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The following is the result of the Sacred Heart University protest of their game played against Northeastern University on October 15th, 2011.

Game protested by Sacred Heart due to decision made by the Umpires.

Requested action – Continuation of game from point of protest.

Protest:

Sacred Heart is protesting the 3:00 pm, 10/15/11 game against Northeastern, requesting the game be replayed from the point of the protest because the umpire decided that the runner on 3rd would have scored on the play regardless if there were 1 or 2 outs in the inning.

Investigation:

Sacred Heart States -

IN THE BOTTOM OF THE 4TH INNING THE GAME WAS TIED AT 5. THERE WAS A RUNNER ON THIRD BASE [Holgerson] AND THE UMPIRE DECLARED THAT THERE WERE TWO OUTS WHEN THE BATTER [Oddo] CAME TO THE PLATE. SHE PROCEEDED TO HIT A GROUND BALL TO THE THIRD BASEMEN WHO THREW TO FIRST FOR THE APPARENT FINAL OUT OF THE INNING. BOTH TEAMS CAME OFF THE FIELD, NORTHEASTERN TOOK THE FIELD AND SACRED HEART BEGAN TO PREPARE TO BAT IN THE TOP OF 5TH INNING. AT THIS POINT THE NORTHEASTERN SCOREKEEPER BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF HER COACH THAT THEY BELIEVED THERE WAS ONLY 2 OUT RECORDED IN THE BOTTOM OF THE 4TH. THE COACH APPROACHED THE UMPIRE WITH THE SITUATION AND ASKED US ABOUT OUR SCOREBOOK AND AFTER REVIEWING WE CONFIRMED THAT ONLY TWO OUTS WERE IN FACT RECORDED. HOWEVER, WITH THE RUNNER ON THIRD BASE [Holgerson] THE UMPIRE ALLOWED THAT RUN TO SCORE. THIS IS WHAT WE ARE PROTESTING. MY CONTENTION IS THAT THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THAT IN FACT THE RUN WOULD HAVE SCORED HAD THE UMPIRE NOT INCORRECTLY ANNOUNCE TWO OUTS. THE BALL WAS HIT CLOSELY TO THE BAG AND THE RUNNER [Holgerson] MAY NOT HAVE RUN FOR HOME OR THEIR COULD HAVE BEEN A PLAY AT HOME. IN ADDITION, THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THAT THE UMPIRE SAW THE RUNNER [Holgerson] FROM THIRD ACTUALLY TOUCH HOMEPLATE AND WITOUT A RUNNER OFFICIALLY BEING RULED SAFE SHE [Holgerson] SHOULD NOT HAVE BEEN ALLOWED TO SCORE AND THE RUNNER [Holgerson] SHOULD RETURN TO THIRD BASE WITH TWO OUTS IN THE INNING.

Northeastern States –

In the bottom of the 4th inning of the 3rd game, NU was up to bat with a runner on third [Holgerson], and the umpire declared there were 2 outs. The batter [Oddo] hit a ground ball to the shortstop, who threw her out at 1st as the runner from third [Holgerson] scored. NU then took the field, but before a pitch was thrown, our manager declared that only two outs had been made in the previous inning, not three. The umpires looked at both teams' scorebooks and discussed the situation, agreeing that there had in fact only been two outs made. The umpires informed us that they were allowing the run from 3rd [Holgerson] to count and for NU to continue batting, but



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that SH was playing under protest. Thus, NU went up to bat [Bartolomeo] again, with the bases empty. NU did not score any more runs in the 4th inning, aside from the runner that crossed home plate [Holgerson] as the 2nd out was made.

Defense:

Home Plate Umpire Statement (Paraphrased from phone call) –

Sacred Heart is correct in that we mistakenly had the outs wrong in the inning. When it was brought to our attention we confirmed with both teams' score-keepers that only 2 outs had in fact been recorded in the inning. We took the best steps we could to rectify the situation and in doing so, it was in our best judgment that the runner on third would have scored on the play regardless of whether or not we had correctly stated there was only 1 out.

Ruling: Protest Denied – While Sacred Heart may have had an opportunity to throw out the runner at the plate had they known there was only 1 out or that the runner might not have even tried to score on the play if she had known there was only 1 out, the fact is that the point in which Sacred Heart has protested was specifically the judgment decision of the umpire. NCSA Rules 16.01.0 states:

16.01.0 No protest ever shall be permitted on judgment decisions by the umpire.

Thus the game will remain as is with the official score being 8-7 Northeastern. The NCSA additionally feels that a ruling to return the game to be continued at the point of the protest and to return the runner [Holgerson] to third base would have simply been yet another judgment decision. And certainly umpires who are present at the time of the game are far more qualified than the NCSA front office who wasn't even present at the game to make such a judgment decision. In regards to the point of not knowing if the runner [Holgerson] actually touched home or not, just like during an appeal play with a runner missing a bag or leaving early on a tag up, if the umpire didn't see the runner miss the bag or leave early, the umpire would assume that the runner did in fact touch the base accordingly.

Sandy Sanderson
President