



Summary of 2015 Rule Changes and Comments

Rule 1, Sec 86; new entry for definition of Strike Mat (SP Only)

The strike mat shall be a 2'(0.61m) x 3'(0.91m) rubber mat with a "v" shaped cutout 17" across the top and 12" on the other two sides centered 3½" from the edges of the mat. This mat shall be placed behind the plate so the "v" cutout fits around the back point of the plate.

***Comment:** Providing a formal definition for the mat which is widely used in several provinces. Various existing rules have also been amended to reflect the possible use of the mat, some of which are included in this document.*

Rule 3, Sec 4 c. - d. & EFFECT (FP Only)

Replace current c. and d. with the following and amend EFFECT reference:

c. The pitcher's glove may be any combination of colours, providing none of the colours (including the lacing) are the colour of the ball. Gloves worn by any player other than the pitcher may be any combination of colours.

***Comment:** Previous versions referenced white rather than simply the 'colour of the ball'. New wording is more appropriate in reflecting the use of optic yellow.*

Rule 3, Sec 5 g. (FP Only)

U16 AND UNDER YOUTH/MINOR DIVISION PLAYERS AND COACHES

***Comment:** Change to allow U18 players to wear metal cleats as many are playing in adult leagues where they are typically worn.*

Rule 3, Sec 10 (SP & FP)

No exposed items (including jewellery) judged by the umpire to be distracting to opposing players may be worn or displayed. The umpire shall require the item to be removed or covered. Medical alert bracelets and/or necklaces, if deemed to be distracting, shall be

required to be taped to the body in such a manner that the medical alert information is visible.

Comment: *Issues of safety with exposed jewellery and other items are now the responsibility of the player and, if a minor player, his/her coach. Umpires shall only address jewellery if it is distracting to the opposing players (e.g. several dangling chains worn by a pitcher). Note that Effect (Sec 10) remains in force and that any player who refuses to remove distracting jewellery after being asked to do so by an umpire will not be permitted to play.*

Rule 4, Sec 6 (SP Only)

RE-ENTRY

- a. Any player may be substituted for or replaced and re-entered once, provided the players occupy their same batting position in the batting order.
- b. The starting player and their substitute may not be in the line-up at the same time.
- c. If a player re-enters the game a second time or a player re-enters the game in a position in the batting order other than their original starting or substitute position, this is treated as an illegal re-entry.

EXCEPTION:

- 1. When the player is used as a replacement player.
- 2. (MINOR ONLY) When all players have been re-entered by a team in a game, the re-entry and substitution rules are waived in the event of an injury.
 - a. The player entering the game shall assume the batting position of the injured player and/or ill player.
 - b. The injured player may not return to the game.

EFFECT – Sec. 6a-c:

- 1. Violation of the re-entry rule is handled as an appeal, which may be made at any time while the illegal re-entered player is in the game.
- 2. Violation of the re-entry rule is treated as an illegal player.
- 3. The penalty for an illegal re-entry is the ejection of both the manager/coach (whose name appears on the line-up card) and the illegally re-entered player.
- 4. The name of the new coach who is to assume responsibility for the team must be provided to the umpire.

NOTE: The umpire can prevent an illegal re-entry up until the next pitch but failure to do so does not alter any subsequent penalties.

Comment: *Two major points of note in this rule change. The **first** is what is sometimes known as the double re-entry rule. It introduces the ability to re-enter substitutes, i.e. they can now enter the game, be substituted for, and subsequently re-enter once. This will allow more flexibility for coaches in utilizing their bench. The **second** is the fact that violation of the re-entry rule is now **always** treated as an illegal player, i.e. it will also violate illegal (or unannounced) substitute rules. Several related rules and definitions have also been amended to reflect these changes.*

Rule 5, Sec 8 a. (SP Only)

Introduce rule 5 section 8 a. NOTE to read:

Only home plate can be used to score a run or make a force out, not the strike mat. The runner is out on an appeal if they only make contact with the strike mat.

***Comment:** With the introduction of the strike mat, clarification was required for scoring runs and force outs.*

Rule M6 (FP Only)

(FAST PITCH ONLY: All Male Categories U16 and above)

***Comment:** This will allow male players to prepare for the change in pitching rules at a younger age. It also brings us closer to ISF standards where players of all ages use this rule. The adoption of this change also resulted in an amendment to the FP rule 6 header to change U16 to U14.*

Rule 7, Sec 1 b. (SP Only)

Shall take a position within the lines of either of the on deck circles.

