

Southeastern Conference Baseball Tournament

Saturday, May 25, 2024

Hoover, Alabama, USA

Hoover Metropolitan Stadium



Umpire

Paul Guillie

Postgame Press Conference

LSU 12, South Carolina 11

PAUL GUILLIE: Obviously a very exciting game and a very complex play. It's not something we see very common, but the rule is specific if you haven't had a chance to hear what went on over here. If you do have a rule book, if you go to Rule 8 and baserunning, section 3.p., it says that on an attempted squeeze play or a steal of home plate, the catcher steps on or in front of home plate without possession of the ball or touches the batter or the bat (indiscernible), and the catcher with interference, hence the reason for the balk call scores the runner from third; the interference on the catcher moves the batter to first base.

So all of that is 100 percent by the rule book. The ball becomes dead. The batter shall be awarded first base on the interference. The run scores, and the other runners, which is a runner on first, advances to second base.

By rule, a lot of questions. Is the play reviewable? The play is not reviewable under the current play chart that we have. It's not one of our 14 plays.

Is the play protestable? Which you saw the school that was involved wanted to protest the situation. The call of balk and interference is a judgment call. That is not a protestable play.

The award of home plate and the interpretation of the rule on putting the batter on first would be a protestable play. So we decided to make sure that we did not continue the game under protest to solve the rules-related issue in the interpretation of the rule.

Again, I'll reiterate, the play is a judgment play, and that is not a protestable type situation.

Q. Paul, is it a catcher box issue here or actual contact with the hitter?

PAUL GUILLIE: It's not a catcher's box situation. It's the catcher being on or in front of home plate and not having possession of the ball. That's the issue. It's not a catcher's box situation because our rule does allow the catcher to have one foot out of the box, and he can leave the box -- let's say we had a potential steal where we have a pitch-out. He can leave the box at the time of the release.

This particular play has specific guidelines in it of what they can and cannot do.

Q. Does it change things if the pitcher steps off before he throws to the plate?

PAUL GUILLIE: Yes, then it's not a pitch, it's a play, and then he would be allowed -- we don't have a pitch in that situation, so once he steps off, the pitch is not a hittable pitch so it doesn't become interference on the batter, and the catcher is not under the same restrictions because he can't balk because he stepped off.

Q. Was there a microphone that the umpires had access to and was there a way that we could have talked to the fans or explained what happened in real time?

PAUL GUILLIE: That question did come up, but because we had a judgment play and the crew getting together to get the call right, then we had a rule interpretation, then we had a question about a review process, then we also had somebody -- then we had the play appealed on whether or not the runner touched home plate.

We had so many things going on, the decision was made that we felt like we would have probably confused people more than trying to come over a microphone in this type of environment and explain it, and we elected to take the time to do it here.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports.

