# Teeball Common Plays – What is the Call?

## Running Bases in Reverse Order

Two base runners have passed 3rd base and are heading home, the catcher then receives the ball and chases both runners back. The back runner runs across the diamond directly to 2nd base without going back through 3rd base. Would you call that runner out?

ANSWER: Yes. If a runner needs to retreat back more than one base, they must do so in reverse order. Rule 17.7 mentions this – ie. If a runner is between 3rd and home, and needs to go back to 2nd, they must reverse and touch 3rd base before heading back to 2nd.

## Control of the Ball

Forced runner running to 2nd, throw comes along the ground towards the base, the fielder on 2nd, drops pretty much onto his belly and with one foot on the base, while stretched out, puts his hand on the ball on the ground. His hand was gripping the stationary ball but he never actually lifted the ball off the ground. This was before the runner had reached the base. Once the runner arrived, I called “safe”.

Re-reading rule 17.8(ii) – “Tagging a base consists of touching the base with any part of the body whilst in control of the ball.” I am now thinking that I was probably a bit harsh on the fielder. Your thoughts?

ANSWER: By the letter of the law you were perfectly correct a fielder with a mitt or hand over top of a ball on the ground is not in control of the ball. The ball should be **in** the hand or mitt.

## Over Running a Base

Runner on 1st, batter hits a ground ball. The runner from first makes it to 2nd base but over runs the base. Then while he was off the base, and before he returns, the fielder with the ball stands on the base. Should that be out? The runner was forced to second.

ANSWER: A good question and an easy one for any umpire to get wrong. Once the runner touches 2nd base, the force is removed and they have ‘made it’ to the next base. If the runner then decides to step off the base either to ‘have a look at 3rd’ or by accidently over running the base, as the force is removed, the runner would need to be tagged while off base.

So assuming the runner was not tagged, then safe on 2nd.

## When do you call time?

This is probably the most contentious rule in our game. There is no black and white in the rule as there are two elements you require before “Time” can be called and are relevant to each individual game.

The two elements are:

* **Held by any player in an infield position –** means securely in the possession of the player, within the area occupied by players other than the orthodox left, centre and right field. (It doesn’t mean inside the diamond). The distance out from the infield varies with age groups for instance an U7s outfield is much closer that and U11s outfield, you need to keep it relevant to where the infielders are fielding.
* **Approximately in contact with a base** – means at the base, a few steps short of the base, or a few steps past the base. Once again keep this relevant to the size of the players, for instance an U7s have a smaller step size than U11s. Run downs and pick-offs can, and do, still occur when this rule is correctly applied because ALL RUNNERS must be approximately in contact with a base.

Correct interpretations of the “TIME” call speeds the game and creates less confusion. The game generally only lasts an hour. “TIME” calls at the correct moment will keep the game flowing, and make the hour more fulfilling for all, compared with the stand-offs which can sometimes result from slow calls. The most prevalent question asked at umpire clinics when discussing this rule is, “when a runner is half way up the line and time is called where do I send them forward or back?” The simple answer is YOU SHOULD NOT HAVE CALLED TIME as half way up the line is certainly not in close proximity to a base.