

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE
HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS



2023 Softball Comments On The Rules

1-4-1 - Removes the number of color restrictions on a glove, including laces and seams, and does not allow any part of the glove to match the color of the ball. Manufacturers are producing more multi-colored gloves, and as long as one of those colors is not the color of the ball, they should be permitted for use. This change allows for NFHS rules to be less restrictive, providing more options. The glove still cannot have an optic-colored marking which gives the appearance of the ball or is judged to be distracting to the umpire.

2-20-1g (new) - This allows the definition of a fair ball to reflect what umpires have always enforced as part of the definition of a fair ball. It is intended to mirror the definition of a foul ball. (2-25-1e)

3-2-12, 3-6-11 - Removes the language prohibiting jewelry, which places the softball rules in line with other NFHS sports that do not have the restriction. These sports have no documented data of an increased risk for injury while wearing jewelry. With this change, medical alert and religious medals are no longer a concern. Umpires still have the authority to rule on anything that is considered a distraction or increases risk to any player.

4-2-1 – Allows for all runs to be counted when a fair batted ball clears the home run fence to end the game. All runs scored by virtue of the home run will be included in individual and team statistics.

8-2-7 – This clarifies batter-runner interference on a fly ball over foul territory. This has always been the enforcement but was not listed in the section covering batter-runner. The language is consistent with the rule covering interference on an initial play on a fair-batted ball and aligns with Rule 8-6-10.

EDITORIALS

2-25-1e – Clearly defines that any offensive player can commit interference on a batted ball while over foul territory. This has always been the enforcement, but by changing the word from batter to offensive player, it makes the rule more inclusive and easily interpreted.

7-4-1 – This better defines spectator interference on a fair or foul fly ball. The previous rule language was confusing on a fly ball when spectator interference prevented the defense from catching the ball.