

BULLETIN #13
RUNNER PASSING A PRECEDING RUNNER
RULE INTERPRETATION
RULE 5.10 .3 a) vi)

In the 2014–2017 Playing Rules, Rule 8 Section 9 stated “A runner is out f) when he physically passes a preceding runner before that runner has been called out. EFFECT Sec 9f. The ball remains in play. EXCEPTION: When the runner passes a preceding runner during a dead ball play the ball will remain dead. If the ball becomes a foul ball or an uncaught fly foul ball, the runner who passes is not out.

This was interpreted as a runner who passed a preceding runner on an out-of-the park home run was to be called out, even though this is a dead ball situation.

In the transition to the 2018–2021 Playing Rules, the rule was written as RULE 5.10.3 Runners are out a) vi) “they physically pass a preceding runner before that runner has been called out. The ball remains alive. The runner is not out if the ball becomes a foul ball or an uncaught fly foul ball or if a runner passes a preceding runner on a dead ball play. The ball remains dead.”

Under this wording a runner passing a preceding runner on an out-of-the park home run would not be called out.

While this was not introduced as a specific rule change at the 2017 Rules Congress, the 2018–2021 Playing Rules were adopted by Congress.

Because this is a debatable issue, the following interpretation will be in effect for the 2018-2021 Playing rules:

In relation to Rule 5.10.3 a) vi) A runner who passes a preceding runner during an out-of-the park home run will not be called out, provided the correct order of touching bases is re-established prior to the passing runner touching the next base. . The ball remains dead.

In order to clearly state the rule, the following rule change proposal will be made to the 2022 – 2025 Playing Rules:

*“5.10.3 a) vi) they physically pass a preceding runner before that runner has been called out. Exceptions: When the runner passes a preceding runner on a declared foul ball, an uncaught fly foul ball, **an out of the park home run** or an award of bases, the ball remains dead and the runner is not out. A runner who passes a preceding runner during an out of the park home run, **must re-establish the running order prior to the passing runner touching the next base.** Runners must meet all base running responsibilities including awarded bases being touched in legal order*