**INTERFERENCE**

**They say that softball can quickly become a contact sport because of the small diamond. Players will run into their opponents or run their mouths. In either case, that’s interference. When they interfere, it will cost the offense in the form of an out, and sometimes two outs!**

**In almost all cases, interference causes the ball to become dead immediately when it occurs. So when an offensive player illegally impedes, hinders or confuses any fielder (physically or verbally); or when a runner creates malicious contact with any fielder with or without the ball, in or out of the baseline, the umpire will declare a dead ball, point at the guilty baserunner and rule that runner out.**

# YES, IT IS INTERFERENCE...

**BY THE BATTER**

– Intentionally interfering with the catcher.

– Leaning over the plate and getting in the catcher’s way, or any action or throw around the plate.

– In the way in a crowded plate area.

– Switching batter’s boxes when the pitcher is in position and ready to pitch.

– Any contact by the batter while the batter is out of the box.

**BY THE RUNNER**

– A fielder attempting to field a fly ball over foul territory.

– A fielder attempting to throw the ball.

– A runner is hit with a batted ball before it passes an infielder (other than the pitcher).

– A runner has a right to stand on a base as long she doesn’t intentionally interfere with a fielder. If so, it is interference.

– If a runner is off the base and is struck by a declared infield fly, both the runner and batter are declared out.

– If two runners are struck by the same fair ball, only the first runner is declared out.

– If a runner interferes with a fielder attempting a double play, the umpire may declare two runners out — the interfering runner and runner closest to the plate.

## DID YOU KNOW?

If a coach physically assists a runner during playing action, such as pushing her toward the plate, that’s a no-no, but not a reason for the umpire to stop the game. The runner is out and the ball is in play. But merely touching the runner (such as a high five) is not in violation of the rule.

### STOP IT

Runners can’t advance after an umpire calls interference. They must return to the bases last legally occupied at the time of the infraction.