeal play until asked to do so by a coach or player.
- b. There is no appeal or penalty for submitting an inaccurate line-up card, simply correct the error and continue play.
- c. The following may be appealed:
  1. Batting out of order.
  2. Missing a base.
  3. Leaving a base on a caught fly ball before the ball is first touched.
  4. Attempting to advance to second base after making the turn at first base.
- d. A runner is assumed safe until put out. If a proper appeal is not made, the runner is safe.
  1. If a runner misses home plate and the catcher misses the tag, the umpire should hesitate slightly. If no tag is made, the umpire should declare the runner safe. If an appeal play is then made by tagging either the runner or home plate, the umpire should then make a decision of the appeal.
  2. If a runner passes first base before the throw arrives, they are considered to have touched the base unless an appeal play is made. The appeal must be made before the runner returns to first.
- e. Appeals may be made when the ball is live (in play) or dead (out of play).
  1. A **live-ball appeal** is made by touching the base the runner missed or left too soon on a caught fly ball, or by tagging the runner who committed the violation, provided they are still on the playing field. Runners may advance during the live-ball appeal play. Each runner may leave their base when (a) the pitcher no longer has possession of the ball within the pitcher's circle, or (b) the pitcher makes a play on any runner.
  2. A **dead-ball appeal** is made verbally. Once the ball has been returned to the infield and time has been called, any infielder (including the pitcher or catcher), with or without the ball, may ask the umpire to make a decision on a runner missing a base or leaving a base too soon on a caught fly ball. The administering umpire whose responsibility it was to observe the base and runner steps forward and makes the safe or out call. If the appeal is directed toward the wrong umpire, that umpire should refer the question to the responsible umpire. The responsible umpire should then step forward and make the call. If timeout is re-

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requested for an appeal, the umpire should grant it. No runner may leave their base during this period as the ball remains dead until the next pitch.

Notes:

1. *If the ball goes out of play, the dead-ball appeal cannot be made until the umpire places a new ball into the game.*
2. *If the pitcher has possession of the ball and is in contact with the pitching plate when making a verbal appeal, no illegal pitch is called.*
3. *If “Play ball” has been declared by the umpire and the pitcher then requests and appeal, the umpire would again call “Time/Timeout” and allow the appeal process.*

c An appeal must be made:

- 1) Before the next pitch, whether legal or illegal.
- 2) Before the pitcher and all infielders have clearly vacated their normal fielding positions and have left fair territory.
- 3) Before the umpires leave the field of play (on the last play of the game). If any situation arises that could lead to an appeal by the defense on the last play of the game, umpires should wait until all defensive infielders have crossed the foul line.

*Note: If teams line up for high fives, there is little chance for an appeal even if the defensive infielders have not crossed the foul line; umpires can leave the game at this point. No appeal can be made once the umpires have left the field.*

d More than one appeal play may be made, but guessing games should not be allowed.

**EXAMPLE:** The runner misses second base by a step, but just touches the corner of third base. Even though an appeal is made at third (the umpire called the runner safe), an appeal may be made at second on the same runner.

e A runner may not return to touch a missed base or one left too soon on a caught fly ball if:

- 1) She has left the field of play.
- 2) A following runner has scored.
- 3) They are standing on a base beyond the base they left too soon and “Time/Timeout” has been called by the umpire, or the ball becomes dead.

*Note: If the runner is between any two bases and attempting to return to the base left too soon, they can continue.*

f With regard to the scoring of runs:

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- 1) If there are two outs before the appeal on a runner, the appeal becoming the third out, no runners following the appealed out shall score, and if the appeal is a force out, no runners preceding or following the appealed out shall score.

Notes:

- a) *If a forced runner, after touching the next base, retreats for any reason toward the base they had last occupied, the force play is reinstated and they may again be put out if the defense tags the base to which they were forced.*
  - b) *There cannot be a force out if the batter does not become a batter-runner or runner.*
- 2) If a runner leaves a base too soon on a caught fly ball and returns in an attempt to retag, this is considered a time play and not a force out. If the appeal is the third out, all runs scored by runners in advance of the appealed runner and scored ahead of the legal appeal would count.
  - 3) An appeal may be made after the third out in order to nullify a run as long as it is made properly.

**EXAMPLE:** With one out and runners on first and third, the batter hits a fly ball that is caught. Each runner leaves their base before the caught ball is touched. An appeal is made at first base for the third out. The defensive team then makes an appeal at third base before the infielders leave the infield. The runner on third then will be declared out also, and the run will not count.

**Note – Protests will not be received or considered if they are based solely on a decision involving the accuracy of judgment of an umpire.**

- g. The coach shall immediately (before the next pitch) notify the plate umpire of his/her intent to protest. If the game ends (legal contest) in a situation that can be protested, the offended team must immediately inform the umpire of its intent to protest. The plate umpire shall in turn notify the opposing head coach, official scorer and public-address announcer. **Exception:** protest may be made at any time if the protest involved participation by an ineligible player.
- h. The official scorekeeper, plate umpire and opposing coaches shall each make note of the information, details and conditions surrounding the decision to protest. If the protest occurs in a tournament, which has a process for on-site protest resolution, the protest shall be ruled on before play resumes. In all other circumstances, play shall be resumed from the point of protest.
- i. The written protest should contain all relevant information, including:

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- 1) The opponent, date, time and place of the game.
- 2) The names of the umpires and official scorekeeper.
- 3) The rule and section of the official rules or a copy of the ground rule under which the protest is made.
- 4) The essential facts, details and conditions pertinent to the protested decision.
- h. The head coach must file the written protest within a reasonable time. In the absence of a tournament rule establishing a shorter time limit for filing protest, protest shall be considered filed in a reasonable amount of time if it is within 72 hours of the event.
- i. The decision rendered on a protested game must result in one of the following:
  - 1) The protest is considered to be invalid and the game score stands as played.
  - 2) The protest is considered valid, the decision will be corrected, and the game shall be replayed from the point at which the incorrect decision was made.
  - 3) The protest for participation by an ineligible player is determined to be valid, and the offending team shall forfeit the game(s) played.
- j. When protest is upheld and a game is rescheduled:
  - 1) The same lineup card must be used when the game is resumed and substitutions may be placed legally into the lineups at this time.
  - 2) If a player was ejected in the original game after the protest was filed, that player may legally play in the rescheduled game because she was legally in the game at the time of the protest, unless the ejection also drew suspension for unsportsmanlike conduct.