

# Iowa High School Baseball Thoughts & Tips

## - *by Ira Blue*

A myth is a widely held belief that is actually false. We got a few of those umpires hear from fans and coaches every night. Let's run some of them up the flagpole to remind ourselves we're smarter about the rules than they are.

### **1. The hands are part of the bat.**

My mentor used to say if that was true the bat would come with the hands when you bought it at the sporting goods store. Rule 5-1-1-a is pretty clear. A pitch touches a batter or the batter's clothing it's immediately dead. It doesn't say not including his hands. Kill it. Now we have a few seconds to decide what we are going to do with him. Did he swing? It's a strike and he stays, even if his forearm/hands hit of the baseball went bounding into the infield. Did he permit a pitched ball to touch him (Rule 7-3-4) call it a ball or strike and he stays. Everything else we send him to first, preferably with our left hand.

### **2. The base is a sanctuary.**

The heck it is. Rule 8-4-2-k you get hit by a fair batted ball before it touches an infielder, the ball is dead and you're out. It doesn't say unless you're standing on a base. We cut you some slack on an infield fly rule ball hitting you while on the base but if you're off you're out and so is the batter on the infield fly. I'm still waiting with joyful anticipation to ever get to call that double play.

### **3. Tie goes to the runner.**

They've never read Rule 8-1-2-Note. He's got to reach the base BEFORE the tag or force out. I'm glad we did play tie to the runner in our sandlot games as kids or Ira would have never gotten on.

### **4. Two runners on a base is an automatic out.**

Nope. You better start tagging them and hope we know which one to bang out. Reread 8-2-8-a because not many coaches have. It's the following runner who is out unless it's force out then it's the lead. It also has nothing to do with who got there first because the lead runner is entitled to that base until he touches the next base.

### **5. The batter-runner can be tagged out if he over runs first base and turns left.**

Try 8-2-7. He can return in any direction as long as he does not attempt or feint an advance to second. Attempt or feint is judgment of course but a tip an MLB clinician once said was to think of it like a traveling call in hoops. Big step towards second...nothing...picks up his pivot foot...maybe an attempt.

### **6. The runner is out if the base coach touches him.**

I'm all for that myth because it gets us umpires another out but 3-2-2 and 8-4-2-s both say it must be actual physical assistance. Bang him out if you see it but leave the ball live.

That's 6 big ones and that's enough because this flagpole only holds 6.

I read an MLB article that listed 40 myths. I know there are more. The coach last night said I had a good strike zone. Lucky for me, because the 2 previous nights those coaches would have called that a myth for sure.

*Have a good one, guys!*