***Comment:** On deck batter will now have the option of using either on deck circle to warm up. Aligned with the FP rule intended to provide a safer game environment.*

Rule 7, Sec 4 a. (SP Only)

When any part of a legally pitched ball enters the strike zone before touching the ground and the batter does not swing or, if using a strike mat, when any part of a legally pitched ball lands on the strike mat and the batter does not swing.

***Comment:** With the introduction of the strike mat, clarification was required for what constituted a strike.*

Rule 7, Sec 4 b. (SP Only)

No change in text however it now becomes rule 7 section 4 a. NOTE.

***Comment:** With the introduction of the strike mat, clarification was required for what constituted a strike.*

Rule 7, Sec 5 a. 1) (SP Only)

Does not enter the strike zone, or if using a strike mat, does not land on the strike mat; or

***Comment:** With the introduction of the strike mat, clarification was required for what constituted a ball.*

Rule 7, Sec 6 e. (SP Only)

When his foot is completely outside the lines of the batter's box and touching the ground, or any part of a foot is touching the strike mat or home plate when he hits the ball fair or foul.

***Comment:** With the introduction of the strike mat, clarification was required for what constituted a legally batted ball.*

Rule 8, Sec 9 c. 1 (SP Only)

Introduce rule 8 section 9 c. 1) NOTE to read:

A fielder must touch home plate, not the strike mat, to make a force play on a runner.

***Comment:** With the introduction of the strike mat, clarification was required for what constituted a force play at home plate.*

Rule 8, Sec 9 i. 2) (SP Only)

Introduce rule 8 section 9 i. 2) NOTE to read:

Runners must touch home plate, not the strike mat, to score a run. The runner is out on an appeal if they only make contact with the strike mat.

***Comment:** With the introduction of the strike mat, clarification was required for what constituted a run scored.*

Rule 8, Sec 9 y. EFFECT 2. (SP) and Rule 8, Sec 9 x. EFFECT 2. (FP)

When properly appealed, each runner discovered to have switched positions on the bases shall be declared out (even if they had scored) and the Head Coach shall be ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct. The order of outs shall be determined by the location of the runners immediately after the switch. The runner who switched bases and is closest to home plate after the switch shall be called out first. The next runner who switched bases and is next closest to home shall be called out next and so on. Any runs scored by the offending runner(s) shall be nullified.

***Comment:** Two major points of note in this rule change. The **first** is the fact that a successful appeal will result in the ejection of the Head Coach as he is responsible for*

the violation. The **second** is the clarification of the order of the outs resulting from a successful appeal.

Note: Should a 'switching runners' appeal result in the 3rd or last out in the inning, we must consider the batting order in determining runs scored. For example:

Case: Adams on 3B, Jones on 2B, Smith on 1B, with one out. The offensive coach calls a time out, bringing the three runners together. After the conference, Smith goes to 3B and Adams goes to 1B. On the next pitch B4 hits a single, Smith and Jones score, and Adams is now on 3B again. The defense requests time and appeals to the umpire that the offense switched runners. The umpire rules Smith and Adams out due to the switch and ejects the coach. He removes the run scored by Smith, **and also removes the run scored by Jones.**

Ruling: Even though Jones scored ahead of Adams, Adams preceded Jones in the batting order and as per Rule 5, section 8 b. 4), no run scores if the last out of the inning is the result of a preceding runner being declared out.



2015 Housekeeping Changes to Note

Run Ahead Rule (SP and FP)

To align with ISF terminology, the term **Mercy Rule** has been changed to Run Ahead Rule.

Temporary Runner (FP Only)

To align with ISF terminology and to eliminate confusion with the Replacement Player, the term **Replacement Runner** has been changed to ***Temporary Runner***.

Rule 7, Sec 6 a. (SP and FP)

When a batter enters the batter's box with, or is discovered using, an altered bat or a bat not approved for use by the ASA or ISF.

Comment: *This serves to clarify the penalty for using what we now consider to be a non-approved bat.*