

Hey, Blue! - That Player Has to Slide!



We will explain and define whether, or not, a player is required to slide. The situation described below is applicable in all levels of Little League Baseball® and Little League Softball®.

Situation:

In the bottom of the second inning, with runners on second and third base, the batter hits a ball to shallow left field. The left fielder is unable to make the catch. The runner from third base scores easily, and the runner from second base runs through the third base coach's "Stop" sign and attempts to score. By this time, the shortstop has received the ball and the catcher is yelling "home, home." As the ball is thrown to home plate, the catcher moves in front of the plate and prepares to make a play on the runner. As the ball comes in, the runner ducks his head to avoid being hit with ball, but does not attempt to slide. As the runner crosses home plate, he bumps the catcher with his shoulder. The defensive coach immediately begins to admonish the umpire for failing to call the runner out for not sliding. Is the manager correct to claim that the runner should be "automatically" out for not sliding?

Explanation:

To explain the rule, we reference Rule 7.08 (a) (3) in the 2015 Little League Baseball® and Little League Softball® Rulebooks.

There is no “must-slide” rule in Little League. When the fielder has the ball and is waiting to make the tag, the runner has two options: 1. Slide; or 2. Attempt to get around the fielder. The runner must NOT deliberately or maliciously contact the fielder, but he is NOT required to slide.

Posted by Little League University