

# BULLETIN #17 - 2024

## Subject: Correction to Foreign Substance On The Ball RULE 4.3.5 a) and Effect

Currently Rule 4.3.5. a) states:

“No defensive team member may at any time during the game use a foreign substance on a ball. A pitcher who licks the fingers on their pitching hand must dry them before making contact with the ball.”

The consequent Effect states:

“A defensive team member continues to place a foreign substance on the ball or continues to violate any provision of Rule 4.3.5.

Effect

An illegal pitch is declared. If the illegal action continues, the pitcher is removed from the game and declared an illegal pitcher.”

### Explanation

The rule, as stated, contains a contradiction because in the Effects, the pitcher would be “removed from the game” and at the same time “declared an illegal pitcher.” That effect, a definition, would bring the pitcher to be removed only from the pitching position.

There was no change to the 2023 - 2025 rulebook, so the correct application of this Rule is the one provided by the 2018-2022 Rulebook:

“A defensive team member continues to place a foreign substance on the ball or continues to violate any provision of Rule 4.3.5.

The Effect for the 2023 - 2025 rulebook should read as follows:

“The pitcher is ejected from the game.”

It's a delayed dead ball, and the following provisions and effects apply for illegal pitch.

### Case plays

Play        The umpire detects foreign substance (pine tar) on the ball between innings. What action should the umpire take?

Ruling:    The ball should be removed from the game. [4.3.5 a)]

Note: If it not known which team has put the foreign substance on the ball, watch the pitchers closely, and also observe any teammates that come to the pitching circle. If anything is suspicious, ask to see the ball, and if there is a foreign substance on this new ball, warn F1 and the manager. If any defensive player after a warning continues to put foreign substance on the ball, the pitcher should be ejected. [Effects: 4.3.1 to 4.3.7 Effect 4.3.5 Effect]